



Rocking Horse Review

Rocking Horse Academy February 2011

Winter 2011



Family Time

Are your kids bored and bickering? Are you having a hard time getting back into the swing of things after the winter holidays and school vacation, if your routine's out of whack, and your family's out of sorts, welcome to the winter blues! Don't despair! Whether you like it cold or hot, you'll love our winter wonderland of cures for cabin fever. Find indoor and outdoor winter break fun activities to keep your kids happy and busy all winter long.

On the menu:

Family Dinner Night

Make a Home Video

Watching episodes of your family's history provides a wonderful bonding experience, not to mention some great laughs. And kids love to

see themselves when they were "little"! If you've been lax about capturing your family's precious moments on film, heed these three words: Lights, camera, action!

Grab a Book and a Blanket

Reading together is one of the best ways a family can relax and shut out the rest of the world. Share your favorite reading rituals with us.

Pick a Game, Any Game

Remember: The family that plays together stays together.

Top 10 board games?

Scrabble

Sorry

Chutes & Ladders

Life

Director's Corner

Chinese Checkers

Monopoly

Candy Land

Twister

Clue

Chess

Cool Crafts

Have some fun projects to do together when you're cooped up.

Dim the lights:

Pop the popcorn, unplug the phone, and press 'play'!

Don't let the weather get the best of you. Enjoy this opportunity to spend some quality time with each other.

Stay warm,

Rebecca Eichen

Director

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Mother's /Father's Day Special

Need a great gift for mom or dad? Check out our cookbook full of yummy recipes that our staff and parents put together a few years past. It's filled with favorites and a bargain at only \$6.00



News From The Library

It's Scholastic Book Fair time! To celebrate the National Education Association's Read Across America Week as well as Dr. Seuss's birthday (March 2nd), from February 28th until March 4th Rocking Horse Academy will be hosting our 7th annual Book Fair. All profits made from the sale of books during this time are not taken in money, but actual books for the classrooms and

library. Last year we received over \$2500 in books ranging from board books for our babies to chapter books for our Corral Kids.

Help support your classrooms and teachers while adding fabulous books to your home library and quality reading time for your child/ren. And, as always, I am happy to help you choose books

for your child! Happy reading!

Maria Matts
Asst. Director
Book Diva



Ingenuity, plus courage, plus work, equals miracles.

-Bob Richards

Parent Date Nights

February 12, 2011

March 26, 2011

April 16, 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



APRIL 20th, 21st, 22nd

Teddy Bear Portraits



Tuition Due Dates

February 7th & 21st

March 7th & 21st

April 4th & 18th

Dates To Remember

February 14th– Valentine's Day

February 21st, H.C.I.S.D. early release

February 28th–March 4th—Scholastic Book Fair

March 13th– Daylight Savings begins

March 14th –18th– Spring Break

March 17th –St. Patrick's Day

March 20th– First Day of Spring

April 22nd- H.C.I.S.D.
Make up snowday

April 26-29th- TAKS Testing

Some Helpful Numbers

Kyle Pool Passes

B.O.G.O. Sale

Now through March 25, 2011

All Season Passes

(Individual and Family) are

Buy One Get One*

No coupons, no limits, no kidding

***(of equal or less in value)**

Emergency Medical Services – 911	<u>PAWS Animal Shelter – 268-1611</u>
<u>Kyle Volunteer Fire Dept. – 268-6339</u>	<u>Hays County Appraisal District – 268-2522</u>
<u>Kyle Police Department – 268-3232</u>	<u>Hays C.I.S.D – 268-2141</u>
<u>Hays Health Clinics – 268-1270</u>	<u>Kyle Community Library – 268-7411</u>

FOALS I

February themes are **Health, Dental, Black History, Heroes** and **Feelings**. Our Spanish words are February- Febrero, teeth-diente, nose-nariz, hand-nano, mouth-boca, feelings-sentimientos, I love you-te amo. Fun songs to sing are "If you're Happy and you Know It" and "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes".

Books to read this month are A Visit to the Doctor, Time for Bed and Sometimes I Like to Curl up in a Ball. We will wash our hands to stay healthy. The heart bandana will be out to play peek-a-boo. Our homework is to touch eyes, ears, nose and mouth.

Gardens, Farm, Spring, Insects and **Plants** are the themes for March. Spanish words are March-Marzo, garden-jardin, farm-rancho, plants-plantas, in-

sects-insectos, spring-primavera. For music we will sing "Itsy, Bitsy Spider" and "Old MacDonald". We will touch and smell stuffed farm animals for sensory. The books for March are Moo I'm a Cow, The Very Hungry Caterpillar, and My First Farm Book. The skill to practice at home is sitting up.

April themes are **Space, Earth, Birds** and **Recycle**. Spanish words are April-Abril, space-espacio, earth-tierra, birds-pajaros, eggs-huevos, recycle-reciclable. We will play with colored plastic eggs for manipulative and physical development. Our music is "Five Little Ducks" and "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star". Books for the month are Cool Chicks, Below Us, Under the Earth and Sea and Happy Easter. The homework is to practice

tummy time.

When you take your baby to the doctor, please bring a note stating your baby is **OK** to be at school. This may help keep our other babies and staff well. Also, please remember to bring a copy of updated immunization records after shots are given.

