

WEST MIDLAND FAMILY CENTER Family Focus

VOLUME 25, NUMBER 1

Thriving, Giving, Growing... Together

Winter 2015

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Immunizations Up To Date at WMFC

The measles outbreak that has caught the nation's attention caused WMFC staff members to take a precautionary second look at the vaccination rate of the children attending our own preschool. Then we went back to work on more serious problems. WMFC serves 124, three and four-year-old children in the Center's various preschool programs. We're pleased to report that 123 of the 124 children are current in their vaccinations. Only one family has chosen to opt out by claiming a philosophical exemption. As a result, this one child is certainly safer at WMFC than at Disneyland (ground zero for the measles outbreak), or just about anywhere else the family may travel.



Immunizations by future doctors, are often a part of everyday play!

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P.O. Box 1985

Midland, MI 48641-1985

989.832.3256

www.wmfc.org

Dow COP Students Actively Give Back

Dow College Opportunity Program (Dow COP) students help the community while gaining a deeper understanding of the world around them. This past year students

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Dow COP Students Katelynn (L) and Olivia (R) gear up to learn about copper mining.

Childcare Undergoes Metamorphosis

Over the past several months, the WMFC Childcare Center has been going through a metamorphosis of sorts. The WMFC staff has been working hard to incorporate **Creative Curriculum** into each childcare classroom to provide children with a seamless transition between WMFC childcare and preschool programs. Creative Curriculum is a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate curriculum.



The inclusion of the Creative Curriculum philosophy has resulted

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In Their Own Words - Donor Spotlight

Editors Note: Kevin and Cheryl Collins both met WMFC Director Greg Dorrien when all three participated in Leadership Midland '95. Kevin is employed by the Dow Chemical Company as a Tech Associate/Improvement Engineer and Cheryl has recently retired from the Midland Public Schools after 10 years as an elementary teacher at Cook Elementary School and 16 years as a teacher at Jefferson Intermediate School. Here is what they had to say in their own words about WMFC.

Though it sounds cliché, we get so much more from the West Midland Family Center than we give. We



Kevin and Cheryl Collins

have been involved with the Center throughout the last 20 years or so. We started being involved through the **Midland Jaycees**. We remember having a lot of fun working on Thanksgiving dinners, Snowpich Softball, and other projects led by the Jaycees on behalf of WMFC families. Each activity brought new friends and wonderful memories!

Immunizations

...continued from page 1

The immunization scare story that is unfolding in the United States is very much a reality in communities of means. Communities with predominantly lower income families (who already struggle with health care and doctor bills) know a good thing when they see it. Opting for free immunizations through a public health department is an easy decision. At a recent parent group meeting one mom asked "what's wrong with those moms in the suburbs?" Likely there is nothing wrong with the suburban moms...it's their kids we all have to be concerned about.

We have supported the **Dow College Opportunity Program** at WMFC for over 15 years. We have loved working with the next generation to help them see the potential they have inside. The **Olympics of the Mind** events have been a great time to get to know the students better and test our own knowledge! Through the years we have enjoyed seeing the students at the yearly graduation dinner when they get

Childcare Undergoes Metamorphosis

...continued from page 1

in changes in the childcare classrooms. Softer baskets in the infant rooms, more pictures of families throughout the childcare wing and changes in room colors and furniture choices, have contributed to an overall "homey" feeling in the classrooms. All of these changes provide for a positive environment for children to learn and grow.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) practices are also being integrated into the children's learning experience. As an example, because of their interest in animals, WMFC preschool children recently learned about bears and hibernation and what happens to bears during the winter months. The children studied what bears eat, where they sleep and how long their nails are. They also had a once in a life time experience of touching a real bear when one of the childcare staff members secured a full body mount of a grizzly bear for the children to study and touch and feel. The children even had a visit from a "bear," during snack time when a teen volunteer dressed up as "Mr. Bear" to share a snack with them. "Mr. Bear" and the children ate the types of berries that were like those that real bears might eat in the wild.

a chance to celebrate all of the hard work they have put into their education. They all mature so much through the many activities they do in the program. When we think of WMFC, we think about how lucky we are to be a small part of such a wonderful organization. We would encourage others to give time and treasure to the many activities at WMFC because you receive so much more than you give!

Children in the childcare program have always been rather partial to the idea of bears at WMFC. Some time ago each childcare classroom was given a "bear" name. The infants became the "Cubs", the toddlers became the "Teddy Bears" and the preschoolers are now the "Brown Bears".

