

Congratulations GCC for Maintaining NAEYC Accreditation!

Happy Valentine's Day!

GREENBELT CHILDREN'S CENTER FEBRUARY 2010 NEWSLETTER

EDITED BY FLORA L. GEE, M.ED.

DIRECTOR

7600 HANOVER PARKWAY, SUITE 100

GREENBELT, MD 20770 (301) 345-8830 Phone (301) 345-0874 Fax



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 you here at GCC! We said goodbye to Beverly Cunningham, Teacher in Room 2, last month who was unable to continue with us and we welcome Beverly Adamson, to the fulltime closing teacher position in Room 2. She has been a wonderful addition to our Room 2 team here at GCC since last spring and so this has been an easy transition for our children. We also welcome back Ms. Donna Nance, who was out for the month of January recovering from surgery. Room 1 teachers, children and families have missed her very much!

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 been very involved in the **Grammy Awards** process and has been traveling to Los Angeles recently. Last year he was nominated 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 the 2009 nominated performance of "Wanna Be" by Maishya. 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 when we went through re-accreditation 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 our last assessment visit follows:

Percentage of Met Criteria
By Program Standard:

Percentage of Met Criteria
For Each Classroom Observed:

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 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. 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 15, 2010 for use in filing your income taxes. There may be an increase for families in the amount that can be claimed this year.

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. Please label your child's name on each item brought from home.**

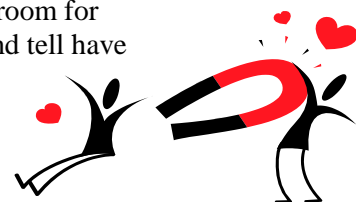
Also, we are making a plea for parents to limit lunch that must be heated up every day. Think about it- there is only one microwave per class, 20 children and if everyone had something that takes *only 90 seconds* that is $20 \times 90 \text{ seconds} = 1800 / 60 = 30 \text{ minutes}$! This equation 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?

- **That we have requested that GCC be a nut free environment? We have children who have severe allergies to all tree nuts and peanuts. Please do not send in anything containing nuts. This is a life or death issue for some of our children and we thank you for being members of a caring community.**



- **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 are 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.
- February is African American History month and Children's Dental Health Month?
- 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. Classroom 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 there will be a census in April 2010? Everyone needs to be counted so please participate! This is how our area gets government resources allocated fairly based on the numbers of citizens- men, women and children.
- 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, 2010 will move to Pre-k in **Room 1** if your family resides in Prince Georges' County and meets any other eligibility requirements that may be required. If you are an out of county resident, your child will join the Pre-k program in **Room 3**. Children turning five by that date will be eligible for the alternative **kindergarten program at GCC in Room 3 this fall**. We are counting on our pre-k families to enroll their children in our Kindergarten program if you are not going to public school. Please support GCC! 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:

Caitlyn Laster and family for the donation of books to GCC.

Teachers are planning Valentine's Day parties on Friday, February 12th, which is also Lincoln's birthday. 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!



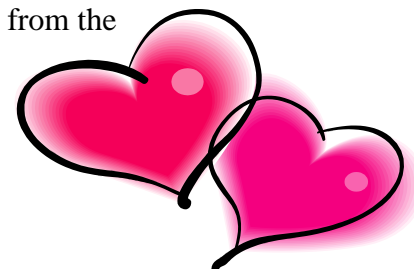
Children's Legislative Day in Annapolis!

There will be an opportunity for any parents wishing to become advocate in early childhood to join the many Maryland Family Network (MFN, formerly Md Committee for Children and MD Family Support Centers) advocates who will go to visit our legislators in Annapolis on Monday, February 8, 2010. Please let Mrs. Gee know if you would like to attend an MFN Public Policy meeting in Baltimore to be a part of important discussions about legislative issues that affect children and families. The Children's Advocacy Evening is a yearly event and more information can be found at mdchildcare.org. Mrs. Gee will be out of the office on February 2nd and 3rd 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 Public Policy Co-Chair for the MD Association for the Education of Young Children.

You may view their website at www.mdaeyc.org.

Welcome College and High School Interns!

We welcome four students from the University of Maryland and two from the Prince George's Community College, as they begin fieldwork or internship placements under the guidance of our GCC teachers 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, 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, Jordan Veney, Corria Hawkins and Nathaniel Williamson. Some students have the opportunity to actually earn college credits during their senior year of high school through this program. We appreciate the GCC teachers who are mentoring our interns.

Wolf Trap Artist in Residency Program

The children have been enjoying time twice per week with our Artist in Residency, Ali Oliver. Each classroom is engaged in bringing language and literacy to life as the children participate using the performing arts to act out stories. They also learn skills such as perspective taking and character education and values as they take on the roles of characters in the stories. This program continues through this month and ends on March 18th.

The Wolf Trap Foundation contacted us recently to invite our pre-school and kindergarten programs to participate in a new and innovative offering for the years 2011 and 2012. The new program will involve math, science and engineering! We said "Sign us up!" and we look forward to joining them in this new endeavor, as well. Our state has made such strides in recent years with the focus on language and literacy increases in achievement rates for our children at GCC. Now the same emphasis is being placed on the science and mathematics area also. We think that your child will benefit very much from the participation of this proposed program and we are happy to be able to offer it here at GCC.