We strive to meet the developmental needs of your baby while caring for their physical needs. Thank you for your confidence in us.

Enjoy spring.

Foals I Staff

Mary Martha, Sonia AM

Lianet, Sherry PM

FOALS II

Our February theme are **Feelings, Hero's, Black History** and **Our Bodies**. To incorporate these themes in our lessons, we plan on looking in a mirror and talking about our feelings, making happy faces, sad faces, questioning faces. The children will learn a new song, "Put Your Finger in the Air" to learn about our body parts, our fingers, and to work on a fine motor skills of managing our fingers separately.

Every day we continue to exercise and work on our gross motor skills: pulling up, balancing, or reaching. To practice fine motor skills, we introduce new toys where the baby can put a certain shape into a hole or close/open a toy door.

Our Spanish words are: **love-amor, I love you-te amo**, like-gustar, I like-me gusta, please-por favor, and thank you-gracias. Ask your teachers for help

learning these new Spanish words and phrases.

With March winds comes Dr. Seuss' Birthday Celebration. Our themes include Farm life and animals, spring plants & growth, and bugs. We will introduce a flannel board with farm animals and a barn story book. We will sing *Old MacDonald's Had a Farm* and begin teaching the sounds animals make.

Our Spanish words are, Dad-Papa, Mom-Mama. Our new signs will be Dad, Mom, and Please.

April showers brings May flowers. We like to begin our daily stroller rides in early spring to look at the trees budding new leaves and watch the birds flying overhead. This month we focus on Birds and Eggs, Space, Planet Earth, and Recycling. We will practice our gross motor skills by pushing and pulling string

toys. In our Learning Skills center we explore cause & effect. Our *Watch the Birdy* game will help our babies acquire some balancing skills, depth perception, social interaction and trust.

Our Spanish words are, more-mas, thank you-gracias. Our new signs will be more, juice, and eat.

As always, our children are learning about themselves, their world and their abilities, and we are here to help and encourage them to reach their goals.

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions or comments, please feel free to contact any of us. We enjoy the time we spend with your baby. Thanks!

Foals 2 teachers

COLTS

How time flies when having fun. Hard to believe it is springtime again. We want to welcome our new Colt friends. We are glad to have you a part of our family. The next three months will be exciting ones.

The first month is February. We will learn about Health and My Body, My Feelings, Heroes and Black history. The first week we will learn about our bodies and how to take care of them. We will also talk about what foods are good for our body. We will practice how to brush our teeth, so please bring in a toothbrush and toothpaste for your child. We will have fun dancing to the **Hokey Pokey** and **Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes**. To help us learn our body parts, we will make handprints and footprints. We will talk about and name body parts in English and Spanish. The second week, we will learn about our feelings and how people express feelings. We will make a collage of smiles. We will sing **If You're Happy and You Know It** and read **I'm Feeling Sad**. We will work on using our gross motor skills by throwing and catching balls and playing *Ring Around the Rosey*. We will learn how to take our plates and cups to the sink. The third week, we will talk about our

heroes and create a wall of heroes. On February 11th, we will have a Valentine's Party. Please look for the sign-up sheet and the class list.

The month of March. We will discuss the Farm: Who lives on the farm? How do plants grow? The first week, we will celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday by making cats and the hats out of our footprints. We will also read some of his books that he wrote like, **Cat and the Hat** and **Green Eggs and Ham**. The second week, students will learn about the farm and the animals that live there. We will paint a horse with string and glue a tail on our horse; we will color spots on a cow. For our science center we will learn how to milk a cow using rubber gloves. We will have great fun with that experience. The third week, we will learn about gardening and how plants grow. We will also measure how much we have grown in the last year. As one of the art projects, we will make a spring tree with our handprints. The last week, we will study bugs. We will make inkblot butterflies, ladybugs out of paper plates, and other fun projects.

The final month is April. We will learn about

Space, Eggs and Birds, Our Earth and Environment and Recycling. The first and second week, we will talk about space and make our solar system in the room. We will read a book called **Space**. The third week, we will learn about eggs and birds. We will do a golf ball art project. We will also go on a bird-watching walks and count how many birds we see. The last week we will learn how to take care of our earth and how to recycle our trash. We will play a sorting game and sort paper and plastic items.

Just a few reminders:

* Please label **everything** with first and last name.

* Please bring in clean sheets and blankets every Monday.

* Please bring in a sippy cup with a name on it.

Thank you for your help and understanding.

Ms. Erica
Ms. Becca

Ms. Lydia
Ms. Jocelyn

PONIES

We hope that all of our Ponies and their families enjoyed a wonderful holiday season! We are looking forward to starting out 2011 with fun and exciting activities for our students and would like to welcome all of our new students to the room as well. We are very excited about each and every one of you and the fun we will have together. The next three months shall include lessons that will enable our Ponies to discover more about themselves and the world around them.

