



# Rocking Horse Review

Rocking Horse Academy

Linda Ashness  
Editor-in-chief

## Fall 2010

It's time to FALL BACK and bring Daylight Savings Time to an end. Days are getting shorter and the weather will turn cooler. Don't forget to trade out your spare clothes in the cubbies and bring jackets and sweaters (labeled) for those chilly mornings.

For many years we have wanted to add shade to our playground. Texas summers are so hot. The cost has been prohibitive so far. Just one simple 40 X 40 shade installed is approximately \$25,000. That's a lot of fundraising. I'm committed to financing ½ of the cost of the project if we can raise the other ½ with our fundraisers. This would directly benefit all of our students for years to come, so please participate in our fundraisers this year. I hope to have enough money by next spring to get that installed.

Speaking of fundraisers, Rebecca Eichen has done an incredible job organizing our Designer Bag recycled bags fundraiser. Thanks, Rebecca, for your willingness to work until midnight to get this order out so quickly. We all

can't wait to get our new bags.

Mr. Trey Dean, our awesome Teddy Bear photographer, is due here in November. We'll have those amazing portraits back before Christmas. Watch for signs and dates for your classroom. If you have more than one child and want a group shot or a family shot, please feel free to come in and take photographs of the entire family. All are welcome. He truly is the BEST in the business, and we're lucky to have him with us.

We are hosting another ID Event. You can have your child fingerprinted and create an ID card. This is a great tool to have on hand. The service is free and sponsored by New York Life Insurance.

The holidays are just around the corner. Once again Rocking Horse Academy invites you and your family to join us for our Family Feast. Rocking Horse will provide the meat and drinks. Our families bring the salads, sides, breads, and desserts. The children are always so excited when you get to come and share

lunch with them at school. Naturally, if you are not able to attend, we try to pair your child up with a friend's family so that they can enjoy the family spirit.

In December, we also offer one Shop 'til You Drop day where you can leave your child/children with us and go holiday shopping without the kids. Santa can be a total surprise and it's so much easier to get things done. The students will play games, have snacks/lunch, watch movies, etc. Please check with the front desk for sign-up.

December is one of my favorite months. As an avid traveler, I love to learn of other cultures and languages. During our Children Around the World Fair, each class selects a country to study for the month. We taste food from that country; we color their flag and compare it to ours. We learn about their customs and costumes. The class then creates a "booth" to display all that they have learned. Then ALL of the children get a passport and on Children Around the World Day, the students take a trip and visit each country. There are activities

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### Special points of interest:

- *Teddy Bear Portraits*
- *Family Feast*
- *Shop Til You Drop*
- *Parent Date Nights*

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to do, food to taste, and music to enjoy. They get a stamp in their passport to commemorate their visit. It's a wonderful experience to learn about the diversity of our world.

Do you know why the numbers 5, 2, 1, 0 are important? They are the keys to remembering the most important elements of healthy living for children. 5 fruits and vegetables a day, 2 hours or less of screen time, 1 hour of physical activity each day, and 0 limiting sugar-sweetened drinks. Are your kids living a 5,2, 1,0 lifestyle?

~Jennifer Shu, MD, FAAP  
Medical Editor, HealthyChildren.org

**Daylight Savings Time**  
**Sunday November 7th**  
**Fall Back**



### Tuition Due Dates

November 1st & 15th & 29th  
December 13th & 27th  
January 10th & 24th



November 10th, 11th, 12th

### Teddy Bear Portraits



## Family Feast November 19th

Foals I-II, Colts, Ponies  
will eat in their rooms unless  
accompanied by an adult.

First seating is at 11 am  
Chargers I-II, Ropers, Pintos

Second seating is at 12 noon  
Mustangs, Wranglers, Trotters, Broncos

### Dates To Remember

November 7th– Daylight Savings Ends

*November 19th– Family Feast*

November 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th  
H.C.I.S.D. Closed  
November 25th, 26th R.H.A. Closed

December 11th– Shop Til You Drop  
12 noon-12 midnight

December 20th, through January 3rd  
H.C.I.S.D. Closed  
December 24th, 27th, 31st & January  
3rd R.H.A. Closed

Back by popular demand.....

ID Event

New York Life  
will be here on

November 17th, from  
3:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.  
to fingerprint and  
voice record  
your child and it's free !

### Parent Date Nights

November 20, 2010  
December 11, 2010  
(Shop til you drop  
12p.m.-12a.m.)  
January 15, 2011

**6:30 pm til Midnight**

**Academy Child \$30/\$15 second child**

**Non Academy Child \$35/\$20 second child**

**Employee Child \$15/\$5 second child**



### CHILD SEAT SAFETY

UNTIL AGE 1/20 LBS - For the best possible protection keep infants in the back seat, in rear-facing child safety seats, as long as possible up to the height or weight limit of their particular seat. At a minimum, keep infants rear-facing until at least age 1 year and at least 20 pounds.

UNTIL AGE 4/40 LBS - When children outgrow their rear-facing seats (at least age 1 year and at least 20 pounds) they should ride in forward-facing child safety seats, in the back seat, until they reach the upper weight or height limit of the particular seat (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds).

