

The leaves are falling to the ground, Yellow, brown and red, They patter softly to the ground, One landed on my head

# South Whidbey Children's Center



## FALL NEWS 2006

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Dear SWCC Families,

We want to extend a very warm welcome to our new and returning families. The children are settling in and learning the new routines, and the teachers are enjoying getting to know your children and your family.

Transitions are exciting and challenging for all of us, especially the younger children. We appreciate the patience and special care that parents and teachers bring to this time. If ever you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to talk to either of us so that we can help you and your children feel comfortable.

We produce quarterly newsletters filled with information about

upcoming events, celebrations, policy changes and parent education tidbits. Our newsletters are also available on our website at: [swchildrenscenter.com](http://swchildrenscenter.com)

We will have many opportunities throughout this year to get together for curriculum nights, family potlucks, and parent support nights. Watch for notices in classrooms and in our newsletters.

We are looking forward to watching the seasons change as your children grow throughout this year.

Kristina and Polly

### Annual Picture Day November 1st

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On Wednesday November 1st, Sunset Portraits will come and take each child's picture as well as one of their entire class. Once the pictures are

returned to us, you have the option of buying some or all of them in various packages.

If this is not your child's regularly

scheduled day, you may call and set up a time to bring them in to have their picture taken.

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Dates to remember:

- October 5th- Honey Bear Curriculum Night
- October 17th- Sunflower Curriculum Night
- October 11th- Star Room Curriculum Night
- October 24th- School Age Curriculum Night
- October 25th- Garden Room Curriculum Night

# Annual Family Contribution

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The South Whidbey Children's Center cannot charge the fees necessary to generate enough revenue to pay our teachers "living wages" or adequate benefits. Most parents would not be able to pay the \$1400 per month per child it would take to meet our salary and benefit goals. Our teachers' commitment to working at their current wage levels, (average teacher wage is \$10.00 per hour), keeps your fees below the "true cost of care."

***We have to make up the deficit, therefore, each family is required to make an Annual Family Contribution of \$200 per year to the Children's Center.***



*We appreciate your support!*

We have many options for families to make this happen. You can either: pay in one sum, make monthly contributions of \$20, participate in the Work Parties, or obtain donations totaling \$200 for the Annual Family Fun(d) Day in May.

Another option is to "adopt" a pro-

ject for the year, such as furniture refinishing, gardens, various maintenance projects, or ??? Let us know if you have any ideas.

Please let Kristina know your plans for accomplishing this year's contribution.

*We appreciate your support!*

Thank You!

# Board Membership and 501( c ) 3 Status

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We are a Non-Profit, 501(c)3 organization. This means we are eligible to receive tax deductible donations. *We are a United Way Agency and can be designated for donations through your employer.*

All non-profit organizations are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Board consists of parents and community members. Becoming a Board Member is a great way to participate in your child's early education and the running of the children's Center.

Our Board is elected in October of each year and members serve for a three year term.

We always welcome parent's interest in serving on our board. Please talk to Kristina or Polly if you are interested.



Our current Board is as follows:

Renee Yanke

*Chair*

Patricia Amsler

*Treasurer*

Tom Donnelly

*Secretary*

Niall Twomey

Spencer Bright

Megan Scudder

Kat Fritz

Marni Zimmerman

Carol Griswold

Beth Smith

Kris Barker

Gail Miller

# Parent Education Nights

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It is a priority for the Children's Center to offer parent education nights frequently throughout the year. The first one is scheduled on November 28th and the topic will be "Creating Family Rituals." Karin Watson will talk to us about the important role routines, rituals, and traditions play in our family's lives,

Watch for notices about upcoming parent education nights and parent chat nights, which are a time for informal sharing and discussion about issues that are important to you. We have many guest speakers available, please let us know if you have an idea for a topic or speaker.

## HEALTH REMINDERS

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### Sickness:

Your children need to stay home when they are sick! We follow state licensing guidelines that state that your children need to be fever free, vomit free, and diarrhea free for at least 24 hours before they return to the Children's Center. We do our best not to spread illness throughout our programs. Sometimes we are more conservative than your pediatrician because group care, especially for the very young, is so challenging in regards to health and communicable diseases. Please have BACK-UP CARE for your children so that everyone can remain as well as possible.

### Medication:

If your child needs prescription medication, please ask your teachers how to fill out the appropriate forms and store the medication in the kitchen away from the classroom. We never administer over the counter medications without a doctor's prescription. We also need a medical form to administer sunscreen, Chap Stick or other lotions.

### Fresh Air:

We go outside everyday. We believe fresh air is good for us all. Please dress your child for action! An extra set of clothing is important for their comfort, should they get muddy, etc. If you do not

think your child should be outside for health reasons, he or she should probably stay home that day.

