



## JEN'S PRIMARY CLASS INFORMATION

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year! I am so glad you have come. The beginning of the school year is a special time for me, a time when I remember, with clarity, the reasons why I do this work, the big reasons. Montessori wrote "The child is both hope and a promise for mankind," and I believe this to be true. It is my hope that the children that leave our classrooms do so ready to help this world be a better place. They learn to do this by being part of a special community of children and adults who understand the developing child and what he/she needs. Over the course of the year your child will have an opportunity to do great work with his/her hands, to form and maintain meaningful relationships with the children that make up our community, and to have access, on a daily basis, to a philosophy and pedagogy that holds in its heart, in its core, the idea of honoring the greatest gifts of the individual.

The following is the logistical side of things, the information about our classroom that I covered or should have covered in the opening parent meeting. Please do not hesitate to call or email me if you have questions about what you read or if you just want to talk philosophy. Looking forward to another great year!

### OBSERVATION

I encourage you to observe your child in the classroom setting as often as possible. It is the best way for you to have a clear understanding of their life at school. During the first six weeks, I ask that you use the one-way window for your observations while the group gets settled. Remember, you will get the best representation of their classroom activity if they don't know you are watching. After this initial period, you may either use the observation window or come into the classroom and sit in our designated observer's chair. If you come in, please do your best to be a "fly on the wall" to allow the children to show you what they can do! Look for an observation guide, either under the chair or next to the window, to elicit specific thoughts while observing.

### SNACK

This year the children will enjoy a school provided snack. Our school is very committed to healthy living and so will provide fruits and veggies, lean proteins, and whole grains as snack options. As always, much of the preparation will be done by the children in the classroom. Outside of normal, everyday snack, we will do specific tastings and culinary experiments. I will occasionally ask for grocery getting volunteers to assist in these special cooking projects, if you are interested please see volunteer form.

### VOLUNTEERISM

The classroom functions, in part, because of the great help that you all lend. If you would like to donate your time and energy and/or a special skill please indicate so on our volunteer form and return it to me by the end of Friday, September 9, 2011. I am putting together a calendar for the rest of the school year and will need your input to complete it. Thank you.

### LUNCH

The school lunch program is wonderful, really wonderful. I encourage you, without reservation, to check the calendar on the website and send in your choices. You will not be disappointed. If you pack your child a lunch, know that we will supply cloth napkins, placemats, plates, silverware, and glasses of water for your child, so you needn't pack them. Milk is available for purchase for \$.75/glass. Please clearly label lunch boxes containing peanut butter or other nut butters. Thank you, in advance, for your effort to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Our refrigerator is very small, so we ask that you include a cold pack in their lunchbox if they have perishable food items. Please pack their warm food in a thermos as we are not able to heat food in our classroom.

### PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please label all of your child's personal belongings on the tag of the clothing item. This aids our efforts in helping them keep track of their things and minimizing "lost and found" items.

If your child has something from home that they would like to share with their classmates, they can display it on our museum shelf. Please limit items to these categories: something from nature, photographs, something they have made or something from a different culture. Please encourage them to keep toys at home.

### SUPPLIES

Please supply your child with these items:

One pair of indoor sneakers with non-marking soles (Please refrain from lights, bells or whistles.)

At least one extra change of clothing for accidents and spills, weather appropriate.

### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AND SNACK

Your child will be invited to have a special birthday celebration with you and their classmates during the school year. Summer birthdays will be celebrated on their half birthday. I will contact you around the time of their celebration to schedule a date and a time with you. If you like, you may bring a few photos of them on the morning of their celebration; it is always great fun for the children to see them “growing up.” Many children also enjoy bringing a snack to their celebration. You may bring a low or no sugar birthday snack for your child to share with their class. Please save cookies, cupcakes and other sugary snacks for their celebrations at home. I have many ideas for delicious, healthy birthday snacks. If you would like some suggestions, please ask. Teaching the children about healthy food choices is part of our curriculum. I appreciate your help in this effort.

### MEDICATION/ILLNESS

If your child becomes ill at school, I will call you to come and pick them up. They will rest in the comfortable room adjacent to the front desk until you come for them. For specifics about our illness policy, please refer to your parent handbook.

If your child needs to take medication at school, you must fill out and sign a medication form. You can get a copy of this from the front desk or in your parent handbook.

### NON-PARENT PICKUP

If someone other than you will pick up your child, their name must be on your child’s white card or the child must have a signed note from a parent or guardian. I will check ID of everyone I don’t recognize and appreciate your patience with this safety precaution.

### TEACHER AVAILABILITY

During the school day (8am –3:30pm) the receptionist will forward your calls to my voicemail. I will check my messages daily after school and return your call as soon as possible. I am available between 3:30-4:00pm most days for phone calls or to meet you in person. I also welcome your emails, again my address is [jen@traversechildrenshouse.org](mailto:jen@traversechildrenshouse.org). Please know that I will respond to an email within a twenty four hour time period. Sending a note with your child is another great way to let me know what you are thinking. Keeping open lines of communication between us is so important for your child’s school experience. Know that I view this work as a gift, and am excited, truly excited, at the opportunity to work with your child and with you.

Here we go!

Jen