

February Newsletter

ChildRoots 2010

March-Drum-March

It's time to gear up (and wrap up in something waterproof) for our annual March-Drum-March. At this community event you learn classrooms' songs and jam out with your child on some cool handmade drums.

When: Saturday, March 13th! 10:00 -11:30AM

What to bring: Umbrellas, rain boots and some rhythm (lets embrace our Portland Rain shall we?!?)

Where: Meet in your classroom at 10:00 AM with your teachers and learn the classroom songs your children have been singing each day at school. Your teachers will have a song list available for you to take home. At 10:30am we will all leave our classrooms and walk in a long single file line to the Buckman field. We have asked several professional drummers to take part in this event. The drummers will be in a drumming circle and the children can join in a drumming jam session.

What's new this year: Instead of making our own hand drums we made a sizable order for some child friendly hand drums made in Africa. We will be working hard to keep these drums safe so that we can use them for many years!

Who: Everyone in our ChildRoots community should come to this fun and rhythmic event. Even if you don't have a child old enough to jam, it's still a wonderful opportunity to get to know the greater CR community.

Soup Cycle

Need dinner in a hurry? Try SoupCycle. A delivery service for soup that will be making a stop right here at ChildRoots! That's right...soup at our door. This business is designed for busy, health-conscious, environmentally-minded families. They make delicious soups (with a new choice of veggie, vegan or meaty each week), then ride them over on a bike. You pick up the soup (with your child) at the end of the day.

Here is the scoop...on the soup!

1. All orders and payments are done through Soup Cycle (no delivery charge).
2. Soup Cycle will begin delivering soup to CR the week of 2/15 on Thursdays. Deliveries will always be on Thursdays.
3. Samples and sign-up at CR will be available on 2/11 between 4-6pm .A soupy rep will be near the elevator at those times...or you can simply go online immediately and sign-up.
4. Soup storage will be a fine cooler located near the front door.

Great Website

Sex education for three year olds...? You betcha. This great website is the ultimate resource for sex education. It breaks down information based on age group, starting at 3 years old and up to 18. www.theresnoplacelikehome.com
Check it out!

Upcoming Closures

February 15th Teacher Training
March 19th (preschool only) PTC
May 7th Teacher Training
May 31st Memorial Day

Reminder: New tuition rates for March. Please make sure your tuition check due February 15th, indicates the new rates.

Hooks and Bags

Finally! A decision has been reached about a positive preschool storage system that will work for parents, children and teachers!!! In the next month each preschooler will have his and her very own double hook. One hook for a coat and one hook for a CR-provided, sensibly sized canvas bag. This bag will keep your child's extra clothes in it. Soiled clothes will also be left in this canvas bag in a smaller plastic sack that can be taken home.

Because we have established a new routine to sleeping and separate sleeping rooms, your child's blankets will be stored in a larger canvas bag also provided by CR. This bag will be kept in the classroom and your teachers will give your child his or her blanket bag right before nap time. This will really help with transitions to different classrooms and keep those blankets cleaner. After nap your child will return their blankets to their bag and bring them back to their homeroom. Hooks will be hung slightly higher than the current ones and will be clearly labeled with your child's name and picture. Shoes will be kept under the hooks- with an individual space for each pair.

Canvas bags will be labeled with a removable badge so that they can be easily identified and cleaned.

Benches will be available for your sitting needs.



Goodbye Danielle

Dear Families,

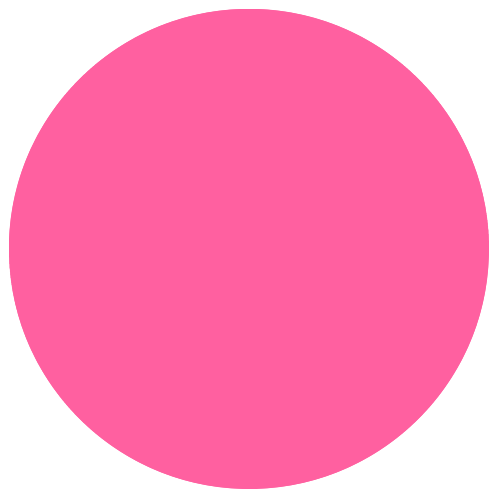
As many of you have already heard, I will be leaving ChildRoots in the near future. After more than two and a half years at ChildRoots, it will not be easy to say goodbye. My last day will be Friday, February 12th. I am moving to Eugene to be with my boyfriend who is pursuing his PhD at the University of Oregon. In Eugene, I plan to continue working in education, as well as devote time to creating my own art. My experience as both, a primary toddler teacher and the art studio director, at ChildRoots has given me valuable knowledge and skills that will allow me to continue pursuing my career in art education. I am grateful for the opportunity I have had, at ChildRoots, to work within a community that is so strongly committed to artistic exploration and creative thinking. I would like to thank everyone at ChildRoots for their continued support over the years. Thank you.

Best Wishes, Danielle



Art and Science Specialist Replacements?

We have found a wonderful fit for the art studio teacher for the morning studio times. Hannah, a current CR substitute has an extensive knowledge of the arts and of young children. Hannah joined our staff a month ago and reapplied for the studio position. We are excited to see her in this new role. Beverly our preschool specialist will be filling the “science” role for the preschool atelier and we are still working to fill the art atelier and movement specialists roles that Danielle and Beth both currently occupy. Look to our March Newsletter for more details about how these specialists roles will change.



