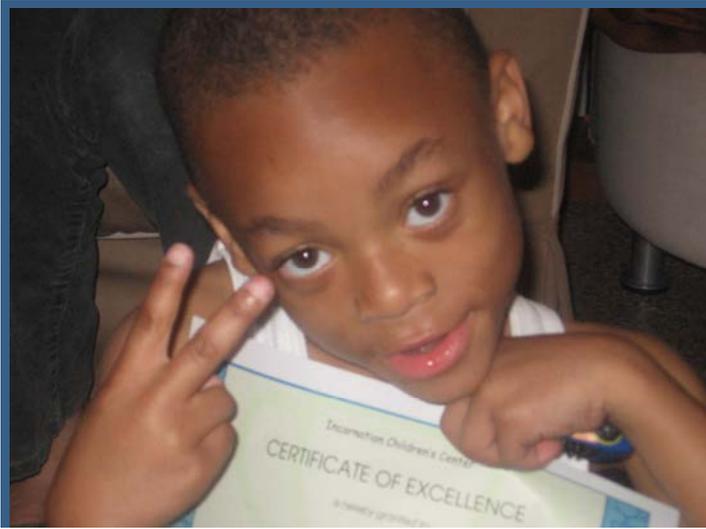


Incarnation Children's Center



An award from the annual art show!

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Greetings to all of our wonderful friends and supporters!

Welcome to the very first ICC newsletter!

Yes, it's been a long time coming!

We are excited to have finally hunkered down to put together a newsletter for all of our special friends and supporters as a way to inform you of recent events, programs, highlights and ways you can help.

We hope that you enjoy reading about what's going on at ICC as much as we

enjoy sharing it! The work that we all do is so important in the lives of these children we serve.

Thank you for your past and continued support!



Annual Children's Art Show

We had another successful art show this year, highlighting the creative endeavors of all of the children. Each child submitted either paintings, drawings, collages, sculpture or poems.

Our creative arts therapy team of interns and staff work with the children all year long and use artwork as a way to help children express themselves, as well as a way to help them feel good about their accomplishments to raise self-esteem. This annual event, attended by children, staff, volunteers

and special friends, featured a cheese and cracker/ fruit ensemble with sparkling cider in plastic champagne flutes to add to a real gallery feel. Each child receives an award for the work they've done, regardless of the type of work or number of pieces.

Our annual art show is usually held every year in late April or early May, so keep an eye open for an invitation next spring! The more guests to celebrate the children's work, the better!

Desperately needed donations:

- Batteries, Size AA and D
- Book bags for teens
- Video Games
- Storage bins
- Backpacks for school
- Gift cards for Modell's or Foot Locker (for school sneakers!)



Each child featured art work in the show and received an award for a job well done!



Children are involved in all phases of our gardening program. Here we have one of our gardening helpers deciding where to plant some climbing ivy as her peers plant annuals and shrubs in other areas of the garden.

Horticultural Therapy Program

Horticultural Therapy is the use of live plants and the growing environment to heal and rehabilitate people. A time-proven practice since ancient times, horticultural therapy today is recognized as a practical and viable treatment with wide-ranging benefits for children and adults in a variety of healthcare settings.

Greenhouse and gardening programs take advantage of the relationship between people and the natural environment to affect human wellness. Horticulture can be used as a therapeutic tool with children of all ages, and can be an effective intervention to promote opportunities for control and mastery.

We are excited to have started a successful horticultural therapy program here at ICC where the children are included in all phases of gardening. From propagation to harvesting as a means of increasing self-esteem, providing opportunities for growth and learning and enhancing overall health and quality of life, this



program has affected each child in a profound way. Caring for and nurturing plants can teach life lessons, reenact life traumas, and boost self-esteem. The children have become caretakers themselves and are able to regain some control in their lives as they continue to learn and work through emotional issues through caring for plants. It can also be rewarding and relaxing, as many of us avid gardeners know!

On any given day, the kids can be found weeding, watering, harvesting herbs and vegetables, potting houseplants from cuttings, planting seeds.

This program was made possible through a generous grant through the **Starlight Foundation of NY*NJ*CT**.

To learn more about the horticultural therapy program at ICC, to volunteer in the program or to donate gardening supplies, please contact:

**Meagan O'Connell, 212-928-2590 x27
moconnell@incarnationchildrenscenter.org**

AIDS Walk New York 2008

On Sunday, May 18th, a group of ICC kids, staff, volunteers and friends showed up for the annual AIDS Walk New York to walk as a team. Children confined to wheelchairs and with the use of specialized crutches walked together with thousands of others from around New York City to raise awareness about the HIV/AIDS pandemic, as well as to feel a part of a larger community and support system.

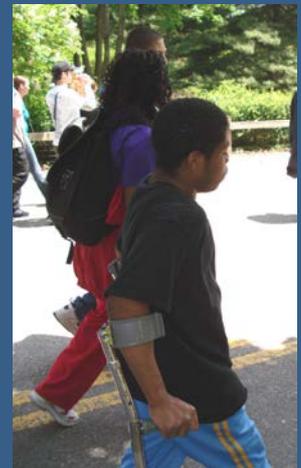
Although fairly exhausted by the end of the walk (over 6 miles!), the children felt both supported by their friends, staff, and volunteers and beamed with a sense of accomplishment.

Hopefully you'll join us next year for the AIDS Walk 2009!