UNTIL AGE 8 OR 4'9" TALL - Once children outgrow their forward-facing seats (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds), they should ride in booster seats, in the back seat, until the vehicle seat belts fit properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually at age 8 or when the children are 4'9" tall).

AFTER AGE 8 OR 4'9" TALL - When children outgrow their booster seats (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall), they can use the adult seat belts in the back seat, if they fit properly (lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest).

# FOALS I

Fall is in the air and our thermometers are finally dropping. You may want to add a sweater or jacket to your drawer for cooler days. When we have the opportunity, we like to take walks in our strollers if the weather allows.

**Family and home, Neighborhood and Community Helpers** are the themes for November. Our Spanish words include November-*Noviembre*, family-*familia*, home-*casa*, brown-*cafe*. We will sing the finger play song "Where is the Family" and read Hugs and Kisses, Guess What I Eat and Little Quack. The discovery time will be to shake a bottle with corn and beans, count the people in our family will be our math and for physical activity we will roll a pumpkin. The homework for November is to practice drinking from a cup.

December themes are **Music, Holiday Traditions** and **Children around the World**. December-*Diciembre*, Christmas-

*Navidad*, red-rojo, green-verde, music-*musica*, children-*niños* are the Spanish words. Our songs include the German rhyme "Backe, Backe Kuchen" and "Jingle Bells". We will wash our hands to stay healthy and read Here Comes Santa and The Night Before Christmas. The homework for December is to practice sitting up.

**New Year's, Winter and Arctic Animals** are the themes for January. Spanish words are January-*Enero*, New Year's-*Año Nuevo*, white-*blanco*, winter-*invierno*, snow-*nieve*, cold-*frio*. For story time we will read Snowflake the Snowman and Panda Bear, Panda Bear, What Do You See. A fun song to sing is "Be Kind to your Fur Footed Friends". The babies will touch cold things for sensory and play peek-a-boo with the snowflake scarf for physical development. The

homework assignment is to practice rolling over.

**Parent reminders:** Please remember to label everything you bring including bottles, lids, pacifiers and food. Thanks for your help. Also please sign your baby in and out with the time and your initials. These are requests from administration. Questions and comments are always welcome. We appreciate the opportunity to care for you baby. Please note that Rocking Horse Academy will be closed Nov. 25 & 26, Dec. 24, 27 & 31 and Jan. 3, 2011.

Have a wonderful Holiday Season by keeping your family happy and healthy.

Foals I Staff

Mary Martha and Sonia AM Staff

Victoria and Sherry PM Staff

# FOALS II

Our November themes are "Family", "Neighborhood", and "Community Helpers". We will spend a lot of time looking at pictures of our families and talking about them as well. If there are any new photos you'd like to share, we would love to see them. We will also play house with play dishes, pots, & pans. We will continue to work on our Spanish words: thank you- *gracias*, please- *por favor*, family-*familia*, and home-*casa*. Books for the November are: "One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish" by Dr. Suess & Theodor Seuss Geisel; "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle; "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see?" by Bill Martin Jr. & Eric Carle.

Our theme for December is Music and Movement and we will learn how to move with music. We will spend time listening to "Kids Sing Songs Around the World", and "Dance Baby Dance!". If there is a favorite CD or tape you'd to

share, feel free to bring it by. Another thing we have in December is Children/Culture Around the World. Foals 2 has chosen Ireland as our country. We will explore the Irish culture with music, pictures, books and art projects. Our Spanish words for December are red-rojo, and green-verde. Book for the month of December are "Love You Forever" by Robert N. Munsch & Sheila McGraw; "Toes, Ears, & Nose!" by Marion Dane Bauer; & "Corduroy" by Don Freeman.

For January, we will explore Winter and Arctic animals. We will read short stories and look at picture books of Arctic animals, and touch ice cubes. Spanish words for January are cold-*frio*, amor-*love*. Books for January: "Dear Zoo" by Rod Campbell; "Guess How Much I Love You" by Sam McBratney & Anita Jerman; & "No Hitting" by Karen Katz. We will introduce Foals 2 to a Fall Flannel Board. Science will be all

about sensory with leaves, large rocks, and soft toys. A few books we will be reading are "I am Special", "All the Children of the World" and "Rudy's Rainy Day". Our movement and music includes, Fall Fun", "Scarecrow, Scarecrow", and some circle time activities include reach and feel, fall finger plays.

Our class curriculum works on many areas of activities and physical development that is appropriate for this age group. Each child is in a different stage, so all the lesson plans are planned with this in mind.

We enjoy being a part of your baby's. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Thank you,

Foals 2 Staff

# Colts

Fall and winter are upon us and we are looking forward to cooler weather. We want to welcome our new families to the Colt room. These next 3 months are going to be fun-filled learning experience.

In the month of November, we will talk about *Family and Home, Neighborhoods and Community Helpers*. To help us enjoy our Family Feast, we will make our own placemats and create a family collage to help us learn about relatives and relationships. We will build a Colt family tree with pictures of our family members and pets. We will play with ears of corn and gourds to see how they feel in our hands. Please plan on joining us on November 19th for our annual Family Thanksgiving Feast. Parents are asked to bring side dishes to share with the school. We'll have a sign-up sheet in the room soon.

