

Greenbelt Children's Center

7600 Hanover Parkway, Greenbelt, MD 20770

Telephone (301) 345-8830 Fax (301) 345-0874

Flora Gee, Director

NOVEMBER 2009 NEWSLETTER



Dear Parents,

The month of November is a time to be thankful and we certainly have much to be thankful for at GCC. Many thanks to all of you who have been able to take an active role in your child's program since the start of the first semester. Family support and involvement is an important component of our program. **Parents and Grandparents, you have simply amazed us!!!** Please remember that we sincerely welcome and encourage you to come and visit your child's class anytime. For anyone that can, bring a brown bag lunch and come join your child at lunch time! We guarantee the children will treat you as a VIP and your child will feel very special to have you visit at lunchtime.

NOVEMBER MEANS NUTRITION

November means the end of the harvest and the children will be spending the next few weeks learning about nutrition. They will be involved in units about the food pyramid food guide, where foods come from, and discussions about healthy foods vs. junk foods.

Parents can help by being sure that healthy lunches are being packed, using the guidelines in the GCC Parent Handbook.

(Remember: fruit roll ups, gummy animals, etc ARE NOT FRUIT!)

They are the equivalent to candy. We allow them but you must pack **2 SERVINGS** of FRUITS AND/OR VEGETABLES IN EACH LUNCH!) We'll be looking for those *two* fruits and/or veggies! This month will also bring discussions of the Thanksgiving Day Holiday, Thanksgiving traditions and our compassion for people less fortunate.

Parent Involvement: Parent-Teacher Trainings

Remember, **YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND LIFELONG TEACHER!** We are planning a Parent-Teacher Training on Positive Communication and Conflict Resolution called "**Moving from Lose, Lose to Win, Win**". Social Worker, Kathy Kaufmann, from Bowie therapeutic/Project WIN will be our trainer that evening. This event is planned for Tuesday, December 1, from 6:30-8:30 pm. Look for a sign-up sheet soon. We will be holding this event jointly with the staff & parents of Greenbelt Nursery School, paid for by our Judith P. Hoyer Grant to Private Providers.

Parent-Teacher conferences will be available this month. Look for a sign-up sheet in your child's classroom to schedule a parent-teacher conference.

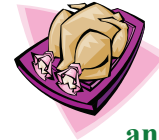


Canned Food Drive

Our center will participate in the canned and boxed food drive sponsored by the Greenbriar Community to help stock a local Food Pantry, which is experiencing a severe shortage. **From now until November 19th, you may have your child bring in a donation of**

canned or dry goods to drop in the designated box at GCC. All foods donated will go to Thanksgiving baskets for local families throughout Prince Georges County who are less fortunate. We will also participate in the Greenbriar Coat Drive, so you may also donate clean and usable coats as well, through November 19th. A toy drive will take place from December 1st through 16th.

Annual GCC Thanksgiving Feast



We will have our annual Celebration and Feast on Tuesday, November 17th, at 11 am, in conjunction with a Book Club Event, where we look for volunteers to come in and read to the children and help with a book distribution. As has been our tradition in recent years, we acknowledge that we are all working parents with limited time and energy. Therefore, each classroom will contribute to the feast by making a cooking project using corn, cranberries, pumpkin, or sweet potatoes as a major ingredient, and enough for all the children in the center (and any parents, grandparents or other family members who can join us). Then, on that day, the children will join together to enjoy these special treats with a turkey prepared by one of our staff. We are looking for a parent, aunt/uncle or grandparent who can come in early to carve the turkey this year. Parents are invited to join us for this and you don't need to bring anything but yourself! However, if you want to contribute to the luncheon, we will be happy to receive your contribution! And promise to read to a child or two! (If you really want to help with clean up or settling the children for naptime, that would of course be so

appreciated!) We will need parents or other family members to sign up to volunteer to read to the children and help us with a book distribution so that each child receives a free book of their choosing to keep for their home library.. Please look for the sign up in your child's classroom and volunteer at GCC! Join us for the Thanksgiving feast!

Thank You!

