

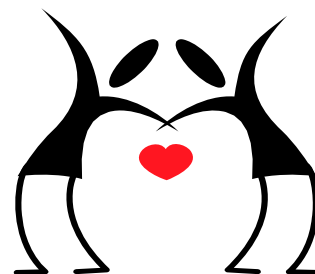
Congratulations GCC for Maintaining NAEYC Accreditation!

Happy Valentine's Day!

GREENBELT CHILDREN'S CENTER FEBRUARY 2009 NEWSLETTER

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Dear Parents,

February marks the beginning of the Spring Semester. As we enter the second half of our school year, we welcome the new families that have recently joined us. We are very happy to have our new families joining us!

We would like to announce some very good news! Our own music teacher, **Mr. James McKinney, and parent to Ambe, Rm 3 and Azinwi, Rm 2**, has received a **Grammy Nomination** in the 2009 Best Urban Alternative Performance category. He co-wrote and co-produced a re-make of Minnie Ripperton's "Loving You" for Maryland based artist Wayna. He also produced the re-mix for nominated performance of "Wanna Be" by Maishya. He is traveling to the Grammys this week to attend the awards ceremony. You can watch the pre-telecast section of the awards in which his nominations will be awarded at: www.GRAMMY.com from 4-7:45 pm EST and watch the main event on CBS at 8 pm on Sunday, February 8, 2009. Congratulations to Mr. McKinney and we hope to hear all about your trip when you return!

How fast the year has past! We are so proud of the efforts of all the faculty and staff for the hard work that is done every day to ensure that GCC is providing a high quality early childhood care and education program. The report from the National Association for the Education of Young Children received last year includes information about the term of our NAEYC accreditation (5 years) and a summary of scores for each of the 10 NAEYC standards. Included were suggestions for ongoing improvement by topic area based on the data collected during the site visit which we will use in our annual report which we are working on at this time. A summary from the assessment visit last year follows:

<u>Percentage of Met Criteria By Program Standard:</u>		<u>Percentage of Met Criteria For Each Classroom Observed:</u>	
Relationships	100%	Room 3	99%
Curriculum	100%	Room 1	99%

Teaching	100%
Assessment of Child Progress	80%
Health	100% *
Teachers	80% *
Families	83% *
Community Relationships	100+% *
Physical Environment	100% *
Leadership and Management	100+% *

Summary of Required Criteria

Candidacy Requirements

1.B.09	Met	License/License Exempt Status	Met
3.C.02	N/A	Collaboration	Met
3.C.04	Met	Administrator Qualifications	Met
5.A.03	Met	Teacher Qualifications	Met
5.A.12	N/A	Assistant Teacher Qualifications	Met
10.A.02	Met		
10.B.04	Met		

Note: To achieve NAEYC Accreditation, a program MUST: meet all Required Criteria; meet at least 80% of the criteria on which it is assessed for each program standard; and each observed classroom must meet at least 70% of the criteria on which it is assessed. Programs who do not meet Candidacy requirements may be subject to further verification.

* Score includes credit given for meeting Emerging Criteria (similar to extra credit, not yet required). Please note that even if our program scored 100% or better on a particular Program Standard, there still may be topic areas reported for ongoing improvements. This can occur because Emerging Criteria are given extra credit when scoring. Therefore, there could be unmet criteria in a particular topic area although the credit given for meeting the emerging criteria raised the Program Standard score to 100% or more.

During each site visit, classroom observations are random and the assessor does an observation in 50 % of all classrooms. In this visit, Rooms 1 and 3 were the randomly assessed classrooms.

We continue to work on program improvement for each annual report. Each classroom has a copy of the full report posted on the Parent Information Board for your review and please let us know if you have any questions. You should feel very good about the choice that you have made for your child. Greenbelt Children’s Center is a very good place for children!

February Activities:

Teachers have a full month of activities planned for your child, which may include units on Black History, President's Day, Valentine's Day, and Dental Health. Room 3 will also do a unit of dinosaurs. In addition to these units, the children will be involved in Book Club events and continuing activities about different kinds of transportation and car seat safety.

