



## **FROM THE DIRECTOR**

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Dear Clara Barton Preschool Parents,

Please mark your calendars to join us for another Parent Education workshop: "Social Skills and the Resilient Child," scheduled for Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8 pm in the school library. It's a topic of much discussion among parents of preschoolers and preschool educators - in this month's *Washington Parent*, the front cover story is on bully proofing your child, followed by an article on skills and strategies for successful socialization among preschoolers.

I was reminded of a wonderful article I read recently about navigating the trials and tribulations of adolescence. I think the points in the article transcend a particular time in the life of a child, so I would like to share them with you.

*How can you as a parent help your child become the kind of person you want him or*

*her to become?* How can you as a parent help your child become the kind of person you want them to be known for by family, friends, and colleagues – mature, civic-minded, responsible, an individual of integrity, a caring spouse or partner, a caring parent, a good friend?

1. **Lead by example.** Your children are watching you all the time. Robert Coles wrote in his book, *The Moral Intelligence of Children* (1977):

We grow morally as a consequence of learning how to be with others, how to behave in this world, a learning prompted by taking to heart what we have seen and heard. The child is a witness; the child is an ever-attentive witness of grown-up morality – or lack thereof; the child looks and looks for cues as to how one ought to behave, and finds them galore as we parents and teachers go about our lives, making choices, addressing people, showing in action our rock-bottom assumptions, desires, and values, and thereby telling these young observers much more than they realize. (p. 5)

2. **Love your children.** Children gain enormous confidence from knowing that they are loved by their parents for who they are, not simply for how they perform. Loving your child demands time and attention.
  - d. Help to cultivate their aesthetic sensibilities – take them to the art museum or an opera.
  - e. Watch television with them. Help them to become critical viewers.
3. **Do not protect your children from failure.** Help your children make sense of and learn from difficulties and disappointment.
4. **Foster an attitude of gratitude.** Children need to be needed. Hold them accountable for the part they play in your family. Give them opportunities to show their gratitude by completing small jobs around the house or helping with a project. Help build character by showing them how to put the needs of others before their own.
5. **Cultivate the art of communication.** Talk with your children. In the car, at the dinner table, around the house, when preparing a meal together. You might discover what your children have on their minds if you simply say, “Tell me about your day.”
6. **Nurture their moral imagination and memory.** Parents can drown out the negative effects of the advertising industry on our children with an abundance of good alternatives.
  - a. Take along some excellent books-on-tape for your next long car trip.
  - b. Talk to your children about the sports teams you enjoy, the music you love, and why. Share the lyrics with them.
  - c. Talk about your childhood heroes and heroines.
7. **Help your children develop a talent, hobby, sport, or skill.** Be aware of how your children spend their time, energy, and talent. This is particularly important in adolescence – they need to expend their energy and time usefully and meaningfully, but they also need to learn how to use their freedom well.
8. **Hold your children accountable – not their teachers – for their own academic performance.** This is certainly more applicable to older children, but help your children to identify the study habits and extra help they need. Don’t do it for them, but help them see that they can make choices and take action to improve their performance.
9. **Be generous with your affection.** Let your children know what they are worth. Encourage them to seek friendship and mutual respect. Talk to your son about becoming a man of respect and integrity. Talk to your daughter about her own self-respect and dignity. Let your children know that their worth is not dependent on their appearance, popularity, or sex appeal.
10. **Don’t lose hope.** Hope is rooted in the conviction that something good, real, and worthwhile lies behind the challenges, difficulties, moods, and phases. Children are eager for direction and to hear your “yes” and “no.” They want to know what you think and what you care about. Let

them lean on your moral courage and convictions while they are still developing their own.

It's easy for parents to lose sight of the big picture and get mired down by the issues screaming for immediate attention – I think you spell that L-I-F-E ! Yet I encourage you to take a moment to reflect on how you as a parent can help your child become the kind of person you want him or her to become?

