



# ROCKING HORSE REVIEW

February 2012

Editor-In-Chief

Linda Ashness



## STOP! Don't Miss Out!

### Inside this issue:

Foals I & II	2
Colts	3
Ponies	4
Charger II	5
Charger I	6
Pinto	7
Wrangler	8
Mustang	9
Trotter	10
Bronco	11
Corral Kids	12 13



It's Scholastic Book Fair time! From February 27th until March 3rd Rocking Horse Academy will be hosting our 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. Help support your classrooms and teachers while adding fabulous books to your home library and quality reading time for your kiddos.

Happy reading!

### Tuition Due Dates

February 6th & 20th

**March 5th & 19th**

**April 2nd & 16th, 30th**

### Dates To Remember

*February 14th– Valentine's Day*

February 20th . C.I.S.D. closed

February 27th-March 3rd  
Scholastic Book Fair

March 1st– Daylight Savings begins

March 12th -16th– Spring Break

March 17th –St. Patrick's Day

March 20th– First Day of Spring

April 3rd CPR/First Aid 6:30

April 9th H.C.I.S.D.  
Student Holiday

### Parent Date Nights

February 11, 2012  
March 24 2012  
April 21, 2012

**6:30 pm til Midnight**

**Academy Child \$30/\$15 second child**  
**Non Academy Child \$35/\$20 second child**  
**Employee Child \$15/\$5 second child**



### Teddy Bear Portraits

APRIL 6th, CK, Staff, Graduates

APRIL 25th, 26th, 27th , 0-4 yrs.

(Back in Time for Mother's Day)



### Mixedbag Designs Fundraiser

April 9th through 20th

Orders due back by April 23rd



# FOALS I

February themes are *Health, Dental, Black History, Heroes and Feelings*. Our Spanish words are *February- Febrero, teeth-diente, nose-nariz, hand-mano, 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 and You Are My Sunshine*. 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, Spiders and Plants* are the themes for March. Spanish words are *March-*

*Marzo, garden-jardin, farm-rancho, plants-plantas, insects-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*

*kle Little Star*". Books for the month are *Hatch, 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 release note to return to 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

# FOALS II

Our February themes are *Feelings, Hero's, Health and Body, Black History and Our Bodies*. To incorporate these themes in our lessons, we plan on looking in 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 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 Insects*. 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 bring 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, Environment, 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 Bird* 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 Rosie*. 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 pro-

jects.

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. Lydia  
Ms. Jocelyn  
Ms. Theresa



# PONIES

We hope that all of our Ponies and their families enjoyed a wonderful holiday season! 2012 has started with a bang and we are ready to breeze through to spring. We are very excited about each and every one of you and the fun we will have together. The next three months will be bursting with activities that will enable our Ponies to discover more about themselves and the world around them. As always, we will continue learning our sign language and our Spanish words.

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 (nariz)*, *eyes (ojos)*, *hands (manos)*, *knees (rodillas)*, 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 (feliz)* and *sad (triste)*. 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*

(*amor*) and *friendship (amistad)*. 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*.

March brings the fun of learning about farm animals! Our students love to make animal sounds while pretending to be *chickens (pollos)*, *cows (vacas)*, *ducks (patos)*, etc. 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 (*flores*), 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 Rosie*'. Our Circle Time books will include *Piglet and Mama*, *Wow, it's a Cow*, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, and *10 Busy Buzzy Bugs*.

In the month of April your Pony will learn about beautiful and colorful

*birds (pajaros)* 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 (estrellas)* and *planets (planetas)* through a make believe telescope. We will also learn how astronauts visit space and we'll play with toy rockets and spaceships. Finally, the Ponies will learn about our environment and how we can take care of it with the Three R's- Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

Parents, as the weather warms up, please remember to switch out the spare clothes in your child's cubby. This time of year is unpredictable so it may be a good idea to stock different types of spare clothes for any type of weather. 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!

The Pony Teachers





# CHARGERS I

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 while having plenty of fun along the way! We teach and encourage toddlers to take turns, share and make choices for themselves. We provide a consistent schedule and routine to make learning new ideas and concepts easier.

