

GREENBELT CHILDREN'S CENTER  
Accredited by NAEYC's National Academy of Early Childhood Programs  
7600 Hanover Parkway, Greenbelt, MD 20770  
(301) 345-8830



# WINTER NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2008



Edited by Flora L. Gee, Director



Dear Parents,

Soon we will be experiencing the natural phenomenon that Mother Nature sends our way each winter - SNOW! As adults, we often take the wintry wonderland for granted or we may even complain of the inconvenience that it sometimes brings. However, young children are often in awe of this event, as many pre-schoolers are just old enough to be observant of the properties of snow and its ability to change the way their world looks by transforming it to a beautiful, quiet, and blanketed place. Each snowflake is unique and has six sides! At Greenbelt Children's Center, we delight in having the opportunity to share in the discovery and experiences that Mother Nature provides for our children. Remember to dress your child for the weather each day, so that he/she will be comfortable exploring the outdoors this season. **Your child will need a hat, gloves or mittens, boots and a warm coat.** Be sure each is labeled with your child's name! The best way to keep up with gloves/mittens is to attach them to the sleeves of your child's coat with fasteners. If you will be purchasing **snow suits or pants, be sure to get the ones with zippers at the ankles** so that they can slip on easily over shoes or boots. It often takes longer to dress the children to go outside, than the time actually spent outside! We thank you for your help with this! (Reminder- follow PG County Public School closings/delays for emergencies/bad weather.)



**THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!!**

We have SO much to be thankful for at our center and Thanksgiving gave us a wonderful opportunity to reflect on this. We are thankful for our precious healthy children who brighten our world and renew our faith in the future. We are also thankful for you wonderful parents who support our program in so many meaningful ways. Deep and sincere thanks to the parents, grandparents, and aunts that attended the Thanksgiving Feast! We know that there were other parents who were with us in spirit but were unable to get time off from work to join us- maybe next time. We truly appreciate your company and help! And remember, we sincerely welcome and encourage parent involvement ANYTIME!!! It's nice to have a little help from our friends! December will have some additional opportunities. **Special thanks to the Evans family for the donation to the GCC Lending Library in honor of Maya's birthday. We hope that other families will make this a tradition to honor their child's birthday in the same way. It is a lasting gift when a book with your child's name becomes a legacy for many parents to read to their child for years to come.**

Thanks for all the contributions from GCC families and staff to the food drive! Ms Mimi made several trips to take donations to the food pantry which has been so severely depleted due to the economic strains on so many families. Let's keep the giving spirit in mind throughout the holiday season and into the New Year.



### December Toy Drive



Our center has long participated in the Annual Toy Drive that the Greenbriar community is sponsoring. If you can contribute a new or gently used toy in good condition, we will have a box in our center for that purpose. The toy drive will run from December 1-12, 2008. At this time of year, parents are often sorting out toys that children may have outgrown or are no longer interested in and these may be treasures for children who are in less fortunate circumstances. Thank you for thinking of others and for helping us to teach the children about compassion for less fortunate children in our community by participating in the annual toy drive.



### FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD



The month of December is centered on the theme of children that live all around the world. Our goal is for the children to experience food, songs, dress, and customs of children from many lands, **especially those represented by the places that our families, community partners and staff are connected to by birth or family history.** We will also be discussing the traditions and holidays that are celebrated by others. **Families are invited to share in our plans by scheduling with teachers for a date and time to come into the classroom and tell about your particular holiday traditions.** This helps to present a multi-cultural curriculum that broadens children's knowledge and understanding of other cultures. Our goal is to help children to become comfortable and knowledgeable about the diversity of their world. The best way is to have this done authentically by members of our diverse community, who have personally celebrated their own special traditions and have history passed to them through family as well. It makes sense that this is the very best way to try to accomplish our goals. If you can help, *please* tell your child's teacher! We believe this is a very important part of our program, and ***extend this invitation to other than holiday times as well.*** You are each the experts of your culture and we ask that you help the teachers to convey accurate and reliable information about a tradition that they may not have much knowledge about. This is truly a gift you could give! Parents-we need you! **We also need a picture of each family for every child to display in your child's classroom. This is a requirement of accredited centers. Please be sure that your child's teacher has received this from your family!**