Goodbye Beth

Dear ChildRoots Community,

It has been a great pleasure to watch your children and families grow. The time has come for me to focus on my private Alexander Technique Teaching practice, so I will be leaving my position here on February 15. My experience playing, reading, running, investigating and making delightful messes with your children has helped to keep my heart open and curious...your children have encouraged me to be a better teacher, actor and person. Thank you and may joyful, messy learning continue to fill your lives!

Beth

February Welcome Box

ChildRoots welcomes new students Tommy to South, Priya (comes back) to West, Ava to 7, and Casey to 6. We also welcomed recently, teacher Jordan to room 1, Christina as a sub, Brianna and Andrew as preschool support, Jamie P as a sub and Hanna who will soon be taking over for Danielle in the art studio.

Ateliers

The new year has begun and upstairs in the preschool we are excited to start a new program of specialized afternoon classes ("Ateliers") that will provide expanded learning and development opportunities for your children. The purpose of this email is to provide you with an overview of the goals and logistics of the new program as well as the few scheduling changes that implementing it will require.

Ateliers basics:

You may know that we now commute to nap rooms where the individual needs of your child can be best met. After nap we return to our 'Homeroms' for snack and afternoon centers. Starting in mid-February however, we will break back up into small groups after snack (3:30-4:15). The groups will include children from all three classrooms. There will be seven groups corresponding to seven new specialized classes or 'ateliers' (a dutch word meaning "studio") that will take the place of afternoon centers. The groups will range in size from 6-12 children depending on the class. The ateliers will be: Baking, Science, Art, Mechanics, Cooperative Games, Dramatic Play, and Movement. Ateliers will last for one week and will be led by one or two teachers giving lots of opportunity for focused learning and one-on-one interaction. Although groups will be teacher assigned (based on our experience of each child's current interests and learning style), every child will have the opportunity to experience every atelier!

The big picture:

The main goal of this new program is to create more opportunities for children to creatively explore the learning topics that are the focus of their morning circles throughout the remainder of the day. The new ateliers will facilitate this goal by creating more small group time and lending more focus to our afternoon work and play. Importantly, although the activities that take place in the afternoons will now be more structured, they will still be child-directed, consistent with our overall philosophy. This balance will be struck by using the "Research-Plan- Do-Reflect" strategy of education. This means that each week long atelier will begin with children and teachers sitting down together to decide on a common interest related to one or more of the ongoing learning topics in the preschool homerooms. Together they will then do any necessary research, plan an activity or project and execute it.

Ideally, the last day would be spent reflecting on their endeavors (the focus should remain on the process rather the final product) or sharing them with another group. This final stage of the process will allow children to internalize the experience and encourage community spirit. It will also will help friends understand that they can look to one another for knowledge and support in addition to adults.

Additional benefits of ateliers

In addition to expanded 'academic' opportunities, ateliers will provide lots of opportunity for social/emotional growth and development. Preschoolers will now be able to form meaningful bonds with like-minded children (and teachers) from other classrooms. With each new atelier (i.e. each week) they will also be challenged to communicate, cooperate and compromise within the context of a new group dynamic. The social and emotional skills that this will exercise will be invaluable preparation for the larger class sizes and more frequent teacher and peer group shifts that children will encounter in school beyond ChildRoots.

Most importantly, because children will be taking the lead in directing their own work -playful but purposeful learning- they will develop not only independence but a sense of empowerment as they become capable and confident self-educators.

Logistics and schedule changes
Morning opening routine: In order accommodate ateliers and provide teachers with the planning and meeting time that will be necessary run them, home room care with primary teachers will now begin at 9am, rather than 8am. This will allow one primary from each room the 8-9 hour to plan and gather materials for the afternoon classes each day. Before 9am, children from all three rooms can be dropped off- and will remain combined- in East, the new opening room. Between 8am and 9am, 2 - 3 primary teachers will join the opener as needed while the other primaries work outside the classroom. At 9am, children will rejoin their cohorts in their homerooms. The homeroom day will then begin with a welcoming circle and snack promptly at 9:00 AM.

Atelier Descriptions

Science

Science will be related to areas of interest in classroom study-or the "Big Idea" children will be involved in planning, implementing, and reflecting on experiments. Beverly will work with a group of up to 8 children in the West classroom.

Art

Art will build on a subject matter, children will collaborate, construct, document, then de-construct an art process. A group of up to 8 friends will work in the studio with the Art Artillerist (still working to hire).

Movement

The focus on movement time will be to allow children space to explore rolling, tumbling, somersaulting etc. Mats and other equipment will be used. A Movement Specialist will be hired for this role and will work with group of up to 6 children in preschool hallway.

Dynamic Materials

Children will have a variety of fine motor options available to them to freely explore. The teacher will talk to children about intentional use of these materials. Jessica and Skyler will work with up to 8 children in the South classroom.

Cooking

Bread will be the focus of the cooking atelier. Children will each take a different part of the bread making experience. Measuring, scooping, pouring, coring apples, scrapping, etc. Bread will be available for children to take home TWTHF. Bethany will work with up to 7 children in the West classroom.

Thematic Centers

Children will construct stage, props, costumes, story lines, based on classroom interests and the "Big Idea". Susan and Lauren will work in East with up to 10 children.

Cooperative Math Concepts

Children will be engaged in math games- focused on addition, subtraction, one-to-one correspondence, matching, and comparisons. Children will rotate between mechanic and cooperative math concepts every other day. Harry will work in South with up to 6

New Opening and Closing Rooms

Rooms 7, East and room 2 are now the opening classrooms and the closing classrooms each day. These are the classrooms we use before your primary teachers arrive and after they have left for the day. Room 7 is the infant opening and closing room. Room 2 is the toddler opening and closing room and East is the Preschool opening and closing room.