Thanks for all the party goodies for the celebrations in October. Thank you to all the families that supported the GCC fundraiser! We saw extraordinary efforts this year! **Special thank you to Arlette del Toro & Aaron Ivey and children Max & Mia who sent a contribution from Florida in honor of Grayson & Carter Page-Wells in Rm 2!** **This year, parents raised \$2400.00, our highest total ever!** The funds are going to our playground fund to replace our aging playground climbers and swings. This brings our fund to just under \$10,000 and closer to our goal of about \$20,000 needed. We plan to do a Joe Corbi's Pizza Fundraiser soon after the holidays in January..

Congratulations to Ijeoma Nwaka and family (Rm 1), for having the largest order! Their total sales were \$542.65, just over the amounts of two other outstanding efforts by Devin Vaughan & family (Rm 1) at \$531.65 and Kameron Jones & family (Rm 3)at \$508.20! Ije will receive the \$100.00 Savings Bond! Kaitlyn Laster's name was pulled in the drawing for

a free week of tuition! Way to go Ije & Kaitlyn and everyone who participated!

We promise to provide more opportunities for fundraiser participation!



DID YOU KNOW???

- **GCC is closed on November 20th for Teacher In-service Day so that our faculty can attend the national conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, which will be in Washington, D.C. this year? The conference is held annually and only comes to D.C every four or five years, so we would like our staff to have the opportunity to attend a large professional conference. We will also try to find subs to release some staff to go on Wednesday and Thursday, also. Mrs. Gee will be at the Conference from Tuesday through Saturday.**
- That November 16-20th is National Education Week, a time for parents to visit and volunteer at their child's school?
- ...that ALL children should have extra clothes on hand in case of an "accident" or if juice is spilled, etc.? This prevents a distressed child and teacher from having to disturb you at work to bring something dry for your child! **A shoebox or similar container keeps everything together nicely and fits into the cubby space well.** Cubby boxes make it easy for teachers and children to find things! **A photograph of your child or family, fastened on the end is a**

wonderful identification marker and especially tells non-reading children where their belongings are kept. *Please check today* to see that your child has shirt, pants, **underpants**, and socks on hand at the center, and that all is **clearly marked with your child's name.** We request at least two complete changes for a younger child. *Please make sure that you TAKE OUT ALL SUMMER CLOTHES NOW before it becomes the dead of winter and we pull out a tank top and shorts!!! WE THANK YOU AND YOUR CHILD THANKS YOU, TOO!* Extra shoes are super too!

- ...that extreme caution should be used when entering/ leaving the parking lot in case a toddler should pull free and bolt away from a parent! Drive slowly and be very observant!
- ...parents can go to www.greenbeltchildrenscenter.com to view the GCC newsletter, calendar and menu, or to email Mrs. Gee, Director?

SNOW POLICY REMINDER



Yes, we realize that very few of us want to think about snow yet, but as winter weather approaches, please remember our snow closing policy. Greenbelt Children's Center will follow the **snow or other emergency closing announcements made over the radio and television for Prince George's County Public Schools.** If the public schools announce that they will be opening late due to emergency conditions, we will open late also. For example, if public schools open 1 hour late,

GCC would open at 8 am. If public schools open 2 hours late, GCC opens at 9 am. If the public schools close early, we ask that parents pick up their child as soon as possible and we will close when the last child is picked up or specify an early closing time for the center after calling all parents.

Extracurricular Activities

McKinney's Music Mondays

have been fantastic! Children are learning about musical instruments, instrumental timbre (instrument sounds), musical notes, beats and musical terms. For instance, they learned about percussion instruments and each one was given the opportunity to play the drums during class in October. They enjoy this program very much and current research shows music and math are very closely related. Parents passing by often stop to watch because it is so engaging for the children.

Club Espanol is teaching the children and staff Spanish language and culture through activities and song. Teachers and children practice Spanish each day in every day GCC activities such as Calendar time, math, and social conversations. This year, the children are being grouped into Spanish 1st year and 2nd year classes to individualize the program. Spanish folders were purchased for each pre-school family and sent home on October 30th for parents & children to practice at home.