We begin to introduce children to the potty and keep them on a frequent potty schedule. We continue to encourage the children to sit on the potty and help them become familiar with the idea of potty training and make steps towards it. Children are naturally curious so when they see the rest of their friends sitting down on the potty, usually they want to do the same! We also continue to reinforce hand washing and help them learn about personal hygiene.

Our themes for February will be *Being*

*Healthy and My Body*. We will learn how to keep our bodies healthy with nutritious food and exercise. We will also learn about our feelings and emotions and how we can best express them verbally and non verbally. In February we will focus on: *Letters: I-N Colors: Red and Pink Shapes: Heart and Square, Books: Kiss Kiss, Say Please, and Head to Toe.*

Our themes for March will be *Farm Life, Spring, Plants/Gardening and Insects/Spiders*. We will learn about different farm animals and their sounds, spring weather and plants, and different bugs including what bugs eat and where they live! In March we will focus on: *Letters: O-T, Colors: Green and Yellow, Shapes: Rectangle and Circle, Books: On the Farm, Wow, It's a Cow!, You Can Fly Bumblebee, and Beetle Bop*

Our themes for April will be *Space, Birds and Eggs, and Our Environment*. We will talk about the sun, moon, stars, and the planets in our solar system. We will also talk about what

animals lay eggs and why birds have feathers. After that our next unit will include lessons on how to keep our earth clean and why recycling is helpful and important! In April we will focus on: *Letters: U-Z, Colors: Orange and Purple, Shape: Diamond and Triangle*

*Books: Chickens Aren't The Only Ones, That's Not Fair, Hare!, and What is the Sun?*

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! J Our door is always open so please come and talk to us if you need to!

Happy Spring!  
Miss Laurie  
Miss Gabby  
Miss Brittany



# CHARGERS II

We hope that everyone had a happy holiday season. The Chargers 2 class has many fun and great activities planned for 2012! We are so proud of all of our potty trainees. It seems like everyone is catching on and quickly saying goodbye to pull-ups and diapers. This is a big accomplishment for our classroom, and we are extremely motivated and determined to work your child on this huge developmental milestone. We would also like to thank all of our parents for working with your child at home as well. It definitely helps speed up the process and keeps the potty routine consistent.

For the month of February, we will dive right in and learn about our *Health and Body*. Our class will have the opportunity to learn about healthful and non-healthful foods and have some fun introducing and trying some new vegetables and fruits. *Exercising* as well as eating healthfully helps us stay healthy and happy, so we will also be learning different exercises to keep our hearts pumping. The Chargers 2 teachers will also be teaching and demonstrating the proper hand washing technique to help keep our bodies safe from germs and sickness. February is *also Dental Health and Black History Month*. The Chargers will learn about going to the dentist and how a dentist helps keep our pearly whites healthy. The proper teeth brushing technique will be demonstrated and the class will then have the opportunity to practice brushing

their own teeth as well. Throughout February, we will also be highlighting different *African Americans* from past and present, who have made a difference in our history and culture.

In March, we will bloom into *spring* by learning about *Plants and Gardening*. The Chargers 2 will observe the different parts of a plant with microscopes and learn exactly what a plant needs in order for it to grow. Our class will then get a chance to get their hands dirty by planting their own seeds and watching the cycle of *Growth*. We will introduce *photosynthesis* and discuss why the sun is important to plants. Along with the discussion of photosynthesis, we will also discover how different *Insects and Spiders* help some flowers grow and thrive. The Chargers 2 will then take a trip down to *Old MacDonald's Farm* and identify different types of farm animals and what they contribute to the farm. Our class will discuss different animal jobs, and learn about a farm animal's diet.

