Annual Report
August 1, 2013-July 31, 2014

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Child Development Lab at the McPhaul Center
College of Family and Consumer Sciences
Department of Human Development and Family Science
The University of Georgia
Child Development Lab at the McPhaul Center
Mission Statement

The Child Development Laboratory (CDL) at the McPhaul Center is a university-based child care program housed within the Department of Child and Family Development in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences on the University of Georgia campus. The CDL offers full-day programming for Infants through Pre-K children.

Mission

The mission of the CDL parallels the three-part Teaching, Research, and Outreach mission of the University of Georgia. As a laboratory school, we support this academic mission by:
   - Facilitating a high quality educational experience for children
   - Serving as a facility for pre-service teacher training and CFD internships
   - Providing an environment that encourages educational research and development
   - Sharing information and training others through participation at conferences

Philosophical Framework & Actions

The guiding educational philosophy of the Child Development Lab at the McPhaul Center is based on an understanding that every child is unique in personality, development, and learning style and possesses special talents. Our philosophy also reflects a commitment to nurturing the distinct needs of each child through developmentally appropriate, research-based practice. To do so, the CDL:
   - Offers a play-centered curriculum that focuses on the whole child and is designed to meet the diverse social, physical, emotional, and cognitive needs of individual children.
   - Provides children a safe, secure environment in which to explore new materials and establish new relationships
   - Fosters a sense of self-respect, concern for others, independence, and environmental awareness through positive guidance and problem-solving techniques.

Effectively meeting the needs of young children requires teachers who act as guides on a journey of exploration and adventure and who are reflective practitioners committed to their own ongoing learning. The CDL teachers’ professional growth is supported by:
   - Collaborative teaching that leverages the knowledge and strengths of each teacher
   - Participation in external learning experiences including conferences and seminars
   - Routine CDL-based learning experiences including staff development and training
Fostering the healthy development of each child also requires active involvement of families in children’s school lives. The CDL seeks to build connections with families by:

- Maintaining regular communication with families regarding the school experiences of their child(ren)
- Coordinating center-wide family gatherings
- Sustaining monthly parent council meetings and utilizing this resource as a two-way communication between families and administration
- Providing training and information opportunities for parents

Overview

During the 2013-2014 programming year, the Child Development Lab (CDL) at the McPhaul center served a total of 108 students. These included children in our tuition based classrooms, summer camp, and Pre-Kindergarten.


During the previous programming year, the Child Development Lab at the McPhaul Center worked closely with the State of Georgia Quality Care for Children Program. Dr. Amy Kay, Director, Lori Maerz, Program Coordinator, and the CDL staff identified best practices and processes for children infant to six years. The CDL was rated on a three-star rating system applied to childcare centers throughout the state of Georgia, which is used to provide parents with a standardized way to compare centers. The CDL at the McPhaul Center was rated three starts in September of 2013. Stars are awarded based on a combination of points gathered from an independent observation and a portfolio that demonstrated that the program meets standards above and beyond what licensing requires. The Quality Care Award reflects not only the high quality of the early learning experiences at the CDL, but also the commitment of the CDL teachers and administrators to engage in training, curriculum development, and teaching engagement: All of which are part of being accredited with the National Association of Early Childhood Education.

Two lead teachers completed their Masters degrees—one in the Masters of Arts in Teaching program and one in Human Development and Family Science. Another lead teacher began work in a Master’s program related to early childhood education, and one assistant continued her work towards her Associates in Early Childhood Education.

Three of our teachers received “Years of Service” recognition from the college. Elaine Pittman has taught at the CDL for 20 years, Christy Cook has taught at the CDL for 10 years, and Joyce Butler has taught at the CDL for 5 years.
Teaching
The professional growth of undergraduate and graduate students was facilitated through the following internships and practicum placements.

