



**3472 E. Ft. Lowell Rd. Tucson, AZ 85716 • (520) 327-0844 • fax (520) 323-2984  
bill@childrensendeavors.com**

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Dear Families,

Do you know we have a website? You probably figure we do but we have to tell you that it hadn't been updated for quite some time. It seems we needed a little push to get back working on it. Fortunately, Payton's mom, Katie Bailey, asked me one day if she could help; and, help she has! Please check it out when you have chance. We still have some work to do but it is really looking much better. You will find menus, teacher biographies and even a just started blog. We're hoping to post to the blog once or twice a week – please let us know what you think. **Thank you Katie!**

Our love of reading event is scheduled for 10 AM on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. We hope your entire family will join us as we celebrate books, literacy and simply being young or young at heart! We'll be done no later than 12:00 so you can make it home for lunch and naps!

Please help us by picking up your children before 6:30. We have had too many parents coming in after 6:30. While we do have a late charge on our billing sheet, we don't regularly apply the charge if you are just a few minutes late; however, **effective immediately you will receive a minimum \$10 charge if you arrive after 6:30 to pick your children up. You will also then be charged \$5 for every 5 minutes you are late.** Picking up your children on time allows our teachers to leave, spend time with their families and recharge for the next day. Please be sure to arrive no later than 6:30. There are centers in town that stay open past 6:30 and while we would prefer for you to stay with us, we can help you with your search if a 6:30 pickup is not possible. Thank you.

Will your son or daughter be moving on to Kindergarten in August? It's hard to believe but 20 of our 5 year olds will be transitioning to a new school soon. Now is the time for you to identify what school your child will attend and make arrangements to register or apply for open enrollment. We provide transportation to and from Cragin, Davidson, Presidio and Academy Adventures. Please ask us if you have any questions about kindergarten or our before and after school program.

The following information comes to us straight from the Make Way for Books website. ([www.makewayforbooks.org](http://www.makewayforbooks.org)) MWFB works on early literacy and is a shining star in our community. Please read this carefully as it might impact your parenting time!

“Vocabulary development at age three has been found to predict reading achievement by third grade. The quality and quantity of language that children hear in their first three years contributes to their cognitive development, and the interactions children have with language in their earliest years form the foundation of their ability to be able to read and to comprehend what they read later on. When children are read stories, they encounter new words beyond the words that they

would hear as families go about their “daily business” together, as they eat, get ready for bed, go to the store, for example. When parents read to children, they hear more complex and sophisticated language which become the building blocks of their literacy and language development. Researchers have found that families who share books tend to have more “extra talk” beyond the daily “business talk” that happens as families move through their day and routines together. This “extra talk” also tends to contain more affirmations, which contributes to children’s self-esteem. In a study conducted by researchers Hart and Risley, they found that the children who received exposure to more words and affirming content had larger vocabularies and more sophisticated verbal and literacy skills as measured by third grade tests.”

Two of the greatest things you can do with your child is to talk and to read. Turn off the TV, put away the cell phone and crack open a book – you’ll be glad you did!

Valentine’s Day is quickly approaching. Those of you who have been around Outer Limits for a while know that we intentionally do not celebrate holidays. We do this for many reasons. First, we want to respect each of your own family traditions. When we were celebrating holidays at Outer Limits we had families who would take off of work so their child did not have to come on celebration days. This seems unfair if we are trying to have an inclusive, diverse population at Outer Limits. Therefore, we ask that you do not send in candy and Valentine’s Day cards as we will not celebrate Valentine’s Day. Many classes will discuss friendship as that may be of great interest during the month of February but we ask that you don’t send in any special treats around Valentine’s Day. Thank you for understanding.

We recently completed two days of Quality First assessments. Many of you know that Quality First helps improve the quality of early childhood education throughout Arizona. Quality First also assigns ratings to centers to help families identify quality preschool. After our first assessment two years ago we rated 5 stars. This is the highest possible rating and we are proud to be one of the only centers statewide that cares for infants through school age to hold this rating. We hope to maintain the 5 star rating but know the assessment is incredibly challenging and that we are assessed on about three hours of classroom observations. (That’s not much!) We’ll let you know what our new rating is when we find out, but are confident we will assess at one of the levels that indicate quality (3,4 or 5 stars). Please feel free to ask us for more details.

We have a couple reminders for you. First, we **are** open during rodeo days and look forward to seeing your children those days. Two, please remember to walk your children all the way to class and say hello to the teacher in the classroom to ensure they notice your child entering. Lastly, school age parents – please make sure the gate to the back classroom is completely closed after you go through.

Thanks again for being part of Outer Limits. We hope to see you at our Love of Reading event. Let us know if you have any questions.

Take care,

*Minnie, Blanca, Debbie and Bill*