In April we will blast off into *Space* and explore our solar system and planets. We will be discussing the moon, stars, constellations and sun as well as the planets in our galaxy. Our little astronauts will have an opportunity to make their own rocket ships and telescopes to explore outer space. We will soar to new heights when we learn about our fine feathered friends the *Birds and their Eggs*. We will identify different types of

flying and non-flying species and learn if they lay eggs or not. There will also be some egg-citing egg-periments involving eggs and gravity! In keeping with our egg theme, our class will keep their hands busy dyeing and stuffing their own cascarones with confetti! We will then wrap our hands around *Earth and our Environment* and learn about *Reduce, Reuse and Recycle*. The Chargers 2 will do different activities that use recycled materials and environmentally safe materials. During the *Week of the Young Child*, we will celebrate being young and those who are young at heart! We invite all parents to come have lunch with their child, volunteer to do story time or circle time with our class, or just come to play during recess. We want parents to focus on spending quality time with their child and remembering what it was like to be young again. We will send home an activity that all members of the family can work on together and also a list of activities, games and songs that the entire family can take part in at home.

Don't forget to have an extra change of weather appropriate clothes in your child's cubby (especially if they are potty training) Label all personal items that are brought from home and check daily sheets for any important information or reminders. Thank you for your continued support.

Chargers 2 Teachers



# PINTO

I want to welcome Jenny the new assistant teacher in the Pinto room. She has had the pleasure of getting to know the children and families. The children love having her in the room, and they have bonded well. Making new friends is exciting for the teachers as well as the children.

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 little guys start turning into independent and sometimes hard headed bigger guys. They are learning 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* is an exciting month. 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. Some fun activities are making a chart on how we feel each day and giving reasons why we are feeling that way. We are also going to read several books that help us deal with and identify different feelings. Painting to different types of music and moving to different types of music can also bring up different emotions. A few of those books are "*Feelings*," "*I am Feeling Orange*" and "*If Your Angry and You Know It*"

Keeping our bodies healthy is very important. We do this in different ways: eating healthfully, exercising, and getting check-ups from the doctor and dentist. We will study which foods are healthful foods and which foods just taste good but don't help our bodies grow. To learn which foods are healthy foods we will have a special lunch. We will explore the journey our food

takes in our bodies when we eat and the benefits of those foods. We will exercise, do pretend play and show the children how fun it can be to stay active and fit.

February is also *Black History* month so we will be learning about some very important heroes that have made our lives better. Learning names, events and how they have improved and impacted our daily lives.

March is 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. A part of learning about plants is learning about insects. This is one of my favorite subjects. Finding different types of insects and looking up their names and how they benefit the plants and earth. Talking about how plants get pollinated so that they can make more plants is also very important. Studying the different body parts of insects and their proper names is a great natural science experience.

In *April* we learn about where our earth is in space, the sun and about the stars we see at night. We will also create our own constellations and name them just like real astrologist. While studying about earth, it is important to understand about taking care of our earth. We will pick up trash outside, learn how to recycle, and how to reuse different materials. I will be asking for support from the families to bring in materials that we can reuse in several different areas of the classroom, not just for art projects.

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 is called "*Week Of The Young Child*" and I will ask parents to come and share their time and talents with the children. Getting to see their parents take an active part in their classroom gives them a great sense of pride and gives you as parents a picture into their day and of course an excuse to just have fun!

Literacy in the classroom is a very important part of learning. There are many ways we offer literacy to the children on a daily basis. One way is to do what I call story stretchers. This is when you find a book that the children really enjoy listening to and make experiences for them that are related to the book. For example, if we were reading "*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*" I would offer to have all those foods for lunch one day. I would give them the flannel pieces to the story so that they can retell the story to their friends. Bringing real experiences to the classroom like allowing the children to watch a real caterpillar go through the process of metamorphosis.

*Social Play* is a skill I will concentrate on teaching the children and 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?*"

The Pinto Teachers



# WRANGLER

The Wranglers have had a great start to 2012! With the opening of this new year came new beginnings for our Wrangler classroom. First, we welcomed several new friends from the Pinto room: Wyatt, Isabella and Jayden. We also welcomed two friends to our room from other schools: Cooper J. and Jake. And last but certainly not least, we welcomed Mrs. Diana as my new assistant and Ms. Valerie as our new closer. The three of us had a meeting of the minds; our goal is to stimulate the natural curiosity of each individual child. We realize we only have 4 months until they graduate to pre-k; therefore, we plan to have several more brainstorming sessions to assure every child is on track and ready for his/her next level of learning. Our lesson plans will be geared toward getting him/her involved with open-ended questions and actual hands-on experiences. We also strive to keep our environment neat and organized which promotes respect and responsibility from the teachers and the children. Also our learning centers are clearly defined, inviting and well-stocked. We would like to thank Ms. Jane for all the new toys she brought for our class. Our shelves are fully stocked with a variety of activities that help eliminate negative behavior. As teachers, we consistently model the behaviors we expect from each child. We teach our Wranglers to be good example-setters at school and at home.

