

## \*From the Chair \*

by Yvonne & Jim

A school year has passed leaving parents with memories of new and further understanding of children and friendship with other adults, children with concrete often unarticulated, memories of feelings, interactions, and events from which they create their growing individual personalities in fact and fancy, and teachers building memories of an ever more profound respect for the overwhelming responsibility of supporting the best in parenting and providing young children with challenging learning experiences tailored to their development.

The new school year is around the corner. We expect to make it an interesting and challenging one for all returning and new families. Returning families certainly can help new ones. For the latter, summer school will ease anxiety, if any, for parents and children. If your children are not attending summer school, frequent the Open House. They are on the web site, or contact the school.

You will receive the fall semester calendar with all the school events so you may make plans for attendance. The room parents from your session will also contact you to schedule your coop days, including your child's birthday. They will always contact you ahead of time for the various meetings and events for your participation.

We are very much looking forward to seeing you soon!

## Reflections

by Yvonne & Jim

# Transitions, Transitions, Transitions...

Life, of course, is full of transitions. At times, we forget to acknowledge how difficult some may be for adults, and we often forget that they are especially hard for children. There are a multitude of transitions, here are just a few examples: Anxious transitions before moving to another place, state or country; Transitions before exciting trips, long and short; Transitions caused which dictate realigning relationships because of additions and absence or deaths in the family; Or the unsettling feeling from anticipating family visitors or preoccupation with upcoming holidays!; And the mounting anxiety facing the prospect of school or job changes. What about the constant adjustment of a parent who goes on business trips? Or the more

painful anticipation of change in economic status, and emotional trauma because of an impending divorce, illness, hospital stay, or even death? What about seasonal transitions? Weather transitions? Or even small daily ones, such as going from home to school or jobs, or from one activity to another? And let's not forget transitions in one's development from infancy to old age. All of these transitions, big and small, have the potential to affect children minimally or greatly, but affect them more harshly than they do adults, depending

on the child's sensitivity to change. The affect on a child mostly depends on how adults handle any life transition themselves.

What is a transition? It is that period of time between a past event and a forthcoming one. Transitions all share common ground in letting the present event go into the past and getting adjusted to that future one. That in-between time can be either short or extensive. This unsettling time is often demonstrated in children by having "deaf ears", dawdling or having a temper tantrum. If that future even is unforeseen, disagreeable to a child, or part of an adult's agenda and not that of a

child's, then ample time is needed so the past event has appropriate closure for the child. Otherwise, disorientation, whining, argumentative "buts", frustration, anger or resentment (take your pick) can be added to the list above. If the future event is long in coming, anxiety mounts with the passage of time. Remember, the younger the children, the less cognitively able they are to comprehend adult time in terms of minutes, hours, weeks, months, calendar, etc. The usual abstract set of guidelines used by adults is a mystery to young children.

They understand it in terms of a series of concrete events, following fairly close together and in terms of their own psychological integrated experiences (remember, mother's "five minutes" may not be the same as father's).

What is a parent to do to prevent unnecessary conflicts, stress and distrust in the child? Though the content of the event may differ, the facilitating process is essentially the same for all transitions. Adults should avoid hurrying themselves and the child. This means good planning whenever possible. This cannot be stressed enough in a society that perpetually functions in high gear towards the future. As we all know, hurrying only develops stress in children with



resulting adverse psychological, social, emotional and/or health effects. When an abrupt transition is unavoidable (as in the case of an emergency, not because of poor planning), adults should stay calm, friendly, firm and reassuring. Avoid too much talking. Thus you give support to the child, and don't create undue anxiety and resistance. You may still get a temper tantrum, but not a full blown one. Avoid promises of rewards or punishment of any sort and you'll avoid a future of manipulation or distrust. When all is calm again, you may briefly and concretely give a short matter-of-fact explanation.

In instances of daily transitions where adults know the events planned, slow down! The few minutes adults take to help a child will begin trusting that you respect their time and interests, and that you will allow them the time to understand the transition. Indirectly, by respecting them in these "simple" transitions, you will create a foundation for the child to take care of life's more difficult or painful transitions later on.

What about a trip (with or without children), moving, or having visitors stay with you for awhile at your home? Let the children be part of packing, just a day or two ahead for the trip, and gradually (no more than a month ahead!) for the move. Then they may be reassured they are going with you. Show them pictures, or visit the new home, if at all possible. As for visitors, remember that the child will feel displaced or may be spoiled by these visitors. Therefore, plan your visitors entertainment and house rules with this in mind. Refrain from setting your children in front of TV or videos. This may be seducing to children, but deep down, they still feel rejected anyway.



