



Building Bright Tomorrows... Today

Summer 2018



Straight from the Director

Summer greetings from us here at Old Mill Center. This newsletter focuses on the pleasure of reading and value of being read to from a very early age. If you are like me, you already have a few books to enjoy over the summer. Many of us have books at home and add to them from the library or exchange books with friends. But not every parent we work with experienced a love of reading growing up.

Part of our work at Old Mill Center is teaching parents how they can help their kids learn to read, even if they struggle with it themselves. Talking about the images in a book stimulates imagination and vocabulary development. Spending time together reading a book creates closeness and shared memories.

It is a pleasure to send children home with their own books, thanks to the generosity of our donors and grantors. Those books become treasures. I remember one boy telling me that he'd read to his dog when he got home—he was so excited.

Thank you for supporting us, as we help children and families make reading a regular activity in their homes and give them the resources to make that happen. The ability to read is fundamental to success in education and life. You help us invest in the future of all and the inclusive community we want to live in.

**-Bettina Schempf
Executive Director**



OMC Teacher & Home Visitor Annie Bittner reads with her class
Photo Credit: Andy Cripe, courtesy of The Corvallis Gazette-Times

"I rarely read the words in a book verbatim. Instead, my goal is to show that a book tells a story and that books can be fun."

- Annie Bittner

The Benefits Of Reading To Children

by Pernell Harris, OMC Development Intern

With the joy of summer comes the challenge of helping kids stay connected to learning. One of the best ways to help prevent summer learning loss is to encourage regular reading. It is estimated that students lose 2 months of reading skills over the summer, but 2-3 hours of reading per week during summer break can prevent it. Studies have shown that reading 4-5 books over the summer has effects on a student's academic

retention similar to summer school enrollment. It also lets children personalize their education by selecting books with stories and characters that interest them.

Old Mill Center encourages reading through activities that cultivate an early love for books. When nurtured at home, reading can build a strong bond between parent and child. Early and continued reading with children helps develop social skills such as speaking, interpersonal interaction, parental bonding and empathy. It also encourages brain activity, which is critical for early childhood development.

Early reading is a strong focus in several of the Center's five programs. Our Relief

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Get to Know Old Mill Center

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Nursery classroom teachers engage toddlers by letting them act out the story—kids love pretending to be the bears from *Goldilocks And The Three Bears*. Allowing children to mimic characters improves their interpersonal connections, recognition of sounds, and creates positive association with books and stories. This grows the imagination of young minds.

Tips for Engaging Young Readers:

- 1. Be playful: use different voices for each character and mimic motions**
- 2. Encourage kids to be playful**
- 3. Return to books they like**
- 4. Allow interruptions**
- 5. Ask questions to enhance reading comprehension**
- 6. Look for stories with different experiences and backgrounds**
- 7. Make books accessible**

Our classroom students have the choice of reading or being read to every day after meals. Repetition is key when teaching a child to read, because a preschooler's brain is more likely to retain repeated information through the reinforcement of developing neural pathways. Repeating stories and rhymes allows kids to memorize familiar words and phrases. These memories lead to the child becoming more involved in story time through co-reading with peers, parents, and teachers.

To reinforce their child's interest in reading, parents can take a family trip to the local library or book store, include a book on a trip to the park, and frequently read to them. When the child learns to read on their own, parents and children can take turns reading to each other or co-read the same book. This will strengthen the parent-child bond, improve the child's memory, create a positive association with learning and listening, teach pronunciation and vocabulary for confidence in the classroom, and make lasting memories with their parents.

Our semi-annual Book Fairs are a great opportunity for children to pick out their own books, and the Old Mill Center Library features books for all reading levels in a variety of languages. Additionally, through the generous support of the members of the Pi Beta Phi Alumnae Club, Church of the Good Samaritan, and several individual donors, the Center has received hundreds of new books. Many of these are given directly to the families we serve. Book donations support our Library and our commitment to reading to all our children.

In our community, the Public Library's Kids Summer Reading program begins each June and goes until September. This year's theme is "Libraries Rock," and it encourages daily reading through interactive events and prizes for kids. For more information, visit the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library website at cbcpubliibrary.net/ or visit with your child for some summer reading fun!

Community Preschool

new name, same continuing concept.



Community: a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals.

