



# SCHOOL FOR FRIENDS

## NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS & FRIENDS

Director's Report

December 2010



### WINTER WEATHER (SNOW) POLICY

School for Friends closes or opens late for snow emergencies according to the decisions of the D.C. Public Schools. In addition, if DCPS is already closed, the School will close if the Federal Government closes for snow.

#### RECOMMENDED READING

I have begun to read Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs by Ellen Galinsky. I also heard a presentation she made at the national conference on this book and the ten years of research she did to prepare writing it. I think you would all enjoy it and learn a lot about child development – your child's development. It is available on Kindle. Each chapter includes a list of suggestions of what parents and teachers can do to promote the skills. Here are some tidbits from the first couple chapters:

##### Skill 1: Focus and self control

- Executive functions predict children's success as well as – if not better than – IQ tests.
- Suggestion 4: Promote focus - play games that require children to pay attention.
- Suggestion 7: Promote focus – select television shows that help children pay attention. “Watching aggression begets aggression. It's very clear that children, at young ages, will imitate aggressive acts they see on television. It's also clear from a lot of research that children will learn the ways of thinking that lead to violence – retaliation, categorizing people as good and bad guys.”
- Suggestion 8: Promote focus – realize that background television can be disruptive.
- Suggestion 9: Promote cognitive flexibility – have children play sorting games with changing rules.
- Suggestion 11: Promote cognitive flexibility – give children puzzles.

##### Skill 2: Perspective taking

- Studies have shown that children who learn perspective taking have a better adjustment to kindergarten. It helps them understand what their teachers want and expect. And there are connections between this skill and learning to read.

Suggestion 6: Use everyday moments to talk about other people's perspectives. While we tend to think about learning as “instruction,” children learn the most through having everyday experiences where adults talk about perspective taking.

#### INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

If you plan to apply your child to an independent school next year, can you please get us your teacher recommendation before the December holidays break? That way we can guarantee that they are completed on time.

#### WELCOME BACK

Easy Weissman and his parents Terri Weissman & Richard Clayton – they are back in the QH classroom for two months.

#### THANKS

- To all the parents and grandparents who worked during our clean-up day on November 13: Sybille Bayiha, Stefanie Cruz, Michelle Gavin, Michael Gavin, Douglas Guthrie, Tom Jennings, Kuyosh Kadirov, Caitriona Palmer, Jose Reyes, Joe Thompson, Jon Youngdahl, & Brenda Zwack.
- To Julia Elliot for transporting trikes back to FMW.

#### VISITORS

We hosted a couple visitors during the month of November. Educators want to visit our school to see our mission in practice. The head of school of State College (Pennsylvania) Friends School visited on November 12. And the director and a teacher from Amazing Life Games – a preschool in Crestwood, DC – visited on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Jackie Whiting, Sabina Zeffler, and I attended the NAEYC annual conference in Anaheim on November 3-6. Attached to this newsletter will be a list of sessions we attended. If you'd like any more information about these sessions, please contact us.
- Margaret Edwards & MayLing Joa observed at YuYing Public Charter School on November 17.
- November 18-20 – Lela Ivankovic attended a three-day training on emergency preparedness offered by Georgetown University. There will be a few departures from the staff this December. MayLing's last day will be December 23. Since Maire Prabhakar will not be returning from her maternity leave, we have hired Makai Kellogg as the new lead teacher for the Rainbow Room now that she has finished her student teaching in the Quaker House classroom. Leah Young in the QH classroom will leave on December 17 to be able to spend more time on her studies. Shanel James in the GR will also be leaving at the holiday break because her class schedule this next semester will not permit her to work 4-6. We will be hiring to replace her.

#### AUCTION

Thanks to all for a very successful auction. I think it boasted the highest participation rate from current families of any auction we have ever had. And it certainly reached the goal we set for ourselves. That is an important part of our budget. Plus we raised \$2500 for staff development at the auction! Special thanks to Monica Bussolati & Solange Hansen for undertaking the leadership role in this important event.