With warm regards,  
*Linda Owen*



***Spring Parent Work Day  
Saturday, March 21st  
9 AM-Noon***

The Spring Work Day has been rescheduled to March 21<sup>st</sup>. Join other Clara Barton parents from your child's class and others to improve things around the school. We'll wash windows; sand & paint benches and bookshelves; wash & sanitize toys; rake leaves & weed gardens; etc. *(Each family is required to participate in one workday a year. A \$75 fee is charged to families not participating in either the fall or the spring workdays.)*

## ***BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING***

The Clara Barton Center for Children Board of Directors will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. in the Eagle classroom. The Board will be considering the operating budget for the 2009-2010 school year, setting tuition rates and teacher salaries for the upcoming year.



THE PARENT EDUCATION  
COMMITTEE PRESENTS:

### **"Social Skills and the Resilient Child"**

Presented by

Dr. Ed Spector, Clinical Psychologist

DATE: Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>

TIME: 6:30 – 8 PM

PLACE: Clara Barton School Library

There is no charge for attending the parent session. Babysitting will be provided on-site for the nominal fee of \$10 per family.

To reserve a babysitting space for your child(ren), please R.S.V.P. to Paula Curran ([cbccpaula@verizon.net](mailto:cbccpaula@verizon.net) or 301-320-4565).



## **AUCTION, AUCTION**

It's right around the corner ... a social occasion not to be missed ... the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Silent Auction – **SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER! BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!**

**DATE:** Saturday, March 14, 2009  
**TIME:** 7 - 10 PM  
**WHERE:** Clara Barton Community Center

It's time to dig out your polyester suit and platform shoes. Get out the teasing comb and hairspray. **SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER** – we're going to dance the night away to that disco beat. Lava lamps are welcome!

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled for the week of March 23, 2009 as follows:

- **Monday, March 23 - Cardinals**
- **Tuesday, March 24 - Toucans**
- **Wed., March 25 - Puffins**
- **Thur., March 26- Hummingbirds**
- **Friday, March 27 - Eagles**

Cristina Pendergrass and Asma Kadmiri will substitute in the classrooms during conference time.

## **MARCH AT A GLANCE**

Wednesday, March 4th - Summer camp invoices distributed

Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> - 9 a.m., Auction Meeting in school library

Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup> - Summer Camp tuition, 50% payment due.

Saturday, March 14th - CBCC Auction in the Clara Barton Community Center, 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> - CBCC Board of Directors Meeting, 7:30 p.m. All parents are welcome

Week of March 23 - Parent/Teacher Conferences

Tuesday, March 24th - Parent Education, "Social Skills & the Resilient Child", 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the school library.

## ***Class Notes***

### ***Toucans***



As winter is in its final stages and parents are anxiously awaiting the arrival of spring, the Toucans have been pleasantly oblivious to the cold and enjoying indoor activities including reading books (often with parents in the morning – which they love!), movement and singing classes, making paper mittens and snowflakes, and whipping up delicious snacks like white pizza and strawberry sorbet. Festivities have abounded including a Valentines Day celebration (in which each Toucan made a special Valentines Day crown) and birthday parties for Emma and Reed. They are showing so many signs of growing up: they are interacting more when they play, increasingly participating and learning the words to songs, talking up a storm, and even going to the potty consistently. The current theme: colors. Each day the Toucans have been focusing on different colors and they are very quick to name the ones that they like and those that they do not find as interesting (such as “tan”). Hopefully they will be enjoying plentiful colors outside SOON as the flowers come up and the trees become green once again. Happy end-of-winter!

~ Jill Holland  
(Emily’s mom)

### ***Hummingbirds***



February was an exciting month for the Hummingbirds! First, there was the Chinese New Year party as they welcomed in the year of the Ox, then a field trip to the Giant grocery store, and finally Valentine’s Day. I was lucky enough to hang out with the hummingbirds as they got ready for the big journey to the grocery store. All were very excited thinking about one of their favorite subjects, food. Some of their favorite things to shop for include:

**Ian:** “Bananas!”

**Alex:** “Mac and cheese”

**Nathan:** “Chicken fingers”

**Eileen:** “I’ll put them in my basket” What food? “The food in my basket”

**Victor:** “Parrots!” What do you do with parrots? “Eat!” Unfortunately, no elaboration.

**Jesse:** Look at the lobsters

**Talia:** “Strawberries”

**Louisa,** “I like to buy fruit in the grocery store. My mommy buys it for me”

**Reed:** Drive the car

**Nick:** Cookies

**Inga:** Yogurt & pops

**Liya:** “Apples”

**Taylor:** “Apples”

**Anna:** “Apples”

And, finally, after all of those fruit eaters, the answer I agreed with most, from

**Jackson:** “Ice cream!”

Fruit and desserts aside, for at least my hummingbird the highlight was petting two lobsters - one of which was then placed into a headstand! All in all, they had a great time pushing around their customer-in-training little carts, and were rewarded with balloons at the end. All in all, it’s been a great and very exciting month!

~ Alexandra Freeman  
(Taylor Pyle’s mom)

## **PUFFINS**



### **I Love You Dinner**

February is, for the most part, a cold and gloomy month. That is until a heart shaped invitation comes home in your Puffin's backpack inviting you to the annual "I Love You Dinner" for the Puffin class. For those of us lucky enough to have a Puffin it is surely an event not to be missed. This year's dinner was held on Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup> in the Community Center.

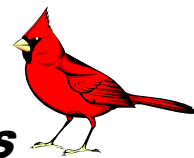
Cece, Maris and their families worked unbelievably hard to make sure everything was perfect. From the moment we all walked into the room you could see that it was. This was a theme party in the truest sense and everything was pink and red (and a little purple) for Valentines Day. Even Cece, Maris and Linda Owen were in lovely red ensembles. The tables were arranged in a square creating a sort of courtyard for our little servers to walk through. Each of the tables decorated with hand made original tablecloths, clearly the little Puffins had been preparing for this event for a long time. The centerpieces were planters with your Puffin's picture sprouting in the middle – and the flower served to mark which table was set aside for your family. (You know it is a classy operation when they have thoughtfully taken the time to designate seats.) On the walls were hearts filled with a quote from each child saying what love means to them.

With everyone seated at their designated spots each family was then served a delicious pasta meal, plate by plate, from their Puffin. Wearing crowns of hearts that

they had made the Puffins emerged from the kitchen one by one in a parade of the cutest wait staff you ever saw. With smiles on their faces they delivered the meal to each member of their family. Not a single plate was dropped in the dining area. For dessert a delicious plate of blondie/brownies went to each table. A particular hit with all the big brothers and sisters in attendance. (Betty Rose was awfully pleased with the one she got her hands on also.)

For all of the Puffin families we could not have been more thankful for a truly delightful evening. Maris, Cece and their families were amazing. If you have not been lucky enough to have your child land in the Puffin room on their way through Clara Barton – well you may want to think about having another because this was one of the cutest things any of us there had ever seen.

-- Colleen McCrystal (Emmy's Mummy)



## **CARDINALS**

All year, the Cardinals have been hard at play learning their letters. Each week, Cathie and Daniela feature a new letter of the alphabet, and use that letter as a guidepost for the books, games and other activities (even snacks!) that fill up their day. For example, the Cardinals recently celebrated Valentine's Day. In addition to the Valentine's bags they made to collect their treats, they focused on the letter "V" and came up with all kinds of fun words that also start with "V," including their favorite story character "Viola Swamp." Other clever ways that the Cardinals have practiced their letters include publishing a newspaper for "N" week, running the Book Nook for "B" week, operating a coffee shop for "C" week, and setting up a train station

and then visiting Union Station for “T” week. For “F” week, the Cardinals opened the Fancy Flower shop, made falafel and went on a field trip to a flower store. For the upcoming “G” week, plans are in place for a brand new grocery store.

One of the mainstays for this exercise is the letter box. You will find the ever-growing stack of letter boxes carefully arranged along the back wall of the classroom. Each one is a small, dark green crate with the designated letter affixed to the front. During the week of the featured letter, the children are invited to bring objects from home that begins with that letter. Each box is chockfull of sundries, a testament to the popularity of the exercise.

I took the opportunity recently to ask the Cardinals about the boxes and to see if they had a favorite letter. Here’s what they said:

Krishan: “I like K. It starts my name.”

Christopher: “H. Because it comes after C [in my name].”

Daniel: “B, and I brought a bug catcher for the “B” box and put lots of bugs in it.”

Anna: “I like N because it’s in my name...twice!”

Gevvie: “F...for Feringa.”

Alicia: “D...because it sounds like a duck.”

Elise: “A...because it says Aaaaaah.”

Kendall: “K...because it starts with me and with Kate!”

Claire: “I pick H because it’s a nice letter. I put marshmallows in the M box.”

Tyler: “T...because it’s the first letter in my name.”

Ben: “My favorite is 2 bumps and one line.”

Kate: “K...because it’s the first letter in my name.”

Lotus: “A...because it has a point.”

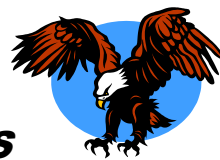
Mia: “W because it’s like 2 letters.”

Evan: “S because it looks like a snake.”

William could not be reached for comment. A reliable source reported that he is celebrating Mardi Gras with his family in New Orleans. Maybe his favorite letter is B for beignets.

Thanks to Cathie and Daniela for thinking outside (or should we say inside) the box and making learning fun!

~ Susan Stiglitz  
(Kate’s mom)



## **EAGLES**

The Eagles spent a busy, and chilly, February! They have continued to enjoy exploring various consonants, including Ff, Vv (for Valentine’s Day, of course!), Cc, Kk, and Tt. For Ff week, they painted with forks, fingers and feathers, and played with forest animals, frogs, farm animals and folded fans. They took a field trip to Sharon’s Florist where the Eagles helped make floral arrangements and were treated to carnations and individualized heart-shaped boxes of chocolates! The fun continued with preparations for Valentine’s Day, the letter Vv. The Eagles decorated their room to the hilt – hearts and personalized valentines were everywhere!

The Eagles learned how to write the word “love” and made lists of the things they love. The holiday culminated in a delicious

parent breakfast and a raucous exchange of valentines. Lest you think that all the Eagles focused on were “mushy, gushy valentines” this month, they also found the time to explore volcanoes. Plans were in the works to explode a class volcano, so watch out!

The Eagles learned about continents and constellations during Cc/Kk week, and even tasted fruit kabobs. “Tt week” saw a lot of talk of transportation, a huge favorite with the Eagles crowd. Despite the fact that the groundhog saw its shadow, the Eagles already are looking forward to Spring. When asked what they most looked forward to as the weather turns warmer, every Eagle responded with a resounding “sun, sun, sun!” Every parent echoes this chant, I’m sure. Enjoy March – may it come in like a lion, but quickly turn lamb-like.

~ Phyllis Marcus  
(Beatrice’s mom)

## **Birdhouse & Science**

I have decided this month to dedicate the Birdhouse and Science News to the science experiments that I did with the Cardinals and Eagles. They are fun for all ages and good for a rainy day projects. Let your children be scientists at home!!!!

### Peppy Pepper

Place some water in a baking pan and add pepper on the top so it is covered and then add drops of detergent and watch the pepper separate. When the pepper separates to the side, keep on add drops of detergent and watch it separate more.

### It’s A Gas

Take a soda bottle, add three to four tablespoons of baking soda into it – use a funnel, it is easier. Then have a balloon ready, then pour a half a cup of vinegar. It will start to bubble, place the balloon on top on the top and watch it blow up.

### Pop And Fizz

Get a glass of water and place two Alka Seltzer tablets into it, and then place 10 to 15 popcorn kernels in it. Watch the popcorn kernels go up and down for about a half an hour.

For more information about the Birdhouse or Science News, please read my bulletin board that is in the hallway.

Thanks and let me know how your budding scientists did at home.

## ***Newsletter Submissions***

If you have an item you’d like to see included in the newsletter, please e-mail it to Paula Curran at [cbccpaula@verizon.net](mailto:cbccpaula@verizon.net).

***Check out our website:***  
**[www.clarabartoncenter.org](http://www.clarabartoncenter.org)**