### Communicable Diseases:

The State of Washington requires us to notify you if there is a communicable disease in our program. Please let us know immediately if your child is diagnosed with any of the following: Impetigo, staph, chicken pox, strep, head lice, scabies, pertussis, mono-nucleosis, any kind of worm, ring worm, Fifth's disease, Hand, Foot, and Mouth disease, etc. We make it a practice to provide you with handout information on each disease. We also seek advice through our health department and your local pediatricians. Again, we work very hard to prevent the spread of these diseases.

## SAFETY in the PARKING LOT

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### Cars in the Parking lot:

Please do not leave your car running in the parking lot. It is not safe! We also ask that you pull in and out of the driveway slowly. Our parking lot was built before the age of SUV's, please park large cars at the CMA church parking lot.

### Leaving and Arriving:

When leaving the Children's Center, please keep your children on the porch and under your supervision before leaving the building. You must be vigilant about holding your child's hand in the parking lot both arriving and leaving to ensure their safety as cars enter and leave the parking lot.

# LUNCHESES, SNACKS AND FOOD ALLERGIES

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It is important to let us know about your children's food allergies. If we know, we will not serve those foods to them for a snack.

We provide morning and afternoon snacks, while you provide lunches. We do not cook with sugar or chocolate and do not serve meat products. We strive to respect family's food preferences and our own "common sense" knowledge of children in group care.

We ask that you do not send sugar, pop, candy, gum or chocolate in your child's lunch. If you do, you will notice that it will be returned "unopened." As a staff, we model nutritious eating habits as well. Each room has a microwave to heat up leftovers. "Lunchables" are very expensive and always include candy or other sugary items. We know it is difficult to find the time and the money to always pack a nutritious lunch. We appreciate your efforts and your creativity in lunch ideas.

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## LUNCH SUGGESTIONS

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### PRESENTATION IDEAS

1. Small containers & small variety
2. Use cookie cutters to cut sandwiches in shapes
3. Try to align child likes with healthy foods
4. Make creative presentations (bright bags, etc.)
5. Allow child to participate in packing lunches.

### FOOD IDEAS

1. Yogurt
  2. Cheese/crackers, apples & water
  3. Carrots, celery with peanut butter, cream cheese dip
  4. Dried fruit
  5. 100% fruit leathers
  6. Tuna fish & crackers
  7. Beans & rice
  8. Bagel & cream cheese
  9. Croissant from bakery (or other healthy, special treat)
  10. Little pizzas (English muffin with cheese)
  11. Cheese sticks
  12. Different types of bread (tortillas, pita, bagels)
  13. Leftovers from dinner
  14. Waffles or other breakfast foods
  15. Soups
  16. Burritos
  17. Homemade "lunchables"
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## The Language of Encouragement

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Although there are times when praise can be encouraging, parents will be most effective if they avoid praising children too often. "Encouragement" helps our children believe in themselves. This is known as "internal gratification." "Praise" such as good, great, better, best, and excellent condition children to look for "external gratification." Praise keeps your child dependent on the authority figure to feel good about themselves. On the other hand, encouragement allows your child to focus on how she feels from the inside out. For example: phrases like, "It looks like you enjoyed drawing that picture," rather than "You're a good boy" gives the child responsibility for his happiness rather than looking for someone or something to bring him happiness. Children realize that it is their challenge to do things to make themselves happy. Adults who did not learn this lesson in childhood often disturb relationships later because they expect others to make them happy. Praise can be a disguise for expressing our personal values and opinions. Praise focuses on the person where encouragement focuses on the effort! Through encouragement we are teaching children to look inside themselves for their motivation, for the answers to their questions, and for knowing their purpose and direction. Encouragement has it's own language.

Here are some examples of phrases that express encouragement:

"You seem to like that"

"Thanks, that helped me a lot"

"You really worked hard on that"

"How do you feel about it"

"I need your help on..."

"What do you think"

"You can do it"

"You're getting better at..."

"I like the way you..."

## The Language of Encouragement, continued

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### POINTS TO PONDER

Ask open-ended questions. Questions that have no simple single answer. Encourage your child to think, explain, and explore. Try to redirect a child's thinking process when you hear statements like "I don't care" and "it doesn't matter to me". Encourage your children to have their own thoughts and opinions. Ask: "What do you think?" Recognize and encourage - "I like the way you..." Accept your child's feelings of failure and encourage more attempts. Good results come from experience; experience is learning. Help your child see the alternatives in challenging situations. Explore ideas together giving your child the lead.

There are four main ways parents can encourage their children:

- (1) show confidence - giving your child responsibility is a nonverbal way of showing confidence
- (2) build on strengths - acknowledge what they do well
- (3) value the child - separate worth from accomplishments and misbehavior, accept uniqueness
- (4) stimulate independence.

Writing encouragement letters to your family members are a continuous way to empower each other and work through tough situations without hurting feelings. Keeping your communication lines open, as a family will create bonding and closeness among family members... one of the greatest gifts a parent could give a child.