



## Westside Montessori School December 2011 Newsletter



### Dear WMS Parents,

Welcome to a festive and busy month at Westside. December is full of holiday preparations, singing seasonal songs, making holiday crafts, practising for our Winter Concert and enjoying this very merry time.

### December and January Themes

We have had a very interactive study of the 5 Senses. It helped the Sensorial area of the classroom come alive as we had a special focus on exploring the different senses.

In December, we continue to appreciate Klimt's works of art and the music of Tchaikovsky. We will also explore traditions of different cultures from this time of year. Parents who have special holiday traditions with their families (i.e.: Hannukah, Kwanzaa, St. Lucia, etc.) are more than welcome to come in and share it with their child's class.

In January we will begin an Introduction to Space. We will have a few months to explore the Solar System before we go to the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 for further enrichment. This unit should be an exciting learning opportunity for the students!



### Parent Observations

We hope you enjoyed your opportunity to observe your child in his or her classroom environment. Thank you for following our observation guidelines. They helped to ensure that classes continued to run smoothly with minimal disruption. We loved seeing the children's faces beam with pride when working with some of their favourite materials, knowing that their Mom or Dad was there to witness it. Thank you for making this a special experience for them.

### "A Very Canadian Christmas"

Our Winter Concerts are on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. We ask that the children arrive 15 minutes before the start time, to allow for a practice session. Concert times are as follows:

**1st Floor AM:** Children's arrival - 9am  
Concert starts at 9:15am

**2nd Floor AM:** Children's arrival - 10:15am  
Concert starts at 10:30am

**1st Floor PM:** Children's arrival - 12:15pm  
Concert starts at 12:30pm

**2nd Floor PM:** Children's arrival - 1:45pm  
Concert starts at 2pm



With the popularity of the Winter Parties and our limited space, we ask that only parents and siblings of the students attend this event. Thank you for your understanding and support in this matter.

### 'Tis the Season ...

Just as the children decorated Halloween Bags in October, they will be creating a winter-themed bag for December. These will be arranged alphabetically on a table outside of the classroom door on Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. If the children made cards for their school friends, they can bring them in on that day to add to the bags. Please refer to the Wish Lists for the most current class name list.







## Christmas Charity Project 2011



At this time each year, we do a small charity project as a school community. This year, the children drew mini stick figure self-portraits, which we made into a class collage. We had them imprinted onto cloth bags. The bags are sold in pairs with a minimum donation of \$30 for 2 bags. The bags are made of

a sturdy, muslin material and have classes pictured on each side. The 1st floor classes have one bag (each class on one side) and the 2nd floor classes also have one bag (each class on one side). These bags would be great gifts for grandparents or a convenient shopping bag. They are available now.

**100% of the proceeds go directly to charity.**

This year, we have chosen **Heifer International** as our charity. They help provide livestock, seeds, or training to people struggling with hunger and poverty. By giving families a hand-up, not just a handout, they empower them to turn lives of hunger and poverty into self-reliance and hope. With gifts of livestock and training, they help families improve their nutrition and generate income in sustainable ways. They refer to the animals as "living loans" because in exchange for their livestock and training, families agree to give one of its animal's offspring to another family in need. It's called Passing on the Gift - creating an ever-expanding network of hope and peace.

With the money raised, the children will select the animals they would like to donate and the country they would like to help.

Teachers will be giving out forms at the P/T Conferences. Please fill out the form and return it by December 1<sup>st</sup>. We had to pre-order a minimum number of bags so ask that each family purchase at least one set of bags. More bags are available.

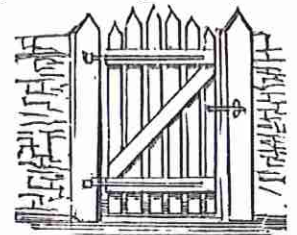
## All I Want for Christmas ...



One of our classroom traditions is to ask the children what they want for Christmas and make a whole class list. We publish this by class and it's just a fun way to hear the responses. Keep an eye out for it in the coming weeks!

## Security Reminder - Arrival Procedure

Upon arrival, the children are asked to line up when the classrooms doors open. Please allow for the children to greet the teacher at the door. The Directress needs to focus her attention on the children arriving and helping them with the cubby routine. If you have to relay a message to your child's teachers, please write a note with any pertinent messages. Also, please remember that any changes to your child's pick-up routine should be communicated by written note or email.



The school gate is kept latched to ensure the children's security. Parents are asked to remind their children that **ONLY ADULTS are to unlatch the gate**. If only parents are opening and closing the gate, it contributes to maintaining all the children's safety. Upon entering and exiting through the back playground, please ensure to latch the gate closed behind you.