Spring 2014: Carly Aroeti (HDFS, Student Teaching)
   Emily Humkey (Birth to Five)
   Carol Yoo (Birth to Five)
   Erin Ochs (Child Life)
   Corrine Milling (Child Life)
   Ruthie Hoover (Child Life)
   Macie Thompson (Child Life)

Research
The process of policies and procedures for proposed research remained in place for the 2013-2014 programming year. The CDL Faculty Advisory committee reviewed all submitted applications. Full descriptions of the studies and findings are included in Table 1.

Outreach/Engagement
The Child Development Lab actively participates in the Young Dawgs program. This program places high school students in internships across departmental units at the University of Georgia. This is a collaborative effort between the University of Georgia Human Resources department and high schools in the Athens and surrounding areas. The CDL provided placements for students from Clarke Central High School, North Oconee County High School, and a home-schooled student. In fall 2013, we placed Hannah Scarbrough (Infants) Lauren Covington (Infants) Lillie Watson (Older Toddlers) and Ivie Brackett (Pre-K) in our program; in spring 2014, Hannah Scarbrough and Lauren Covington remained in Infants and Lillie Watson remained in Older Toddlers.

There were also two visiting Fulbright Scholars who regularly attended and participated in programming during spring semester. Fatima Jibrin (Kaduna) worked in our Infant classroom and Niscoo Ziyoeva (Tajikistan) worked with Multiage Room 123. Martha Allexsah-Bnider, Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education, collaborated with Amy Kay, CDL Director, for the placement of these scholars at the Child Development Lab at the McPhaul Center.

During the week of April 6-12, the CDL celebrated the Week of the Young Child with a culminating Family Picnic which was held on Thursday, April 10th with activities facilitated by HDFS 5130 students. In June, the CDL celebrated “National Mud Day” and created “Got Mud?” t-shirts to coincide. See additional Outreach in Table 5.
# Table 1

**Summary of Research Conducted 2013-2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title of Study:</strong></th>
<th>Young Children’s Embodied Mathematical Practices</th>
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| **Investigator:**   | Primary Investigator: Elif Karsli, PhD student in Elementary and Social Students Education  
                       Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Martha Alexsaht-Snider, Elementary and Social Studies, Early Childhood Education |
| **Subject:**        | Pre-K students                                   |
| **Purpose:**        | Previous research proposes that physically active and playful learning environments support young children’s mathematics learning, and a growing body of research shows that particularly rich bodily experiences are central to children’s mathematical thinking. This video-ethnography study focused on children’s engagements in mathematical practices that are initiated both by children and their teacher, and that may appear at any time and in any settings (e.g. calendar time, teacher-directed small group, large group activities, lunch, free play, outdoor play) during the daily routine of a Pre-K classroom. Preliminary research results showed that young children are experimenting with various mathematical concepts beyond our expectations, such as the notions of speed, distance, time, and balance, particularly during the physically active outdoor playtime. Parent interviews about mathematical engagements also showed that parents have an awareness of physically active mathematical experiences for their children; they see mathematical value in doing sports, dancing and playing musical instruments. |
| **Findings**        | Research was completed for the initial phase of the research study, based on observing and videotaping in the classroom. The next step was to analyze the video data and write up the research in the form of a dissertation. She will provide teachers and families with another, more detailed research report at a later date. |
Title of Study: Preschool Students' Responses to Picture Books and Dramatization Activities

Investigator: Mehmet Gultekin, Master’s student in Elementary and Social Studies, Early Childhood Education. Project done for ESSE 7500, “Teacher Action Research” under the direction of Dr. Martha Allexsaht-Snider

Subject: Preschool students in the mixed age class (ages 3-5)

Purpose: The researcher was interested in studying the relationship between students' responses to picture books when accompanied with dramatization activities. In the first step, the teacher asked the meaning of some advanced vocabulary words in a picture book. Then, he read the story to the students. After that, one student was chosen to direct the dramatization and other students participated in acting out the story. Finally the meanings of the vocabulary words were asked at the end of dramatization. All of the books were related to minorities in the USA. This meant that all students had a chance to act out a character that didn’t look like them. After 5 weeks the researcher coded the data.

