



Fruit & Flower Happenings

December 2009

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 24th – Center closes early

The center will close early at 3:00 PM on December 24th.

Dec 25th & Jan 1st – Closed for holidays

2010 is just days away!

Jan 16th 2010 – Kindergarten Q&A

Our reschedule date for Kindergarten Q&A is Saturday, January 16th, from 9:30 to 11:00. If you have questions about the kindergarten process, you will be able to ask the experts (moms and dads who have just gone through it!). Child care will be available.

THE CENTER

The news from the Development office is simple – **THANKS!** Thank you for choosing Fruit & Flower. Your children are the reason we are in business. We appreciate the support that began with your interest in Fruit & Flower, and look forward to the new year with you.

Save the Date – 2010 Auction Coming Up

Kristi Wilson and Jen Keesey are planning the 2010 Auction. Please save the date (and make a date) for "Prom Night," Saturday, May 15th. More details will follow. If you have ideas or would like to volunteer, please contact Kris at the center or via email: kris.moore@fruitandflower.org.

ICE AND SNOW DAYS

In the event of icy and/or snowy conditions, we will do our best to open the Center and remain open. However, we are always mindful of the safety issues relating to staff and families. If you are unsure, you can call the Center and our automatic message will let you know if we are open. There is also a link on our website (www.fruitandflower.org) for "Emergency Closure Information" which will bring you directly to the Center's information.

Our staff will do their very best to get here on time for their regular shifts. However, there is the possibility that you may arrive with your child before there is sufficient staff. If this is the case, we will ask you to stay until appropriate staff members arrive.

If weather conditions worsen during the day, we will maintain adult/child ratios until all children are safely picked up. If we should lose electricity we will need to close the Center as the building gets cold very quickly and our emergency lighting only lasts for a short while. We will contact you and ask that you pick up your child as soon as possible.

COLD WEATHER PLAN:

It is our belief and our policy that children must have some time outdoors each day. Please send your child to us with the appropriate clothing for the weather. At this time of year, warm coats, hats and mittens are a must! Please help us to keep your child healthy, active, comfortable, and prepared for anything the winter weather can dish out!

Families

- Alana and Alex Hassett have rejoined our family this month, after about a year away! Their parents are Yvonne and Joe, and they have joined the Room Three group.
- Taylor Nieto joined the Infant Center this month. Her big sister, Ashley, has been with us since she was an infant! Ashley is in Room Five now. Their parents are Amy and Mikkel.
- Carson Rollins will also start in the Infant Center in December. His parents are Abbey and Mark.
- Peter Mark Butzer will join Room Six later this month. His parents are Bonnie and Peter.
- Bennett Niedermeyer will stay at home with mom for a few months. We may see him again though, in the late winter.
- Olivia and Angela Panoff will leave us this month for some family time at home. They have promised to visit!
- Mari'ya Sykes will attend a part-time program while her mom finishes some schooling. We may see them again next summer!

Staff Anniversaries

- Catherine Peron-Bevens celebrated two years as a Room Six caregiver on November 1st!
- Chrissy Verpoorten started at Fruit and Flower straight from Linfield College ECE program in 2001. She has moved from a sub to a float to an Assistant to a Lead Teacher over those 8 years. Way to grow, Chrissy!
- Rachel Cordero has been the Assistant in Room Two for one year now!
- December's arrival means that Kathy Duncan has been the Lead Teacher in Room 4 for 21 years, AND that she has been a member of our staff here for 27 years!
- Another 'WOW' goes to Sherry Hobbs, our other Teacher with 27 years at Fruit and Flower this month. What were YOU doing 27 years ago? ☺

Staff continued >>>

We Want to Talk with You!

If your child has recently made a move to a new group, and you have not had the opportunity to speak with the Teacher, please call Judi to schedule a conference. An early check-in can make a big difference in your experience in the new classroom, not to mention your child's experience.

WISH LIST

Below are a few items the Center needs. Please contact Mary Felice (maryfelice.crowe@fruitandflower.org) with questions.

- Refrigerator for Room 6 (energy efficient preferred)
- Toaster oven for staff lounge
- Digital Camera for classroom use

Fruit & Flower Happenings cont...

