



Swing Project

Owl – Lincoln Road: Infant

Background

Start Date: April 25, 2017

End Date: July 11th, 2017

Ages of Children involved: 12 months – 18 months

RECEs involved: Nancy, Shannon, Jaime and Kate

Phase I: Beginning the Project

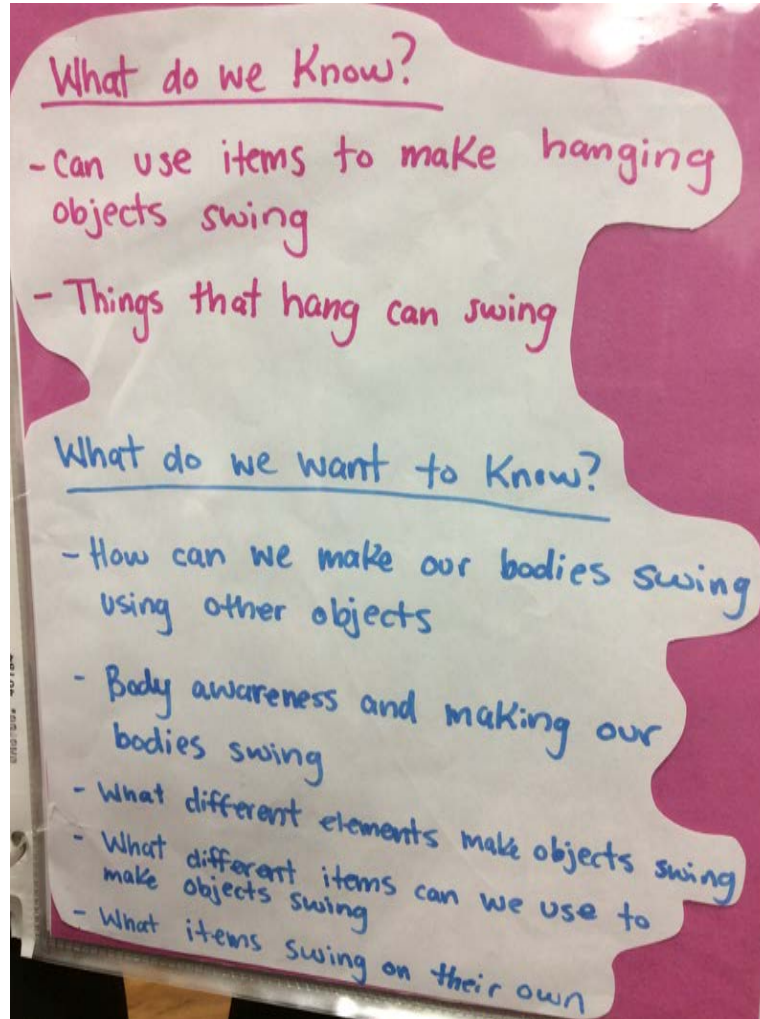
In April, 2017 we observed Raymes and Aaron using the toy brooms to hit the hanging nature globes in our windows. They would swing the broom handle to hit the globes causing them to swing side to side. This made the boys giggle and continue to hit the globes to keep the swing motion going. This action has continued as Raymes still enjoys this action and Ella can now reach, since she can now walk and will swing the broom handle to swing the globes as well.