Funtastic Fitness gets everybody's heart pumping through challenging physical fitness activities as well as activities to teach balance,

coordination, cooperation and team work.

Computer and technology support has enabled each classroom to connect to the internet from their classroom computers. Teachers have email access and have the use of the digital camera to document evidence of learning to share with parents and for classroom portfolios required for each child.

All of this support is made possible through the Judith P. Hoyer Pre-k grant.

Inclusion of All Children

Greenbelt Children's Center advocates on behalf of all children and believes that each child has the right to be cared for in a safe, nurturing developmentally appropriate environment. Sometimes children may have sensory behavior dysfunction or poor impulse control or delays in speech or language skills. These children need us the most. Children are all children first, regardless of special needs. Please understand that staff and Director are very aware of the levels that children may be functioning at and that we will be working with parents and appropriate resources to ensure that children receive early intervention and services, if needed. Parents need to be aware that a child's behavior may look like aggression but may really be poor impulse control. We ask that our community of families be patient, understanding and tolerant of children who may have special needs as they are learning social, cognitive, physical and emotional skills, just like everyone else. They may just need more time than your child to learn these same important life skills. Thanks for your patience.

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY REMINDER



Prince George's
County Public

Schools are closed November 11, 25, 26 & 27th. **GCC will be CLOSED on Friday November 20th as well as Thursday and Friday, November 26th and 27th**, for the Thanksgiving Holiday. We wish you and your family a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

From Parent Tip's:

“Make sure you read to your child daily, for the undivided time together and the literacy skills as well. This shows the importance that you place in books. Engage children in selecting favorite books. It's okay to select the same book over and over again. The repetition helps your child understand the story line and the characters, and helps them understand sequence, cause and effect. Link books and reading experiences with real life activities. **It is important to use non-fiction books.** This helps a young child understand that there are books that help people with every day activities. Share the newspaper with older pre-schoolers and school agers, especially the Mini Page of the Washington Post. Try the comics and the weather report! Ask librarians to suggest special books for your child. They are aware of

children's favorites and award winners as well!

See That Your Child Eats Well! *Eating right provides your child with the energy to be enthusiastic and focused. Typically, preschoolers need three snack size meals and two healthful snacks a day.*

- You decide what your child eats and when- but it is up to the child to decide how much. If most of your child's meals are healthful, s/he will naturally eat the amount that is right for his/her growing body.
- If your child doesn't want to eat, don't force the issue. Forcing your child to eat when s/he is not hungry encourages overeating, which can lead to weight gain.
- Introduce one new food at a time. Be patient. Remember, it can take a while for your child to develop new tastes.
- Certain items such as candy and fried foods can be enjoyed as an occasional treat in limited amounts.
- Breakfast really *is* the most important meal of the day and gives your child the fuel to start the day.
- Sit down and eat with your child. He will mimic your good eating habits.

Parent Tips in This Difficult Economy from the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Parents needn't despair. There are ways to help you save on child care expenses.

Take advantage of tax credits

Open a Dependent-Care Flexible-Spending Account

Offered by 96% of employers, according to Hewitt Associates, these accounts function like medical FSAs by allowing workers to set aside pretax dollars -- a maximum of \$5,000 -- to pay for child care. Eligible expenses include day-care centers, baby sitters and even day camps. To qualify, your spouse must be working, looking for work or a full-time student.

Remember that the same expenses can't be used for both the tax credit and the FSA, says Mark Luscombe, principal analyst at CCH, a unit of Wolters Kluwer, a tax information provider. For example, if a taxpayer had \$8,000 in qualifying expenses for one child, \$5,000 could be covered by the FSA and the remaining \$3,000 could qualify for the full child and dependent care credit, depending on your income. If a taxpayer had \$5,000 in expenses for one child, the costs could be covered entirely by the FSA and no expenses would qualify for the credit.

Check IRS.gov for more information.

