

FEBRUARY  
2017

# Unity School Newsletter



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## PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Dear Unity Families,

The first month of 2017 is over and February has approached fast! We hope that all Unity families have been staying warm and healthy during this first month of the new year.

Winter weather is in full force and we would like to take a moment to remind families of our school closure procedure for severe weather (located in your parent handbook). If the weather is questionable, please call Unity after 6:30am and if we are closed or delayed there will be a recording explaining the situation. Lots of variables are considered when we have an unscheduled closure or delay so we appreciate your patience and understanding ahead of time.

Every classroom is nearly full but we still have a few days open in our pre/k 'Butterfly' class and there is also space in our part day 3 1/2 to 4 year old 'Sea Turtle' class. If you know any children in these age groups, please tell their families about us!

When you are in the building, please take a moment to enjoy some of the creative and unique projects your amazing children are apart of every day at Unity School--beautiful works of art are popping up throughout every classroom!

Here at Unity, we always celebrate love and kindness; this month, in particular, we would like to encourage our families to take part in a friendship celebration on Tuesday February 14th. Each classroom will be doing their own activities so please check in with your child's teacher for more information. There will be time for the kids to exchange tokens of appreciation with each other and we encourage homemade crafts and cards. No snacks please!

As always it is our pleasure to answer any questions you may have or just stop into our office and say "hi".

Sincerely,  
Susanne and Jessica



## PANDA CLASS

Hi Panda Families,

January was a fun month, even with all the crazy weather! We're all happy to have everything back to normal.

We spent the month talking about winter. The kids talked about what they did when it snowed, what we wear in cold weather, and what happens to snow when the sun comes out.

We did a lot of art activities in January, if you haven't checked your child's art file, please do so.



Our field trip to the Eugene Public Library was a lot of fun! The kids thoroughly enjoyed story time, and we had fun choosing books to read at circle time.

Cherri, Celia & Briana

## CATERPILLAR CLASS

Happy February Caterpillar Families,

We are so happy to be back to our regular routine here in Caterpillar Land! Thank you for all of your patience during the crazy weather, closures, and late starts that January brought with it.

Since our Caterpillars are young and learning routines, it is great to keep them on a consistent schedule. Dropping off between 8:30am-8:45am gives your child a chance to play outside and get their wiggles out before coming into the structured academic time. 9:30am is also another great time to drop-off. Please avoid dropping off between 8:45am-9:30am and between 12:00pm- 2:30pm. Our class is very structured during these times of the day (Including Nap) and our littles are very easily distracted. Thanks for your understanding!

In January we finished up our exploration on community helpers. We made inquiries, such as, "What does it mean to be a helper?" The children came up with: helping others learn to do something new, helping a friend who is sad, helping keep each other be kind and safe in the classroom. We also created a "Pom Pom Jar" where children earn pom poms for helping others and random acts of kindness. The children filled up the jar and earned a party for all their hard work! The "Pom Pom

Jar" will be used through out the year as an incentive for different goals the children are working on.

The Caterpillar Classroom have many exciting things to look forward to in the month of February.

Coming up in February, we are going on a field trip to gymnastics! Look in your mailboxes for the information and remember to dress



your children in comfortable clothes. Also make sure to find Jessica or Melissa so you can get your permission slips signed.

Our class is celebrating friendship day on February 14th! Your child can bring in cards or Valentines. Please make sure there is enough for each child to get one. You may label them with the children's names or you can leave them blank. We will put class lists in parent mailboxes soon. We will also have a sign-up in the classroom if you would like to help supply some special art supplies. Please "NO" Candy.

Gentle Reminders:

- Please avoid dropping off at circle & nap times
- Friendship Party February 14th (no sweets)
- Gymnastics fieldtrip coming up! Keep your eyes peeled!
- Please Check your child's cubby daily for wet items to be taken home

Sincerely,

Jessica and Melissa

## LADYBUG CLASS

Welcome February and hopefully warmer days! We hope everyone has had a chance to thaw out a bit from the ice and snow and we hope things are back to 'normal'. The Ladybugs have been busy getting familiar with the new friends that have been visiting and practicing sounding out letters.