In the month of December, we will learn about *Music and Movement, Holiday Traditions, and Children Around the World*. We will listen to all kinds of music from classical to country. We will Dance with the Stars as we strut our stuff to the beat. The second week, we will talk about other holiday traditions. How do different people celebrate the holidays? We will make a special gift for our parents--making a hand-y Christmas tree. The third week, we will talk about *Children Around the World*. We will learn about North America. We will make a USA flag and learn more about our own country.

In the month of January, we will learn about *Winter, Arctic animals and Time and Calendar*. The first two weeks, we will talk about winter and Arctic animals. We will play with ice for our sensory

lesson. We will try to make an igloo and color a polar bear as examples of some art activities. Then the last two weeks, we will explore the world of Time. We will make clocks, talk about each other's birthdays and other time and calendar activities. We will read "*A Clock Goes Tick Tock*".

With the weather changing, be sure to change out the extra clothing in the cubbies. Also, please label coats and jackets. We all shop at the same stores and it can get confusing— especially if the person who drops off the child is not the person picking up the child or if we have a substitute in the classroom. Labeling helps prevent lost items.

Colts Staff

Too often we give children answers to remember rather than problems to solve. ~Roger Lewin

# Ponies

We are so excited that the holidays are almost here! Hurray for fall! Please remember to send your Pony to school with a labeled water cup, even though it's time for cooler weather it is still very important to keep your pony hydrated. Also please be sure to check your child's clothing cubby to make sure that weather appropriate clothing is available for your Pony.

You can expect to see each week's theme and parent reminders to be posted on the parent board outside of the Ponies classroom. Feel free to take a copy of the lesson plan so that you can encourage your little one to practice at home what they have learned at school. Also take advantage of our parent resources wall that has infor-

mation about developmental milestones as well as sign language

**November:** Your pony will learn all about community helpers! Policemen, firemen, doctors, and teachers are among some of the people in our community that make a difference. What does each of these helpers do and who in particular do they help? This lesson plan will include a video, "Elmo Goes to the Doctor" and books about encounters with the various helpers around town. The Bernstein Bears and Dr. Seuss books highlight these lessons. Also this month we will discuss our homes and families as well as our neighborhoods and what makes them special! Who lives with you? Do you have any pets or siblings? This will require some parent involve-

ment since moms and dads will be the source of the information we need to discuss each pony's family. Don't forget: RHA Thanksgiving Family Feast!

**December:** Hurray for the holidays! This month we will be learning about how Christmas is celebrated in other countries. Some countries may not even call it Christmas, what do they call it? What do the children in this country look like? What type of music do they listen to? What kind of food do they eat? The Ponies will be learning about one specific country and about the traditions that make their children and their holiday unique! These special lessons will include food, music, and dance!

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**January:** Brrr! January is still cold in most parts of the world so we will discover the animals that live in the cold arctic. Also, since January means a New Year is coming, your Pony will learn all about time and the calendar and how it changes when the New Year comes around. Lessons will include: the days of the week, the months of the year, what

year is it, and what does a clock do? This month we will learn the sign language for the different animals that we study as well as continue learning our Spanish.

Every day in our circle time your child will discuss the weather outside, and further explore colors, shapes, numbers, and sign language. We also love learning through song so expect your Pony to be humming new tunes. We are still intro-

ducing potty training our Ponies and encourage you to do the same at home! We are proud of what big boys and girls our Ponies are becoming! Don't hesitate to call us during our naptime hours (1:00-2:00) if you have any questions or want to check in on your Pony during the day. We are looking forward to the fall and all of the wonderful things that we will learn!

**How can you name the capital of every U.S. state in two seconds?**

Washington, D.C.

## Chargers 1

We're very excited for the weather change and to watch the leaves turn into fall and winter colors. The air will be turning crisp and cool. Please be sure to check our cubbies for weather-appropriate clothing. Also, be sure to bring jackets or sweaters for early morning recesses. Be sure to label everything with your child's name. Many of us shop at the same stores.

Chargers 1 lessons will focus on our colors, numbers, and alphabets. Each month we use various themes which teach the children about their world as well as their basic skills.

In November we will introduce family, home, neighborhood, and community helpers. We want to share pictures of family members such as aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, pets etc. We will explore community helpers such as police offi-

cers, mail carriers, fire fighters, doctors, and teachers. At the end of the month, we celebrate families by hosting the annual Family Feast. Our parents are asked to bring a dish to share just as the Pilgrims did long ago. We have an exciting month filled with activities. Be sure to pick up a copy of our weekly newsletters and lesson plans.

December is right around the corner and we will enjoy music and holiday traditions. We want to play country, opera, classical, and jazz music to give the students a sense of how music can be very diverse. If you have some favorite music or movies, please feel free to share with the class.

Every December, Rocking Horse Academy hosts the Children around the World Festival. This year Chargers 1 has chosen Germany as our country. We will hear the Ger-

man language, taste German food, and look at pictures of German children in their native dress. We will also create a booth for the festival. If anyone has been to Germany and has items to share, please feel free to help us with this project.

Entering the New Year in January will begin with our Arctic animals, dinosaurs, and the New Year time and calendar! We will discuss the season and colder temperatures. We will also study Arctic animals, talk about their habitat, what they eat, and how they survive in such cold climates.