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### Ongoing Professional Development

All WMS staff (including specialist teachers) will be renewing their Child Care First-Aid certification on January 8<sup>th</sup>. We have also had our annual Epi-Pen review with our local health nurse as well as an overview regarding medical conditions and allergies of children at the school.

### Snow Days Reminder

(reprinted from the November Newsletter ... )

The decision to close the school in the event of a heavy snowfall is based on driving conditions and the safety of our families and staff. If the school is closed, an email will go out to all families no later than 7:00am on the day in question and notification of a Snow Day will be posted online, on the school's website calendar (<http://www.westsidemontessori.ca/calendar>). You can also listen to school closure reports on News 1130 (1130AM) or watch Global TV morning news.



When the school stays open, we will run as normal a class day as possible. If a staff member is unable to commute, we may combine classes where necessary, while still following adult to child VCH guidelines. There will be no broadcast message if the school is open. If conditions are dangerous where you live, please make your own decision on whether or not to bring your child to school. Regular procedures regarding absences apply (call or email to let us know that your child will not be attending).

### School Photos

School photos will be back from the photographer in early December. You will receive your child's pictures and class photos before Winter Break.

### Winter Break

The last day of regular classes at Westside will be Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Our Winter Concert will be held on Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The school will re-open on Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, with a class New Year's Party to welcome 2012.

*Wishing all families  
a joyous holiday  
season and a very  
Happy New Year,  
from all the staff at  
WMS.*



### Upcoming Dates to Remember

Mon. Nov 28 <sup>th</sup>	Scholastic Book orders due
Wed. Dec 1 <sup>st</sup>	Charity Project orders due
Fri. Dec 9 <sup>th</sup>	Last Day of Friday Enrichment before Winter Break
Wed. Dec 14 <sup>th</sup>	Holiday Card Exchange Last day of classes before Winter Break
Thurs. Dec 15 <sup>th</sup>	WMS Winter Concerts:
1st Floor AM:	Children's arrival - 9am Concert starts at 9:15am
2nd Floor AM:	Children's arrival - 10:15am Concert starts at 10:30am
1st Floor PM:	Children's arrival - 12:15pm Concert starts at 12:30pm
2nd Floor PM:	Children's arrival - 1:45pm Concert starts at 2pm

*Please note there are no regular  
classes on this day.*

Dec. 16 <sup>th</sup> - Jan. 8 <sup>th</sup>	Winter Break
Mon. January 9 <sup>th</sup>	Winter Term 2012 starts



## WMS Charity Project 2011



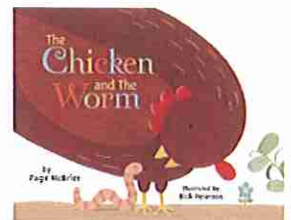
At this time each year, we do a small charity project as a school community. This year, the children drew mini stick figure self-portraits which we made into a class collage. We then had them imprinted onto cloth bags. The bags are sold in pairs with a minimum donation of \$30 for 2 bags. The bags are made of a sturdy, muslin material and have classes pictured on each side. The 1st floor classes have one bag (each class on one side) and the 2nd floor classes also have one bag (each class on one side). They would be great gifts for grandparents or a convenient shopping bag. They are available now.

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With the money raised, the children will select the animals they would like to donate and the country they would like to help.

Please fill out the following form and return it by December 1<sup>st</sup>. We had to pre-order a minimum number of bags so ask that each family purchase at least one set of bags.



Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Order Form for WMS Charity Project 2011

I would like to order the following:

- ☐ 2 sets of bags = \$30.00
- ☐ I would like an additional number of bags: \_\_\_\_\_ with a donation of \_\_\_\_\_ (while supplies last).

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ cash ☐ cheque (payable to Westside Montessori School)

*We appreciate your support with our community charity project. Thank you.*



Dear WMS Families,

Please find the December 2011 Newsletter attached.

### **HFMD**

As of this week, we have had no new reported cases among the four classes. Please continue to let us know if your child comes down with it so we can report it to families.

### **OBSERVATIONS**

If you missed your scheduled observation, we ask that you reschedule one for January or wait until the Spring Term Observations. These next few weeks are among the busiest in the class and we would prefer to schedule them after the holidays.

### **P/T CONFERENCES**

We look forward to meeting with parents these next two P/T Conference days. Please come with any questions or comments from your observations, the reports or anything you've had on your mind. The teachers are a wealth of resources and are always happy to help. We have a very interesting article to pass onto you at the conferences regarding the different learning styles of children. It's quite a good read and we hope you find it insightful.

### **WINTER CONCERT**

We begin preparing next week for the Winter Concert on Thursday, December 15th. Song lyrics, costumes (or colours to wear) and lines (if applicable) will be sent out at the end of the week.

With best regards,  
Bettina

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