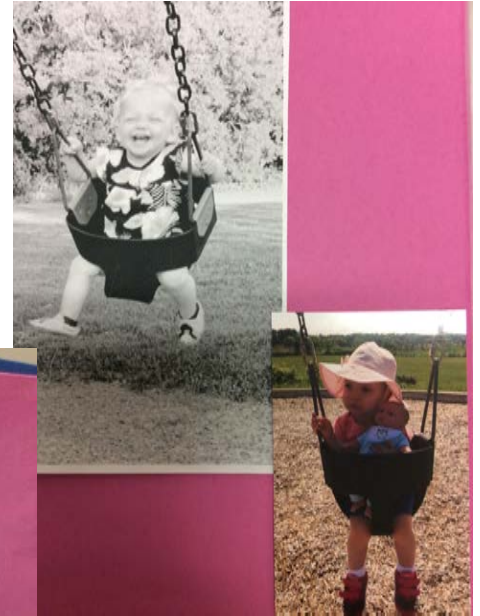
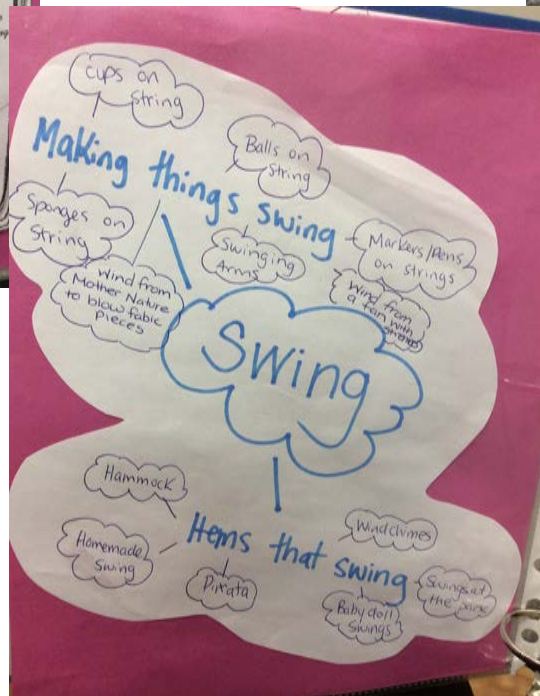
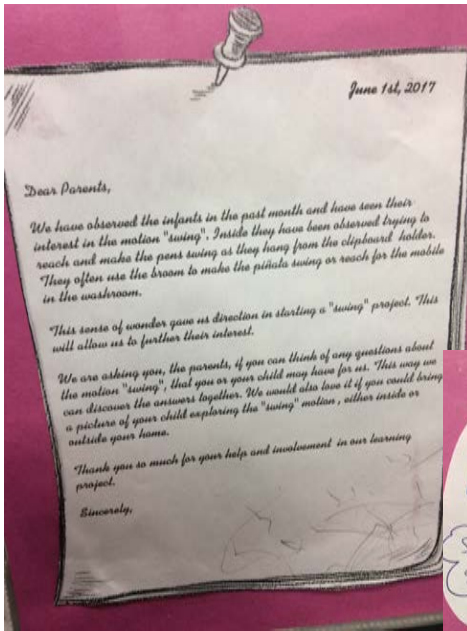
A few days later, Nancy was throwing balls against the wall so they would bounce and the infants would giggle and run, walk or crawl after them, to do it again. One of the balls bounced high and hit a lantern on the ceiling, causing it to swing back and forth. Edith looked up at it with an excited look on her face as she made an “o” shape with her mouth and pointed to the swinging lantern. Once it stopped swinging, Edith looked at Nancy and signed “more”, then pointed up to the ceiling. Nancy used the ball once again to hit the lantern and to make it swing.

We first explored a piñata outside and the infants demonstrated what they already knew about swinging objects. We push it with our hands, use an object to move it and make it swing.



From our observations, Raymes showed us that he could make hanging objects swing. He showed us this by referencing a past activity, where we learned and used a piñata. Raymes took a broom again over to the window, but instead of hitting the globes, this time he went for our hanging plant! He knew, "this plant is hanging" and that "I can make it swing with a long object". To make it a little safer, our supply Laurie had an idea and quickly switched out the plant for the piñata we had used previously. To this day, the piñata is still hanging in our class room along with pickle balls from high points for the infants to hit with an object or their hands. Also from our observations, we gathered questions about what the children want to know about the swinging motion, and we created a web. We sent out a letter asking parents to bring in pictures of their children exploring things that swing at home or in their community. We also asked the parents if they had any questions about swinging. The parents responded by sending in pictures of their children in swings. The web helped us create activities that would answer the questions we had about the swinging motion.





Phase 2: Developing the Project

To begin this project, we hung Dixie cups using fish line from the ceiling. The infants were so excited. They began to run through the cups and tried to catch them as they swung back and forth. Edith, Raymes and Quinn had to hold the cups in their hand to explore what would happen when they pulled them and let them go.