## QUAKER HOUSE NEWSLETTER

What a year 2010 has been and it is soon coming to an end. Our Quaker House children are progressing very well and are enjoying their days and evenings here in the Quaker House Room! They are all coming together intellectually as a group as well as individually. They enjoy learning and helping each other learn as well.

"Children are born ready to learn. During the preschool years a child's brain is twice as active as an adults, with trillions of connections between brain cells being made. And it is the child's relationships and experiences during the early years that greatly influence how the brain develops." --**Diane Gordon, former kindergarten teacher**

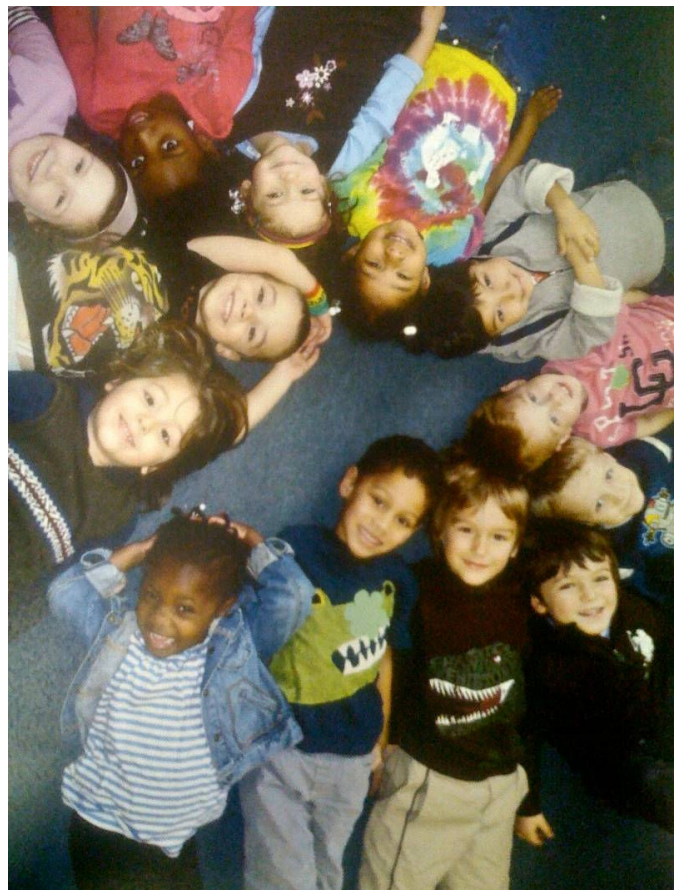
Last month was a very busy month for us as we had lots of activities as well as events! Last month Quaker House had a wonderful time and experience exploring Nature and the Environment as well as finalizing our completed projects for the Auction. We have done lots of activities and read many books that involved brainstorming and creativity amongst the whole class and on an individual basis. Some of the projects we have completed took lots of thought, and we are all proud of the work that has been done. Some examples are: making our own forest out of Styrofoam, making an animal or monster to go inside our forest, as well as a story to go along with that creature and forest. We also began turning our loft into a forest with real life objects such as tree branches and leaves!

"Creating Environments for Discovering Nature's Children live an imaginary life, and creating a place where they can have fun in a very free way can motivate them and expand their horizons." --**Robin Moore and Herbert H. Wong: Natural Learning.**

Since it has been such an enjoyment the Quaker House teachers have decided to continue designing a curriculum around Nature and Environment for the closing of this year. We are excited with the many more projects there are to come and we know the QH-Children will enjoy them as well!

"As children observe, reflect, record, and share nature's patterns and rhythms, they are participating in a process that promotes scientific and ecological awareness, problem solving, and creativity." --**Deb Matthews Hensley, early childhood consultant.**

~Quaker House would like to wish everyone wonderful Holidays and Look forward to seeing everyone in the new year of 2011!!!~



## Rainbow Room December Newsletter

Dear Parents,

It's December! Just about the most wonderful time of the year - A time for celebration and sharing with loved ones, plenty of food and fun!!