We will begin February by learning about health and the body. The Ponies will learn to identify the basic parts of his/her bodies such as nose, eyes, ears, leg, elbow, etc. We will also focus on hygiene; cleanliness is very important to us and we will continue to learn how to wash our hands, clean up after ourselves following mealtimes, and how to use tissues or our elbows to cover our coughs and sneezes. The second week of February we will talk about feelings such as happy, sad, and angry. Our students will learn to identify feelings based on facial expressions and we will reinforce appropriate ways to express our feelings. The week of Valentine's Day, we will talk about love and friendship

and the Ponies will host a Valentine's Day party; keep an eye out for our sign-up sheet. The last week of February, we will celebrate the culture and accomplishments of African Americans and end February by discussing heroes such as firemen, the police, and the military. All throughout February, we will continue learning our sign language (love, happy, sad, and angry) and our Spanish words (love – amor, heart – corazon, sad – tristes, happy – feliz).

March brings the fun of learning about farm animals! Our students love to repeat animal sounds and pretend to be certain animals such as pigs, horses, chickens, goats, cows, and ducks. You can do this at home as well. Your child will love to show you what they are learning! Spring is here and we will talk about the beautiful flowers, new baby animals, all kinds of bugs, and the weather. Staying active is very important to our growing children and as the weather warms up, we will enjoy some more outside time. While outside we will look at the new leaves on trees, run relay races, and play games such as 'Ring Around the Rosy'. All through March we will identify animals by sight, sound, and

name them in Spanish, for example: cow - vaca, and duck - pato.

In the month of April your Pony will learn about beautiful and colorful birds and how feathers keep them warm. We will learn the sounds they make, pretend to fly, and look for birds while we are outside. We will talk about outer space and look at pictures of stars and planets through a make believe telescope. We will also learn how astronauts visit space and we'll play with toy rocket and spaceships. Finally, the Ponies will learn about our environment and how we can take care of it by throwing away our trash and recycling.

Parents, as the weather warms up, please remember to check your Pony's cubby to make sure s/he has proper attire and sizes. And as always, please label everything you bring to class, especially your Pony's cups, clothes, and linens to avoid confusion and potential lost items.

Thank you so much for all of your help and we hope you enjoy a wonderful spring!

Ms. Denise
Ms. Cici

Ms. Lucy

The Chargers 1 are ready to start off the new year with a bang! We have so many activities and fun learning experiences in store for our class. Our goals are to enhance listening skills, social skills, and language development all while having fun along the way! We always teach and encourage toddlers to take turns, share and make choices for themselves. We provide a consistent schedule to help with the developmental process of learning new ideas, concepts and having a routine so the children know what to expect.

We begin to introduce children to the potty and keep them on a frequent potty schedule. We make sure that all children are sitting on the potty even when they do not need to go. This helps them become familiar with potty training and its steps. Children are naturally curious, so when they see the rest of their friends sitting down on the potty, they will be comfortable and want to do the same! We always teach the children to wash their hands after going potty. This helps them learn about personal hygiene and staying healthy.

Our themes for **February** will be **Health and My Body**. We will learn how to keep our bodies healthy with healthful food, and exercise. Why it's important to wash our hands? What are our bones, and

what do they look like? We will also learn about **Our Feelings**. How do you feel? We will learn about our different emotions, and expressing our feelings verbally and non-verbally.

We will focus on the Letters: F-I

Colors: Red and Pink

Shapes: Heart and Square

Books we will read: "Kiss Kiss", "Say Please", "Head to Toe"

Our themes for **March** will be **Farm, Spring, Plants, Gardening, and Insects/ Spiders**. We will discuss different farm animals and their importance. What's the weather like in spring? How do plants grow? Bugs, where do they live? What do they eat?

We will focus on the letter: J-N

Colors: Green and Yellow

Shapes: Rectangle and Circle

Books we will read: "On the Farm", "Wow, it's a Cow", "You Can Fly Bumble-bee", "Beetle Bop"

Our themes for **April** will be **Space, Birds and Eggs, and Our Environment**. We will learn about the sun, the moon, and the stars. What are the planets in our solar system? What animals lay eggs? Why do birds have feathers? We will discuss how to keep our Earth safe. What is recycling? What can we recycle? Why are

trees important to our Earth?

We will focus on the letter: O-R

Colors: Orange and Purple

Shapes: Circle and Triangle

Books we will read: "Chickens Aren't the Only Ones", "That's Not Fair, Hare", "What is the Sun?"

Our **Parent Board** is located outside of our door. It will have our lesson plans, monthly newsletter, lunch menu and any other important information parents should know.

Please don't forget to check your child's cubby for any dirty clothes or make sure that they have an extra change of clothes in case of an accident. Don't forget to pick up art work as well.

Parents, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to discuss any issues with us. We want to have good communication with our parents! Is there something we need to know? Is there something we need to tell you? Our doors are always open so please come and talk to us if you need to!

Ms. Laurie

Ms. Monica

Ms. Brittany



Q: What did the inventor of the door-knocker win?

A: The no-bell prize.

Dry erase boards are handy, but there is one problem — the markers. They're smelly, expensive and easily lost. Well good news, you can ditch them all together and use crayons instead. Any old crayon will work and grip the board instead of sliding around, helping children form letters easier. You can use a microfiber cloth to remove their marks from your board, though sometimes you'll need a spray of dry erase board cleaner.

Permanent Marker on Carpet:

Dab a washcloth soaked in rubbing alcohol onto the marker stain. Do not rub it - just blot it - rotating the cloth to a clean spot every time.