For a new pregnancy, wait until the mother's body is very visibly changing (around the sixth or seventh month). Slowly engage the children to participate concretely in the family's changes, such as purchasing or reorganizing the household furniture or rooms for everyone. The harder job is to prepare your children for a permanent change. Once the bay is born or a child is adopted, take it one day at a time. Watch for clues from the displaced children. They may be delighted and avidly curious at first by this new event. At one point or another, they may become angry or feel abandoned, rejected, or resentful. They may be aggressive toward someone in the household. Be empathetic without condoning destructive behavior, that is be open to the children's feelings but emphasize their growing competence, and help them find their own resources for positive coping behaviors. Furthermore, in the case of a death, divorce or a new companion or spoise in the hosuehold, children will display the process of a grieving period.

Paying attention to transitions pays off in developing flexibility, adaptability, and in learning how to cope with difficulties and pain. Successfully solved, they encourage more harmonious relationships between adult and child. The child can take risks without undue fear or depression. Understanding transition opens a whole range of feelings with which our children learn to communicate, develop empathy, and genuinely help others constructively.

## Membership:

Sessions are filling. So far we have three openings in the 2-day session, three in the 3-day, and one in the 4-day session. This only counts families that have signed membership agreements for 2008-2009 school year. It does not include families who have filled applications, but have not signed membership agreements so far. At this point, it's first come, first served; Open Houses and chance encounters have been successful: please send prospective families. Thanks so much to those family members who have come to the Open Houses. They have been great advocates for the school and their children have enjoyed coming.

## Thank You!

Thank you to the membership which showed the program and administration some great support on the Board and as a whole. Thank you for the donation of the new phone, tomato plants, New Yorker humorous small plates, for cleaning up the flower bed which is in very good shape now, and various food.

Thank you to all of the families who came to the yard sale, and who donated items, organized the lemonade stand, and helped with setting up and putting away the tables, boxes and items each day!



## JUNE

- 5 Last Day of School: 2-Day & 4-Day Sessions
- 6 Last Day of School: 3-Day Sessions

## JULY

- 16 First Day of Summer Session ~ 3-Day and 4-Day
- 17 First Day of Summer Session ~ 2-Day

## AUGUST

- 7 Last Day of Summer Session ~ 2-Day and 4-Day
- 8 Last Day of Summer Session ~ 3-Day

## August

Saturday 2nd	Open House-Families Welcome
Saturday 16th	Open House-Families Welcome
Monday 25th	3-Day Session Staggered Start (1/2 of class)
Tuesday 26th	2-Day Session Staggered Start (1/2 of class) Board Meeting and Training Session-6-9 p.m. Required for all new Board Members-Potluck
Wednesday 27th	3-Day Session Staggered Start (1/2 of class) 4-Day Session Staggered Start (other 1/2 of class)
Thursday 28th	2-Day Session Staggered Start (other 1/2 of class) 4-Day Session Staggered Start (other 1/2 of class)
Friday 29th	No School

## September

Monday 1st	No School-Labor Day
Tuesday 2nd	1st Day of School 2-Day and 4-Day Sessions
Wednesday 3rd	1st Day of School 3-Day Session
Sunday 7th	ALL SCHOOL POTLUCK PICNIC - 4-7 PM
Thursday 18th	Seminar
Saturday 20nd	Open House-10-12-Families Welcome
Tuesday 23rd	2-Day Session Meeting
Saturday 27th	Open House-10-12-Families Welcome
Tuesday 30th	Board Meeting

## 2008 Fall Calendar of Events:

### October

Wednesday 1st	3-Day Session Meeting
Saturday 4th	Open House-10-12-Families Welcome
Wednesday 15th	4-Day Session Meeting
Saturday 18th	Open House-10-12-Families Welcome
Tuesday 21st	SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING **REQUIRED**
Tuesday 28th	Board Meeting

### November

Wednesday 5th	2-Day Session Meeting
Saturday 8th	Open House-10-12-Families Welcome
Tuesday 11th	Seminar
Saturday 15th	Open House-10-12-Families Welcome
Sunday 16th	FUNDRAISER KICK-OFF PARTY **REQUIRED** POTLUCK
Wednesday 19th	3-Day Session Meeting
Tuesday 25th	Last Day before Thanksgiving Break

### December

Tuesday 2nd	Board Meeting (For November)
Saturday 6th	Open House-10-12-Families Welcome
Thursday 11th	4-Day Session Meeting
Saturday 13th	Open House-10-12-Families Welcome
Tuesday 16th	Board Meeting
Friday 19th	Last day before winter break

### January

Monday 5th	School Resumes 3-Day and 4-Day Sessions
Tuesday 6th	School Resumes 2-Day Session