Chargers 1 is so excited about our new themes and the activities. There is so much to learn and discover! Please feel free to call if you have any questions or concerns.

Chargers 1 Staff

Don't worry that children never listen to you; worry that they are always watching you. ~Robert Fulghum



# Chargers II

Transitions have been completed and the Chargers II class is ready to continue our preparations for more fall activities.

The class welcomed three new faces to the teaching staff with Ms. Amber joining us as the new assistant teacher. She and Ms. Patti have done some work rearranging the classroom and introducing new art projects as well as establishing a new routine for the children. In the afternoons, Ms. Arianna and Ms. Kasie are assisting Ms. Amber.

Welcome to Our Pumpkin Patch theme greets those who enter the Chargers II room. The children have enjoyed looking at their pictures on the bulletin board which Ms. Amber created. The little pumpkins represent each of our young friends popping out of his/her pumpkin. The children have also been working on fall activities including painting pumpkins, listening to stories about fall, as well as gearing up for the Halloween time at school. The children have been working on free art which has incorporated various shapes to form the Halloween themed pictures. They also have helped to decorate the windows with their mosaic fall trees and stained glass leaves and acorns.

The week of Halloween the children have been working on specific activities to get ready for the celebration on Friday. They have decorated their Trick or Treat bags with a cutout and then were able to add their own artistic representation to the bag. They helped to carve the class pumpkin and find out what is inside. The seeds were taken and roasted for them to taste. Once the week is over the class pumpkin was roasted and made into mini pumpkin pies for the children to enjoy. The children were also able to decorate their own pumpkin shaped muffins as an art project and their yummy snacks. The children were treated to a pizza party on Friday along with their parade through the school during which they were able to collect treats. It was a fun time for all involved.

In November, the children will begin their activities which will lead them up to Thanksgiving. We will be discussing more about fall with an opportunity for them to collect leaves and acorns which will be used for activities which will include counting, sorting, letter recognition and various art projects. The children will be introduced to the story of the first Thanksgiving and the meaning of sharing. Additional themes for November will include activities which focus on Family, Home, Neighborhood and Our Community Helpers. We would love the input of our families for pictures of you and your child/children. We will use opportunity to introduce our children to Show and Tell which will begin on Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup>. Please send photos of the family, which can include grandparents and pets. We would ask that you send caption(s) for each photo so we are able to identify those in the photos. We would also like to display the photos throughout November so others may see our wonderful families in the Chargers II room.

The children in are continuing to work on activities including number recognition, counting, sorting, colors, letter recognition and sounds along with days of the week and months of the year. We have also added to our learning words and phrases from the above list in Spanish. We encourage any of our family members who are bilingual to assist us with our learning of Spanish. We would love to have those of you who are bilingual to visit our room and read or sing to our children in Spanish. Ms. Amber and I would also love to strengthen our knowledge of Spanish.

We have begun to post around the room information about Sign Language. We have a young man whose parents are deaf visit us twice a week, and we are working to use verbal communication as well as signing to communicate with him and his mother. So if you see us speaking with our hands and making no sound, we are just practicing our other form of communication.

One of the themes we will concentrate on in December is Children Around the World. Our children will be learning about Spain through music, food, dress and photos. We would appreciate any information or recipes/food from Spain. Ms. Amber and I will do our best to find some simple fun recipes that represent Spain and hope that the children like them. Please do not forget that Daylight Savings Time ends Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. We will need to set our clocks back one hour.

Please remember to check the extra clothes in your child's cubby for weather-appropriate clothing. You may also want to check the size of the clothing because some of our friends are sprouting up right before our eyes. Make sure all items of clothing including jackets and sweaters are clearly labeled. We are hanging up jackets in the room and want to make sure that every jacket or sweater has a little boy or girl to go home with daily.

Please remember to sign your child in when you bring them to school and sign them out in the evening. Also please make sure you check your child's hanging file daily for artwork, information, and Daily sheets that are often forgotten. There are days that you will see notes on the Daily sheet. These notes are reminders to our staff about something you may have told us such as the child will be picked up early or had Flu shot. We also include what the child came into the room with such as a jacket, toy or lunchbox. This helps us to remember the item in case someone else picks up your child that afternoon. We are also including how your child did for the day using our light system. Green means they had an overall good day. Yellow means they had some difficulty with listening but managed to do ok for most of the day. When a child gets put on Red, it means that they had a difficult time listening and had to be put in the Time Alone chair more than

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once in the day. Each day starts new so everyone starts on Green. If we see that there are too many times on Yellow or Red, we will find out some incentive that can be used for them to work to through school to home to improve the behavior. We want all of our friends to earn Green everyday so they can get stickers to earn

items from the Treasure Box.

Please do not hesitate to ask questions about how we are doing in the Chargers II or what other fun and exciting activities we have planned. We love to share with you what we are doing and what we are planning. We also love getting ideas from parents about possible projects or activities that we have not thought of. But remember there are

## Pintos

What a very busy time of year for everyone! The Pintos will be just as busy learning and sharing ideas. All the children have become such good friends and their imaginations have gone wild. It is so wonderful seeing them pretend with each other and even assign roles to each other. "You are the mom and I am the baby." I hear those words often. It is so important for children to pretend play for so many different reasons. The children get to practice the very important skill of negotiation when something isn't going their way. They need to act out familiar scenes from their personal lives to better understand how the world works.