We will also use this time to talk about the meaning of friendship and how to be a good friend to others. This is one of the ways that we work to promote the development of good social skills and peace in our world. We ask that parents help by reinforcing this concept at home. One way would be to ask your child to think of good ways to solve a problem that they might experience with a friend or ways to be helpful and kind to another child. We believe **it is important for you as your child's first teacher to tell your child that you expect him or her to solve problems without violence (i.e., using words to express anger or frustration rather than hitting) and that you expect that your child will show kindness toward others each and every day.** Make it a point to discuss this with your child each night. Children at this young age are very egocentric and feel that everything should revolve around them because it is very difficult for them to see things through anyone else's perspective without the help of the important people in their lives (family and teachers) to ask them to really think about other people and their feelings. **Help to make a contribution towards peace in our children's world.**



### TUITION AND CALENDAR REMINDER

Charges for tuition apply to each week of the school year. Please remember that tuition **MUST** be paid for the time the center is closed for Winter Holiday (December 24, 2008-January 1, 2009) in accordance with our published calendar received at enrollment. This is an



important benefit for the teachers at GCC and we are sure that you have experienced the kindness, dedication and joy that the GCC teachers & staff give to your child. Payment due for the week of December 29th must be paid **on or before Friday, January 2nd, 2009**, when we resume our schedule. At this time, we also **announce a calendar change for January 20, 2009**. All local Boards of Education have passed resolutions to close schools on Inauguration Day, Tuesday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, the day after Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. "This date will be of great historical significance in that the first African American President of the United States of America will be inaugurated". Please mark your calendar now so you are prepared for this change. We thank you for your support.

### **HELP!**

An observation of the daily sign in/out sheets in the classrooms is alarming to the Director and staff. Some parents are faithful and sign in and out with written instructions about who is to be expected to pick up their child at the end of the day. **ALL PARENTS AND FAMILY ARE REQUIRED TO SIGN IN/OUT WITH ALL INFORMATION EVERY DAY.** Mrs. Gee has in the past circled missing information to bring this to the attention of some families. As you read this, please have a conversation with all the adult members of your family including your extended family to make sure every one knows what is expected. This is for the safety of your child. Please help us with this! Please remember, this form is a legal document.

### **WINTER HOLIDAY CELEBRATION AND BOOK CLUB EVENT!**

Each classroom is planning a **Holiday party and Book Club Event on Friday, December 19, 2008**. Please check in your child's classroom for a sign-up sheet for parents to help with contributions of goodies and for family members to join in the fun, help with holiday crafts, read to children individually or in groups and help distribute books!! Join them if you can!

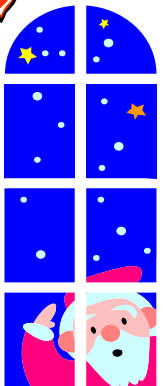
**Remember the Lending Library!** No excuses! We have received many new books in our lending library-CHECK THEM OUT!!!! There are just so many benefits that come from reading good books to young children. You are your child's first role model for literary experiences. You show your child how to hold a book properly, which way to turn the pages, and you spark their interest with your fluency and enthusiasm! We know you want these great experiences for your child and so do we! Remember, if **EVERY FAMILY READS 10 BOOKS** or more, the classroom will be awarded with a special treat!

### **DID YOU KNOW???**...

... That a note is **required** for any **absence of three days** or more? It can be a doctor's note or note from parent, but it must state why your child was absent, that your child may resume regular activities and is not contagious. It is suggested that a note be written for **each** absence so that you will get into a habit required for elementary school.

... That learning for young children is a combination of maturation and experience? Young children learn best when they are actively involved in concrete learning experiences. This means that the best teaching materials allow the child to see, touch, manipulate, explore, dismantle, reshape, listen to, or taste. (Keep this in mind when buying toys!) Play is how young children learn best!

...that pre-school is a time for establishing good habits for later years of school. Because we



are helping to prepare your child for success in school, **we ask that you bring your child in by 9:00 am daily**, as they will be expected to come on time to school. Children who arrive late miss so much of the enriching curriculum teachers have planned.

... that our **Federal Tax Identification Number is 52-1689271 for your income tax purposes!** Yearly summaries will be given to you in January to assist you in **documenting Child Care expenses for your income tax filing. This number appears on every receipt you receive!**

### Fundraiser News

Look for our next fundraiser to begin next month. We will be asking for each family to participate in the Pizza fundraiser that we do each year. Remember, this year we are working towards a playground fund to replace our 1993 climber and slide structure which is showing signs of age from being much loved by children at GCC for 15 years! Thanks to the families that helped with fall fundraiser because that new stove that we got was a blessing to use in preparing our Thanksgiving turkey, all the trimmings and our many weekly cooking projects, which are an important part of the GCC curriculum each week.

# HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