Ella, Edith, Seth and Raymes also explored the cups as they held them in their hands. When they felt the restriction of being able to move the cups, they looked closely and discovered that there was a string attached to the cups. They would pull the cups and then follow the fish line with their eyes, looking to see where it was attached to. With this exploration, the infants discovered they could use their body, hands and arms to make things swing. They would pull the cups and let go to watch them swing or swat at the cups. They also learned that wind (air) could make objects swing. When they were running through the cups, it was the wind of the infants running past the cup, which would make it move.



A few weeks into the project, the infants demonstrated what project questions they were answering through their play. Jaime was taking some things out of the closet when Seth found two pool noodles. Seth brought out the pool noodles and was trying to determine how best to explore and play with them. When Seth raised the pool noodle he realized, “this goes up really high”. He looked up to see exactly how high it went, when he realized another thing. He could reach the lanterns that were hanging and the pictures hanging from our family tree.

Seth picked up the pool noodle and got a good grip of it. He started to swing the pool noodle side to side, his aim being to hit the lanterns and watch them swing. When he hit his mark, Seth giggled hysterically! He thought it was hilarious that he was able to reach the lanterns and make them swing all by himself. He was so proud.

Quinn, who had been watching attentively, picked up the second pool noodle and he too began to swing it. He looked up to make sure he was hitting his mark as well. He laughed when he saw that he got the lantern to swing. He looked over to Seth to see if he had seen. He had! The boys continued to swing the noodles up in the air, making everything hanging from the ceiling swing. Seth and Quinn demonstrated their cognitive thinking as they discovered an object that could make hanging objects swing. They already knew they could use their hands to make things swing; they took it a step further and used a long object that could reach the objects out of their reach and make them swing.



The infants watched as Nancy and Shannon brought out a floor fan, and tied fabric and tissue paper to it. As soon as the fan turned on the tissue paper and fabric started blowing everywhere in a quick swinging motion. Chelsea noticed the different materials flying everywhere. Chelsea grabbed one end of the material and tried tying it to the fan, just like Nancy and Shannon had. Because of the air flowing, Chelsea discovered that this was too difficult. Instead, she sat in front of the fan and liked how the textures felt on her body and face. Zachery sat where the end of the materials were and tried to “catch” them. He laughed so much as the air moved the materials away from him. We turned the fan off, the materials stopped moving. We turned it on and they started moving again. The infants enjoyed having the fan on, using the air to make the materials swing up and down. They clapped their hands in excitement when the materials moved.



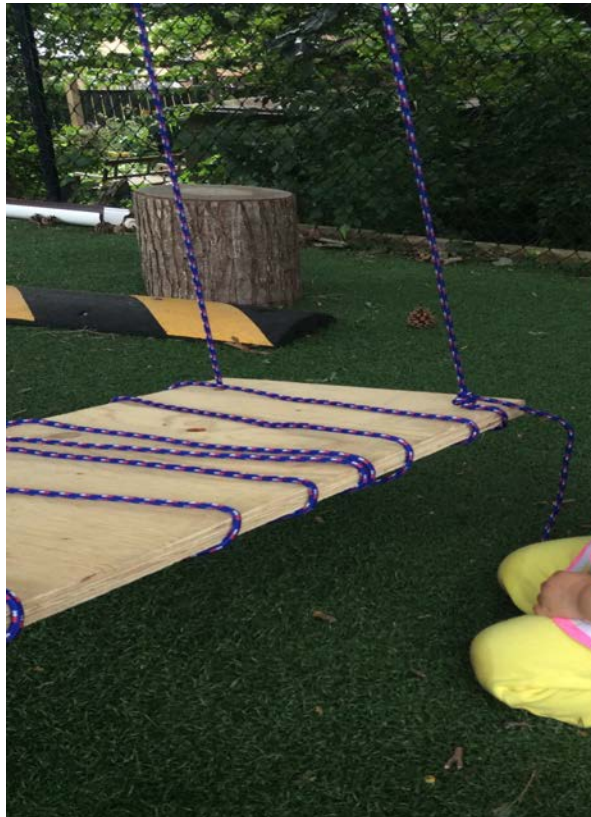
We decided to create our own life size swing that the infants could use on their own. Nancy gathered some rope and a piece of rectangular plywood. We borrowed Randy's drill to make four holes in each corner. Seth and Quinn observed closely as Nancy drilled the holes. They did not want to touch it because it made a loud sound. They nodded and agreed with Nancy when she asked if they needed to make the holes bigger so the rope would fit.