The children in the Chargers II class have begun learning about Arctic animals including polar bears and penguins. Several nonfiction books have been read and discussed during circle time about where they live and how they survive. The children have been working on arts and crafts projects which focus on both animals. One of their favorite activities to do when going to the gym, cafeteria or outside is to try to walk like a penguin. Several of the children have mastered the skill and enjoy showing off this new found talent. They have also learned a new song about Five Little Penguins which they are learning to count using the Flannel board.

The children are also focusing on the winter theme using Weather Bear to help them determine if they are dressed appropriately for the day. They love to volunteer to look out of the window to announce to the rest of the Chargers II what the weather looks like outside. Weather Bear is a part of the morning circle routine where the children learn about the Days of the Week, Months of the Year, and the seasons. Also during circle time the children are working on their counting and number recognition skills.

Show and Tell has been introduced with a new topic or item to be brought in each Monday. The Show and Tell theme will now focus on the letters of the alphabet. The first week the letters were A and B. Each week two new letters will be introduced with letter cards posted on the wall and activities and books used to enhance the learning about the new letters. One book that many of the children love because of the repetitiveness of the letters is *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom ABC*. The children are often able to repeat many of the phrases from the book especially when the letters tumble out of the coconut tree. Many of the children have been singing the Alphabet Song as we walk down the hall, but one of our target skills is letter recognition. We are working to have them able to identify the letters using common ob-

jects or recognizing them on various posters on the wall and in activities. Music and movement activities have been continued into January especially with the cold weather and the children not being able to go outside. They have been introduced to Cat Paws where they are learning more about following directions, body control and coordination as well as various gross motor movements. They have been practicing their movements to several songs including *Move My Feet*, *Say Your Name*, *Cat Paws*, *How to Make Popcorn* and *Thank You*. On other occasions you may see the children along with Mrs. Patti and Mrs. Amber doing strange movements. These are not so strange to the children when *Tootie Tot* is being played.

The children love the opportunity to try new treats especially those that they have had a hand in making. They enjoyed tasting the homemade applesauce and hot apple cider but were very excited when they were able to decorate their own Gingerbread houses (graham crackers) especially when they could eat the decorations. Unfortunately, some did collapse due to the weight of the decorations but all were pleased with the hands on fun. The children will have a hand at making homemade butter and Kick the Can Ice Cream.

In February, the children will focus on Health and My Body-Dental Health. The children will work on activities about taking care of their teeth especially eating healthy and drinking milk. They will also focus on what are foods that are good for their teeth and body learning about the food pyramid. This will prepare us for March when they will have the opportunity to learn about growing plants and gardening.

We continue to work each month on being nice to our friends and in February we will turn our attention to Feelings. The focus will be working on being nice to the friends in our classroom as well as to others we meet. We constantly remind the children about being nice to our friends by sharing, saying "I'm

Sorry," when we have hurt someone and helping someone. Many of our Chargers II knows about being a good friend but some do have a tendency to let it slip their mind especially when a new toy or book is introduced.

The children will learn about Black History month in February and discover about Heroes. This will be the time for them to learn that a hero does not have to be famous but has done something special for others. My favorite heroes are the athletes that I coached when I worked with Special Olympics in Louisiana. They are not always fast or strong but have accomplished something that most people would not think they could ever achieve.

In March, the children will begin to focus on spring time activities. The focus will be on plants those which are grown on a farm and in our own garden. The children will have the opportunity to watch a bean grow along with other plants in the classroom. Sequencing events will be a focus in March as well as April, when the topic of birds and eggs will be introduced. During these two months the children will learn more about nature and investigate insects and spiders. The class spider (he is not real but "lives" in the observation box) has been a source of fun for the students to try to find him amongst the "grass." Their interest in the classroom set of bugs will lead to the opportunity to find real ones around the school.

We will focus on the Earth and Environment as well as recycling in April. The children already practice recycling in the classroom by reusing paper to practice their coloring and handwriting skills on. They continue to learn about not wasting water or paper products when they wash their hands and even during potty training by flushing the toilet only once.

Space has always been a fun topic for children with the opportunity to learn about the stars, moon and the planets. The children will be able to learn more about how the rotation of the Earth af-

(Continued on page 7)

fects our season and build the Solar System. Along with learning about space, there will be the opportunity to learn about rockets and flight making their own paper airplanes.

During April, we will celebrate the Week of the Young Child. In the Chargers II classroom, the young child is celebrated daily. We recognize the uniqueness of each child during this often rough period of their lives. They are constantly learning about themselves and others through social interaction, hands on activities, dramatic play and the host of other opportunities. Each day presents a new learning challenge and opportunity to grow physically, cognitively, and socially. More information will be sent out as we move closer to this special time.

As most of you have noticed when you walk into the Chargers II classroom, you see a sign that our computer is not working. We have been using a CPU that run Windows 98 (most of our CD-ROMS are run on the Windows 98 system) but sadly the system has died. If you know of someone who has a working unit or someone who could repair the unit the children would greatly appreciate it. Our friends in the Chargers I also love to have access to the computer when they are in our room in the morning. Please let us know if you know of someone who could help.

