

Wings Advisory

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New Classroom Opens

Kids are Just Kids

Fundraiser: Every Child Can Learn

Story Ideas

About Wings

Wings Learning Center
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Welcome to the Winter 2004 edition of Wings Advisory, our quarterly e-newsletter. We have some exciting news to share in this issue. On behalf of all of us at Wings, we deeply appreciate your continued interest in Wings Learning Center!

—Irma Velasquez, Executive Director

[\(back to the top\)](#)



Wyatt enjoying the sun at Laurel School

New Classroom Opens

Autism is now considered an epidemic, and the concentration of families who are impacted by this diagnosis is escalating. Wings' additional classroom on the Laurel Elementary campus represents the first milestone in a three-phase plan to address the needs of both the growing number of autistic children as well as to manage the staggering costs involved in providing services. Currently, children with autism and related disorders make up 10% of the students in special education classes. These children are now being served in district classes and non-public schools at a cost of \$5 million dollars per year.

In the last 10 years, the San Mateo Foster City School District has experienced a fifteen-fold increase in the number of autistic children it serves. To meet the educational needs of these children, the District faces long-term costs of \$29.5 million over the next three years.

A "Win-Win" for all

Wings Learning Center holds a powerful vision of progressive inclusion in community schools.

Wings' new classroom is making this vision a reality by providing an educational setting where children interact with typical peers and learn new skills at a challenging pace. The term "inclusion" becomes reality as Wings' and general education students spontaneously mix, learning the fine art of verbal and non-verbal communication. These are skills that will serve them well throughout their lives, empowering the children to lead more independent, productive lives as they reach adulthood.

Please Join Us on November 10th

Wings Learning Center's annual fundraiser, "Every Child Can Learn" is planned for November 10, 2004 to raise funds in support of our mission. This live auction fundraising event will benefit Wings' Education and Therapy Programs. We hope you can join us in reaching our goal of \$50,000 by year-end.

On behalf of the growing number of children diagnosed with autism, we need your financial support to forge paths toward inclusion. We sincerely hope you can support our students by joining us on November 10th and by making a tax-deductible contribution to the Wings Program. Call Irma Velasquez at 650-342-8753 for further details.

[\(back to the top\)](#)



*Wings Laurel staff and students
get ready for Halloween*

Kids are Just Kids

by Linda Lange

This fall marks a very special landmark for Wings Learning Center—the opening of the school's additional classroom at Laurel Elementary in San Mateo. This new classroom offers a valuable opportunity for Wings' students, ages 8 to 11, to experience life in a public school setting with typical peers. In fact, recess and lunch breaks will now allow daily interaction with Laurel's general and special education students.

Building Awareness about Autism

Wings' staff at the new site is very excited about building diversity awareness at Laurel Elementary among teachers and students. For example, at an upcoming teachers' in-service day to be held on November 2nd, Wings' teachers and therapists will present a workshop on autism.

When communication challenges arise during play amongst Wings' and general education students, the staff is there to guide the children in learning valuable lessons about interacting more positively.

On this particular morning, a charming young girl from Special Day Class (Special Education offered through Laurel Elementary) seeks out her new friend from Wings to play a clapping and singing game to "Ring Around the Rosie." The girl engages the young boy, allowing both to practice communicating through the magic of song.

Then there are the games like relays and obstacle courses. Wings' staff set the games in motion. Before long, the kids spontaneously join in the fun--kids just playing with kids, regardless of differences.

[\(back to the top\)](#)



Wings Laurel classroom

“Every Child Can Learn” Fundraiser on November 10th Annual Fundraiser Planned

Wings Learning Center cordially invites you to attend its annual fundraiser, "Every Child Can Learn." Join us for food, fun, and festivities, including a live auction, while supporting our mission of forging paths toward inclusion for all Wings' students.

As Wings grows to accommodate more ASD kids, so our needs for financial support grow. Our goal this fall is to raise \$50K to fulfill our immediate needs toward our mission.

On behalf of each Wings' student now and in the future, please join us!

Event Details

Date: Wednesday, November 10, 2004

Time: 6:30 to 9:00pm

Place: Wings Learning Center

49 N. San Mateo Drive, San Mateo, CA 94401

Appetizers and beverages will be served, and there will be a live auction.

Please RSVP by Wednesday, November 3rd

Call Wings Learning Center at 650-342-8753 or email
Mona Rosa: rose@wingslearningcenter.org

If you are unable to attend, your financial contribution is greatly needed and appreciated! Mail to Wings Learning Center or contact Irma Velasquez for more information.

[\(back to the top\)](#)

Contact us with your Story Idea

Wings Learning Center's quarterly e-newsletter promotes information sharing among parents and professionals. If you want to contribute a story or article, or if have a great idea for a story, please contact Mona Rose at (650) 342-8753.

[\(back to the top\)](#)



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