



SCHOOL FOR FRIENDS

## Director's Report

### MIND IN THE MAKING -Final Installment

#### Skill 3: Self-directed, engaged learning



- All of young children's achievements occur "in the context of close relationships with others." □
- Children learn best when they have time during the day for physical activity and play.
- Elaborating and extending children's experiences are essential to promoting learning.
- Gold-standard early childhood programs each based their curriculum on closely observing the children and then providing activities that moved the children from where they were to the next step in learning.
- The children most willing to take risks, to feel comfortable making mistakes, and to take on learning that is hard for them are those who are praised for their effort, not for their intelligence.
- Adults who continue to learn about children – about parenting them and teaching them - make the best parents and the best teachers.

### TEACHERS AS BABYSITTERS

We have modified our policies around this issue; please see p. 28 of the Parent Handbook on our website.

[www.schoolforfriends.org/parents/handbook](http://www.schoolforfriends.org/parents/handbook)

### RE-ENROLLMENT FOR NEXT YEAR

**Mid-month you will be given an opportunity to re-enroll for next year by the end of the month. At that time a deposit of half of September's tuition will be due. If you are planning to apply for financial aid, please do so by March 1st.**

### BRAIN RESEARCH

Recently I was reading an article in [Child Care Exchange](#) magazine by Pam Schiller on "Early brain development research review and update." One of the Findings (Touch, movement and gestures are critical to learning) is particularly relevant to our school – "the sense of touch helps children to ground abstract ideas in concrete experiences. Based on research assembled over the last 15 years, [researchers] have concluded that hands-on explorations contribute not only to the



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Accreditation

### Staff News

On January 11, [Maria Woodford & Lajuan Celey](#) observed at Bridges Public Charter School. [Jim](#) attended a full day of training on governance (with a focus on Friends-based Decision Making) on Saturday January 22 at Friends School of Baltimore.

### Welcome and Goodbye

We have a new family in the Green Room  
~ Rayan Sigvaldason and his parents Maria Sarraf & Thor Sigvaldason.  
~ Amirali Kadirov and his parents Aliya & Kuyosh have left; they have relocated to Zambia for work.

### Thanks

To the parents who came in on a Saturday to paint the loft in the Quaker House classroom – Giorgio Furioso, Matt Rosenberg, & John Hamilton.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Fund for Friends

#### Phoneathon

**Save the Date from the Fund for Friends Committee!**

**On Wednesday, February 9, 2011,**

understanding of abstract concepts but also to four critical thinking skills essential to learning: making distinctions, recognizing relationships, organizing systems, and taking multiple perspectives. This higher level thinking starts with touch.” Another Finding (During sleep the brain engages in data analysis, from strengthening memories to solving problems) reminds us that “for children, the recommended amount of sleep varies by age. A preschooler, for example, should be getting nine to ten hours of sleep each day.”

## CAMP INFO

Here's some information about a camp for older siblings: Headfirst's award-winning day camps for children ages 3 ½-13 include a wide variety of summer programs for every interest from cooking, science and movie making to swimming, sports, arts and crafts and games. Our premier facilities, top-notch staff, approach to learning and dedication to making a difference in the lives of young campers have earned us the reputation as the best summer camps in Washington, DC, Bethesda, MD and McLean, VA. Headfirst is proud to have been recognized by Sports Illustrated For Kids Magazine (voted “Best Summer Camp Program In Washington, DC”), the Positive Coaching Alliance (“National Award-Winning Organization”), and The Washington, DC Home Plate Club (“Youth Organization of the Year”). Headfirst Camps run from June 13 – August 26, 2011. For information and to register: [www.headfirstcamps.com](http://www.headfirstcamps.com) or (202) 625-1921. Weeks will sell out – reserve your spot soon!

[Link to my website](#)

## Quaker House Newsletter

Dear QH-families, welcome to the second month of the New Year!

“Reflection is turning a topic over in various aspects and in various lights so that nothing significant about it shall be overlooked”

(John Dewey. “How we think”)

Looking back on the month of January, the QH-children have been a part of lots of different activities and experiences in order to meet their interests, challenge their abilities and support their individual growth.

In general the QH-kids are taking good care of the classroom and we have been working on making some changes to “beautify” the classroom environment and find more ways to reflect each and everyone of the children and their families in our classroom. The children have really enjoyed having their family pictures framed, so they can take them with them into other areas if they choose to. The loft is repainted thanks to Giorgio Furioso, Matt Rosenberg and John Hamilton, and the children gave a warm welcome to Silas our new classroom pet fish. A very important part of our environment is the displays of the children's projects and words on the walls in the classroom and hallway in order to encourage reflection and further growth. Beginning towards the end of last month we started introducing food, nutrition and cooking, as well as the connection between food and the body. Everyone enjoyed the activities surrounding these topics, because they spoke to

**the Fund for Friends Phoneathon will take place from 7:00 until 9:00 p.m.** Our Committee members will hard at work making phone calls to all of you and we hope that you will consider giving a tax-deductible donation to the Fund for Friends that evening. Your donation to the Fund for Friends supports compensation and retention for your children's teachers, maintains affordable tuition, provides financial aid, and supplements our operating fund. This could not be possible without your help. Our goal is to raise **\$34,205** for School for Friends this year. It will take many gifts of all sizes to reach our goal this year, but the important thing is that all of us - **100%** - give as much as we possibly can. Every contribution is equally significant and greatly appreciated. We're already on our way with the generous contributions from our holiday mailing with over \$14,600 raised, including several leadership level gifts of \$1,000 or more! Please join with us as we support and strengthen our school community. Your gift to the Fund for Friends is a way of saying that you believe in what School for Friends is doing for your child.

