

Dear parents,

I wanted to keep you posted on the project work we are engaging in with the help of Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago. Ms Lily and I took part in the second seminar organized at the museum, where we shared our experiences with other teachers on the approach, our pitfalls, and our children's final decisions about the topic for the project we are going to engage in for the next couple of months. As I have mentioned already, our class is really interested in the tree's life, their purpose, their role in keeping the environment and people healthy and clean as well as the ways we can help trees and nature in general. Ms Lily's group has decided to engage in sand exploration. As you might know, our rooms have been granted with the amount of \$300 to use toward purchasing tools and/or materials we need for our project investigations. We ordered a microscope, a slide maker set for it, a plant press for our field collectables for the class herbarium, a woodland terrarium, and books about different kinds of trees, ferns, and biomes. For the four's sand exploration we ordered a big wooden classroom sand studio set, sand of different colors, glass-like objects and books about sand. At the workshop in the museum that took place about 10 days ago, Ms Lily and I had the opportunity also to learn about the proper ways to document and present our project work and we were given homework for our third meeting; we are to collect all kinds of documentation of children's work on the project, decide what the most important and meaningful pieces are, and present it to the museum on a big tri-fold board. Since parent involvement is a big and very important part of the project work, I want to inform you of the project's schedule and parent initiatives that you will be welcomed to participate in. The Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago has graciously provided all of our parents with one free family pass for the museum, to use whenever you want by March 2012. We will be distributing these together with this letter, so you have the option to go visit the museum during the holidays. Next on the schedule is a *parent and child process art workshop* that we would like to organize before the winter vacation. It will be a fun time spent together in our classrooms, talking about art and making art with your children. The workshop will take about 30-45 minutes of your time, and its purpose is for you to have some time working and playing with your children on a shape painting art project. In addition to that, you might want to try similar art activities at home, during the winter vacation! A letter explaining the benefits of creating art together as a family as well as an evaluation letter will be provided to you at the workshop. You will be asked to share your art projects and bring the evaluations by March, when we will bring them to the museum for our third and last seminar. On January 10, 2012 we will use one of our freebies in the museum and go on a focused field trip, when our class will explore the dimensions in art, and the fours will engage in water art; how fun! Afterwards, in February we will go on a second free field trip to Kohl Children's Museum and focus on science. On Sunday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2012 you are invited to the celebration of our project in the Museum, when we will present our process of working on the tree and sand projects. Only the participants in project work will be allowed that day in the museum, and light breakfast will be provided. Children get to bring one parent free on that day. It will be a celebration of our exploration of learning, a well-deserved culmination of our inquiring minds.

We will try to organize the parent-child workshop for Thursday, December 8 at 5PM or Thursday, January 19, 2012. Please talk to Ms Lily or me about your preferred date. In a case both parents are unavailable, grandparents are welcome to substitute too! Make sure to come, you won't regret it!

November 20, 2011