REMINDERS It would be very helpful if every child had a bag that is left in the cubby until Friday. The bag can be a canvas bag or grocery store recycle bags. The afternoon staff is able to have the children ready to go on Fridays by packing the bedding, artwork, notes and other cubby items that should go home on the weekends.

We are continuing to work on good eating habits which include using a fork or spoon for most foods. There are still some of our children who prefer using their hands to eat a majority of their food. We understand that some do use fingers to push food onto the fork or spoon but there are others who hold the

utensil in one hand and pick up the food with the other.

Another area we are working on with the children is having them sit down at meals and during some table activities. This is a difficult area for some because they are so used to moving around but especially at snack and lunch we need them to sit in a chair on their bottoms. We spend time with each child reminding him/her to sit on his/her bottom with his/her feet on the floor so he/she can focus on his/her food. There have been numerous occasions when food ends up on the floor because someone was not sitting down and knocks his/her plate on the floor. This has been a challenge for us, but we will continue to remind the children to sit on their chair properly.

Please mark all items sent to school including clothing, bedding and any toys. We would prefer that the children not bring toys from home unless the toy is for Show and Tell or a special requested item. We have noticed that some children have difficulty with keeping up with items especially small cars. We understand that there are times when a child feels comforted by bringing something with them from home especially when a child is new to the class or for Transition. We will work with each child on an individual basis in this case. We want each child to feel safe and secure when they walk in the door and through out the day. Children may have a pillow for nap. We often find that they are able to settle in better for nap with something they can hold onto.

We are working on the children respecting the classroom items such as the books, puzzles and other toys. There have been several instances where some books have to be removed from the rack or the table center boxes because they are being torn or misused. We are not able to replace some of these items so others lose out of the opportunity to "read" that particular book. We have been able to repair some but others are beyond repair. Please help us to teach our children to respect these items so we may keep them around for a long

time.

Potty training has been continuing. We will continue to check with you on the progress of your child at home and report to you our successes at school. We have had several who have begun to potty and are staying dry between their times going to the potty. We cannot forget that colder weather will often cause them to go more or running around either in the gym or outside. We are doing our best to keep each child dry to reduce the use of pull-ups. Some days are better than others.

We continue to work on appropriate behaviors in the room and other areas of the school. Each day in the life of a 2.5 year old/Charger II presents new and interesting challenges. Some use their words to have their needs and wants met while others are still using crying, tantrums, taking things from others and occasionally hitting and biting. We are still using time alone especially for those who hit or bite. The STOP LIGHT is still in use with the color written at the bottom of the Daily Sheet. We are consistently talking to the children about how to behave with our friends and if something happens we speak to them about the behavior they just displayed. There are times when we realize that the children see others doing the not so nice behavior and they begin to display it. We work to keep this from happening but sometimes it just doesn't. We do a lot of praising of our Chargers II who demonstrate good behavior. Those are usually the ones whose sticker charts are filled up quickly.

Just a reminder that our children (yes, we call them ours during the day) are learning about being individuals-they are becoming independent, learning to do things on their own with out our help, discovering more of their world, communicating, finding out what they can do before they get in trouble, explore their environment, but all and all they are children with loving hearts.

Chargers II Teachers

I will be welcoming some new friends into the Pinto's room. The children will help the newcomers to the room learn the classroom rules and routines. In doing this the children gain self-esteem and a sense of community. The next few months will be packed full of fun and learning. I have been having so much fun with all the children. They learn so quickly that it is sometimes hard to keep up. At the age of three those cooperative two year olds start turning into independent three year olds and sometimes becoming a bit hardheaded about certain routines. They start to learn that they can control some situations, like toileting and eating, so they practice that power in those areas by refusing to cooperate. This is very natural and important for them to learn the natural consequences of not going potty or refusing to eat. Our job as caregivers is to let them experience those consequences in a safe way.

February

February is a very exciting month. I will take this opportunity to work on handwriting, letter recognition and pre-reading skills while they write notes to each other and put them into their mailboxes. Not only do we have a chance to appreciate our friendships on Valentine's Day, but we will also learn appropriate ways to express our feelings and learn new vocabulary at the same time. In expanding their vocabulary of feelings the children are better at problem-solving with words instead of their bodies. Keeping our bodies healthy is very important. We do this several different ways: eating healthfully, exercising, and getting check-ups. We will study which foods are healthful foods and which foods just taste good but don't help our

bodies grow. We will also learn about the journey our food takes in our bodies when we eat it. We will practice different kinds of exercises, showing the children how fun this can be. To help the children understand how important check-ups are, we will talk about and pretend play doctoring and dentistry.

March

What a perfect time of year to learn about how plants grow and what they need to grow. The best way to learn about plants, of course, is to grow some of our own. We will experiment by planting seeds in different ways and places to see how well they do in each environment. For example, planting seeds in water versus soil, planting seeds in shade versus the sunlight and finding out which combination works best to grow our seeds. Learning about plants is a great way to start learning about why farmers are so important to us and where our food really comes from. When taking such a close look at plants, we will discover insects and the role they play in helping plants grow. We will catch insects outside, bring them into the classroom to observe and find out some fun facts. I will also order some caterpillars so that the children can learn about metamorphosis.

