

## **Sir Wilfrid Laurier Neighbourhood Night**

Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010

6:00 PM – School Age Room

**Present:** Carm Thersidis (centre Supervisor), Janis Webster (Umbrella Executive Director), Katie Wheaton (R.ECE-senior room), Anna Corsini (R.ECE-senior room), Jaclyn Novak (R.ECE-preschool room), Heather Smith (R.ECE-preschool room-new staff), Sandra Davidson (School Age), Nayer Kahn (School Age), Marian Zamprin (Resource Teacher), Lisa Kiriakopoulos (HWDSB Liaison).

Parents and Families: Tanya Lawrence and John Franchi with children Christian Lawrence (SA) and Chase Franchi (preschool) and Lily Franchi, Dana Turple with son Jason (school age).

**Regrets:** Darren Griffiths (Principal)

**1) Welcome and Introductions:**

Janis Webster welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for taking the time to attend our Neighbourhood Night.

**2) Why are we having a Neighbourhood Night?**

Neighbourhood Nights give stakeholders the opportunity to participate in discussions about the services we provide and determine ways in which we can improve our services for children and their families.

**3) Child Care Program ~ Responsive Curriculum in our classrooms.**

**Junior Room** – Jaclyn touched on some of the things that are happening in the preschool/junior room. The children have been discussing families, homes and people in our family. Jaclyn shared some of the “Finger Family” documentation from the Juniors. The Artist at the Centre (Judy) has been working along side the classroom teachers over the past 4 weeks and brings great learning experiences with her. Heather Smith will be returning from her maternity leave effective March 1, 2010, allowing Missy to be available for upcoming changes over the next few months, and allowing for consistency in the Junior room.

**Senior Room** – Katie spoke about family involvement in our program. Since February is Black History month, one of the grandparents of a child in our program shared information with children about the significant contributions people of African descent have made in our world. Katie also shared some of the Senior Room documentation. Interests right now are around winter sports and the Olympics. Children had an opportunity to have their picture taken with the Olympic Torch. The Senior children also have the opportunity, every other month, to work with our centre artist, Judy.

**School Age** – Nayer and Sandra shared that the children have been interested in the history behind the Olympics, and also made their own skateboards from wood. The classroom focus is on respect for the classroom, the things in it, and other people. To improve social skills in the school age program, Sandra explained how the children are divided into 2 groups – older/younger – and they separate into 2 rooms. Sandra and Nayer also explained that the children earn “dollars”

based on respectful behaviour and “good deeds”. At the end of the week, they use their dollars in the “SA Store” (run by the school age children) to purchase items children have made or items that have been purchased by the teachers at the dollar store. This is allowing the children to understand and respect the value of money.

#### 4) **Questions:**

##### 1) **How can we adapt social behaviours to make them acceptable?**

We realize that when children are younger – such as preschoolers and JK/SK – redirecting, labeling, and explaining behaviours work, and decreases the behaviour. However, as the children get older, this doesn’t always seem to be the case.

The Umbrella has a behaviour code of conduct – as does the Board of Education which outlines the expectations for children, families and staff members. Janis reviewed the procedure staff members follow when children behave in a way that is unacceptable. Child care staff members have the advantage of connecting with families at the beginning and end of every day, so updates regarding a child’s participation in the program happen regularly. Although Darren Griffiths was not present at this meeting to share strategies used by teaching staff, we know that teaching and administrative staff members call parents when children exhibit challenging behaviour at school. HWDSB has published a series of pamphlets that outline ‘Codes of Conduct’, ‘Progressive Discipline’, ‘Bullying’, ‘Suspension’ and ‘Expulsion’. The Umbrella has always worked with families to determine the most appropriate course of action with regard to children’s behaviour. In some cases, a child and his/her family may need additional support from a community agency; in others, we sometimes find group care is not in the best interest of some children.

##### 2) **How do we deal with negative behaviour at the centre?**

**Junior Room** – reward positive behaviour with words/praise, ignore undesired behaviour, teach the children to express their feelings.

**Senior Room** - reward positive behaviour with words/praise, encourage independence and respect for the environment, express feelings, problem solve, conflict resolution.

**SA Room** – problem solve, conflict resolution, separate children with conflicting personalities/behaviours, give the children a sense of responsibilities. Sometimes children don’t always understand what they are saying and what the words they are using really mean so we help them by explaining how or what other words could/should be used.

Lisa Kiriakopoulos talked a little about ‘Restorative Justice’ – a process whereby children are held accountable for their negative behaviour and participate in an activity to repair the damage to a relationship that has occurred as a result of their negative behaviour.

**5) Feedback on meeting/program:**

One parent asked for some suggestions/strategies to prevent or discourage her children from climbing on furniture/tables at home. Participants at the meeting then discussed the possible reasons for the behaviour and appropriate responses.<sup>4</sup>

**Adjournment**

Janis thanked everyone for taking the time to participate in this discussion and let the parents know that once minutes are complete, they will be circulated to parents and also posted on the Umbrella website.