In November we learn about how important our families are and how there are several different types of families. We also celebrate all the families together. We really get into learning the definition of community. I like to take this opportunity to have the children learn a little something about each of the other classrooms to get a closer connection to their school community.

We will also start practicing our writing more often as we write letters to community helpers in the neighborhood, telling them how thankful we are for the jobs they do. We will learn how the mail system works, all about the garbage trucks, and the jobs our parents do for the community. This will be a fun and exciting month learning about everyone around us and how they help each other out.

During December dedicate the entire

month to learning about children in other parts of the world. We learn about their homes, family traditions, holidays, foods and music. We get to cook food that comes from that country. We will dance to their music and even dress up in clothes that the people from that country wear. This year we have chosen to learn about Syria. There will also be a festival with booths from all the classrooms sharing the information they have gathered about the country they studied. This festival is for all the children and their families to enjoy together.

Right around the age of three is when children start to realize they are not the entire center of the universe and can have an effect on the people around them. This is a great time to learn about the world, all the different types of people, and how to accept differences through understanding. This will be a very exciting month for everyone!

January is when everyone is starting to slow down and things are getting back to normal. We will study the season of winter and all the wonders it brings. We will do this through observations when we go on nature walks, conduct science experiments with ice and water, and, of course, read several different books.

The Pintos will also learn about all the different types of Arctic animals. We will study their homes they live in, the food they eat, and why they are equipped to live in the cold Arctic weather.

Because everyone will be celebrating the New Year, so will we! The children are

times that our thinking is that of a Charger II so you might have to get our attention because we are having so much fun.

Always remember that one of the greatest gifts a teacher can receive is the acknowledgement from a parent that you have not only taught their child but that you love them as well.

slowly getting some concepts of time at this age. They understand about tomorrow, yesterday and of course, "stay home days." I will help expand their knowledge to include weeks, months and years.

**Social Play-** Now that the children have gotten to know each other, they naturally pair up and play in small groups. At this stage in their development, the children will more likely pair up in same gender groups to play. They do a lot of gender identity at this time, saying things like, "only boys can do this," most of the time the children's presumptions are incorrect. I make sure to point out all the different things that both boys and girls can do. So don't be surprised if some of those conversations start to come up. As the children start to play in small groups, they also might start excluding others from their play. My job is to help the child who is trying to join in do so successfully or find another group to join. I do this by giving them phrases like, "I can be the brother." "I can help you build that tower." "Which toy can I use?" This way you are not giving the children the obvious opportunity to say, "No." Phrases like, "Can I play?" usually come back with the no response.

Excluding at this age is not personal or as hurtful as you might think. The children are only trying out a new social skill to see how it works. They are all still really good friends; the teachers always make sure everyone is safe, both emotionally as well as physically.

**ABC's and 1,2,3's** All of the children can

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recognize the first letter in their name when they see it in the environment. Most of the children can recognize their entire name in print. So I will continue to

Fall is nearly over and winter is around the corner! We have had a great time getting to know each other, making some new friends, and continuing long established friendships. The Mustangs are a great group of kids with great imaginations!

In November we will be ready to fly into our November themes. We will start with learning about our families and homes. We will learn about each other's families and where we live. We are looking forward to the Family Feast; the children will prepare table decorations as well as place mats. If you are able to, please join us for this special occasion. In November we will also talk about different community helpers and their roles in our lives.

In December we are going to get Rockin' and Rollin' in our Music and Movement theme. Get ready to hear music coming from the Mustang Room! We will also make our own instruments for some extra fun! Later in December we will celebrate the Children Around the World Celebration. We will taste foods, listening to music, hearing the language, and

The Wrangler classroom has only been open since the first week of October and it's been great. The children have adjusted really well. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each parent for your support in helping the transition go so smoothly.

The children are also doing really well during our morning lesson time. They get involved and ask lots of questions. They also enjoy the doing the artwork related to our lesson topics. Most of this artwork can be viewed

work on these skills with all the children at group time as well as in small groups at the table.

Most of the children can count at least two objects successfully and many can count up to five objects, pointing to each

## Mustangs

seeing how children from Costa Rica live their lives from day to day. We will create and decorate a booth for the festival. To finish off 2010 we will have New Year's activities, talk about resolutions, and take a hard look at the calendar.

In January we will start off looking at the season of winter. We will have lots of fun art projects that will help the children with their fine motor skills as well as their imagination. We will also discover all about Arctic and Antarctica animals and their habitats. We will study animals from the polar bear to the penguin. We will create a fun penguin craft using a toilet paper roll. We will continue to learn our letters and sounds, and we will begin to blend some of these sounds together to bring us one step closer to reading!

Reminders to parents... Please sign your child in and out every day. If we are on the playground when you arrive, walk out and sign your child in or out. It is very important for us to know when your child has arrived and when they have left. Also, please check your child's folder everyday; this folder contains les-

son as they count. We have been working a lot on this with simple finger plays and fun sorting toys. As the children start to master these skills we will do some simple addition and subtraction.

son plans for the week, comments about your child's day, and all notes concerning accidents, boo-boos, illness, or behavior. Please talk to your child about how his or her day was and remind them to continue making good choices. For example, remind them to use their "big boy or big girl" words rather than hurting their friends or screaming or crying.

