

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation



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CTUIR Celebrates Week of the Young Child

MISSION – The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) and its Early Childhood Department celebrated the Week of the Young Child April 8-12 to honor early learning children, as well as their teachers, families and communities.

Rayne Spencer, Child Development Intervention coordinator, said the CTUIR participated in the weeklong event to show how much goes into a child's daily development and learning.

"It is important to celebrate Week of the Young Child to highlight how children learn and the parents/caregivers, family members, friends and educators that come together to support them. It truly takes a community to nurture and uplift our future generation," she said. "What our early childhood programs hope to gain by celebrating is that everyone involved in a young child's life feels appreciated while educating individuals on what goes into their development and how we foster that learning within our classrooms."

The Week of the Young Child is celebrated during the first week of April each year with the CTUIR's events running April 8-12.

Monday's event consisted of students and faculty parading from the Nixyáawii Education Center to the Nixyáawii Governance Center. Tuesday's event was Tasty Tuesday, in which teachers discussed nutrition and wellness while showing students healthier snacks. Wednesday was a Family Engagement Night & Art Show that allowed children to show their artwork after hours at school. Thursday was Scavenger Hunt & Obstacle Course Day where each classroom completed an age-appropriate scavenger hunt and obstacle course in the Nixyáawii Community School courtyard. And Friday was Family Friday, in which parents and caregivers were invited to create a family tree with their respective children to be displayed in hallways.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children first established the Week of the Young Child in 1971, recognizing that early childhood years (birth through age 8) lay the foundation for children's success in school and beyond.

Spencer said the CTUIR has been celebrating Week of the Young Child for more than 20 years, and it's geared toward the Átaw Miyánašma Learning Center, Cay-Uma-Wa Head Start and InterMountain Education Service District Early Childhood Special Education classroom, which this year consisted of seven classrooms and 51 students.

"Early childhood is the foundation of the education system. I believe the more community that surrounds these young children, the more effective we will be in raising strong individuals," she said.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is comprised of the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla Tribes, and formed under the Treaty of 1855 at the Walla Walla Valley, 12 Stat. 945. In 1949, the Tribes adopted a constitutional form of government to protect, preserve and enhance the reserved treaty rights guaranteed under federal law.

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Caption 1: Two young girls twirl in front of the Nixyáawii Education Center's Week of the Young Child sign on April 8 in Mission. Students and faculty of the Átaw Miyánašma Learning Center, Cay-Uma-Wa Head Start and InterMountain Education Service District Early Childhood Special Education classrooms paraded from the Nixyáawii Education Center to the Nixyáawii Governance Center as part of the week's celebrations. Lisa Snell/Confederated Umatilla Journal

Caption 2: Young students enjoy snacks with flavors ranging from sweet to sour on April 9 as part of the Tasty Tuesday event during the Week of the Young Child in the Átaw Miyánašma Learning Center, Cay-Uma-Wa Head Start and InterMountain Education Service District Early Childhood Special Education classrooms. Teachers discussed nutrition and wellness while showing students healthier snacks. Lee Gavin/CTUIR

Caption 3: Parents and children gather in the Nixyáawii Community School Learning Center commons area to observe students' artworks on display during an April 10 art show to celebrate Week of the Young Child. Lee Gavin/CTUIR

Caption 4: Children hustle through an obstacle course on April 11 at the Nixyáawii Education Center as part of Scavenger Hunt & Obstacle Course Day during the Week of the Young Child. The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's Early Childhood Department celebrates the annual event to honor early learning children, as well as their teachers, families and communities. Lee Gavin/CTUIR

Caption 5: Alanna Johnson, who teaches in the Átaw Miyánašma Learning Center, holds her daughter Ryland and their family tree on April 12 as part of Family Friday, in which parents and caregivers were invited to create a family tree with their respective children to be displayed in Nixyáawii Education Center hallways. Lee Gavin/CTUIR