Okay, what's up for the next three months? *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 will celebrate *Black History*. We will learn about the contributions made to our country by African Americans. I will introduce simple fact sheets and handouts for us to explore. We will

play a fun matching game linking inventions to the inventor. Another theme during the month of February 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. Healthful foods provide energy and help us grow. We want to encourage healthful eating habits and exercise routines. During this lesson, we will review proper hand-washing techniques.

Next, the month of *March* brings in a new season, *Spring*. Be sure to check out the front lobby; Wranglers will be displaying some of our art projects. During this month, 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 project called *name that animal*; the children will hear the sound from the tape player and be asked to name the animal that matches 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 personal flower pots, and then chart their size, shape and color. The month will close with spiders and insects. We will learn that spiders are not insects and 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. Last year we made bumblebee Wranglers. What will the children choose to be this year? We will see. During the final month of the quarter, which is *April*, we will learn about *space, birds, our earth, our environment and recycling*. The children will learn the value of using earth's resources. During this week we will

again ask for parent participation; a recycling bin will be set up in our classroom for you 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 ways we are alike and how we are all different. We will also put together special books to take home.

With only a few months before graduation, along with our weekly topics, we will be adding more hand-writing practice, letter and number recognition, and pre-reading activities. I will communicate with the Trotter and Bronco teachers to assure that each child is familiar with what will be expected of them in Pre-K. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to talk with me or Mrs. Diana. Her son is currently enrolled in our Pre-K program.

Parents, as I often offer, please let us know if there are specific areas that you would like for us to explore with the children. The project we did on siblings was introduced by one of our parents; it was a wonderful time of sharing and learning about each other's families. Our parent show and share lesson was also a hit; everyone loved our display board. These were examples of ideas that came from our parents, so again please feel free to enhance our lesson topics.

Reminders....

Please sign your child in and out. Please check your child's cubby and folder every day. Please initial the behavior space in the folders every day. It's the season for weather changes: cold in the morning and warm in the afternoon. It's helpful to have a variety of change of clothes in the cubby to help your child stay comfortable.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Tammy, Mrs. Diana and Ms. Valerie



# MUSTANGS

The Mustangs have had a great start to 2012! joining us as the new assistant teacher and Ms Erika as our p.m. closing teacher.

In the afternoon we welcomed Ms. Erika, who is the new afternoon assistant teacher. Ms. Erika is familiar with our Mustangs and has stepped right in to the routine in the classroom. Hello, my name is Erika Serrano and I am 20 years old. I have been working here at Rocking Horse Academy for 2 years in every classroom, from Foals to Corral Kids...I have done it all. I have a 5 month old son named Julian who stays home with my mother while I come to work. I am happy to say I am the new afternoon assistant teacher for the Mustang room and am so happy to be in your child's life. I'm sure we will have so much fun learning and working our brains for a better tomorrow!

The children have been working very hard learning the sounds of letters, writing numbers, counting to 30, and writing our first and last names. Everyone has been doing a fantastic job! Over the next three months, we will continue learning these skills while having fun.

**February:** The month of February is designated for *Health, Feelings, Heroes and Black History*. With Health, we will learn how to keep our bodies healthy, like washing our hands and eating nutritious foods. We also learn how to brush our teeth correctly. During our *Feelings* week, we will explore our feelings and have opportunities to

discuss them during our circle time. Children are filled with all kinds of feelings: happiness, sadness, anger or frustration, excitement, joy and wonder. By listening, responding, modeling and providing the appropriate language needed, children learn to understand and express their feelings appropriately. We will be doing various activities to help encourage children to learn how to express, accept and understand how to express himself/herself in healthy ways. In the month of February, we will also be celebrating Valentines Day! For our Valentine's Day party, we will make "*Heartwarming Pizza*", using canned biscuits and delicious healthful toppings as well as passing out our Valentines cards. Please check your child's folder for upcoming information regarding our Valentine's Day Party. Later in the month we will move on to *Heroes/African American History*. Children hear the word "hero" used more than ever, yet what does it mean to be a hero? We will remember those who influenced great changes in America from *Martin Luther King Jr. to Rosa Parks*. At the end of the week we will explore this concept in depth and host a special "*Super Hero Day*" where your child will be able to come to school dressed as his/her favorite super hero.