April

In April we are going to talk about where our earth is in space and learn about the stars that we see at night and the biggest star we see during the day. While studying about earth, it is very important to understand the importance of taking care of our earth. We will be picking up trash outside, learning how to recycle, and how to reuse different materials.

Around Easter time the children see and

even decorate eggs at home, so I will take this opportunity to teach the children about birds and eggs and their life cycle. Natural science is always fun to learn about. Also in April we will celebrate how important the education of our young children is by having a full week of just plain fun! This week of fun is nationally celebrated to help educate about the importance of quality child-care and how important our children are. I will put up a sign-up sheet so that the parents can come join in all the fun.

Social Development

I will concentrate on teaching the children how to enter a group that is already engaged in play. I will do this by giving them some short phrases to use as well as modeling by being a part of their play. Some of those phrases are: "Which blocks may I use?" "I can be the mommy." Another important social skill to learn is how to invite someone else to play with you. I will use the same strategies for this as well. Some common phrases that I use are: "Do you want to build blocks?" "I need help fixing dinner." "Do you want to play chase?"

ABC'S and 123'S

During this time of the year, I have already done an assessment on each of the children. This will give each family a set of strengths and a set of goals to continue working on. Each child develops at his/her own rate, so I will take where each child is and build on those skills. Some of the skills that the children work on are letter recognition, starting to draw familiar shapes like faces, circles and the letters in their name. I will also focus on sorting objects by different aspects (size, shape, color) as well as counting objects.

QUICK AND EASY DESSERT

- 1 sm. pkg. fudge strip cookies
- 1 sm. box instant vanilla pudding
- 1 c. milk
- 8 oz. container Cool Whip

Mix milk and pudding. Crumble cookies. Mix pudding, cookies and Cool Whip; refrigerate.

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MUSTANGS

The Mustangs have had a great start to 2011! We have been working on our letters, numbers, counting to 30, and writing our names. Everyone has been doing a fantastic job! Over the next three months, we will continue learning these skills and add some more skills with fun themes.

In February the first theme we will start with will be our **Feelings**. We will talk about the best way to express our feelings as well as continue to reinforce sharing. We will read a book called The Way I Feel by Janan Cain. We will then move on to our **Heroes/African American History Theme**. We will remember people who influenced great changes in America from Martin Luther King Jr. to Rosa Parks. Later in February we will talk about **Health and Our Bodies**. We will learn how to keep our bodies healthy, like washing our

hands and eating nutritious foods. We will look at teeth and the right way to brush. During the month of February we will also sort and graph using Valentine's hearts.

March brings the first day of spring and the Mustang classroom will be learning about plants and animals. Our first theme will be **Farm Life**. We will learn all about different farm animals and their babies' names. We will also talk about life on a farm for a farmer and their family. The next theme will be **BUGS!** We will take a close look at all types of insects. Our last theme of the month will be **Plants**. We will be growing our own plants and naming the parts. We will be measuring our plants and using comparing words like bigger and smaller, taller and shorter. During the month of March we will be focusing on life cycles for Science and

Discovery.

In April, our first theme will be **Eggs and Birds**. We will study different kinds of birds, their eggs, and their nests. The next theme for April will be **Space**. We will talk about planets, the sun and their sizes. As a class we will chart the planets from biggest to smallest. We will then move on to our theme **Our Earth and Recycling**. We will talk about how important our earth is and what recycling does. We will look around our classroom for items that can be recycled and talk about items in our homes we can include.

These next few months are full of fun themes that will have the kids learning with great lessons; it will be an exciting beginning to 2011!

WRANGLERS

Where did January go so fast? It seemed like just yesterday we were all saying Happy New Year!

With the start of this new year came new beginnings for our Wrangler classroom. First our recess time was adjusted to allow for an extension of our morning lesson, which has worked out great. Next Ms Erika has joined me as a full time assistant. Yea! Finally we welcomed several new friends into our classroom: Grayson and Andrew from the Mustangs, and Josephine, Chloe and Noah from the Pintos. The children have adapted really well to the change. I'd like to give a special thanks to all of our parents for helping to make this a smooth transition. I would also like to give an overview of our classroom. Our Wrangler room is unique and different because Ms Erika and I strive to stimulate the natural curiosity of each individual child. The goal of our lessons is to get them involved with open-ended questions and actual hands-on experiences. Our environment is neat and organized, which promotes respect and responsibility from the teachers and the children. Our learning centers are clearly defined

and inviting. Our shelves are labeled with both pictures and words to enhance pre-reading skills. Also, we take care in making sure each shelf is fully stocked with a variety of activities, which help eliminate negative behavior. As teachers, we also consistently model the behaviors we expect from each child. We teach them to be good example-setters at school and at home.

We're looking forward to the next three months. It will be a wonderful time of learning. February is Dental Health month. We will talk about ways to keep our teeth clean and strong. We will also discuss the importance of regular dental check-ups as well as not eating too much junk food, which is not good for our teeth and our bodies. During this month, we also celebrate Black History. We will learn about the contributions made to our country by African Americans. I will introduce fact sheets and hand-outs for us to explore. We will do a matching game linking inventions to the inventor. Another theme during the month of February we discuss is *feelings*. *We want each child to know that his/her feelings are important, and we will talk*

about ways to better express disappointments and anger. Next we will get into health and body. We will discuss nutritious meals and snacks. Healthy foods provide energy and help us grow. We want to encourage healthful eating habits and exercise routines. During this lesson we will also review proper hand washing techniques.

