

## Mandala Children's House

# We Continue to Grow and Change!

## ★ New Roles ★ New "Friendship" Skills Class ★ The Same Great Teachers and Staff ★ The Same Great School

Going into our 35th year, Mandala just gets better and better at nurturing and educating children and supporting their families. As many of you know, over the past year the Mandala Administrative Team has been in a process of evolution. We have been shifting responsibilities as we prepare for Marilyn Drino's official retirement in June 2011 at the end of next year. We have made changes from within, drawing on the experience and expertise of our staff, who we have been "growing" and nourishing through the years. This is an exciting time for all of us. Our mission and our values remain the same, guiding us as we open ourselves to new possibilities.

### ★ New Roles as of September 1, 2010

This coming year, we are moving into the last phase of our administrative transition. We are fortunate to have Marilyn on staff for one more year as our Administrative Mentor. She will function in an advisory capacity to support the new Administrative Team. Marilyn will move out of her central role, and the new Administrative Team will take on the day-to-day tasks of administering the program. She will operate more from the side, guiding and supporting the team. Marilyn will be in and out of the office, working fewer hours and taking periodic extended leaves during the next year.

As of September 1, 2010, the new Mandala Administrative Team will consist of:

- ❖ **Executive Director - Jean Buell**  
Jean is responsible for the administrative overview of both the Preschool and Childcare Programs. She is also responsible for the management of Finance and Human Resources.  
*(In the office T-F)*
- ❖ **Preschool Director - Penny Lawrie**  
Penny oversees the Preschool Classroom and Curriculum, Preschool Enrollment, and the Preschool Teaching Staff.  
*(In the office M-T mornings and T/TH after 2 pm + teaching in the classroom M/W afternoons)*
- ❖ **Childcare Program Manager/Facilities Manager - Mary McDonald**  
Mary is responsible for supervising Family Childcare Homes, assessing children in the homes, and rating home environments for our State-Funded Childcare Program  
*(In the office W/F all day + teaching in the classroom T/Th)*
- ❖ **Family Services Director/Personnel Manager – Anne Kangas, L.C.S.W.**  
Anne is here to offer guidance to Families, Teachers, and Childcare Providers about children, parenting, child development, early intervention, and community resources. She is also responsible for Staff Development and Employee Relations.  
*(In the office M- F)*
- ❖ **Consultant and Mentor – Marilyn Drino, Retired Administrative Director**  
Marilyn will be a resource to the Administrative Team, offering her wisdom and experience in areas as needed. Her role has been to mentor others to assure a seamless transition.

## ★ New "FRIENDSHIP GROUP "

### A Class for Building Social Skills and Connections

We are excited to offer something new at Mandala for our students who need some extra coaching in the area of social skills. Many children in our program would benefit from more individualized support in building these skills:

- Interacting confidently with peers
- Conversational language
- Emotional flexibility
- Personal space awareness
- Self-regulation
- Problem-solving
- Focusing on a group task
- Motor and sensory development

**In September, we will begin offering two classes, running in 8-week sessions, on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons from 1–2 pm.** Ms. Penny and Ms. Veronica will be the two teachers in the class. Every session will have a play-based theme with activities to enhance social and language skills. We are fortunate to have a group of consultants who are part of our planning and advising team.

We are limiting the number of children to a very small group (4-6 children). Parents may enroll their child in continuing sessions throughout the year or choose just one session.

*Session I:* Sept. 14 - Nov. 4, 2010

*Session II:* Nov. 9 – Dec. 9, 2010 (Thanksgiving week and Christmas break) and Jan.4-27, 2011.

*Session III:* Feb. 1 - March 24, 2011

*Session IV:* March 29 – May 26, 2011 (one week Spring break)

**COST: \$280 for 8-weeks**

If you have a child you think could benefit from this specialized "play skills" class, give the office a call at 251-8633 or download a registration form from the website. Spots are filling up quickly.

Many people have asked us about taking outside referrals. At this stage, we are choosing to start with children already attending our school program. We like the idea that the teachers can work with children in the regular classroom to help them integrate the skills they are learning in the Friendship Class.

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## ★ We also have some teaching team updates.

**Early Preschool Staff:** Denise Rivas and Tiffany Lindsay and Neetu Sethi will continue to work five mornings a week in the Early Preschool Classroom. Fausia Khan is joining us as our new assistant teacher.

**Preschool Morning Staff:** Veronica Brandariz, Aparna Raghavan, and Nasreen Ilyas will continue to work five mornings a week in the Preschool Classroom. Mary McDonald will work T/TH mornings, and Christina Ybanez will work M/W/F mornings.

**Preschool Afternoon Staff:** Christina Ybanez will continue to work five afternoons a week. Tabatha Osborne, a new strong teacher who was a mentee with us last year, will join her working five afternoons. Tiffany Lindsay will work M/W/F afternoons, partnered with Denise Rivas working T/TH afternoons. Penny Lawrie will work Monday and Wednesday afternoons, partnered with Mary McDonald working T/TH afternoons and Neetu Sethi working Friday afternoons.

**Friendship Group (Tuesdays & Thursdays):** Penny Lawrie and Veronica Brandariz will teach this class.

We are very fortunate to have such a flexible, gifted staff  
who are committed to growth, change, and working together.  
We look forward to an exciting school year.