We look forward to speaking with you on February 9th!

Co-Chairs/Quaker House: Jon Youngdahl & Gisele Grayson

Rainbow Room:

Tiffany Walker

Green Room:

Dhulsini DeZoysa

Blue Room:

Robin Teasley

**School is closed on Presidents' Day, February 21st**

multiple senses, especially our sense of taste - hmm yummy!

We will continue to offer activities and experiences around food and increasingly go beyond making simple snacks, following recipes for example for pasta and tomatoes sauce and soup. We welcome any recipes that you and your child have enjoyed making together at home in the past for the QH-cooking-book we are planning to put together. And be ready for an invitation for a special lunch cooked by the QH-chefs in the near future.

*Please make sure that your child has enough extra clothes in their clothes cubbies.*

**Upcoming Events:**

Jake's Birthday 12th

Valentine's Day 14th

President's Day 21st (school is closed)

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## Rainbow Room Newsletter

The Rainbows had a great interest in the hibernation theme that we explored in January. They have been making comments about the information that we discovered and their reports are quite accurate. This month we are studying shapes. We started last week and most of them are familiar with the shapes that we encounter on a daily basis, but we will expand their knowledge by introducing them to some that they aren't so familiar with.

The children will also discover that when some shapes are cut in half, combined and turned at different angles new shapes form. The children have become secure and settled with Makai's transition into the class. Although she has been away performing her civic duty she comes into work on Fridays and reassures them that she is still here and will soon return to being here every day.

The Rainbow Room Teachers would like to thank you for your patience and understanding during this period.

**Reminders:**

- Remember to sign in when you drop off and pick up.
- Please make sure that your child has two extra sets of clothing for the weather.
- Remember that we are outside an hour in the a.m. and p.m. and your child needs a hat, gloves, winter coat, snow pants and boots on very cold or snowy days.
- We would also like to ask parents to begin dropping off all coats, lunches and other items belonging to the Rainbows upstairs. Space is limited on the Quaker House coat hooks now that winter is here.

Thanks! from the Rainbow Room Teachers

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## Green Room Newsletter



**For the month of January** we had exciting themes and great activities. Our themes were: "Winter", "Babies" and Martin Luther King Jr. For the theme "Winter" we talked about the clothes we wear, the food we eat and special activities in that season. For the theme "Babies" we discussed how to feed, clothe and give babies baths. We also did a "Baby Food Tasting". We celebrated the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with a week of activities. The activities included a peace walk with signs, making a marble cake and painting a group diversity canvas.

**February** is Black History month. Our themes for February are "Black History" and "Love." For black history we will focus on the lives and work of notable African Americans. For the first week in February we will highlight five African Americans. During the rest of the month we will highlight others. For the theme "Love" we will focus on activities which will include Valentine's Day celebrations, such as a lunch on Wednesday, making cards for our family, and giving cards and gifts to friends and teachers.

#### **Upcoming Events!**

Family of the Week - Nicholas Feb 7

#### **Birthdays:**

Will Hamilton - Feb 15

Matteo Scano - Feb 24

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## **Blue Room Newsletter**



Dear Friends and Families of the Blue Room!

**We had a wonderful time in January!** Our themes included "Bears" and "Winter Season." We enjoyed painting and decorating bears. Those types of activities promote fine motor skills focusing primarily on eye-hand coordination. For our "Winter" theme we had a "Tea Party" and made tomato soup. These activities help to promote social skills (as they are group activities) and others aspects of child development. The "Tea Party" for instance, promotes language (conversation) among the children. It also promotes fine motor skills and self-help skills as the children had to hold the cup properly to prevent spilling. Most of the children enjoyed preparing the soup. This activity promotes trust in adults, fine motor skills (chopping vegetables), and self-regulation (waiting your turn to add an ingredient).

**In February**, thus far, we have learned about Chinese New Year (February 3, 2011). We learned that this is the year of the rabbit, which is supposed to bring positivity and peace (how fitting). We have begun our theme on music and soon we will make our own instruments out of recyclable items such as

boxes, plastic containers, rubber bands, and empty paper towel rolls (thanks so much to the families who brought in those items). And starting the week of February 14th we will begin our "Friendship and Love" theme, which includes learning about what it means to be a friend and what friends do for each other. We will pick up our best friend, bake cookies and do more yoga for our gross motor development. Families, please remember to sign up for "Family Week" as well as the "Snack List", if you would like.

**Important Dates:**

February 9, 2011 (Jasper's Birthday)

February 21, 2011 (President's Day-**School Closed**)

Thanks from the Blue Room Teachers

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