Page 2

December 2009

Program

Dawdling

Does it seem like its taking longer and longer each time to get your child through the daily routines? According to an article from the Parent Trust for Washington Children, dawdling can have several purposes. It can be a form of control. ("I'll do it in my own sweet time!") It might be a bid for attention ("Look at me. See what I am (not) doing. Talk with me".) Or dawdling may just be a way for your child to say, "I need you to slow down. We are trying to do too much too quickly!"

Here are some tips:

- Give your child a choice. "Would you like to fly to the car today, or trot like a pony?" In either case, you get your choice. Or, you may need to say "Will you fly to the car or does someone need to carry you?"
- Make eye contact. Come close, get down to your child's eye level, and then state the situation. It is usually much less effective to call to your child from the other room.
- Give your child a certain amount of time, and then move on. Following through is important. If you continue to say "one more minute", your child will never understand the meaning of 'one minute'
- Sometimes you need to assert your relative size and strength. "I am going to pick you up and carry you now because we need to hurry. " It is important then that you do so. Very quickly. If you need assistance, ask the Receptionist to find someone who can help. We are happy to do that.
- If there is time for dawdling occasionally, allow it and enjoy it. Let your child know that this can be a slow-poke day. If there is not time for dawdling, tell your child in a calm and firm voice. And then take action.

Sometimes adults don't realize how often we dawdle. Make sure that your expectations for your child are not higher than they would be for a friend or a spouse or a coworker. The next time someone asks you to do something – and you don't do it right away – think about it: why not? What were you feeling? How would you like someone to respond to your needs? You might come up with some answers that will enlighten you when you are feeling most frustrated about waiting for your child.

TIPS

ECO-Healthy Tip:

Vanilla extract can be used as an insect repellent, to remove sticker residue, to eliminate odors in a microwave or refrigerator, and much more. Read more about it at <http://www.greenlivingtips.com/articles/351/1/Vanilla-extract-uses.html>

Quote of the Month:

"At the core of all education that makes a difference in children's lives – beneath all the methods, materials, and curricula – is a teacher who cares about each child, who teaches from the heart." - Mimi Brodsky

DID YOU KNOW?

Nurturing = Wiring!

A study done by the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University reports that, "There is no credible scientific data to support the claim that specialized videos (Baby Einstein, e.g.) or particular music recordings (the Mozart Effect) have a positive, measurable impact on developing brain architecture." Much more important influences are the "attentive, nurturing, and growth-promoting interactions with invested adults." The study explains that, "the issue is not whether a child is 'smart enough' or 'motivated' to learn, but whether the necessary brain circuitry is sufficiently 'wired' to support the specific domains required for that learning." Those nurturing interactions are what provide the child with the proper wiring!

Spanking Lowers IQ!

Another recent study of students in 32 countries indicates that "the higher the percentage of parents who use corporal punishment, the lower the national average IQ." The study also learned of current research which has found other harmful side effects of corporal punishment such as "physical aggressiveness, delinquency, and mental health problems." Corporal punishment was defined as "the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correction or control of the child's behavior."

Staff (continued)

- We welcome Jessica Kain, our new Early Morning Aide (7:30 to 11:00), who is replacing Noemi Semadini. Jessica is an artist who recently moved to Portland from New York.
- Lacy Mitchell, who worked part-time as our Development Assistant since April 2008, has left us. She will take some family time over the holidays, and then do some grant-writing for another non-profit.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY HIGHLIGHTS

We had a very productive day on November 11th. Highlights included training on H1N1, presented by Eneida Nemecek, MD, better known here as Charlie and Jake's mom! Eneida provided us with lots of good information to help us protect everyone, including ourselves, from those mean germs! We also had training by Jenny Sowder, who is Executive Director for Child Care with the YMCA. Jenny provided an upbeat training on keeping positive energy flowing in our relationships with families and with each other.

On February 15th, 2010, we will have our other Staff Development Day. This one is focused on Health and Safety, including Infant/Child CPR and First Aid for all regular staff. The center will be closed to children that day.