Once they had the pieces to make the swing, Nancy brought them outside and hung the rope over a tree branch. Ella and Chelsea helped Nancy decide what a good height was for them. When it was all complete, Ella and Chelsea took a turn together to sit on the swing and swing.

The infants learned about their balance and comfort for risk taking as they climbed onto an unsteady piece of plywood and then sat as it moved their whole bodies. It was quite a different experience for some of them.

Over the past month the infants have grown confident in their use of the swing and we know our limits as to how far we want to be swung and that we need to hold on to the ropes for extra balance.

The infants learned that they could make various items swing if they were hung from a height and hanging from a string. They enjoyed playing with real swings that they could swing baby dolls in, and push on their own. This also taught them some body awareness; they learned to balance their bodies so they could make their bodies swing on our homemade swing.



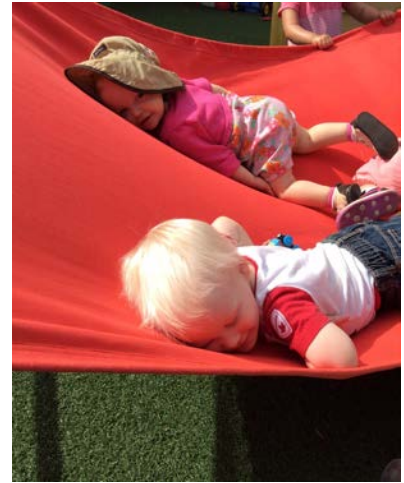
The educators planned and implemented a curriculum about swinging. Kate planned a frozen string in ice activity. Ella had a sense of wonder, as ice hung from a chair frame. Kate asked, “Do you want to swing it back and forth Ella?” She quickly began swinging the ice cube and then discovered that the ice, could be eaten. Janelle came over to swing the ice as well. The ice began to melt and the string came away from the ice. “Oh dear, we will have to put the ice back into the freezer”. The children learned cause and effect as a cube of ice turned into a liquid, along with temperature change. This activity, answered our question of “What different elements make objects swing”? As well as to enhance our sense wonder.

The question of “Body awareness and making our bodies swing,” was explored, as Jaimie hung a swing from a tree branch and Janelle put a doll into the swing. Ella using her palmer grasp, held the swing so that Janelle could begin to push the swing. She learned that by pushing the swing, it would go back and forth, using her large arm muscles. Janelle also learned that when she stopped pushing, the swing slowed down to a full stop. This interest of swinging objects, allowed Jaimie to plan and implement a “Swinging Marker” activity that would enhance creativity along with fine motor development. Markers hung by a string from a rope. Janelle was able to grab two markers as they swung, using her eye/hand co-ordination, she used her palmer grasp to draw onto the paper. Another spontaneous play activity was when the children observed the pens at the clipboards, and could be pushed and thus make the pens swing back and forth. This standing on the shelf and learning about swinging, helped us with our new vocabulary words of from side to side.



The infants explored a Hammock, and to our surprise had no trouble using their bodies to crawling up into it. They used their core muscles and balance to stay sitting up right as they rocked their bodies back and forth making the hammock swing. Seth liked to help by using his gross motor skills and push the hammock, swinging his friends on it. Edith liked the swinging motion so much the she yelled out “Weeee!” Ella preferred the comfort of laying on her tummy, then sitting up. Ella and Edith also learned about turn taking during this activity. They liked to swing on it so much that they stood close by the hammock and waited while other children were riding, till it come back to be their second, third or even four turn once again.