Kids and staff walked together for the over 6 mile AIDS Walk NY in May.



Even our canine friends got involved!



Kid Spotlight...



On April 19th, 2008, this painting, created by one of our children, was presented to Pope Benedict XVI at the Papal Event in the Chapel at Dunwoodie during his visit to the United States. In addition, two of our children attended this event and received a special papal blessing.



YOUR DONATION

CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Donations can be sent directly to:

Incarnation Children's Center

Att: Carolyn Castro

142 Audubon Avenue

New York, NY 10032

Phone:

(212)-928-2590 x32

Fax:

(212)-928-1500

E-Mail:

ccastro@incarnationchildrenscenter.org

Web Site:

www.incarnationchildrenscenter.org

Kids' favorite outing
this summer:

Mountain Creek
Water Park

Saturday, July 12

A special message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends of Incarnation Children's Center:

I am so excited to share with all of you our first newsletter which is meant to give you an opportunity to experience our mission "in action". I hope you are as excited as I am to celebrate the accomplishments of our wonderful children and to meet the staff and volunteers who care so lovingly for them.

Our specialized program is serving children and adolescents more than ever, which means that we continue to need your support in so many ways.

I'd like to thank each of you personally for your continued support of the Center and the children we serve. We are forever grateful!

Sincerely,
Carolyn L. Castro

A Special Thank You!

There is no way that we could do all of the work that we do with the children at ICC without our team of very special, dedicated volunteers!

We'd like to take a moment to recognize the committed individuals who donate their time every week to make the lives of the children that much brighter.

Make sure to check back for spotlights on our volunteers!

*John Ierardi
Stephie Rojas & Winston
Rhonda Fell
Edwin Grullon
Heather Hargraves
Bryan Robinson
Sherri Powers & Cooper
Bonnie Bisgeier
Lorrie Ader
Dev Kapoor*

Our Mission Statement

We believe that, in ideal circumstances, every child should be healthy, live at home, and be surrounded by a loving family. However, some HIV-infected children are chronically ill and are too sick to be at home, or they have care needs that are too complex to be provided adequately in a home setting. For children who need the services of Incarnation Children's Center, we acknowledge that we are not an adequate replacement for a child's home or family. However, we pledge the following:

- ❖ To provide a nurturing, home-like setting that provides first-rate care, filled with love and compassion, designed to give each child a longer and better life.
- ❖ To be ever-mindful of the effects, on child and family alike, that admission to ICC may cause and to do all we can to ensure a positive experience.
- ❖ To make every effort to improve each child's health to allow the earliest possible discharge back to a home setting.



Volunteer Appreciation Ceremony, April 28th, 2008
From left to right: Bryan Robinson, John Ierardi, Jeff Schwartz, Meagan O'Connell, Stephie Rojas, Tali Silverberg (oh, and Winston!)

The ICC Art Gallery...



"**Art therapy** is a mental health profession that uses the creative process of art making to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages. It is based on the belief that the creative process involved in artistic self-expression helps people to resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, increase self-esteem and self-awareness, and achieve insight." ~ American Art Therapy Association

Animal Assisted Therapy: The Healing of Animals!

Most people would agree that children enjoy having dogs, cats, birds, or fish as companions, but do pets belong in a skilled nursing facility? Apparently, they do! Professional and popular literature documents the many ways in which having an animal close by is relaxing, engaging and motivation to children. In a word, pets can be healing.

Healthcare professionals working with human-animal activities or adjunct therapies are finding quantitative evidence that contact with animals in a treatment setting provide therapeutic benefits such as distraction during painful procedures, decreasing need for pain medication, decreasing anxiety and stress, reducing a sense of isolation, and increasing a sense of control, in addition to general recreational benefits. Pet therapy is now a recognized therapeutic treatment modality which has had enormous healing affects on the children at ICC.

Through the generous support of the **Starlight Starbright Foundation of NY*NJ*CT**, we currently have a 150 gallon fish tank that soothes and relaxes children and staff alike.

The **Good Dog Foundation** has been an integral part in helping us to recruit trained volunteers and their canine companions who visit the children weekly. These pet therapy visits have helped to decrease anxiety and stress in these children dealing with medical illness and stressful situations in their lives. It has helped them form an emotional attachment to the animals thereby decreasing their feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Animal-assisted therapy can also help address the children's medical and psychosocial goals by incorporating them into visits under the supervision of the pet therapy team leader and ICC staff. We are extremely grateful to our supporters and donors who have enabled us to add animal-assisted therapy to our therapeutic programming which has benefited the children at ICC both physically and emotionally.



Quote of the week:

"One Hundred Years
from now....

It will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove, but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a **child**."

~ Anonymous



Ways to help....

- Cash donations ... to help with costs throughout the year.
- Donations of needed items, such as school supplies, book bags, batteries.
(please contact Carolyn Castro at ccastro@incarnationchildrenscenter.org or 212-928-2590 x32 for a list of currently needed items)
- Volunteer your time. *(please contact Meagan O'Connell at moconnell@incarnationchildrenscenter.org or 212-928-2590 x27 for a list of current opportunities)*
- Sponsor a trip. Send the kids to Rye Playland, Coney Island or the Bronx Zoo with your support.
(please contact Jasmine Leon at jleon@incarnationchildrenscenter.org or 212-928-2590 x73 for a list of currently scheduled trips)



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142 Audubon Avenue
New York, NY 10032