

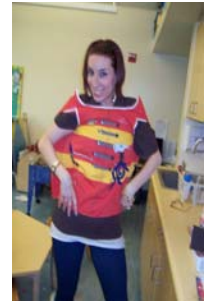


# The Stars

Gillen Brewer School  
November 2009  
Newsletter



## Pumpkins, Pumpkins and more Pumpkins!



The past month has been filled with adventures to the park, exploring the neighborhood, and discovering nature. Pumpkins were appearing everywhere and the Stars were eager to explore pumpkins, corn, and gourds. We experimented with and learned what is inside a pumpkin, where they grow, and what foods are made with pumpkins. We planted seeds and our own pumpkin patch is growing.



## Grandparents' Day



Grandparents' day was a huge success. It was very exciting to have such special guests in our classroom. Everyone enjoyed sharing a meal together and getting to know each other. Each family participated in decorating a framed picture of his or her grandchild. Thank you Star parents for providing us with a delicious pot luck meal.



## Construction in our City



The Stars were fascinated with all the construction taking place in our neighborhood. We learned about construction vehicles, workers, building materials, and construction tools like cones and flags. We wore construction hats while building extensively with blocks. Their interest in traffic lights and signs



deepened their understanding of the world around them. Play tools were experimented with daily.



## WORK TIME

Our dramatic play and house area has become a favorite spot for the Stars. We have incorporated a variety of costumes and dress-up clothing over the last month. Imagine dressing up as a doctor, police officer, fire fighter, train conductor, or chef. Props are provided for extending the imaginary play. Daily, each child has the opportunity to manipulate play dough, express themselves with tempera paints, finger painting, or water colors. They use their senses to explore sand and water in the sensory tables.



Our sand and water tables are a big hit with all the children. They are able to pour, scoop, measure, take turns, and share ideas while having fun getting their hands wet or sandy. The block area is just being discovered and large intricate structures are developing daily.



## Music with Robert



Music and movement have a special place in all our hearts. We have music and movement in our class everyday, and also visit Robert to engage in musical exploration. Robert incorporates puppets, rhythm, math, literacy, colors, finger plays, and the Thanksgiving theme into his sessions. The Stars are constantly singing a song that they learned in music or in our class. Over the past month, Robert has introduced such instruments as the violin, drums, harmonica, banjo, and guitar.



## Art with Kate

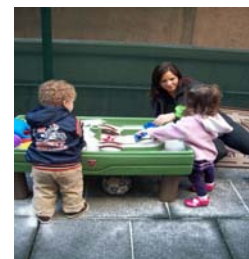
In ART the Stars are jumping right into a fun unit where they will learn all about color and color mixing! We began this unit by exploring red, orange, and yellow. We got to look at various paintings by Vincent Van Gogh and Diego Rivera. The Stars looked at real sunflowers and had a chance to touch, smell, and talk about shape, color, and texture. We drew the different parts of the flower and added paint. Last Friday we got to try using easels, too! Be on the lookout for more colors as we learn about blue and green this week! We also enjoy singing when we enter and leave the art room. Our newest song is called "Funga Alafia/Welcome My Children" and comes from Liberia.



# Gym and Gross Motor Play



# Outside Play



# SCIENCE WITH ANDREA



During the month of November, the Stars explored with a variety of materials and explored with some new scientific tools. In science the Stars are learning how scientists investigate new materials by using their five senses. We have

made Soy Ice cream, planted pumpkin seeds, learned how to use magnifying glasses, and learned how to make bubble solution. The Star scientists can't wait to explore new and exciting scientific discoveries!



# SPEECH



# Occupational Therapy with The Stars

Thank you to all of the parents who were able to attend the speech and language department's parent workshop "How to Talk With Your Child So Your Child Will Talk With You," on October 28<sup>th</sup>. For those who missed the workshop, we covered the OWLing technique and ways to adapt to play to share the moment with a child, both taken from the Hannan program. OWL stands for Observing, Waiting, and Listening. By taking the time to observe what a child is engaged in and the child's body language, you are gathering useful information on how to approach the child. By waiting for the child to act or speak, you are giving him/her time to initiate and express thoughts in his/her own way. When we listen and respond to what a child says, we are encouraging him/her to express himself/herself. The book [It Takes Two To Talk](#) has more information on OWLing.

The Stars are working hard while they play in Occupational Therapy! With two sensory gyms and a fine motor room the opportunities for fun skill building are endless. Zooming on the scooter boards and crawling like different animals in the hallways are exciting ways for the Stars to learn how their bodies move through the environment. We also play with different materials like resistive putty, play-dough, and shaving cream to help our hands and fingers become stronger. Exploring fine motor supplies such as 'fat' crayons broken in small pieces, paintbrushes, and smaller scissors that fit our hands helps us learn how to use our classroom tools successfully!