The Rainbows enjoyed the month of November, watching the atmosphere change and enjoying our fall walks. Our friends produced beautiful leaf collages and other fall art works. In December, we shared with Rainbow families and learned about their cultures and interests. Thanks again to the Bradley-Burns, Hostetter and Bahiya families for the good times shared. As it gets colder, we continue to learn through our senses – touching, smelling, listening, tasting and observing the world around us.

As we look forward to 2011, we welcome Makai Kellogg as lead teacher come January 3<sup>rd</sup>. We are confident the transition will be smooth and demonstrate to be a positive change for the children. Thank you parents for all your support these past months as the Rainbow Room established itself in its new classroom.

Happy birthday to Hunter on December 31<sup>st</sup>! Wonderful holidays to all!!

Best,  
RR Teachers

## GREEN ROOM NEWSLETTER

The Holiday Season is here again! The Green Room has exciting activities and wonderful events planned for the season. In November we worked on the auction project. We assembled a cupboard and made prints on fabric for several dress-up clothes. We focused on the theme, 'transportation', in which we discussed all the different forms of transportation. We also had a Thanksgiving lunch on November 22.



For the month of December we will be focusing on the following activities and events; Native American Culture Celebration, Dec. 13-16, Christmas and Kwanzaa, Dec. 17, 20-23.

An article in the December edition of 'Washington Parent' entitled 'Doing Good for Goodness Sake' written by Robbye Fox, addressed the topic of 'Social Interest'. It is a term that was coined by an Austrian physician and psychologist, Alfred Adler (1870-1937). Adler defined the term as 'one's sense of community or contributing to the common welfare.' In other words, 'Social Interest' is doing a task to help, or for, someone else. According to Adler, "...children seek ways to belong in a social group and to be seen as useful or a contributing member within the group.' Adler also believes that 'Social Interest' influences children's behavior and their mental health for their lifetime. He believes it was the role of parents and teachers to teach this principal. The writer states that the holiday season is an ideal time for children to get involved in activities that promote 'Social Interest,' in the home as well as the community.

### Family of the week:

Paulos Dec 13 – 17  
Will Dec 20 – 23

### Special Events:

Staff Holiday Dinner Dec 17  
Winter Break Dec 24 – Jan 3

### Birthdays:

Shanel Dec 14  
Andrea Dec 27  
Paulos Dec 28

**Happy Holidays!**

**From Jackie, Margaret and Shanel**



# Blue Room Newsletter December 2010

Thank you so much for such a successful auction! The children really enjoyed creating their auction project. It was the Water Lilies inspired canvas from Blue Room expressionists. We are almost done with fall conferences. We enjoyed speaking with you about your child. Each child has developed so much even in just three months. We are looking forward to watching them grow more physically and cognitively.



## *Upcoming Themes in December*

In the month of December we will learn about "December Holidays." We will talk about Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanza. In case of snow, we will try to organize a "Winter Walk". We would like to go to the park to make a snow person. We will learn through books, conversation during circle time and numerous art and cooking projects.

Just before "Winter Break", we will have a holiday party, on December 23<sup>rd</sup> at noon. All of you are invited to have a lunch with us in the Blue Room Classroom. We will make a food list/ sign up sheet and we will display it on the parents' board.



## *Reminders/Important Dates*

Please check your child's extra clothes cubby to make sure it is appropriately stocked for the upcoming winter. This should include two to three pairs of "change of clothes". Please, make sure that you have mittens/gloves and hats for your child. Lastly, in January, we will need snow suits as it can get really cold, and we will go outside to play most of the time unless extreme circumstances take place.

