

# Garden School News

December 21, 2007

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## Headmaster's Column Early Childhood @ Garden

### PARENTING

What can be more challenging today than being a parent? After all, the world has changed so much, from threats of terrorism, to a media that is out of control in so many ways and in what it presents to children, to technology that has made both positive and negative information available to children and adults that has never been available so easily in the past.

In addition, modern industrialized societies provide a degree of wealth and the material availability that on occasion may run counter to some of the values that the previous generation held to be core values in one's life.

My sense is that there are many issues about parenting that we as a school can address. Issues involving homework, social relationships, dedication to academic work, setting limits—all these could form the basis for a number of parenting workshops that should be of assistance to parents.

As parents react to each stage in their child's life, it is important to remember that as a child grows, the issues are just as important as when the child was younger, but the responses to those situations may, at times, need to be more indirect so that the child begins to internalize the value, resolve the conflict, address the work. School work and social relationships ultimately belong to the child, who, with help and guidance, will become the capable adult we all want to see.

It is obvious that today's children benefit by exposure to a variety of cultural events. Children need stimulating and challenging experiences appropriate to their developmental levels. Our goal in PreK and K is to expose our students to some enlightening experiences happening in New York City during this holiday season. PreK and K began the season with a trip to Madison Square Garden to see Cirque de Soleil's "Wintuk". Continuing with exposure to happenings in New York City, Kindergarten has gone to Radio City to see the Christmas Spectacular and PreK has gone to Lincoln Center to see The Nutcracker. These tickets were donated by parents in the Garden School Community who support the efforts to explore NYC's

cultural attractions.

What is so ideal for us is that we can take advantage of New York City and begin to make our environment our curriculum. For younger learners, the environment of the classroom serves as the curriculum base for examining social relationships. By expanding out of the classroom, into the school as a whole and then out of the school into the city, our curriculum begins to include the world as a source of learning.

Learning does involve the careful modulation of interior and exterior states, resulting in understanding, knowledge and a profound sense of self awareness.

## Dates to Remember

**January 7, 2008**  
School Re-opens  
**January 11, 2008**  
Jean Day  
for Peruvian Disaster Victims

**January 16, 2008**  
Amnesty International Bake Sale  
**January 17, 2008**  
Upper Division Exams Begin  
**January 18, 2008**  
Lower Division Pajama Party

## Upper Division

Among the many traditions at Garden School, few have had a longer history than our sense of community. This year alone, students from the Upper School and students from the Lower School have raised thousands of dollars to support those in need or in difficulty outside of our community. From food drives, to jean days for various causes, the Garden Community has reached out beyond itself and has tried to help improve the lives of others.

The most recent activity of this kind has been the Upper Division Coat Drive. As you can see from the main hall, the coat drive has been a success. Dozens of coats have been donated by families from the Lower and Upper Schools and will be taken today to our local precinct by Mr. Pigman, Mrs. Elkind and members of the Key Club. Aside from the assistance given to those in need, this type of activity helps instill a life-long recognition of giving service to others within and beyond our community.

## Lower Division Highlights

On Friday, December 21, the Lower Division students performed Winter Spirit 2007. Children who took part in our "Fashion Friday" class (one of the many new after-school courses offered in the Foundations portion of the program), opened the show by walking the runway with flair as the couture fashions wowed the audience. The "Winter Line" designed by the students with the help of Jacqueline Quinn (parent and Fashion Designer) was a huge success.

The second part of the show began with the PreK singing and ringing in the season. As fruitcakes and snowmen joined the singing, the students helped kindle the spirit of the season. The Lower Division sang their hearts out to tell their message of love. Everyone sang well and the finale *Put a Little Love in Your Heart* brought a tear to many an eye.

### Queens Family Museum Project

If you wish to take advantage of museums this vacation with your children, review the "Queens Family Museum Project" booklet that was sent home with your Nursery through 6th grader.

It offers tips on visiting museums and there are opportunities for free admission to some of them for Queens residents.



## ***Board of Trustees***

***As with all Independent Schools, Garden has a Board of Trustees; each Board has an executive committee consisting of a President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. After 17 years of service, Ellen McPhillips Baumann, Garden Class of 1959 and former Garden teacher, has decided to step down as Board President. On behalf of all Trustees and members of the Garden Community, I would like to thank Mrs. Baumann for her generosity, her wisdom and her leadership as Board President.***

***Dr. Arthur Gruen, Garden Class of 1966 and Vice President of the Board, has been elected to the position of President of the Garden Board of Trustees. Congratulations to Dr. Gruen, whose many years of service as a Trustee will serve him well in his new role as President. Garden will continue to have excellent leadership in its President.***

## ***Reminder.....***

**T**his will be the last newsletter that will be mailed to Garden Families. Future newsletters will be sent via e-mail. If we do not have your current email in our records, please update our records by sending an email to Ms. Petruso at [mpetruso@gardenschool.org](mailto:mpetruso@gardenschool.org).

**R**egistration for the second semester of our Foundations afterschool program as well as our Music Conservatory will begin when we return on January 8th. The Winter 2007/Spring 2008 catalogue was distributed to the Lower Division students on the last day of school, December 21 and will be given out to 7th and 8th grade students when we return in January.

***Don't Miss Out....Register Early***

**See you in 2008!!!**