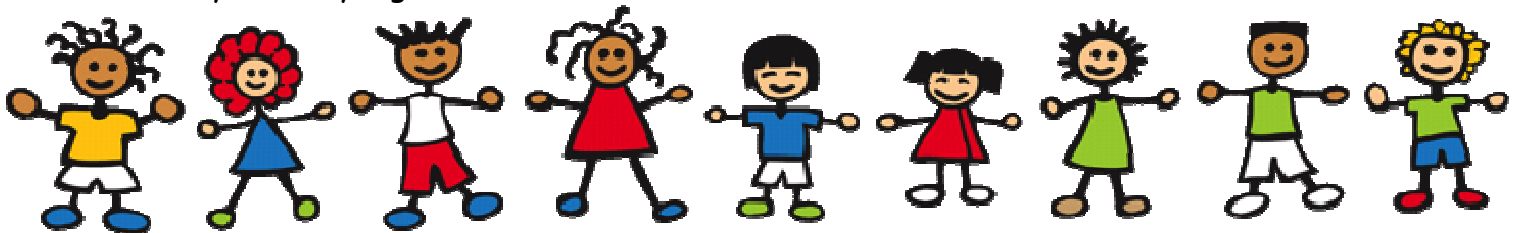
We were hoping to have a field trip last month, but due to weather we postponed to February. The Ladybugs have been showing interest in healthcare (doctors, babies, and broken bones) so we'd like to go to a healthcare facility. If you have an idea of a location or if you might have an opportunity to join us, please let Teacher Dorothy know.

February brings with it... "friendship parties" and exchanging cards. At Unity School we encourage homemade cards and it can be a fun time with your child (coloring, writing their own name, gluing paper, etc.). The Ladybug class will be having a Friendship party on February 14th. Remember, we can't allow ANY outside food or candy. If your child would like to add something to their cards it could be non-edible (i.e.: notepad, pencil, etc) and please no tiny choking hazard items like erasers.

Continue to remember extra clothes and warm coats. We play outside in most kinds of weather and we try to keep everyone warm and healthy.



Thanks from your Ladybug teachers



## BUTTERFLY CLASS

Hi Everyone!

We hope that you all had a great January and survived all the crazy weather!

February is going to be a super fun and busy month! We have been working on our basic skills to see what we still need to work on to prep for kindergarten!

Reminders:

- Please make sure your children have 1 full set of clothes (weather appropriate) in their cubbies at all times! Unity has very limited extra clothes.
- Blankets need to be taken home EVERY weekend! It helps with keeping sick germs at bay, and makes for a much more comfortable rest time for your children.
- For the safety of your children please be sure to drop off your child to the opening classroom in the morning, and to make contact with one of the teachers. In the afternoon at pick up time, please make contact with one of the teachers, so we know that your child is leaving the school. Thank you!!!!

Upcoming Events:

- Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> - Friday - Butterflies 100 days of school party (9:00-11:00)
- Feb 6<sup>th</sup> - Monday - Scholastic Book orders are due
- Feb 14<sup>th</sup> - Tuesday - Friendship Party
- Feb 20<sup>th</sup> - Monday - Field trip to the Science Factory (\$4.50 Per child)

We hope you have a wonderful month! Thank you for sharing your amazing children with us! We sure enjoy spending our days with them!

Hug & Smiles,

Pammie, Michelle, Kelly & Sarah

## SEA TURTLE CLASS

The Sea Turtles have been exploring space the last few weeks. I was impressed with the knowledge they already had about space. When we started our web for this topic, the class knew that the moon and stars helped light up the night sky and that they are always there as well as the sun, but sometimes we can't see them because the earth turns around. These words were the children's words! One student even grabbed the globe and showed the other students how the earth rotates. We expanded on this concept by using objects to be the sun and moon to see how we can't see the sun at night and how we see the moon instead. This is a very big concept for such young kiddos, but their interest is there and they love exploring this concept.