Lending Library Continues!

Have you been faithful about reading 10 books per month to your child? Thank you!! We need your help in fulfilling goals for the grant to the local school system. We need you to borrow and read **10 books every month!!** Can we count on you? It's a very good thing for your child! More and more research is showing that the children who love books are the children that succeed in school! We are offering an incentive to each classroom that has 100% participation by the end of February! Make sure you are helping them to meet this goal-check out a book today! Read 10 books each month to your child from our lending library! Help your child's class to meet the goal!

IMPORTANT TAX INFORMATION

When claiming child care on your income tax form, you will need to use the Center's **FEDERAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER** which is: **52-1689271**. End of year tax summaries were placed in Art folders on January 16, 2009 for use in filing your income taxes.

EARNED INCOME CREDIT

Also, for *any family* with an income of about \$33,692.00 or less, be sure to fill out "Schedule EIC" to see if you are eligible for **UP TO \$4900.00** of Earned Income Credit (this is a Federal Income Tax Form). This benefit is for both married and single parents. There is also a **Maryland EIC for your state taxes**. For more information about the Earned Income Credit and where you can get your taxes done for free, call **First Call For Help at 1-800-492-0618** or the IRS toll free at 1-800-829-1040 or go to www.irs.gov/individuals/topic.

ABSOLUTE NECESSITIES

Every child needs an extra complete change of clothes at all times! Please check, while you are reading this, to see if your child has underwear and socks as well as an extra shirt and pants. Remember - your child really counts on you for this! (Two changes are requested for the younger children.) **Please send boots and mittens so that we can comfortably enjoy the outdoors whenever the weather allows.**

Also, we are making a plea for parents to limit lunch that must be heated up every day. Think about it- there is only one microwave per class, 20 children and if everyone had something that takes *only 90 seconds* that is $20 \times 90 \text{ seconds} = 1800 / 60 = 30 \text{ minutes}$! This equation does not account for putting things in and taking them out! The last child to get his lunch heated up is now crying because the others are finished eating. **PLEASE** help us with this problem! Children like sandwiches and salads too!

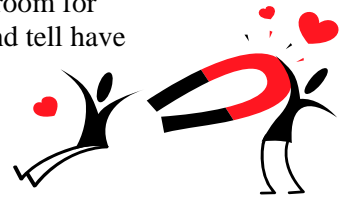
Did You Know?

- **Maryland now ranks #1 in the nation for top quality education! Most of this is being attributed to the strides being made in early childhood education!**
- **GCC FOLLOWS THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SNOW OR EMERGENCY CLOSINGS!! (IF SCHOOLS OPEN LATE, GCC WILL OPEN LATE ALSO!!) Sometimes the public schools are closed when GCC is open, meaning no inclement weather announcement would be made by the school system. If that happens try WTOP 103.5 FM or FOX TV Channel 5 for a GCC announcement.**
- Parent Conferences are now being scheduled for **the 2.5 year olds**. The bi-annual



assessments for two's have now been completed. In the spring, conferences will again be held for parents of 2.5, 3, 4, and 5 year olds. Please see your child's teacher to schedule a conference.

- Lesson plans and snack menus are posted in your child's classroom on the Parent Information Bulletin Board. Be sure to stop and take a look at least once per week. Art folders are considered "Parent Mailboxes". Be sure to check yours daily for important communications being sent home to YOU! Also, remember that you can view our Breakfast & Snack menu, Newsletters and Calendars for each month of the school year on our website at www.greenbeltchildrenscenter.com.
- Please make sure your child's shot record is up to date in the office! Remember to **update the office anytime your child receives boosters! (Especially for four or five year olds who will be in Pre-K or K next year!)**
- Please remember to check the Parent Information Board in your child's classroom for specific details about show and tell each week. Parents' efforts with show and tell have been wonderful this school year!
- That you must submit any changes in program or withdrawal **IN WRITING** two weeks in advance.
- It's time to plan for the children's transitions for next school year. Most children will change classrooms in the fall. Children turning four by September 1, 2009 will move to Pre-k in **Room 1** if your family resides in Prince Georges' County. If you are an out of county resident, your child will join the Pre-k program in Rm 3. Children turning five by that date will be eligible for the alternative **kindergarten program at GCC in Room 3 this fall**. Children entering the public school system will need to be registered by May at their neighborhood school. Teachers will begin working on individualized transition plans which includes sharing information with the future teachers and discussing upcoming changes with children so that they will be well prepared when the change occurs.