## **Conference dates:**

**December 17<sup>th</sup>** for Clara@1pm, Colette@1:30pm, Trey@2pm, Derick@3pm, Jackson @3:30pm.

**December 20<sup>th</sup>** for Amirali@1pm, Paloma@1:30pm, Daniella@2pm, Jasper@3pm, Leo@3:30pm.

**Teacher's Holiday Dinner, December 17, 2010 (school closes @5pm).**

**Holiday party, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010**

**Winter Break December 24<sup>th</sup> 2009-January 3<sup>st</sup> 2011**

**Sessions attended by Jim Clay**  
**National Association for the Education of Young Children**  
**2010 Annual Conference – November 3-6, 2010, Anaheim, CA**

**Wednesday, November 3**

**“Antibias strategies that work! A tool kit for promoting diversity and equity in your classroom”** Presenters: Chris Amirault, Rhode Island AEYC & Brown/Fox Point ECEC **(3 hours)**

**Thursday, November 4**

**“Increasing preservice teachers’ knowledge of child and adolescent development and learning”** Presenters: Samuel Meisels, Erikson Institute; James P. Comer, Yale University Child Study Center; Jon Snyder, Bank Street College of Education; Randy Hitz, Portland State University; James Cibulka, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. **(1.5 hours)**

**“Engaging young children in critical thinking about prejudice and taking action for fairness: Building blocks of antibias education”** Presenter: Louise Derman-Sparks, Pacific Oaks College (formerly). **(1.5 hours)**

**Friday, November 5**

**““Privileged? Not me!” Addressing and dismantling racism to build an early childhood community where everyone is safe, valued, and respected”** Presenters: Claire Chang, The Saint Paul Foundation; Beth Menninga and Sandra Heidemann, Words Work! **(1 hour)**

**“Keeping our children engaged in learning: A guided tour of cutting-edge research on children’s learning and seven skills that are essential for life success”** Presenters: Ellen Galinsky, Families and Work Institute. **(1.5 hours)**

**Saturday, November 6**

**“Children who are transgender in our care: Welcoming them and meeting their needs”** Presenter: Robin Fox, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. **(1 hour)**

**Total # of hours: 9.5**

**Sessions attended by Jackie Whiting**  
**National Association for the Education of Young Children**  
**2010 Annual Conference – November 3-6, 2010, Anaheim, CA**

**Wednesday, November 3**

**“From Michigan to Reggio Emilia and back: An ongoing journey of transformation and professional growth for each individual and the team”** Presenters: Cheryl Priest, Margaret Desormes, Ranay Gursky, and Anastasia Bristley, Central Michigan University. *Preschoolers*. (3 hours)

**“Research for innovation: Ongoing interpretations of Reggio Emilia’s philosophies and experiences”** Presenters: Margie Cooper, Inspired Practices in Early Education, Inc.; Jennifer Strange, North American Reggio Emilia Alliance; Amelia Gambetti and Lella Gandini, Reggio Children. (3 hours)

**“Touchpoints: Caring for children, parents, and other caregivers”** Presenters: **T. Berry Brazelton, MD, and Joshua Sparrow, MD**, Brazelton Touchpoints Center. (1.5 hours) 4:30–6:00 p.m.

**Thursday, November 4**

**“Ooey Gooley® squishy plop! Sensory play for every day”** Presenters: Lisa Murphy, Ooey Gooley Inc. (1 hour)

**“Eco-Healthy Child Care: Promoting environmentally healthy, safe, and green facilities”** Presenters: Hester Paul, Eco-Healthy Child Care. (1.5 hours)

**“Acorns are tired and they fall from trees”: Embracing nature in a Reggio-inspired preschool setting”** Presenters: Brigitte Dubois and Jocelyn Khalifa, St. John’s Episcopal Preschool. (1 hour)

**“What do we do when they turn 2? Unpacking the unique developmental needs of 2-year olds”** Presenters: James Clay and Jacqueline Whiting, School for Friends. (1.5 hours)

**“Creating a caring community of learners through music”** Presenters: Thomas Moore, Thomas Moore Enterprises, Inc. (1 hour)

**Friday, November 5**

**“Cooking with children: Healthy, seasonal, and inexpensive foods and projects for the classroom”** Presenters: Sheila Williams Ridge, Amanda Janquart, Heather Erickson, and Britney Stark, Dodge Nature Preschool. (1 hour)

**“Get your motor running! Movement, play, and physical activity for every body”** Presenters: Sharron Krull, Play Power. (1.5 hours)

**“Yes, more drama, please!” Incorporating drama throughout the day”** Presenters: Paula Marinos and Heather Caciola, All Saints Episcopal Day School. (1 hour)