Some of their favorite activities from the space unit have been making galaxy gak, painting on foil, building Lego rocket ships, playing in the outer space sensory table, and Creating "space" art.

A big thank you to everyone that donated boxes and foil for our big space project. The class worked together to build a rocket ship from boxes, then covered it in foil. Then we wrapped



ourselves in foil for our space suits and pretended to go on a space adventure. It was so much fun.

The Science Factory has a flight exhibit going right now and two short space shows in the planetarium specifically for pre-k kiddos. We will be going for a field trip soon so stay tuned for dates and more information. Parent volunteers are always welcome and as we get closer I will put a volunteer sign-up on the parent board.

We will be having a friendship party February 14<sup>th</sup>. Handmade or store bought cards and stickers are welcome. Please no candy. We will be playing some friendship games and doing a special project.

Teacher Tara

## OTTER CLASS

Hello, from the Otters,

We hope everyone enjoyed their holidays. We have been spending more time with Cloudy our school kitty since the winter weather set in. the kids enjoy his presence as he goes from lap to lap at circle time.

We got to go bowling last month during the break. We had about eleven kids, which was a good turn out. The kids did great taking turns and had lots of fun.

The Otters look forward to getting their weekly classroom jobs, and many of them are willing to step in and help each other out.

We look forward to fun and learning with our group in 2017,

Josh and Sarah



## Furniture & Carpets

### Health Concerns

Household furnishings can contain toxic materials such as formaldehyde and flame-retardants. Formaldehyde can be irritating to the eyes, skin and mucous membranes. Off-gassing (the release of chemicals into the air) can cause headaches; nausea; burning of the eyes, nose, and throat; skin rashes; coughing; and chest tightness. Exposure to high levels of formaldehyde for an extended period of time (10-20 Yrs) may cause cancer. Formaldehyde is a suspected neurological, reproductive, and liver toxin.

High levels of exposure to some common flame retardants, including polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), can be toxic to the liver and thyroid. Infants and toddlers who are highly exposed to PBDEs may suffer damage to their developing nervous systems.

### Formaldehyde

Formaldehyde is used to add permanent-press qualities to fabrics like draperies, as a component of glues in particle-board furniture and plywood flooring, and as a preservative in some paints and coating products. It is also produced by combustion (burning), such as from car exhaust, cigarette smoke, and wood burning stoves. Formaldehyde is almost always found in indoor air, often at levels that are higher than safety levels. It is a flammable, colorless gas that has a pungent odor. Off-gassing is highest from furniture for the first five years after products with formaldehyde are installed. People are exposed by breathing air containing formaldehyde.

### Brominated Flame Retardants

PBDEs are chemicals that have been used for more than 30 years to slow the burning of products. New research indicates these flame retardants are toxic. They have been widely used in furniture foam, carpet padding, back coatings for draperies and upholstery, plastics, computers, televisions, building materials, and electrical appliances. Research indicates that more than 80% of PBDE exposure is from house dust. PBDEs persist in the environment and accumulate in living things—they have been found in human blood, breast milk, and umbilical cord blood.

### Tips for Reducing Exposure to Formaldehyde and PBDEs in Furniture and Carpets:

1. Have children wash [wash] their hands frequently with soap and water.
2. Keep dust levels down by damp dusting and mopping.
3. Ventilate often, and especially while cleaning.
4. Avoid wall-to-wall carpets with carpet pads; choose hard flooring (wood, tile) instead.
5. Choose solid wood furniture. Avoid use of pressed wood products are made with glues that contain urea-formaldehyde resins (UF).
6. Avoid products made with foam. Dispose of torn foam items (cushions, pillow, stuffed animals).
7. Choose new items stuffed with polyester, down, wool, or cotton; these are unlikely to contain toxic fire retardants.
8. Vacuum when children are not present using a high efficiency particulate air (HEAP) filter vacuum cleaner.
9. Remove shoes prior to going indoors.
10. Choose area rugs that are made with natural fibers (cotton, hemp, and wool) that are naturally fire-resistant and contain fewer chemicals.
11. Clean area rugs with biodegradable cleaners.