Seek Child Care Subsidies If you are Eligible

GCC accepts all child care subsidies and because we are NAEYC accredited, our families that are eligible can use them here. Check this out if you think you might qualify for a Child Care Subsidy:

Prince Georges County Department of Social Services, Purchase of Child Care Voucher 301-909-6200

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Military Child care Subsidy 1-800-793-0324 x 163

Federal Employees Education Act- check with your Human Resources Department if you are a Federal Government Employee



Wow, what a supportive community of families are at GCC this year. We almost need a separate newsletter to share all the good deeds that have occurred this month. We just have to acknowledge the following acts of random kindness shown to us here:

Thank you to:



Kaylin Peters & family (Rm 2) for donating boxes of cereal for breakfast.



Kaylin's mother, Kristal also joined Toye & Quillen McLean (TJ, Rm 3 and Ramiyah, Rm 2), who came in to assist Ms Jill and Ms Johnson divide up the huge fundraiser order after it was delivered and help sort it into the orders of the 27 participating families.

Aaliyahmarie Key's mom, Stephanie wrote kind words to the teachers in Room 2 for taking good care of her daughter.



Malcolm Hamm's mom, Jessica (Rm 1) brought in a crock pot full of a savory Turkey Sausage and Bean Soup on a rainy Tuesday for all the faculty. The teachers were so thankful and honored by this.



Thank you to Myisha Hagler, (Trinity Rm 3 & Takiyah Rm 2) for the donation of books to the GCC Lending Library. Thank you to Stanley Nut, (grandfather, Jaden Rm 1) for chaperoning the field trip an providing lunch for a child who was without one. We also thank Kimberly Helton (Mackenzie Rm 1) Tamika Pickett (Xavier, Rm1), Denise Samuel (James Rm 3), and Dawne Frisby (DeVaughn Rm 3) for also chaperoning on the field trip to the Sunrise Farm last month.



Thank you for signing up to read at the October Book Club Event:

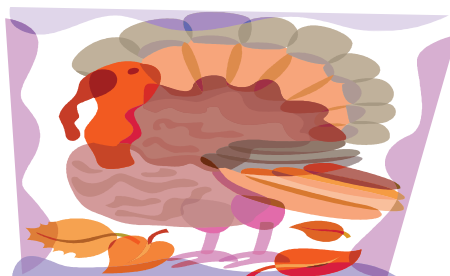
Rm 1 Barry Sterling (Aaron Jr.)

Rm 2 Barry Sterling (Aaric) Leanne (Carter & Grayson) Zkamaya Banks (Xavier) Stephanie Key (Aaliyahmarie)

We would also like to thank the Greenbelt fire Department for visiting the children and teachers to teach about fire safety and for bringing the fire truck and ambulance to GCC for the children to climb in and observe, hands on.

We would also like to acknowledge the Prince George's Arts Council for giving GCC a matching grant of \$600.00 that paid for the Inter Act Story Theatre program enjoyed very much by all the classrooms. Actor, Jeff Mochel instructed the children and teachers in the art of using drama and we will be treated to a Story Teller on November 10th at 4 pm, at the completion of this 4 week program. The performance will take place in the Terrace Room and we would like for parents to sign permission to take the children there (and for future use of that room also). All parents are invited to come to the Story Teller Performance as well. Please join us!

Another nod goes to acknowledge the Maryland State Arts Council for the very generous grant of \$1200.00 that will bring the Creative Kids



Program to all classrooms at GCC beginning on November 24th and continuing through the month of December. Creative Kids is the sister company to Inter Act and will also bring drama & literacy to the children and teachers for a five week period. We are so thankful that we are able to provide for these high quality performance based arts program to our children.

Composite Picture Orders are being taken now!

If you would like to have an 8 x 10 Composite of all the children that had their pictures taken by Teddy Bear Portraits in September, we are taking your orders now. For a fee of \$10.00, your child's picture will be featured in the large oval and then the smaller pictures of all the children and teachers will be in the composite. There is a sample and poster on the front door. Just let Mrs. Gee know if you would like one for your child. You may include the \$10.00 payment with your tuition and all checks should be made to GCC by November 13, 2009. It will take a couple weeks after orders are sent in before they will be sent back to us. You can view this year's composite in Mrs. Gee's Office as well as the last five year's!