Next we will spring forward into March where we will explore different kinds of farm animals. We will learn how to care for them as well as how they provide nutritious foods to help us grow. We will do a fun science activity called name that animal; the children will hear the sound from the tape player and be asked to name the animal matching that sound. March is also the month we talk about spring plants, growth and gardening. Our discussion will include the changes in the weather, the days becoming longer, the nights shorter and the grass turning green. We will plant seeds in personal flower pots, then chart their size, shape and color. The month will close with spiders and insects. We will learn that spiders are not insects and

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why. We will also create a spaghetti spider web and learn lots of spider songs and finger plays. Our insect portion will be just as exciting. Get ready parents. We will be asking for live show and share examples, in secure containers, of course.

During our final month of the quarter, which is April, we will learn about space, birds, eggs, our earth, our environment and recycling. The children will learn the value of reusing our earth's resources. During this week, we will again ask for parent participation; a recycling bin will be set up in our classroom for yourself and your child to place items that we

can reuse to create art projects and center activities. We will celebrate "The Week of the Young Child" with reading books and learning about the ways we are all alike and how we are all different.

With only a few months before graduation, along with our weekly topics, we will be doing more handwriting practice, letter and number recognition, and pre-reading activities. I will be communicating with the Trotters and Broncos teachers to assure that each child is properly prepared for their next level of learning. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

Parents although we have planned topics, please let us know if there are spe-

cific areas that you would like for us to explore with the children. Also you are more than welcome to come in and share things with our class during our lesson time or other times throughout the day. We're Partners! Reminders... please sign your child in and out each day. Please provide a fresh water bottle daily. Please check your child's folder and cubby daily. It's the season for weather changes: cold in the morning and warm in the afternoons. It's helpful to have a variety of changes of clothes in the cubby to help us stay comfortable.

Sincerely,

Tammy Hornsby

Wrangler Lead Teacher

TROTTERS

How do I love thee? Let me count.....

The Trotters are counting their way through the month of February. 0-30 is our goal and we are more than half way there. We will not only count from memory but recognize these numbers as well. Another exciting topic we will talk about is feelings. We will learn to identify and express our feelings properly. Some of the books we will read include, *Guess How Much I Love You*; *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*; and *The Pigeon Has Feelings Too*. Our attention will then turn to Heroes and African American History. We will start off with Jackie Robinson and move into inventors such as Madame C.J. Walker and George Washington Carver. As we learn of the great heroes in African American History, we will learn of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his crusade against discrimination. As we near the end of February, our attention will turn to Health and Our Body. We will learn how to keep our bodies healthy

and discuss the food pyramid. A Healthful Food Collage with help remind us of things we should put in our bodies. We will also learn the difference between a fruit and vegetable.

March brings the first day of spring, so it would only be fitting we'd learn about plants and things that grow. Farm-life and animals will be the first topics we cover in the month of March. Our block center will become a farm complete with animals and barn. Our sensory table will turn into a milking station where the Trotters will learn how to milk a cow. As we move into spring plants, our learning will move outdoors. The Trotters will plant their very own vegetable garden. We will learn to till, water, and prep the soil, along with planting the seeds and caring for the plants. When the time comes to reap what we have sown, we will celebrate with a party. Bugs will wind down the month of March. As we pick up our magnifying glasses and head outside, we will become bug hunters in

search of the greatest insects of all.

Which came first--the chicken or the egg? Only five year old minds have the answer. As we kick off the month of April, we start with birds and eggs. We will ask this age old question and see what answers we get. Look for them to be on display in the Trotter Hall. Space and Earth will be our focus during the middle of the month. We will learn about the planets and how the earth rotates. We will also experiment with gravity and see if we can defy it. As April comes to a close we will discuss recycling. Taking on a popular motto, "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" we will try our hand at making our own recycled paper. Throughout the entire month of April we will be collecting aluminum cans and other items to recycle.

Now that spring time is quickly approaching don't forget to rotate your extra clothes to accommodate the weather.

DID YOU KNOW?

February 1865 is the only month in recorded history not to have a full moon.

I cannot believe how quickly time is passing. We are more than halfway through our school year, and I am amazed at the change/growth I have seen in your children. We have completed basic short sound phonics for the entire alphabet, and we are now working on letter combinations such as, th, sh, ch, ck, st, etc... As always we continue to add to our list of sight words. I will be sending home updated copies of our sight words. Working on these at home will help the students recognize them more efficiently. It is also effective to help your child identify these words in books you are reading as this helps them develop pre-reading skills. We are working almost daily on group reading and writing of sentences as well as sounding out to spell simple words, such as cat or sit. I am so excited about the next few months and the progress the children will be making.