## Green Cleaning Products:

Visit EcoLogo At [www.ecologo.org](http://www.ecologo.org) or Green Seal at [www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org) to find cleaning products that are certified as biodegradable and environmentally healthy.

## Recipes for Cleaning Furniture & Carpets:

### Carpet Spot Remover

Blot immediately with water, Sprinkle with baking soda or cornstarch and let dry. Wash with club soda and vacuum.

\*If a rug or carpet is contaminated by bodily fluids: Blot to remove the fluid as quickly as possible, then disinfect by spot-cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant (adapted from Caring For Our Children, 3<sup>rd</sup> editions).

### Wood Cleaner

1/4 cup white vinegar

1/4 cup water

1/2 tsp. liquid soap

A few driops of olive oil

Combine the ingredients in a bowl and wash the area. The vinegar smell will dissipate.

### All Purpose Cleaner

1/4 cup white vinegar

2tsp. baking soda

3-1/2 cups hot water

1/4 cup liquid dish soap

Mix ingredients in a 32 oz. spray bottle, adding dish soap last. Wash surfaces. The smell of vinegar will dissipate.

## Furniture & Carpet Resources

- Polybrominated diphenylethers (PBDEs)  
[www.epa.gov/oppt/pbde/](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/pbde/)
- Formaldehyde  
[healthychild.org/issues/chemical-pop/formaldehyde](http://healthychild.org/issues/chemical-pop/formaldehyde)
- PBDE-free Manufacturer and Product List  
[www.ewg.org/pbdefree](http://www.ewg.org/pbdefree)
- Choosing Safer Products  
[www.watoxics.org/healthy-homes-gardens-1](http://www.watoxics.org/healthy-homes-gardens-1)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Formaldehyde  
[www.epa.gov/iaq/formalde.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/formalde.html)
- Formaldehyde  
[www.epa.gov/teach/chem\\_summ/formaldehyde\\_summary.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/teach/chem_summ/formaldehyde_summary.pdf)
- Certifiers of products and materials that have low chemical emissions:
- Greenguard Environmental Institute  
[www.greenguard.org/en/index.aspx](http://www.greenguard.org/en/index.aspx)
- Indoor Advantage by Scientific Certification Systems  
[www.scscertified.com/gbc/indooradvantage.php](http://www.scscertified.com/gbc/indooradvantage.php)
- Eco-Healthy FAQs on Ceramic Tile  
[www.cehn.org/ehcc/FAQ](http://www.cehn.org/ehcc/FAQ)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call: 202-543-4033, ext. 13

Email: [info@ecohealthychildcare.org](mailto:info@ecohealthychildcare.org)

Visit: [www.cehn.org/ehcc](http://www.cehn.org/ehcc)

Eco-Healthy child care® (EHCC) is a science-based, award-winning national program that seeks to improve the environmental health of children by partnering with child care professionals to eliminate or reduce environmental health hazards found in child care facilities. Originally created by the Oregon Environmental Council in 2005, EHCC is now managed by Children's Environmental Health Network.

Eco-Healthy Child Care®  
c/o Children's Environmental Health Network  
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# FEBRUARY

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		1	2	3
6 Tuition Due	7 Annual Corporation Meeting 6:30-8:00 pm	8	9	10
13	14 Friendship Parties in Individual Classrooms	15 Overuse Fees Due	16 PAPA "PIZZA" FUNDRAISER	17
20	21	22	23	24 Schedule Changes Due
27	28			