Findings: The preliminary findings indicated that: 1) When preschool teachers read a story to their class without much conversation, speech or action, the story doesn’t appeal to 3-5 years old mixed age students. They seemed less interested and indicated their disinterest by lying down, speaking with others, moving and turning around. 2) Though some students demonstrated understanding of the meaning of some advanced words mentioned in picture books, they did not use these words during the dramatization activity. The students preferred using more familiar and easier words. 3) The students could make a connection between the words that have similar sounds; however, some thought the rhyming word was the meaning of the vocabulary word being taught. 4) When one of the students, who had volunteered to direct the dramatization activity, was chosen, s/he would begin the story by saying “Once upon a time” even though the story didn’t start with that sentence. I believe, this common beginning is a clue of read aloud activities with families, because in that class they generally have read postmodern picture books. Thus, they probably hear that sentence while reading with their parents. In conclusion, parents and teachers can use dramatization with their children in order to make the activity more enjoyable and effective and this can have a positive influence on children’s development of vocabulary.
Table 2

Observations Conducted 2013-2014

- Individual Observations 3102
  - Individual Students Observations (1962)
  - Therapists Visits (144)
  - Other Visitors (996)
- Group Observations/Tours (22) 108
  Total Observations 3124

University Courses Supported By CDL Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<th>Course Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 2950</td>
<td>SPED 4120</td>
<td>MUSC 7440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 3900</td>
<td>SPED 4440</td>
<td>Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS 5130</td>
<td>SPED 7150</td>
<td>FYOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECEC 4020</td>
<td>SPED 7170</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUC 2110</td>
<td>KINS 2420</td>
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List of other schools and Colleges that have utilized the CDL:

- Madison County High School
- Barrow Elementary (through Barrow Buddies program)
- Georgia Perimeter College
- University of Alabama
- Auburn University
- University Childcare Center
- Oglethorpe County High School
Table 3

Class Projects Conducted 2013-2014

**CHFD 5130 (Cown)**
- Students worked in small groups to plan, coordinate, and implement dramatic play.

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**Number of Graduate or Undergraduate Students with Placement in CDL Classrooms 2013-2014**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013-2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth to Five Students</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Life</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS Internships</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS Graduate Assistantship</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFS Student Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHFD 3900 (Dr. Hui-Chin Hsu)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Hourly Workers</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood Education Students</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Perimeter College Student</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table 4

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<th>Outreach and Presentation Activities of Staff Members 2013-2014</th>
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**Outreach:**
Amy Kay, Director, continues to serve on several community boards as a service and outreach to the community. These include: the University Childcare Center Advisory Committee and the Athens Technical College Early Care and Learning Education Committee. Amy was nominated for the Advisory Committee Member of the Year for her service to Athens Technical College.

Amy Kay, Lori Maerz, Anjanette Russell, and Phillip Baumgarner were invited guest lecturers in HDFS and EDEC courses at the University of Georgia and numerous presentations were given by CDL staff, as indicated below.

**Phillip Baumgarner is the District 8 Junior Representative on the Georgia Association on Young Children (GAYC) board.**

**Presentations/Publications**

Baumgarner, P. & Costa, D. (2013, October) Going Beyond "We are All Friends", Creating Cooperative Democratic Communities. Presented at Georgia Association for Young Children's Annual Conference, Duluth, GA.


Kay, A. (2014, April) Teachers Transforming Professional Development: Moving forward Presented at the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers Annual Conference, Portland, OR.

Maerz, L. (2013, October) How Does Your Garden Grow? Presented at Georgia Association for Young Children's Annual Conference, Duluth, GA.

Russell, A. & Douglas, L. (2014, October) Bringing Story Time to Life: Incorporating Puppets into Story Time. Presented at the Georgia Association for Young Children’s Annual Conference, Duluth, GA.