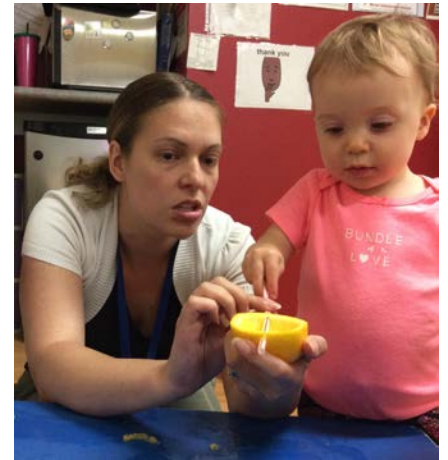
Janelle, Ella, Edith and Chelsea kept coming back to the hammock day after day. Ella and Edith laughed and giggled every time Nancy swung the hammock back and let it go to swing. Nancy explained how she had to push back to make it go high. Edith repeated the word “push” and then she would sign more so Nancy would swing the hammock some more. In the afternoon, Chelsea joined the girls for more swinging. The next day when Janelle and Nancy were enjoying the hammock, they were lounging on their backs together. While swinging Nancy made up a swing song, Janelle repeated the word “swing” every time Nancy sang it and then would exclaim “Weee!” as the hammock swung.



We explored how elements create the swinging motion by the wind blowing different objects. This was visited during an activity done outside, where pieces of fabric were hung up along a string across the playground. The infants watched as the wind caused the fabric to swing, Seth then went over and touch the fabric and begin to pull all the pieces together along the string. Janelle shook and swung the fabric pieces with her hands, then tried with all her might to pull them off the string, Quinn liked to make the fabric swing by running through it or rolling the big bouncy balls through it.



In this activity we created a bird feeder out of an orange, whole punch, straws, string and birdseed. Quinn, Janelle, Seth, and Chelsea, with hand over hand assistance, got to cut the orange in half and cut the fruit out. We then all got to taste the orange, which must of tasted good since Quinn and Janelle kept asking for more. Seth stuffed his mouth full of orange and Chelsea lick out the orange peel for the left over juice. Shannon used the whole punch to create hole in the orange peel and the infants then helped by using their fine motor skills to push the straws through the holes. We finished the birdfeeder, by adding string and birdseed. After it was, fully assembled Edith and Seth took turns holding it to watch it swing.



We learned many vocabulary words like, back and forth, side-to-side, swing and push, as we explored an indoor baby swing. As soon as the infants saw it, they looked around the room for the baby dolls. Each child brought over one or two dolls to place into the baby swing to swing. The infants would push it back and forth or side to side. Raymes and Janelle used their hands to also push the animals on the mobile and swing them. When Edith pushed the swing, she would repeat the word “push”, each time.



The infants used their hands to create the swinging motion in this activity. Shannon tied string with a pickleball (it is one word if you look it up) on each. Then hung them in a row of four, the infants came over to hit and push the balls causing them to swing back and forth and side to side. We noticed when the balls were hit side to side it would hit the next ball beside it and so on, making all the balls swing one after the other like a pendulum. Ella was so excited to explore that she would play with each one as Shannon tied them up. Once all ready, Ella giggled as she hit the balls back and forth. Quinn found a new way to swing the balls as he flicked the string with only one finger. Raymes stood by entertained by Edith, as she swung the balls into each other making them all swing together. This was exciting to Edith, as she screams and yell with joy. It also kept bring her back to this activity throughout the next few days for more swinging ball fun.



We also created a painting cup pendulum, using string, two toddler chairs, Styrofoam cups and purple paint. Once all put together we poked a hole into the bottom of the cups and added the paint. Quinn, Zachery, and Chelsea came over and used their sense of touch to feel the wetness of the paint; this made them all sign, "All done," as we cleaned them up to go play elsewhere. Raymes walked over and went right to the chair, as we observed he climbed up and sat in a horse-straddled position. Raymes then started to rock the chair causing the cups to swing and bounce, making the paint drip all over the paper taped to the floor. He then got down and explored his senses as he felt the paint with his feet, squishing it between his toes. Raymes walked around leaving footprints all over the paper and would stop to look down at them. Janelle and Edith were next, as a team, they both held onto the string and together shook it swinging the cups to drip paint. It was even dripping on the girl's feet and with all the force almost flipped over their heads. Janelle and Edith got so excited the harder and faster they shook the cups. What a beautiful masterpiece we made.