**“Sharpening your assessment lens: Create stronger links to teaching, development, and learning”** Presenters: Cate Heroman and Diane Trister Dodge, Teaching Strategies Inc. (1.5 hours)

**Saturday, November 6**

**“Let’s get moving! Ageappropriate movements to integrate into the preschool day”** Presenters: Faith Grinder, The SPARK Programs. (1 hour)

**“Whip up some music and have a blast! Discover a recipe for adding fun, spice, and Three KIND Mice to your classroom”** Presenters: Beth Green, “The Music Lady.” (1.5 hours)

**Total # of hours: 21**

**Sessions attended by Sabina Zeffler**  
**National Association for the Education of Young Children**  
**2010 Annual Conference – November 3-6, 2010, Anaheim, CA**

**Wednesday, November 3**

**“Antibias strategies that work! A tool kit for promoting diversity and equity in your classroom”** Presenters: Chris Amirault, Rhode Island AEYC & Brown/Fox Point ECEC (3 hours).

**“You can’t make me!” Five levels of defiance and how to effectively respond to each”** Presenters: Jill Molli and Becky Bailey, Loving Guidance. (3 hours)

**Thursday, November 4**

**“Food for thought: Ideas for classroom cooking projects”** Presenters: Meredith Lord and Kathrine Utzke, Our Growing Village. (1 hour)

**“Rediscovering the big picture: The importance of intentional and reflective teaching for children”** Rachel Johnson, Laura Earley, and Christine Meyer, Los Angeles Universal Preschool. (1.5 hours)

**“Acorns are tired and they fall from trees”: Embracing nature in a Reggio-inspired preschool setting”** Presenters: Brigitte Dubois and Jocelyn Khalifa, St. John’s Episcopal Preschool. (1 hour)

**“Balancing play and instruction in the early childhood classroom”** Presenters: Edward Miller, Alliance for Childhood; Barbara Bowman, Chicago Public Schools; Maurice Sykes, University of the District of Columbia; Sherry Cleary, City University of New York. (1.5 hours)

**“Engaging young children in critical thinking about prejudice and taking action for fairness: Building blocks of antibias education”** Presenters: Louise Derman-Sparks, Pacific Oaks College (formerly). (1.5 hours)

**Friday, November 5**

**“What can we learn from trees? Using the project approach to conduct a scientific investigation of trees”** Presenters: Stefanie Adamson-Kain and Kristy Leyton, Center for Young Children, University of Maryland. (1hour)

**“Research for innovation in Reggio Emilia: Learning experiences and projects with children, teachers, and parents”** Presenters: Lella Gandini and Amelia Gambetti, Reggio Children. (1.5 hours)

**“Reggio-inspired strategies to integrate math concepts throughout the curriculum”** Presenters: Dolores Stegelin, Clemson University. (1 hour)

#624 **“Becoming a teacher Researcher”** Presenters: Daniel Meier and Barbara Henderson, San Francisco State University; Isauro Michael Escamilla, Las Americas Child Development Center; Nkechi Nwankwo, South of Market Child Care Center. (1 hour)

#615 **“Sharpening your assessment lens: Create stronger links to teaching, development, and learning** Presenters: Cate Heroman and Diane Trister Dodge, Teaching Strategies Inc.(0.5 hours)

**“My world, your world: Revisiting early childhood practices based on expectations and beliefs held by various socioeconomic groups”** Presenter: Jenny Bilmes, Walden University. (1 hour)

**Saturday, November 6**

**“Let there be light: Arranging the preschool classroom for long-term light investigations and discoveries”** Presenter: Lauren Smith, Tribeca Community School. (0.5 hour)

**“Going green with recycling: Raising environmental awareness in the preschool classroom”** Presenters: Cecilia Fowler and Sara Person, University of Maryland. (0.5 hour)

**“Helping boys learn emotional intelligence: What we can learn from gender science Terri Emberling”,** ECE Professional Development Solutions. (1.5 hours)

**Total # of hours: 21**