

Not just playing around Child Care creates challenges

Senior Mercedes Meyer is excited about her internship with South East Elementary in Decatur. She works with children in the kindergarten class four days a week, two hours each morning and has fallen "in love."

"There's this little boy who is super-hyper and he showed me a picture he had drawn of a girl and a boy holding hands with a heart. 'It's me marrying you,' he said," Hormann told her class.

Each Thursday morning, students in Jennifer Mickem's Early Childhood Education class gather back in the Belmont High School classroom to share stories such as Meyers' and further their learning about the different aged groups of children, and their related needs, growth patterns and safety concerns.

Today they are studying Chapter 9 that deals with selecting

toys and playground equipment.

"I love doing this because I love kids; they're fun to play with," Kaylie Conrad said.

Conrad works with the children who are one and younger at Kids First Daycare, which presents unique challenges for the junior student.

"They get fussy and push each other. And since they cannot talk, we help show them how to cooperate. Some even touch their palms to let us know they want more."

Mickem explains that at semester her students will be placed with a different group of children so they get an idea of what aged children they might want to work with someday.

"This class is a good place to start - even for those who decide to be a stay-at-home-mom. It teaches responsibility," Mickem said.



Madison Glanay works at St. Joe's Day Care with infants. Although she enjoys her assignment, Glanay plans a career teaching older children someday. In addition to studying and working with children, the high school students study gross and fine motor skills, along with the social, emotional, cognitive and language development of children during their pre-school years. The course is year-long, and involves a change in participation assignments at the end of the semester "so students get experience with the different ages," said fourth-year teacher Jenn Mickem.

It's story sharing time in Room E118...



"You have to have patience with the kids," explains junior Courtney Ketron, who gains experience in kindergarten at South East Elementary School. At semester, Courtney, together with the other students, will switch assignments and experience working with a different aged child.



"The teacher was spelling a little boy's name on the chalkboard, and when she said the letter 'o' you could hear a voice coming from the bathroom from another little boy. He yelled, 'There's an O in my name. There's an O in my name,'" Danielle Burkholder said.



"There's this little boy and he's so adorable. He just screams. 'I gotta go poopy. I gotta go poopy,'" related senior Hailee Hormann regarding her experiences with the 3-6 year old group of children at St. Joe's Pre-School. "I like working there because there's always fun stories."

MAKING A CONNECTION with Chapter 9: Toys "What were your favorite toys when you were a young child?"

- Fake flip phones
- Teddy Bear that sang songs
- Army guys with parachutes
- Cabbage Patch Kids
- Baby Dolls
- Kitchen sets
- McDonald's Window with Food

What the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts:

CHILDCARE WORKERS:
Job growth rate 20 % in the next 10 years. Pay - \$9.28 per hour or about \$19,300 per year.

PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE CENTER DIRECTORS: 25% job growth rate
Median Pay - \$42,960

SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS:
17% job growth rate.
\$51,380 median salary per year.