



Little Champ Times

September - October 2007

Upcoming Events

October 4

Central Market Fun Raiser, 5 - 7 p.m.

You won't want to miss this fun-filled event. Tickets are available at the front desk now!

October 22-26

Pantry Drive.

Let's stock the Center's pantry! Each class will be assigned a snack or drink category, details to come.

October 23

Parent Education:

Raising Girls, noon- 1 p.m. in the San Jacinto conference room

October 31

Halloween Social.

Wear your costume (no weapons, please) and join us at the Center at 4 p.m.

November 5-9

Turkey Hands. Details to come.

November 6

Pajama Party, 6-7:30

p.m. Bring your kids to school in their PJ's (even if they're not staying for the party). Pizza arrives at 6 p.m. and the 30-minute movies start at 6:30 p.m. Then we clean up. Parents must attend with their children.

Central Market Fun-Raiser

The UTCDC will kick off the school year and "One to Grow On," the annual fund raising campaign, at the Central Market Fun-Raiser on, Thursday, Oct. 4 from 5-7 p.m. This event features music from Mr. Craig, moon bounces, face painting and a picnic style dinner*, and provides an opportunity for families to get to know each other better.

The Fun-Raiser depends on volunteer help from parents. Please consider signing up for a volunteer shift – look for the sign-up sheets at the front door. So that everyone can spend most of the time with their kids and family, we are asking for a commitment of just 20 to 30 minutes to help with set-up, to staff a table, or to contribute to clean up.

Tickets are \$5 per adult – children are free – and include one raffle ticket. Raffle items include a Gregory Gym fitness package, a weekend stay at the Hyatt Hotel, gift certificates to restaurants and so much more. Tickets can be purchased in advance from the front desk.

So bring your blanket (tables and chairs are limited), set the kids loose for face painting and moon bouncing, and get to know your fellow UTCDC parents.

Special thanks to our sponsors: Central Market, Opus One Music, MusicalChairs.biz, Bluebell Ice Cream, HEB and Sparkletts Water.

* Light dinner items include chicken tenders, triangle sandwiches, cheese and crackers, pasta and marina sauce, fruit, veggies and ice cream.

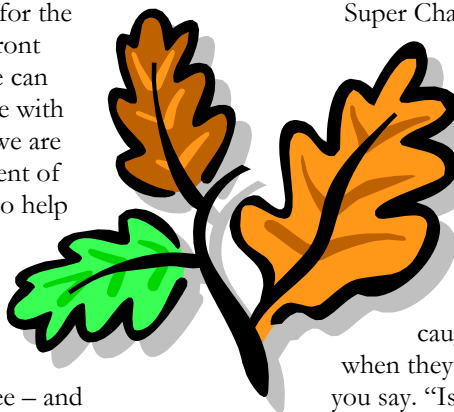
Super Champ!

There are heroes in our midst. You know, the chef who ensures your daughter's meals don't come into contact with dairy. The assistant who frosted those birthday cupcakes for you because you were running late. They always show they care. Now you can show 'em you care.

Nominate a teacher, assistant or student teacher, administrator or cook who you think has gone above and beyond. Each month, one Super Champ will be highlighted on the bulletin board as well as in this newsletter. Nomination forms are available at the front desk, although an e-mail will do (brileys@mail.utexas.edu), and can be dropped off in Sandy's mail slot at the front desk.

But wait there's more. "I caught someone doing something nice when they didn't think anyone was looking," you say. "Is there a way to recognize individual acts of kindness?"

Glad you asked. Pick up a "You Got Caught" camera at the front desk, describe the deed and tape it to the appropriate classroom door. It's easy and it's so much fun.



Staff Appreciation and Support

Visualize “Whirled Peas”

World Peace Day was Sept. 21. To mark the day, the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and its Staff Appreciation and Support Committee delivered World Peace Day Treat Grams featuring a granola bar and fruit treats with a note saying Happy World Peace Day. Contributions to the “One to Grow On” campaign make this possible.

Pantry Drive

Free and healthy snacks make for a happy work day. We want happy teachers and staff. We will have our annual pantry drive the week of Oct. 22. Each classroom will be assigned a food and drink category. More details to come.

PAC Points

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is a group of parents that provides parental viewpoints and unique expertise on issues that affect the center as a whole. The PAC works with the center’s administration to review important issues, such as teacher retention, fund-raising, food service, facilities, extracurricular activities and changes in procedures or services.

We want the UTCDC to be a great place to work, which will result in a nurturing environment for our children. Tuition alone cannot cover expenses like playground maintenance, toys and books, and teacher supplies. The “One to Grow On” fund raising campaign at both UTCDC locations strives to cover some of these expenses.

Some of the “One to Grow On” fund raising activities include: the Central Market Fun-Raiser, the Giving

Tree, Champ Change and Cheers for Champ.

Last year’s campaign, which raised \$15,000, enabled both the Comal and San Jacinto child development centers to purchase and install large shade structures on the playgrounds. We hope to raise \$12,500 this year to purchase an ice machine for the San Jacinto location and benches under the tree in front of the center, in addition to teacher appreciation activities and classroom enhancements, such as toys and curriculum material.

We’ll keep you updated on our progress via this newsletter throughout the year and look forward to your support.

Sincerely, the San Jacinto PAC members: Kelsey Evans, chair, Wendy Anderson, Maria Arizpe-Sanchez, Jenifer Flaxbart, Erin Geisler, Kristen Kayross, Jeremiah Palmer and Steve Rosen.

Super Champ Spotlight



Sandy Briley

Director Sandra Briley, Ph.D., launched the UTCDC in 1991 and has been engaged in the child care field for 38 years. She was drawn to a career in early childhood education while still in high school in Houston.

“I was inspired by the idea of breaking the cycle of poverty through early intervention when I was helping my mother with a group of inner-city children in a Head Start Program,” said Briley.

“I recognized early in my professional career how powerful quality early childhood care and

education are in affecting children’s future well-being.”

When asked about how the early child education industry has changed over the years, she explained that there’s been an increased emphasis on literacy and academics, and a significant increase in the public’s understanding of the importance of the early years.

“However, we still have a long way to go in terms of valuing early childhood education from an economic standpoint.”

One of Briley’s top priorities for the year is to improve teachers’ ability to identify children who need intervention, such as therapy for speech or sensory integration issues. In-house training for teachers on these issues includes observing the therapists working with children in the center, meeting with the therapists to ask questions and discuss how to accommodate specific needs, and reading educational material on various diagnoses.

“When a teacher has concerns about a child, I am usually asked to observe,” explains Briley. “If we feel that a child is not thriving or developing normally we will meet with the parents and suggest they have a professional conduct an assessment.

“In addition to identifying potential learning impediments, we are striving to improve our teachers’ knowledge and skills in adapting curriculum and classroom practices to help these children thrive.”

When she’s not enjoying watching families and teachers grow and work together, Briley enjoys SCUBA diving, as well as reading, gardening and cooking. She credits her commitment to a meditation practice for her tranquil, steady demeanor.