We have an exciting 3 months approaching. In February we will be studying Health and the Body as well as Dental Health. We are hoping to have a dental specialist come to talk with the class about appropriate brushing and flossing habits. We will also be studying Feelings and appropriate ways to share our feelings. Following, Body and Dental Health we will study Heroes and Black History Month. This is an interesting topic to

broach with the students as most of them do not identify with race. We will approach this topic by introducing the children to some African American historical figures, such as Martin Luther King. We are also having a Valentine Party Friday the 11th. Each child needs to bring in a shoe box to decorate; please begin bringing these as soon as possible (extras are always welcome).

In March I am pleased to announce that we will study plants and growth. We will be planting vegetables and other plants in pots in the classroom that we will take care of and observe growth. Once the plants have developed a strong root system, we will plant them in the garden on the playground. The children will prep. the soil, plant the vegetables, tend to them and when ready we will eat them. We will also study farms and farm animals in March as well as insects and spiders. What a fun month!

April will be packed full of wonderful themes and activities. We will begin the month with Eggs and Birds, followed by Space, Our Earth and Environment. During our Space theme we will build a model of our solar system and discuss the importance of our sun. Recycle, Reduce and Reuse will be our motto for the month of April, as we discuss what and how to recycle as well as what it means to conserve vs. to waste. To give the

students a better understanding of recycling we will experiment with making recycled paper. We will end the month with Week of the Young Child. Sometime in April we will also take a field trip. I will be asking for parent chaperones when the time is near. Do not worry, I will give you ample notice. More information to come.

For the next few months my academic goals for the Bronco classroom are to improve reading readiness in each child, build vocabulary, add and subtract single digits, and introduce coins and their monetary values. My social goals are to improve on manners and continue encouraging play with multiple classmates, as well as modeling and role playing appropriate ways to voice our feeling, needs and wants.

Parents, I would like to thank you all for your support as we work to give your children the best possible preparation for kindergarten next year. I have truly enjoyed working with your children and look forward to spending more time with them as they grow.

Thank you,
Mrs. Casey

There is a seven letter word in the English language that contains ten words without rearranging any of its letters, 'therein': the, there, he, in, rein, her, here, ere, therein, herein.

"Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that a son of a mine worker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farm workers can become the president..."

-Nelson Mandela



CORRAL KIDS NEWSLETTER

Time flies when you're having fun! We have been having such an incredible time with Corral Kids, we can hardly believe that it's already time for our Spring 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 with regards to group projects, we hope to stimulate *everyone's* imaginations and promote curiosity in all that we do. This spring we will also be exploring concepts dealing with community helpers, home & family, music & movement, different cultures and traditions from around the world. It has been a dynamic year so far, and we look forward to what is yet to come.

HAYS Schedule

Hays CISD has an **early release Monday February 21st**. Due to our Corral Kid's staff's personal school schedule, **we can NOT** staff for early pick-up. You are welcome to bring your child to RHA at 2:40, but we can NOT accept after school students any earlier. We do not have anyone available to work any earlier than our regularly scheduled hours. Perhaps you can enjoy a lunch with your child and then bring him/her back to us for the afternoon.

Spring Break: Hays CISD will be closed Monday, March 14th through Friday March 18th

Good Friday April 22nd is a snow-make-up day for the Hays CISD.

During Spring Break, Corral Kids will be offering full day care from 6:30am to 6:30pm. If you need full

time care during Spring Break, **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. 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 February 28th will be generously donated to the local Goodwill.

Teaching Values to Our Children (from Parenting.org)

As parents, we want our children to be honest, decent, caring individu-

als. 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).

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Corral Kids Counselor Spotlight

Andrea Ochoa has been with our program for over a year now. She is the kindergarten counselor. Andrea is from Houston, TX and is currently enrolled at Texas State University. She is pursuing a degree in Business Management. When Andrea is not attending classes, she enjoys spending time with her friends and going to the movies. Andrea enjoys TV like *Biggest Loser*, *So You Think You Can Dance* and *America's Got Talent*. Some of Andrea's favorite movies are *Toy Story*, *Monsters Inc*, *How to Lose a Guy in Ten Days* and the Disney Classics. Finally a great quote that Andrea enjoys is: "Everything happens for a reason" **Ale Borrego** has been with Rocking Horse since January 2009. She is the 1st grade counselor. Ale is from Brownsville, TX. She is currently attending Texas State University. She is pursuing a degree in

psychology and child development. When Ale is not attending classes, she loves to hang out with friends, cook, and read. Her favorite TV shows are *Glee* and *The Office* and her favorite movies are the Disney classics. Lastly, a quote Ale lives by is, "Love the life you lead, lead the life you love."

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 informa-

tion. It improves understanding and enhances academic performance. 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.

Q is the only letter in the alphabet that does not appear in the name of any state of the United States.

RIDDLE ME THIS:

Three people check into a hotel. They pay \$30 to the manager and go to their room. The manager suddenly remembers that the room rate is \$25 and gives \$5 to the bellboy to return to the people. On the way to the room the bellboy reasons that \$5 would be difficult to share among three people so he pockets \$2 and gives \$1 to each person. Now each person paid \$10 and got back \$1. So they paid \$9 each, totaling \$27. The bellboy has \$2, totaling \$29. Where is the missing \$1?

We have to be careful what we are adding together. Originally, they paid \$30, they each received back \$1, thus they now have only paid \$27. Of this \$27, \$25 went to the manager and \$2 went to the bellboy.

ANSWER: