

### **Changing Chairs: A Note from The Executive Director**

Starting July 1, 2006, I plan to give up my chair as Executive Director and take a seat on the Family Resource Centers' Board of Directors. After six wonderful years as Executive Director, I am stepping down to work on some health issues and to spend more time with my family. I plan to continue to support FRC, however, by being an active participant on the Board. The Board has begun the process of recruiting my successor by drafting a job description and announcing the availability of the position in this newsletter. If you or someone you know is interested in this part-time opportunity, please call the office at 392-3911 for more information.

### **Spring Fundraising Challenge**

Attention all playgroups! The Board is challenging each site to conduct a local fundraiser for FRC. Our goal is to raise \$2,000 by May 31, 2006. The site with the highest proceeds will win a party with **Tots the Clown** including balloons and party favors for the kids! Whether it's a plant sale or bingo night or a pancake breakfast or an ice skating party with bonfire and hot chocolate—the important thing is that it involves your local community and that it be family- friendly and fun to do.

### **Home Makeover**

Do you have drapes, table cloths, bedspreads and linens that you no longer use but are in good condition? A new program at our Hudson site will recycle these items to needy families living at Bliss Towers. Call Nancy at 392-3911 for more information.

# **Winter 2006**

**Playgroups meet in the mornings  
October through May in our four sites:**

**In Chatham on Tuesdays and Thursdays  
9:30-11:30**  
at the Morris Memorial, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Park Row.

**In Copake on Mondays and Fridays  
10:00-12:00**  
at the Copake Park Building,  
North Mountain Road, Copake

**In North Chatham on Wednesdays  
10:00-12:00**  
at the Methodist Church, Route 203 and in

**Germantown on Mondays and Thursdays  
9:30-11:30**  
at the Reformed Church of Germantown  
20 Church Avenue, Germantown

**Hudson**, Bliss Towers Community Room,  
call 392-3911 for info

**There are no fees for our playgroups  
Call 392-3911 for information or visit us at  
[www.FamilyResourceCentersCC.org](http://www.FamilyResourceCentersCC.org)**

***Weather-related Closings:  
Playgroups will close when the local  
school district is closed. We will  
open with one and two hour bus delays.***

### **Free Music Classes at the Roe Jan (Hillsdale) Library**

Amy Hilliard's **Learning Through Music** Program will be presenting a series of classes for young children this winter. Classes will be on Saturday mornings beginning on **January 28<sup>th</sup>** and ending on March 11<sup>th</sup>. The program will include traditional children's songs and rhymes, classical music selections, folktales, and selections from children's literature. There are openings in the toddler class at 9:00-9:35 (9 months-2 years with parent) and the two and three year old class at 9:45-10:30 (must be 2 by 12/1/05, with parent). The class for three, four and five year olds is already filled. To register, call Amy at 325-4101.

### **All About Worms**

Carol Morley, a playgroup alumna and **Columbia Land Conservancy educator**, will present stories, crafts and a hands-on learning experience about worms for 3 and 4 year olds. Join her on Tuesday, **February 7** from 10:00-11:00am at the Chatham Playgroup.

### **Dancing Moon Playhouse**

Check out the new 8 week winter series for **Music Together** (Tuition is \$105 and classes are held on Mondays and Tuesdays at 10:00am and Fridays at 9:30am) and **Art and Music** (Tuition is \$125 with classes on Mondays from 1:30 to 3:30pm). Register by **February 3** by calling Susan Dixon at 392-5341.

### **Creative Movement**

Judy FitzGerald will lead class at the North Chatham playgroup on **Jan 18, Feb 1 and 15 and March 1 and 15.**

From *The Best Things Parents Do* by Susan Isaacs Kohl, Conari Press, 2004, pages 87-88

### **Reward with Time**

Few parents haven't been stressed by morning or evening routines—trying to get kids out of bed and out the door, making sure that evening baths, homework, and bedtime happen in a timely manner. Under pressure, it's easy to forget that kids aren't as motivated as we are to rush out the door so we won't be late for work, or to cut evenings short or jump into bed. I've discovered that one of the secrets of changing these routines is to give children something that lifts their mood and motivates them to cooperate.

Of the hundreds of parents I've consulted with about making mornings and evenings more enjoyable, I love Diane and her daughter Erin's story the best. Erin hated saying goodbye before preschool. She would scream so loudly her mother could hear her in the school as she drove away. This behavior went on for a period of about eight months. She had fun once she settled down, but the teachers worried about why her morning upset was so intense.

When I met with Diane about Erin's distress, I learned that not only was Diane a devoted parent to a preschooler and a baby but also the CEO of her own company. We talked about the behaviors that sour a parent's mood in the morning: a child refusing to leave the TV and get dressed and then arguing about what to wear. Quickly, the reasons for Erin's behaviors seemed clear to me. I have seen over and over that a child's morning goodbye reflects the feelings that have gone on between parent and child that morning. No wonder Erin cried in the mornings; she and Diane had argued from the time they got up.

I proposed a solution that I have observed to work successfully on countless occasions. I advised Diane to reward Erin with fifteen or twenty minutes of having fun as a perk for getting ready on time. Erin would have an incentive to get ready on time, and her mood would improve after having time with her mom. I told Diane this secret worked equally well in the evenings and that no video game, TV program, or toy could compare with the reward of spending time with her.

Diane's expression revealed her incredulity. "How can I possibly spend time with Erin playing when I can barely get myself and the baby ready? I'm always running late." We talked more about the impossibility or mornings, and then she had to leave. However, after a couple of months Erin suddenly changed. She entered the schoolroom skipping in the morning and smiled at the teachers. She said goodbye to her mother easily. Her teachers were stunned by the dramatic turnaround. Finally after two weeks of Erin's bright smile, I asked Diane about Erin's mood change.

Diane's look softened and I thought she might cry. "I started spending time with Erin in the mornings," she said. "And I got my girl back. I started getting up a little earlier so I could be with her. It's a wonderful way to start the day."

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