

# NOVEMBER 2009 NEWSLETTER

## FOOD-DRIVE AT DAYCARING

As most of you have noticed in school we have a big barrel sitting by the entrance to school. This barrel is for us to fill with food for the Marin Food Bank's Holiday Food Drive.

The food we collect will be distributed in Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and Christmas boxes and then later to low-income senior citizens and families in need.

This giving campaign provides an excellent opportunity for our children (especially the oldest ones) to feel themselves empowered by helping and foster their sense of compassion.

## November at school

We are starting our month of November with the celebration of Dia De Los Muertos. (Day of the Dead) a pre-Hispanic festival that originally celebrated the first crops of beans, chilies, corn and squash and to thank Mother Earth for her bounty and to honor the ancestors. As you can see on the altar in my office (thank you Jenny) some favorite foods of the deceased are offered with great flair.

A HUGE thank you goes to Indigo's, grandma, Marty who came with Kevin last Wednesday and brought her homemade sugar-skulls for our children to decorate.

It made this look into other people's traditions very enriching to our children and I thank the Family Herrera-Meade for helping us with that.

November will bring a lot of Native American stories and activities and art to our school and yesterday I was enjoying seeing the stompers exercising the native dances of the Hawaiian people. Please remember to take home our yearly turkey-handprint-laminated placemats before Thanksgiving.

School will be closed on Wednesday November 11<sup>th</sup> for Veteran's Day and again, on November 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> for our Thanksgiving-break.

## **SOME THOUGHTS ON HOLIDAYS, KIDS AND STRESS**

Every year, I see parents in near-agony over the approaching Holidays and what it will do to the peace in the family, the budget they promised to live by, the proper way to teach their children limits and yet not destroy expectations. So, this year, I thought that I would encourage every family to have a FAMILY MEETING, complete with a notepad and a “scribe” to take notes and see if this is a good way to all get on the same page, make agreements and ultimately aim for a relaxed Holiday Season.

### A. Boundaries

Determine how to establish meaningful traditions  
What are YOUR cultural priorities and challenges?  
It remains easier if adults are willing to set the tone.

### B. The kids

How to plan activities that are age-appropriate for each child.  
Why is this Holiday important to your child?  
Are there any special cultural considerations?  
What about the spirit of giving?  
Talking about gift lists  
Toys and the messages that they bring to your children. Please stay focused on gender-interactive toys that will build “world-wise” boys and girls.

### C. Travel away from home

What do we take along ?  
Naps and sleeping arrangements.  
Holiday meals. Aim for the nutritious but remain realistic.  
Talk about realistic expectations before the family visit.

### D. Stress

Talk about the every-day stresses currently occurring in your family  
Budgets: discuss what is possible and what is not  
Media Blitz: Can you limit exposure during the Holidays?  
Is there an equal consideration between giving and getting?

Consequences of disappointment in unfulfilled wishes.

**And my yearly peom since 1973**

When you do your Holiday shopping and you're picking out the toys  
Please remember that your choices will be building girls and boys  
Tools and science sets and paints and books of other lands  
Should now replace the things of war in all your children's hands  
Give them blocks for building peace, our kids can make it true  
And toys that make a game of war should never come from you  
War is too grim a thing for fun and much too sad for play  
So give your child constructive toys as promise of a BETTER DAY.  
KARLA