SHARE WITH ME!

There was a great article in Scholastic Early Childhood Today, November/December 1998 about the stages related to learning how to share, a very important social skill! The following is an excerpt that may interest you:

STAGE BY STAGE

- * Infants begin to share in their own way, offering food and toys to important adults in their lives.
- * The exchange of toys is fairly easy for infants. They haven't yet developed a strong sense of ownership.
- * "Mine" becomes a favorite word as children naturally develop strong feelings of ownership.
- * By three and a half, a child will probably become a little less protective of a toy if she knows it will come back to her.
- * Besides sharing toys and materials, many fours also love to share long involved stories.
- * Many fours have a best friend with whom they are eager to share.
- * Older children begin to develop empathy - the ability to understand the feelings, motives, and experiences of other people.
- * When problems arise, encourage fives and sixes to stop for a minute, look at the situation, and listen to each other's side of the story.
- * At this level, sharing takes on a much larger perspective. Instead of simply involving toys,

sharing also includes feelings, understandings, and experiences.

* If you thought it was important for children to have designated space of their own in the earlier years, it's even more important now. Seven- and eight-year-olds need privacy and a sense of security about their "stuff". Part of individuation is defining what is to be shared and what is NOT!

* Seven- and eight- year-olds are ready for (and interested in) engaging in community projects that involve sharing and empathy. Invite children to suggest a community project they can work on. Explore and create "Make a Difference Day" projects that serve the local community.



Thank you ...

GCC would like to thank the following families for some special contributions to the GCC program:

Crystal Morris , Marvin Rm 1 for the donation of scholastic and other books to our lending library, **Dawne Frisby, DeVaughn, Rm 1** for the army fatigues to each classroom's dramatic play center, **Myisha Hagler, Trinity Rm 1& Takia, Rm 2** for the many books donated to the lending library, **Yi Song, Kevin Rm 2** for the beautiful Teacher Resource Book about Chinese New Year and to **Yuhong Tian, Daniel, Rm 1** for coming to GCC and teaching the staff and children about the customs and celebration of Chinese New Year, including making fried rice and dumplings that were unbelievably delicious! Teachers are planning Valentine's Day parties on Friday, February 13th. Look in your child's classroom soon for a sign up sheet for donations! Thank you for your continued support of the GCC program. It makes the program here richer when parents take an active role and volunteer!



Children's Legislative Day in Annapolis!

There will be an opportunity for any parents wishing to become advocate in early childhood to join Mrs. Gee, GCC Director and the many Maryland Committee for Children (MCC) advocates who will go to visit our legislators in Annapolis on Wednesday, March 25, 2009. Please let Mrs. Gee know if you would like to attend an MCC meeting in Baltimore and then head down to Annapolis that afternoon. This is a yearly event. Mrs. Gee will be out of the office on February 10 and 11th to attend the annual Public Policy Forum of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and will be visiting our federal legislators on Capital Hill. Mrs. Gee serves as the Public Policy Co-Chair for the MD Association for the Education of Young Children. You may view that website at www.mdaeyc.org.

Welcome College and High School Interns!

We welcome new intern, Ray Leslie, from Prince Georges Community College, as he starts an internship in Early Childhood Education for the Spring Semester. GCC serves as a training resource for the local colleges in the community because of the high quality of the program and teaching staff, and because it is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. We also have three interns from Eleanor Roosevelt High School's Child Development programs, Tiffany Ibeawuchi, Janea McCammon and Angela Kelley. Some students have the opportunity to actually earn college credits in their senior year through this program. We appreciate the GCC teachers who are mentoring our interns.