The Old Mill Center Preschool is a unique program for 3-6 year olds. Those with special needs attend alongside typically developing children, and it's been that way for over 40 years. When kids learn and play side by side they develop an understanding of diversity, and they learn patience, interpersonal communication, and above all, kindness. This classroom is a special community. We are celebrating that!

Get to Know Old Mill Center

We're not just a school! We offer five comprehensive programs that serve the needs of children from birth to age 18:

Healthy Families

Teaching parents positive bonding with newborns

Child, Teen and Family Counseling

Individual, group, and family mental health services

Community Preschool

Preparing children for kindergarten

Relief Nursery

Preventing child abuse and neglect

Intensive Treatment Services

Psychiatric day treatment



Giving Thanks to the Community

Paying It Forward

Our Annual Auction raises much needed funds for all 5 programs at Old Mill Center. In 2016, we added a Pay It Forward category with items that would not go home with the winning bidder, but rather would be returned to the Center and given directly to our families. It's a great way for bidders to give directly to children and families in need. This year there were 61 packages available including craft kits, a relaxation basket for mom and grooming for dad, free dental services, legal consultation services, and a plethora of books in both English and Spanish for all ages. This auction category has grown exponentially over the last two years as we added direct giving to 5 "causes" in addition to baskets of books, home items, clothing and toys. Our causes included donations to the classroom, household emergency funds, parks and recreation passes, and summer camp scholarships.



Pay it Forward funds allowed Jonas to attend martial arts classes, which taught him self-discipline and gave him a safe outlet for excess energy. Classes like these provide a variety of benefits for kids but can be financially out of reach for many families.

Last year, money from these causes provided gas cards for clients to get to important appointments; emergency assistance for rent, power, food and child care; martial arts and

ballet classes; and funds for clothes, shoes, and hygiene items. We even supplied a mom with the proper cleaning tools, training, and support to do a major clean-up in her home. These resources allowed her son to continue to live with her.

This year, Pay It Forward causes raised \$3385 to help provide direct support to our families. We thank our Auction attendees for their contributions. We will spend it wisely.

Old Mill Center for Children and Families

PRESCHOOL

FALL ENROLLMENT

ages 3-6 • 8am-12pm
Choose two, three, or five days a week!





To register, call (541) 757-8068
or for more information, visit
WWW.OLDMILLCENTER.ORG

★★★★★
Five-star rating
by SPARK, Oregon's
Early Learning Division

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Alice Alexandrescu
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Alex Anderson
Olivia Anderson
Taylor Anderson
Chris Anthony
Beye Antonsen
Mary Arthur-Young
Gabrielle Arts
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Mica Habarad
Barb Hansen
Ronnie Hansen
Dennis Hanson
Rachel Harrington
Pernell Harris
Muhammad Hassan
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Jill Irwin

Davis Jacob
Justin Jacobs
Linda Jewett
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Austin Jones
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Kusra Kapuler
Katie Keenan
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Riyad Khalf
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Barb Kralj
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Holly Lasley
Mark Lasswell
Sid Lasswell

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Makaela Lehmeier
Larissa Lleras
Tanner Lloyd
Aubrie Loden
Natalie Lorati
Lindsay Malachowski
Jacky Mathis
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Raean McSpadden
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THANK YOU

OMC Volunteers

What's New

Join the Old Mill Center

Magic Makers

Why give monthly?

A steady stream of support helps us operate efficiently.

Smaller monthly gifts won't make a dent in your budget.

Set it and forget it: once you sign up, our website takes care of the rest.

Become a Magic Maker today!



\$10/
month



gas stipends for families in need

\$25/
month



diapers and wipes for families in need

\$50/
month



infant feeding supplies for mom and baby

\$75/
month



healthy snacks for up to 6 children per month

\$100/
month



8 counseling sessions for a child and their family

education • prevention • intervention

CONGRATULATIONS
car raffle winner **Susan Baldwin!**



Susan won a new SUV after buying just ONE ticket.
Next year it could be you!

Above: Chip Edwards of Toyota of Corvallis and Jerry Duerksen present Susan with the keys to her new car.



Thank you to everyone who helped make our 2018 Annual Dinner & Auction such a success!

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Bettina Schempf
Executive Director



☎ 541.757.8068 🌐 www.oldmillcenter.org 📺 📷

📍 1650 SW 45th Place Corvallis, OR 97333