Bears are also a WMFC Playground theme and part of an exciting upcoming playground expansion. "Grizz-Lee Bear", a play structure, which has been funded by a grant from the **Midland Kiwanis Foundation** will be added to the playground this summer. With all the bear changes and additions, bears of all kinds will most likely have a long endearing relationship with WMFC children for many years to come!



Grizz-Lee Bear will be added to the WMFC Playground this summer courtesy of the Midland Kiwanis Foundation.

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Win Zacharias*

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Central Michigan University Students Choose WMFC for Exciting and Interesting Internship Experience



Bridget Holbrook
Family Services
Pinconning, MI

Degree: Child Development and Psychology

Future Plans: "I would like to obtain a position in a childcare or family setting or obtain a Masters Degree in Child Development. I am passionate about working with children and want to make a difference in their lives and the future of the world."

On Choosing WMFC: "I like the atmosphere and all of the different programs and resources offered for children and families in the community."

Most Surprising Thing You Have Learned About WMFC: "There are a huge variety of clients that utilize WMFC and its resources."

Trivia That No One at WMFC Knows: "I traveled to Australia for 18 days when I was 12 with the People-to-People Student Ambassador Program."



Madeline Powers
Family Services New
Baltimore, MI

Degree: Child Development and Psychology

Future Plans: "I plan to work in a behavioral clinic that specializes in working with children that have learning disabilities; primarily Autism and ADHD. I plan to continue my education in a special education graduate program."

On Choosing WMFC: "WMFC was a great match for what I was interested in; working with children. The **Strengthening Families** program interested me and was a new experience that I could gain."

Most Surprising Thing You Have Learned About WMFC: "The size of the Center and everything it has to offer. I had no idea the property went back so far, or that there was even a pool!"

Trivia That No One at WMFC Knows: "My favorite Pandora station is 90's Pop, including 'N Sync, Britney Spears and of course Destiny's Child."



Ashley Theeuwes
Family Services
Grand Rapids, MI

Degree: Child Development and Psychology

Future Plans: Intern at **Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services in Grand Rapids, MI** in the Psychological Consultation Center. Earn a masters degree in Clinical Psychology. "My ultimate career goal is to be a prison psychologist."

On Choosing WMFC: "I chose WMFC because I saw that there were a lot of programs and services available here and I thought it would be a great experience."

Most Surprising Thing You Have Learned About WMFC: "How big WMFC is and how much help WMFC provides to the local families by the programs and services that it offers."

Trivia That No One at WMFC Knows: "My sister and I grew up raising and showing pigs for 4H."



Travis Rodgers
Recreation/ASP
Houghton Lake, MI

Degree: Community Recreation

Future Plans: "I hope to see some of the world before I settle down into a career or use my career to see the world. I would like to eventually get a position as a Recreation Director."

On Choosing WMFC: "The Center's mission matched my own."

Most Surprising Thing You Have Learned About WMFC: "The need of the community served by WMFC and the lengths the staff will go to meet those needs."

Trivia That No One at WMFC Knows: "I've been creating music for nine years and have released three full albums."





"Mr. Bear" discusses hibernation.

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Dow COP Students Actively Give Back ...cont'd from pg. 1

participated in a **Chippewa River** cleanup, the **Grace A. Dow Memorial Library** book sale set-up and caroled at the **Dow Gardens** Christmas Walk. Students also helped with the **Michigan Mobile Blood Bank Drive** held at WMFC which secured four new donors; an area record! During the Christmas season, students shopped for local families as part of the WMFC Holiday Help Program and made trips to the Lansing and Flint food banks. Giving back to the community has always been an important part of Dow COP and the students always look forward to participating in the many ways that they are able to help!

In 2014, COP students also participated in some very unique cultural, fundraising and educational experiences. They attended "Shrek! The Musical" at the **Midland Center for the Arts (MCFTA)** and, for the first time, they participated in the **MCFTA Pumpkin Chuckin' Event** in the fall. In addition, the COP Class

of 2015 attended "Dance United", a fundraiser for the **Isabella County United Way**, held at **Central Michigan University (CMU)**. In January, they attended First Aid and CPR classes and became certified responders.

Future plans for COP include the development of a program that allows students the opportunity to work alongside CMU volunteer organizations. Participation in the **CMU Leadership Institute** is also in the works which will prepare students to be great community leaders! COP is also developing a Peer Mentoring program with the WMFC teens, which will provide middle school students the opportunity to build supportive relationships with Dow COP high school students. While 2014 was an exciting year for Dow COP students, everyone is looking forward to new experiences that help develop personal character and insight.