**March:** 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 his/her family. The next theme will explore *BUGS!* We will take a close look at all types of insects, their variety of habitats, including forests, fields, gardens, and even in people's houses. We will also focus on the life cycles of a butterfly and lady-bug. Our last theme of the month will be *Plants*. We will grow our own plants and name the parts. We will measure our plants and use comparative words like bigger, smaller, taller and shorter.

**April:** Let's look for birds! In April, our first theme will be *Birds and Eggs*. We will study different kinds of birds, their eggs and their nests. The next theme for April will be taking a journey through *Space*. We will explore a variety of resources and exploring our solar system. As a class, we will chart the planets from biggest to smallest, use role play to demonstrate the universe and its connection to the sun, make star scopes and examine "*star dust*". We will then move on to our theme *Our Earth and Recycling*. We will be "*going green*" discussing how important our earth is and how recycling helps. We will be reusing everyday items to create learning activities and artistic crafts! The children will be encouraged to reduce, reuse and recycle.

**Reminders:** Please remember to bring a change of weather-appropriate clothes. Label all personal items and check your child's folder daily for any important information or reminders.

Mustang Teachers



# 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 new

food "plate". 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 garden 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 springtime is quickly approaching don't forget to rotate your extra clothes to accommodate the weather.

Trotters Staff



# BRONCOS

I cannot believe how quickly the year is passing. We are more than halfway through our school year and I am amazed at the change and growth I have seen in your children. We have completed basic short sound phonics for the entire alphabet and we will begin working on letter combinations such as, *th, sh, ch, ck, st*, etc... We will also be adding 2 to 3 words a week to our sight words. I will be sending home copies of our sight words so you can cut them out to make flash cards. Working on these at home will help the students recognize them more efficiently. Also, allowing your child to identify words in the stories you are reading will help them develop pre-reading skills. In class we give the children opportunities to identify sight words in text and many times we send these books home with your child. It is very helpful if you can read these books with them at home as well.

As a class we are also working on *being a team and treating each other with respect*. The Broncos are a very independent group of youngsters and love doing things for themselves. I admire this characteristic but at the same time we are trying to teach them that it is okay to allow someone to help you. We try to model with the children respectful ways to let someone know when we do not like what they are doing.

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 be studying Heroes and Black History Month. This is an interesting topic to broach with the kids 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 Jr.*. We will have a Valentine Party Tuesday the 14<sup>th</sup>. Each child needs to bring in a shoe box to decorate; please begin bringing these as soon as possible.

In *March* I am pleased to announce that we will study *plants and growth*. We will plant vegetables and other plants in pots in the classroom that we will then transplant into our learning garden. This is one of my favorite units and the students really enjoy taking care of the plants and observing the growth. Later in the month we will study *farms and farm animals 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*, fol-

lowed 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. 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 introduce coins and their monetary values and for those who are ready begin reading basic sentences. My social goals are to improve peer to peer interactions. Especially, working together and including every child.

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





# CORRAL KIDS

## Corral Kids Update:

We hope everyone had a great holiday vacation and has settled into the New Year. Over this spring semester we will have a few exciting changes to our Corral Kids schedule that we would like to share with you. During activity time, we will help prepare our students for school by having activities geared towards their homework. Students will participate in group activities and relay races that are all based on their weekly spelling words or grade appropriate math problems. Students will participate in a weekly mock spelling test to help prepare them for their actual test. Mathematics is a huge part of every student's education. We plan to implement activities to help our Corral Kids become more comfortable with and enjoy math. We will help students become familiar with and work on Mad Minutes. Mad Minutes are an activity where students are given a worksheet with appropriate grade level math problems. The students are allowed a certain amount of time to complete as many problems correctly as possible. The goal is for students to increase the number of correct problems they can finish in the set amount of time. The spelling and Math activities will not take up the entire activity time, so we will continue to have fun and interesting science experiments and creative arts and crafts projects.