It is getting colder outside; please remember to send LABELED jackets with your child, and replace their extra clothing with more weather-appropriate clothing. Also, the flu seems to have an early start this year. Please have your child wash his or her hands (with soap) and remind him or her to cover his or her mouth when sneezing and coughing. The CDC recommends that we wash our hands with soap and warm, running water for 20 seconds- sing the "Happy Birthday" song or the ABC's twice. Also, we are teaching children to cough into the crook (elbow) of the arm and not into our hands.

Thank you for sharing your children with us! Every day is a learning day at Rocking Horse academy

## Wranglers

on our Wrangler highlight board located outside our door.

Although our lesson topics are pre-planned please feel free to let me know if there is something that you want me to focus on. We are a TEAM.

In October we had a great time learning more about the changes in the **fall season, stranger danger, fire prevention and fantasy**.

November our lesson topics focus on **families, our neighborhoods, community helpers, and giving thanks**.

December is a joyous holiday time and we like to move it with **music and movement, and family holiday traditions**. Another December tradition at Rocking Horse is to celebrate Children Around the World. This year the Wranglers will study the food, clothing,

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flags, and culture of Africa. If anyone has ever been to Africa or has any materials you would like to share with the class, we would be very grateful.

Also I wanted to let each of you that I have started my pre-assessments and that I am

looking forward to our conference in January. The children really enjoy their show and share time. Even though it's scheduled for Wednesday, if they forget they can still bring it in on Thursday or Friday. I have changed the time to the morning verses the afternoon because of early pick up times. Again thanks so much for your support and I look

forward to teaching your child, preparing them for their next level of learning over the months ahead.

Tammy Hornsby

Wrangler Lead Teacher

### *American Academy of Pediatrics*

#### **HOW TO MANAGE ALLERGIC NASAL SYMPTOMS**

- Many children are allergic to pollen and mold, both of which are found everywhere outdoors and cannot be completely avoided.
  - It's helpful to use air conditioners, where possible, to reduce exposure to pollen in both your home and your car. Molds are present in the spring and late summer, particularly around areas of decaying vegetation. Children with allergies to molds should avoid playing in piles of dead leaves in the fall.
- Dust mites congregate where food for them (human skin scales) is plentiful. They are especially numerous in upholstered furniture, bedding and rugs. Padded furnishings such as mattresses, box springs, pillows and cushions should be encased in allergen-proof, zip-up covers, which are available through catalogs and specialized retailers. Wash linens weekly, and other bedding such as blankets, every 2 to 3 weeks in hot water. Pillows should be replaced every 2 to 3 years.

## **Trotters**

Fall is here and the Trotters are ready to jump into Family and Home. We will begin the month of November talking about our families and homes. We will send home a poster for you and your Trotter to make a family photo collage. We will then share our collages with the entire class and display them in our hall. As the month of November progresses, we will take a closer look at Native Americans. We will make a Tee-Pee for our home center and wear Native American Vests decorated in native symbols. November 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> we will take our Individual School Pictures. You may want to send a change of clothes for your Trotter to wear after the pictures. On November 19 RHA will hold its annual Family Feast. Just a reminder, parents are encouraged to come and enjoy a POTLUCK meal with their child. The Trotters will work hard to decorate for the feast and we would love for all our parents to join in the festivities with us. In observation of Thanksgiving RHA will be closed on November 25 and 26.

The month of December will be full of Music and Movement. We will introduce

the five basic elements of movement - space, shape, force, flow and time. To help us learn these elements we will incorporate several activities that promote gross motor development, physical attention, and relaxation. A variety of activities will be utilized to explore and discover elements of music such as sound, rhythm and dynamics in our "environmental world" as well as our "musical world." As we move along through the month of December, we will talk about holiday traditions. If your child and family have any special traditions you would like to share with our class, please do not hesitate. The remainder of the month will be dedicated to Children around the World. The Trotters have chosen Italy as their country to study. As we indulge in Italian cuisine and learn to speak the language, we will also learn about their love for vineyards, opera, and Italian holiday traditions. At the end of our Italian adventure we will have our 4<sup>th</sup> annual grape stomp. Please be prepared to send a solid white t-shirt for your child to decorate at the grape stomp. Just as a reminder RHA will be closed December 24 and 27.

As the ball drops on 2010 the Trotters will ring in 2011 with a variety of activities. We will start off in a winter wonderland. We will count snowflakes and have a Winter Waltz. We will even test our building abilities by make igloos out of sugar cubes. As we transition into arctic animals we will explore what it is like to live in arctic areas and what an animal needs to survive there. Rocking Horse Academy will be closed for New Year's on December 31<sup>st</sup> and January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Don't forget our mornings are beginning to get cooler and we need jackets or sweaters to wear outside. (Label) You will need to change out our change of clothes in the cubbies as well. Please remember to check your behavior log every day and your cubbie every day to take home notices and art work. We will schedule our very important Parent Teacher conferences after the first of the year, and I will look forward to sharing with you your child's progress at that time.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to teach your child.

