



Westminster Kindergarten

From the Desk of the Director

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Each year, the Kindergarten has participated in a Christmas giving project that brings to light the true spirit of the holiday season.

This year, we have chosen a different project in honor of one of our own Westminster Kindergarten children, Michael Stanley. Michael is a 5 year old child who has a twin sister Caroline, currently at Harding Academy, and a brother William who attends Westminster.

Michael was diagnosed with cancer in the spring of 2005 and underwent extensive treatment. We are so blessed to have Michael back in our midst, cheering us with his smile and great sense of humor.

Vanderbilt Children's Hospital provides a service of supporting children undergoing serious treatment for diseases such as cancer with Child Life Specialists. These Specialists help the children retain some normalcy by providing art supplies, games, toys, and other tangible "gifts" during the child's stay at the hospital.

Michael's parents, Tony and Cindy Stanley, sponsor an endowment for Vanderbilt Children's Hospital called the Michael Stanley Child Life Fund. This fund supports the Child Life Specialists' work and materials. Tony and Cindy's personal testimony is included in the next page of this newsletter along with a list of needed items.

Westminster Kindergarten extends beyond being a wonderful preschool and over the course of each school year develops into a community of children and parents whose love and support for one another continues to make the Kindergarten one with a sense of family.

My blessings to you and yours this holiday season,

Rebecca

Special Thank You's!

- Our Book Fair was a huge success because of the wonderful organization by Julie Smith and Kadie Folk and because of all of the amazing volunteers who helped set up, break down, and man the booths during the sale.
- We contributed over 600 lbs. of food to the Second Harvest Food Bank!
- All of you who have generously responded to our annual giving letter. Without your support, our program would not be of the exceptional quality that it is. Please see page 4 for the list of donors.

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December, 2007

Dates to Remember:

December 19:

3 Day 3's Christmas Celebration 9:15

No ED for 3's

December 20:

2 Day 3's Christmas Celebration 9:15

4's/5's Christmas Program 9:45

December 21:

Teacher Workday

NO SCHOOL

January 4:

Teacher Workday

NO SCHOOL

January 7:

STUDENTS RETURN

Michael Stanley Child Life Fund

Our lives were somewhat similar to the rest of you at Westminster until April 29th, 2005 arrived. Our family was devastated with the news that our sweet son Michael had Stage 3 Embryonal Rhabdomyosarcoma. He endured a 13 hour surgery, 48 weeks of chemotherapy, 6 weeks of radiation, and well over 100 days in the hospital. Michael was unable to come to school. During this time it was painful for us to drop Caroline and William off at school without Michael. However, we are thrilled to report that Michael went into remission and came back at school for the entire 2006-2007 school year. Miracles happen!

Unfortunately, this can happen to anyone. After many tears from being mad at the world and wondering why us, we realized there was a purpose and we would make good things come from our bad situation. After looking back on so many things that helped Michael and our family, it became clear to us that we were particularly touched with the Vanderbilt Child Life program.

Child Life Specialists work with patients and families to reduce the stress and anxiety that is be associated with the hospital experience. They work to meet the needs of patients and families by:

- Promoting normal growth and development through play and activity rooms
- Advocating for non-medical needs of patients and families
- Increasing patients' and families' understanding of hospital experiences

While critical to the work of Vanderbilt, these services are not revenue producing and are thus in constant need of funding and donations. To honor Michael and to help ensure that Child Life services are always available to patients and families at Vanderbilt Children's Hospital, we have enthusiastically started the **Michael Stanley Child Life Fund** in the form of an endowment. Monetary gifts will help to increase the bottom line of the Michael Stanley Child Life Fund, and will have a long term impact on families and patients. However, gifts of toys and other items are desperately needed and will provide an immediate benefit this holiday season.

Cindy and I would be grateful for supplies to provide Child Life Services through the Michael Stanley Child Life Fund. We've seen first hand how such a small toy or a box of crayons can bring the largest smile to a child's face. It can happen to any family and we want to be sure Child Life is there for other families now and in the future.

Cindy and Tony Stanley

www.michaelstanleychildlife.com

A list of needed items will be included with this newsletter.



Holiday Celebrations

Parents are invited to participate in the children's festivities prior to the Christmas vacation.

The **three year olds** will celebrate in their individual classrooms on Thursday and Friday, December 15th and 16th. Children should be brought to the room by 9:00. Parents are then asked to wait in the Music Room until 9:15 at which time they may return to the classroom. Dismissal for the holidays will follow the classroom celebrations.

Four and five year olds will participate in the Christmas program*

to be held in the Fellowship Hall on Friday, December 16th beginning at 9:45. The entire program will be professionally videotaped. Parents may purchase the program either on VHS or DVD for \$25.

Following the program, parents, children and teachers will gather in individual classrooms for refreshments, with dismissal for the holidays immediately after.

Please note:

No extended day for the 3's on December 15th

**A special thank you to Scott Haley for rebuilding our manger!*



*Come celebrate
with us!*

Annual Giving

I would like to extend a special thank you to all of the families who have responded so generously to our annual giving letter:

Bartley and Paige McGehee
Chad and Jessica McKenzie

David and Sarah McMillan
William and Erica Jacobs
Stephen and Mandy Young
David and Anne Trainer
David and Michal Caldwell
Howard and Katheryn Harlan

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Weiss
Michael and Lisa Spellman
Myoung Kim and Ki Seo
Todd and Jennifer Botorff
David and Mary Koziak
Bill and Barbara Jim Turner

Enrollment

Enrollment for currently enrolled students, families of Toddlers & Twos, and current church members begins December 1st and concludes December 14th.

An updated tuition schedule along with an application form are available on our website at:

www.westminsterpreschool.org

Registration for community members begins January 1st. All community applications are due in the Kindergarten office by January 18th.

Please contact your teachers regarding any questions or concerns about your child's placement for next year (program placement, not specific classroom placement).

Toddlers & Twos applications are available at:

www.toddlersandtwos.com



Patience, patience

Young children often want your attention right now!!!!!! But having patience is important for success in school and with friends. Teach your child how to be patient with these strategies.

- **Be specific.** How many times have you told your youngster "just a minute" when she wants something? Instead try, "When I finish sweeping, we'll play," or, "I'll watch you dance when the big hand is on the three." Knowing

she will have your attention later will encourage her to wait now.

- **Model patience.** Make cookies together, and brainstorm activities (clean up the kitchen, write a dinner menu) to do until they're ready. When you're stuck in traffic, try playing a word game or singing songs with your youngster. Learning that he can fill his time while waiting will help your child develop self-control.

- **Praise effort.** Be sure to notice when your child does show patience. Say, "Thank you for waiting nicely while I finished." Your praise is apt to encourage her to try harder next time she has to wait.

A Gallery of Their Own

Show your little one how important his schoolwork is by displaying it in his very own gallery.

Pick a spot (upstairs hallway, kitchen wall) where you have room to hang your child's masterpieces. Make them stand out by gluing or stapling them to colored construction paper. Your youngster will be proud to see his work displayed and to hear visitors' comments.

You can boost your child's self-esteem even more by hanging her pictures, stories, and math papers at your workplace. If possible, take him to your office on a weekend, or take a picture of the display so she can see how much you value her efforts.

Please make an effort to visit the hallways of Westminster Kindergarten this holiday season to bear witness to the amazing artwork created by your children!



Always give without remembering, and always receive without forgetting.

Brian Tracy