## Holidays and School Breaks

Hays CISD will be closed March 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> for Spring Break. During this time Corral Kids will offer a full day program from 6:30a.m. to 6:30p.m. 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' excellently stocked and overloaded Lost and Found table. 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. Please stop by our lost and found table

## Good Communication Helps Children Succeed In School

([www.Parenting.org](http://www.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 uninvolved. One of the best things you can do to become more active in your child's academic life is to communicate with your child's school. You can do that very easily by:

- Talking to teachers and staff when things are going well for your child. Offer compliments to teachers during conversations or through notes and phone calls.
- Addressing problems as they arise. Share your concerns immediately, while the issue is still small and manageable. Ask how things are going, and find out what you can do to improve the situation.
- Arming yourself with questions you want answered. Be

prepared, especially if you will be attending a school activity that includes your child's teachers.

Volunteering your time. Join the local PTA, or find other ways to be part of your child's world.

## Pressure-Proofing Your Kids

([www.Parenting.org](http://www.Parenting.org))

Your young child experiences social pressure every time he or she is with people! Social pressure can be exerted or manifested in a number of ways, including:

- Verbal pressure from adults who criticize or challenge.
- Physical pressure from bullies or siblings.
- Expectation pressure from teachers or parents.
- Social-judgment pressure from peer groups or adults.

Self-pressure.

Your child may be more susceptible to negative social pressure if he or she is consumed by:

- Personal insecurities.
- Fears of peer-group rejection.
- Personal status.
- The need for excitement.
- The need to be noticed.
- Personal independence.
- The need for an identity.
- The need for approval.

Success at any cost.

You can help insulate your child from the negative effects of social pressure by following these five steps:

1. Identify risk factors. Keep your eyes and ears open and discover the types of social pressures that easily influence your child.
2. Be protective. Find ways to lessen the amount of time your child is left unsupervised around sources of negative

(Continued on page 13)



(Continued from page 12)

tive social pressure.

3. Be a teacher. Empower your child with the skills to help him or her deal with stressful and pressure-packed situations.
4. Monitor and plan. Make sure your child can have his or her needs (acceptance, excitement, etc.) met, including maximizing time spent with positive social influences.

Communicate. Talk with your child to keep your relationship strong.  
(Parenting.org)

Corral Kids Staff Spotlight: Jordan Prado & Tiffany Perkins

Jordan Prado

Jordan has been with Rocking Horse for over three years now. She is the kindergarten counselor. She is from

San Marcos, Texas and is currently attending Texas State University where she is majoring in Education. Jordan's hobbies include reading magazines, hanging out with friends, shopping, and trying to learn how to cook. In her free time Jordan likes to watch *Friends*, *The Notebook*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *A Walk to Remember*. Jordan loves true story crime books. Jordan's goals include graduating from college, becoming a teacher, traveling to different countries, and getting her master's degree.

"You can never cross the ocean unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore."

-Christopher Columbus

Tiffany Perkins

Tiffany has worked at Rocking Horse Academy for three years. She works with all of the Corral Kids. Tiffany is

from Austin, Texas and is currently attending Texas State University. Tiffany is majoring in Early Childhood Education through 6<sup>th</sup> grade ESL Generalist. Tiffany's hobbies include knitting, reading, and jogging. Tiffany likes to read *Hunger Games*, *Harry Potter*, and *Pillars of the Earth*. When watching TV Tiffany likes to watch *Gilmore Girls* and *Friends*. Tiffany's favorite movies include *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Hangover*, and *Bridesmaids*. Tiffany's life goals include becoming a teacher, going into the Peace Corps, and eventually earning a Master's degree and possibly a Doctorate degree. Tiffany's favorite poem is 100 Languages of Children.

Corral Kids Staff

## CORRAL KIDS INFORMATION BOARD



Need to know where your child is at the time of pickup? Their class schedule board and parent information board is opposite the lobby area water cooler.