# Broncos

Now that we are well into our school year, I would like to update you on the progress of our Bronco class. I am seeing progress in every child's writing, letter and number recognition as well as fine motor skills. Broncos, who were already writing their names, are now beginning to write their names with a capital letter followed by lower case letters and some are even writing their first and last name. Those who were not writing their names are now writing them. As far as pre-reading, the children should know all five vowels and their short sounds and should show some ability to blend two to three letter sounds. We have started our word wall and are reviewing these words almost daily.

The Broncos are also showing progress in their interactions with their peers. We continue to work on using words and manners when interacting with peers as well as adults. The children are doing well using their manners with the teacher, but we still need to work on being polite to our peers.

We have begun some work on our math skills, including, counting to 100, recognizing shapes and numbers, sorting and categorizing and very basic addition. We have just scratched the surface of addition but will focus on it more in the spring. The Broncos should be able to identify a square, rectangle, triangle, circle, trapezoid, hexagon, octagon, oval and rhombus (diamond), as well as iden-

tify the number of sides each shape has. I am so excited about the months ahead. We will begin November by focusing on Community Helpers. Then with all the holidays approaching, we will study many traditions and cultures. In November we will learn about Native Americans, the Pilgrims and how Thanksgiving originated. This will be a time for your child to share his/her traditions with the class. Do not forget the Annual Family Feast hosted by Rocking Horse Academy on Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. Come and enjoy a nice Feast with your Bronco. There will also be individual portraits by Teddy Bear Portraits November 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>. With Thanksgiving around the corner, do not forget that Rocking Horse Academy will be closed the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of November. So be sure to mark your calendars for a busy couple of months.

As December begins we will turn our studies to the country of India, in preparation for our Children Around the World Festival, which will take place on Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. We will learn about India's music, traditions, culture, and compare and contrast to our own. But don't worry we will not forget about our own traditions. We will learn and sing holiday songs as well as have a Holiday Party for our class. Tentatively I would like to have the class Holiday Party on Friday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. We will decide later what type of gift to bring for the gift exchange. Once again Rocking Horse Academy will be closed Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup> and Monday, December

27<sup>th</sup> for Christmas and also Friday, December 31<sup>st</sup> and Monday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> for the New Year. I would also like to inform you that Ms. Casey will be taking personal leave from December 3<sup>rd</sup> - December 14<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, when we return in January for the New Year we will discuss time and the calendar as well as New Year traditions. Around the second or third week of January we will learn about winter as a season and how it is different in other parts of the country and world. To end the month of January we will learn about the habits, habitats, and appetites of Arctic animals and why some of these animals hibernate.

I have enjoyed getting to know each of the Broncos and their families. I am delighted to have each of them in my class and we are really coming together as a team. Once again if you have any concerns or questions, I am available to discuss them between 1:00 - 2:30. I do not mind having brief discussions in the morning as you drop off, but please remember that I am supervising children, so if you have a concern or question that will take more than a couple of minutes to discuss please call between 1 - 2:30 or set an appointment. You may call Rocking Horse Academy at 405-3700 or email me at [casey.hall@grandecom.net](mailto:casey.hall@grandecom.net). Thank you for allowing me the privilege of being a part of your child's life.

Mrs. Casey  
Bronco Lead Teacher

## Leftover Ideas

by Mealtime.org

**Morning-After French Toast:** Use leftover cranberry, pumpkin or nut bread to make warm and wonderful French toast the next morning. Top it with a spoonful or more of canned berries, peaches or crushed pineapple.

**Bread Pudding:** Cut leftover bread or rolls into one-inch cubes. Use them in your favorite recipe for bread pudding. You can also top it with maple syrup or caramel topping.

**Easy Quiche:** Fill an empty pie shell with minced leftover vegetables, canned seafood (crabmeat, shrimp and/or salmon), shredded cheese and an egg-milk mixture. Canned evaporated skim milk works great because it's as thick as cream.

**Puréeed Veggies:** Purée leftover potatoes or squash with other cooked or canned vegetables. Add a little canned evaporated skim milk and herbs; heat and serve as an elegant, colorful side dish. Or simply add puréed vegetables to canned broth for an easy, creamy soup.

# Corral Kids

**Time flies when your having fun!** We have been having such an incredible time with Corral Kids we can hardly believe that it's already time for our Winter Newsletter!!! Already this year we have worked on countless projects exploring math, science, music, art, reading, movement, dramatic play, problem-solving and community outreach. By constantly exploring new subjects and giving the students ownership in regards to group projects, we hope to stimulate *everyone's* imaginations and promote curiosity in all that we do. This winter we will also be exploring concepts dealing with community helpers, home & family, music & movement, different cultures and holiday traditions from around the world. It has been a dynamic year so far, and we look forward to what is yet to come.

**The Holidays are coming ....**  
Hays CISD will be closed from Monday November 22<sup>nd</sup> through Friday the 26<sup>th</sup> for Thanksgiving Break. Rocking Horse Academy will only be closed November 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> for the Thanksgiving holidays.

