



IWSE

INFANT WELFARE SOCIETY OF EVANSTON

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1 March 2016

A letter From the Executive Director

I wanted to let everyone know how great the first six months of my role at IWSE has been as Executive Director. As a new leader it takes some time to get to know everyone and build connections and relationships. The IWSE community of teachers, staff, parents, board and volunteers have made me feel welcome and I appreciate all of the support.

I am excited about many of the opportunities on the horizon. We are improving our facilities and creating new ways to engage and build connections to our parents. As always, our focus is on your child's growth and development and we will always make sure that their education is our first priority. We will continue to work with our teachers and staff to ensure they are receiving the best training and support possible so all of our children can become successful.

I look forward to meeting with everyone and hearing any concerns or questions you may have and learn about your experiences at IWSE. As Spring is in the air, look for new outdoor volunteer events and gardening opportunities as we beautify the properties at both of our sites. Stay tuned for some great events and activities during the "Week of The Young Child" April 11th to April 15th!



IWSE staff, Stephanie Lane-Baker and Eryn Jones enjoying the evening at Warm Your Palate

In This Issue

- A Letter From The Executive Director
- Playground remodel at BTN and facelift at TBN
- STOP, Drop and Read: EC2C literacy awareness initiative
- Father's Empowerment initiative
- Huge success at annual even, Warm Your Palate
- Nutrition, Horticulture and Wellness programming
- Teacher Spotlight



IWSE 's focus on literacy , reading and language development is key part of all of our classroom instruction.

Playground Remodel at BTN and Facelift at TBN

Earlier in the year at Baby Toddler Nursery (BTN) , we built a new 6 foot cedar fence for security and to beautify the play area for our children. Last month we began the process for the development of a \$30,000 renovation that will be taking place in early April 2016.

A teacher committee was formed to help select the design focus and build a concept that we would all enjoy. The hope was to create an outdoor play space that is engaging , but also brings natural elements



into the play experience. The teachers met with our designer and laid the foundation for an amazing project that will be underway shortly. We will have new play surfaces, equipment, music walls, flower beds and a gazebo for all of us to enjoy. We want to thank the Kendall Foundation for this amazing and generous donation to our facility at IWSE.

Our Teen Baby Nursery (TBN) site is also going through a transformation. We began by painting our fence and putting new signage out front. We built planter boxes and began the

renovation of the play space that will continue this Spring. Inside we are getting new carpeting for the infant room and replacing furniture and equipment. We will be renting more space from our partners at Family Focus to accommodate our Home Visiting program and additional staff positions.

Stop, Drop and Read: Cradle to Career Literacy awareness initiative across Early Childhood community in Evanston

Did you know young children need to hear 1000 stories read aloud before they begin to read themselves? The Evanston Early Childhood Community is trying to raise the level of awareness and collaboration around the importance of reading with our children at an early age to build a strong foundation of literacy skills.

On Wednesday, April 13th at exactly 10:15 AM, children scattered throughout Evanston will STOP, DROP & READ, no matter where they are, all at the same time. Inspired by the Cradle to Career initiative, this effort is being coordinated by the Early Childhood Director's Council which represents 33 early childhood programs, including District 65's preschools and Evanston home day cares. Please grab a few favorites and join our community as we STOP, DROP & READ!

Special thank you to everyone who made our evening such a huge success!

We would not have been able to make this amazing event possible with out all of the support and commitment from our IWSE family, donors and friends!

Warm Your Palate 2016 a Huge Success, Amazing Food and Fun!



Chef Brian Huston from Boltwood Restaurant

On Thursday, February 25th, 2016 IWSE hosted its annual event, Warm Your Palate, at Now We're Cooking in North Evanston. Over 150 guests, chefs and volunteers created an amazing experience of food, drink, live auction and raffles that was certainly a night to remember.

Over \$70,000.00 was raised to support our families and programming at IWSE. Beyond the money that was raised, it was an

incredible evening of commitment and passion towards a powerful goal of creating equity in our community and ensuring **all** children are prepared for kindergarten regardless of their economic circumstance and access to resources. IWSE is committed to this cause and our community of supporters really came out and supported our mission.

A huge thank you to all of our donors, guests, chefs, board and volunteers. A special thank to all of the hard work of the development committee and staff that made this night possible.



Guests at Warm Your Palate raise their hands to bid for the live auction

Young Father's Initiative begins at IWSE

IWSE believes all fathers can be amazing parents. We believe our mission of "supporting families efforts to be effective parents" is a critical part of our work.

Poet, Chicago Hip-Hop icon and young-adult activist, Phenom, has landed in Evanston to support our Father's Initiative.

Many of our young father's are looking for outlets and access to positive engagement. Phenom meets with young dad's on Thursday's at our Foster Street

site at 4:30pm. The group helps our young dad's learn how to elevate their life and be a positive influence in the lives of their children and in their community.



Nutrition, Horticulture and Wellness Programming set to Begin this Spring!

This Spring a new initiative is beginning that will support our children and families health and wellness. We plan to implement a new Nutrition and Horticulture initiative. We will be building garden beds at both BTN and TBN sites.



Cooking classes will be offered for parents and staff by our partner, Cooking Matters. The hope will be to grow fresh vegetables in our own educational garden and then cook those fresh vegetables with healthy recipes. We will have the opportunity to take our children and parents on field trips to The Talking Farm in Skokie and parents will be able to go on educational workshops to the grocery store and receive free gift cards from the program.

Curriculum and lessons will be developed to use in our classrooms and engage our children in outdoor education

and learning in our garden space. Those under 2 yrs. old will be able to experience the garden with their teachers and parents as well. Our hope is to use our partners and develop a holistic approach to healthy eating, nutrition awareness and family wellness.

We are looking forward to seeing you volunteer in the gardens this Spring and Summer!

Nutrition Initiative Partners:

Cooking Matters

Edible Evanston

Northwestern University

Evanston Northshore Hospital

The United Way

Greater Chicago Food Depository

The Talking Farm

Evanston Food Exchange

Office of Early Head Start

School District 65

School District 202

The City of Evanston

Child Care Center of Evanston

REBA Early Learning Center

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information or to talk about how to get more involved with your child's school.

IWSE

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Visit us on the web at
www.iwse.org



Teacher Spotlight: **Sage Siler**

Our toddler assistant teacher from P2, Sage Siler, has just completed 11 weeks of student teaching in PreK/3rd grade classrooms. She has received her bachelor's degree and teaching certificate from DePaul University. Congratulations Sage!!!

-IWSE family