

Phyllis Bodel Childcare Center at Yale School of Medicine, Inc.
February, 2008 Newsletter

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Dear Parents,

The main difficulty of our location is the lack of storage space. For our infant-toddler parents on the Dorm side, the stroller pile up is becoming a danger to the children and our parents must find a way to store their umbrella strollers in their office. For our infant/toddler parents on the pre-school side, the entry way is a common space and we must clear all strollers from the space. Your prompt attention is appreciated.

We recently had parents, albeit not purposely, let non Bodel parents into the Center. We are locked and have proxy cards for the protection of the children. Especially on the pre-school side with new offices opening on the second to fourth floors, please, if you do not recognize the parent and they do not have their own key, send them to the office. Do not let them into the Center.

We sincerely want to thank our families who took the time to fill out the Annual Parent Survey. We heard back from 41 of our 76 families. The following is a summary of the results. For information sake, the points in which all our parents were able to answer yes, we will not address. We will share the points that the parents did not answer yes and hopefully, answer any questions.

1. For those who answered no to our question regarding inclusion in an annual program review, this survey is our review. The last survey was sent out December of 2006, with the results shared February of 2007. This newsletter (February, 2008) shares the results from the Annual Survey sent December, 2007. I think it is an issue of NAEYC's language using survey when this is also an evaluation. Parents are given this opportunity each year to give feedback on ways to improve the program.
2. Our Pot Luck suppers are the best opportunity for our parents to come together and meet each other and get to know other families. In September, we offer a breakfast for our families, this year we had 7 families come. We are always open to suggestions from our parents and if there is some other venue that would help our families meet this criterion of getting to know other parents, please let us know.

3. *(The Program Staff helps me learn about community events and resources that can help my child and family)* All our families are urged to look at the Bulletin Boards located on either side of the building. Posted there are events from Common Ground, the New Haven Symphony, and any other local events of which we have been notified. If information of an upcoming event comes to us, we do post it for you to possibly attend with your child. In addition, on page 5 of your hand book is listed the location of a variety of agencies available to our families.
4. *(I know how the program makes sure that information about my child and his or her progress is kept confidential)* There were a few families who did not know our confidentiality policy. Please review on the bottom of page three of your handbook. Addressed in that paragraph is complete statement regarding how we handle all information about our children and families.
5. *(The program helps me to get to know other families in the program and encourages us to support each other.)* For our families who did not feel that they are invited to participate in events within the program, please let me extend an open invitation. We only had one response for new parent participation on the Board last year, or to work on any committees, we need parents for the auction committee. To date only two parents have volunteered. (And we sincerely appreciate them.) Invitations are in the newsletters and by email for a variety of events within the Center. We need parents to participate. This is your invitation!
6. *(The teacher often shares information about things happening in the program and wants to know about things my child is doing at home. The teacher asks about things that are important in our family and uses this information to help my child grow and learn.)* Finally, in support of our incredible staff who work so hard with the children, spend so many hours writing in journals, planning for conferences and planning each week for individual children, I want to say that if you are not reading your child's journal and writing back to the teachers, if you do not attend the parent teacher conferences, if you do not notice the plans that are posted right next to your sign in sheets, you are missing so much information about your child's day. When you do not read these communications you are missing requests for your presence in the classroom and you are missing an open invitation and opportunity to share the home life of your child. Our staff are warm, wonderful, caring and sensitive people. When they ask how was your evening, how was your weekend, it is an invitation to share. When they hear "fine" and no further comment, they will not press. This is a partnership; please share with us how we can better reach out to our families to meet this criterion.

February Calendar:

February 1: Teacher workshop on Mandated Reporters. Center opens at 8:30.

February 6: Music for the Pre-school and Kindergarten. Auction meeting 8:30 am.

February 7: Dental Consultants to talk with Kindergarten and Pre-school for National Dental Health Month.

February 15: Board Meeting Cancelled. Next Board meeting, March 14th.
February 22: Kindergarten Open House

Special Thank you's:

Ella Zimolo's family for soft Kleenex for the Toddlers
Eli Driscoll's family for soft Kleenex for the Toddlers
Halvor Suter's family for soft Kleenex for the Toddlers
Felix Kibbey's family for the paper plates for the Dolphins
Antonio Giraldez's family for the paper plates for Infant 2.
Laila Samuel's family for the donated farm blocks for the pre-school.
Benjamin Rudikoff's grandmother for all the baskets for our auction.

Toddlers: Transitions, tantrums and the development of trust.

Change is uncomfortable for the majority of people and for toddlers, struggling with autonomy (independence), the discomfort is increased. Change most frequently comes from an outside source and if you, the toddler, are driven to make your own independent choices, any influence...parents, teachers, etc. that is enforcing a change will most likely be met with resistance. This resistance usually takes on a form of a tantrum. If you think of the number of normal transitions in the course of the day (getting up, getting dressed, eating, going to school,...) you can see how frustrating the world can appear to a toddler who believes it is their moral obligation to hold their ground and make their own decisions. So where does the development of trust (trust in self, environment and others), critical for all development enter into this process? Autonomy fosters trust. It means that for toddlers, set, predictable routines allow them to predict what happens next, to help them become more independent. With routines they can anticipate and prepare for transitions and they learn to trust their environment, where things are and what they are for. They learn to trust their caregivers, parents and teachers because they follow through on what they say and they learn to trust themselves that they have made a successful transition and they are proud of their accomplishments.

Important footnote: The toddler's view of the world has often been compared to looking through a kaleidoscope. What works great one day may not work the next! You just have to keep consistent and positive and remember your little one is working very hard on growing up and really is not focused on thwarting you.

The Auction:

April 17th, mark your calendars, is our sixth annual auction. Our special thanks to Angela Cui's family for their donations and Benjamin Rudikoff's family for their donations. We need your help to make this auction successful. Our next auction meeting is Wednesday, February 6th in the auction. All our families are invited to attend and work together for this important fundraiser. This is an invitation to our families to work with other families to get to know them, to work on a committee that is important for the center, and to become more involved in this special community to which you bring your child every day. Your support is important.