For the winter holidays in December and January Hays CISD will be closed from Monday December 20<sup>th</sup> through January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Rocking Horse Academy will only be closed on December 24<sup>th</sup>, December 27<sup>th</sup>, December 31<sup>st</sup>, and January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

During this time Corral Kids will be offering full day care from 6:30am to 6:30pm, except for the dates that we are closed. If you need full time care during the holiday season you **must** sign up in advance. You **will be** charged your \$55 weekly tuition plus an additional \$20 per day for the days you attend. If you do not need care at all confirm with us that you will not attend any day that week, and we

**will not** charge you your weekly tuition. We **must** have **advanced notice** of your intention to be able to come during the holiday or to receive your credit. More information about this service will be available on the Parent information table (located by the South gym entrance) as these dates draw closer.

## **We would love to hear from you!**

Corral Kids has a new email address [corralkidsrha@yahoo.com](mailto:corralkidsrha@yahoo.com). This is a wonderful way for you to let us know about your child's expected attendance, questions about the programs and services that we provide, or any other questions that you may have. Please feel free to drop us a note any time, and we will get back to you A.S.A.P.

## **I once was lost but now am found.....**

As we all know, it is more than easy for our elementary age children to, shall we say, misplace a few items now and again. Hence our Corral Kids' exceptionally stocked and overloaded Lost and Found table is full. Please take a moment and take a look; you just might find that Star Wars tee - shirt or Mario Cart lunch box you have been searching for all this time. Any items not claimed by November 18<sup>th</sup> will be generously donated to the local Goodwill.

## **Corral Kids Counselor Spotlight**

**Brittany Parrott** has been with our program for over a year now. She is the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade counselor. Brittany is from Ferris, TX and is currently enrolled at Texas State University. She is pursuing a degree in early childhood education through the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. When Brittany is not attending classes she enjoys spending time with her family and boy-

friend. Other activities include: shopping, being outside on pretty days, or playing catch. Brittany enjoys TV like *Jersey Shore*, *Teen Mom*, *Hoarders*, and *My First 48*. One of Brittany's favorite movies is *Hocus Pocus*. Finally a great quote that Brittany enjoys is: A smile is the lighting system of the face, the cooling system of the head, and the heating system of the heart.

**Tonya Garza** has been with Rocking Horse for over a year now. She is the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade counselor. Tonya is a local right here from Wimberley, TX. She is currently attending Austin Community College and will be attending Texas State soon. She is pursuing a degree in criminal justice. When Tonya is not attending classes she loves to go two stepping and enjoys watching sports. Her favorite TV show is *Pretty Little Liars* and her favorite movie is *Sixteen Candles*. Lastly, a quote Tonya lives by is from Mahatama Gandhi which says, "We must be the change we want to see."

## **Helping Children Succeed In School (from Parenting.org)**

Children spend one - half of their waking hours in school or school - related activities. Studies show that children whose parents are involved in their education do better in school than children whose parents are not involved. Parents' involvement in their children's education is a stronger indicator of their success in school than cultural background, socioeconomic level of the family, or natural individual level of academic capability. Two activities parents can do to help their children succeed in school are: **Set up a study time at home**, completing homework helps children learn and retain new information. It improves understanding and enhances academic perform-

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ance. Begin small and work towards the ideal setting. Some helpful suggestions: **Establish a central location, keep area quiet and free of distractions, schedule time that best fits family routines, divide study time for children who have difficulty with concentration, have your child do their homework first before other activities, communicate effectively with your child's school.** This may not be easy to do but can be extremely helpful to your child's success. **Some helpful suggestions:** When attending school activities, prepare yourself with questions or concerns that you want to address, begin communication when things are going well with your child. Give compliments to the teacher through notes or phone conversations, when there are problems, share concerns while they are small. Ask how things are going. **Teaching Values to Our Chil-**

### **dren (from Parenting.org)**

As parents, we want our children to be honest, decent, caring individuals. Simply hoping our children will naturally acquire these skills is not enough. They must see what it means to be honest, courteous and generous. After all, children learn what they live. You are the best person in your child's life to teach values and model positive behavior. Here are a few everyday situations that provide opportunities to shape your child's character: **Household chores:** If you ask your child to perform certain household duties such as taking out the trash or cleaning his or her bedroom, show your child how to do it ( the behavioral steps) and clearly explain your expectations. When children know how to complete a task and take care of their personal belongings, they learn what it means to act responsibly. **Nightly homework:** study time at home should be part of your child's weekly routine. Set clear expectations for completing homework (assignments must be

done before watching TV or playing a game). When children do what they are supposed to do, even when they don't feel like doing it, they develop character. **Meal time:** sitting around the dining table should involve much more than breaking bread. Whether you're reminiscing about youth or your child is discussing the events of the day, family "table talk" is sharing and relationship building. You'll be surprised at how many of the stories serve as metaphors about values, discipline and character. Point those lessons out to your children so they can relate true-life events to those abstract ideals. As you see, the everyday moments of life offer opportunities for us to teach children positive values. However, all the teaching in the world can be undone if our kids watch us behave in ways that contradict everything we've said. If you want your children to learn honesty and sincerity, then be truthful and act kindly. (parenting.org).

## He's Making A List

### Kyle's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Santa's Arrival & Tree Lighting Ceremony

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

**Location TBD**

Santa Arrives at Kyle City Hall at 4:30pm  
(Location TBD)

**Tree Lighting at 6:00pm**  
(Location TBD)

Join us for free children's activities, food vendors, pictures  
with Santa (offered by Kyle H-E-B PLUS, or take your own), and more!  
Fun for the whole family!