We also created a water play swinging activity. Outside string was hung from the hooks on our overhang roof. At the bottom of the string, wet sponges were tied on. The toddlers and infants came over to squeeze out the water, or hit the sponges back and forth to each other creating the swinging motion. Ella jumped right in with the toddlers swinging it by hitting the sponges. Nathan and Natalie two of our new infants came over to explore, Nathan liked the feel of the wet sponges and would squeeze it with both hands. Natalie explored it with her father Jonathan, since she was still visiting. Natalie started by feeling and squeezing the sponge's water out and then started to hit it causing it to swing and come back to her. Once her dad was holding her Natalie pointed to the sponges, so daddy grabbed one and pulled it up to Natalie in his arms. Natalie held it for a second and then let it go, giggling and smiling as it swung so high and far away, then retuning. Natalie kept trying to catch it, and explored in this way many times before it was time to go home.



Phase 3: Concluding the Project

We knew it was time to end our project, as the interest in some of the swinging objects became less. The children weren't seen trying to make everything in their sight swing and with a few children moving to a different room and new children starting, new observations needed to be made.

To conclude our swing project we took a mini field trip. The infants normally will go for walks around the neighborhood, but we needed special permission to take the kids onto the playground and use the baby swings. All our parents agreed and we were able to experience this first trip together.

Some of the new experiences were:

- Trying out our new four seat strollers (first walk for infants who started in July)
- Going on a neighborhood walk
- Seeing the swing sets and coming out of the strollers
- Swinging on the swings
- Exploring the playground

Once we were at the playground, the infants were excited to see the swing! "Weeeee" said Janelle and Ella. They already knew what it was and what was coming. For some, going on the swings with the educator's help was a new experience. Natalie, Nathan, Janelle and Fiona wanted extra comfort until they were comfortable enough in the swing. Once the swing started moving though, most of them enjoyed the motion. Ella and Zachery loved being swung in the swings "Weee"! They did not want their turn to end. We also had some infants who preferred to explore the sand instead. Jeremy, Chelsea and Jax explored the sand; it was rough and grainy in their hands. They even tossed it in the air. We also saw ducks at the creek as we walked back to Owl. We mimicked the sound they made, "Quack, quack". We learned and enjoyed many different aspects of this field trip.



Teacher Reflections

I learned many different ways that swinging contributes to our everyday life. I observed the children's play and discovered that they enjoy doing swinging objects many times over. I especially liked the spontaneous way that the string came away from the melting of the ice cube. All in all we have given the children a sense of wonder about movement and swinging, that they will continue these adventures during their play.

Kate

I discovered that there are many more objects than I realized that swing. Any object you hang; there is a body part, object or element that will cause it to make the motion of swinging. I also enjoyed observing the children learning the different ways to cause the swinging motion and using these methods on new and existing hanging object around their environment. To see the excitement in their faces when it worked made this project a success.

Shannon

During the course of this project, I was excited to see what aspect of swinging would be of most interest to the infants. I found the activities in which they were able to control the movements seemed to be their favourite. They also loved having to "catch" swinging items. It was like a game to them. What I enjoyed learning the most alongside the infants was what objects can we use to make other objects swing. When Seth and Quinn used the pool noodles to make the lanterns swing, I was impressed. I never would have thought to use a pool noodle to make something swing. You always think a broom, a baseball bat etc. but a pool noodle? That was a neat observation. I also learned how to make a homemade swing! Simple materials and tools and Voila! We had a swing! It took some problem solving to make it all fit together, but once it was done, it was perfect. Seeing the infants enjoy these activities with their smiles, their laughter and demonstrating to us, what they were learning made this project so much fun and successful.

Nancy