

GOSHEN FRIENDS SCHOOL CARING AND SHARING:

Providing opportunities for our school community
to become aware of needs within our greater community
and our individual ability to bring hope and joy to others.

What is "Community Cares"?

It is the GFS service learning program that sets aside monthly class time so that all students and staff can learn about the needs of specific focus areas, work on cooperative outreach projects, and reflect on the impact of such an experience.

What is "Kids Care"?

It is the GFS outreach program which offers opportunities for our larger school community to come together outside of class hours to participate with various organizations to provide intergenerational, multicultural, and need-based activities.

Calendar of Events

Community Cares - Second Wednesday of Each Month

Kids Care - Third Wednesday of Each Month

Goshen Giving/Operation

Santa - November

MLK Day of Service -

Mark your calendars for
January 19, 2010

To jump start the service learning initiative, during September **Community Cares**, each student and staff member will decorate a "Remember Bin". This bin should be taken home to generate discussion and involvement at home. As the children learn of specific needs others encounter, the bin could be filled with contributions that could be brought to school and donated to various organizations. For example:

- The S.P.C.A. is always in need of newspapers and shoe boxes. These items could be collected at home in the remember bin and brought to school rather than thrown into the recycling can.
- The West Chester Food Pantry gets inundated with donations in November and December but the shelves are almost bare by February though the needs still exist.
- After a special family meal or holiday celebration your child might write a thank you or thinking of you card to the local volunteer firefighters who leave their families and friends at the sound of a siren to respond to emergencies.

We want the children, and the larger GFS community, to be aware that the solutions to many of these needs are not just "one and done" but on-going. We must keep working together for the good of the greater community and that solutions are not only about money or complicated fundraising events. Even the youngest child can make a difference.

*******See flip side for more details*******

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Nancy Hiro
at Hiros5@comcast.net,
send a note through your child's teacher, or call 610-696-8869.

Just in case you wanted more details...

Community Cares

Each month during **Community Cares** all lower school students and staff will take time out of their regular schedule to center their attention on the needs of our greater community. Each class will spend the first 15 to 20 minutes learning about challenges which face a specific focus area, how the challenges might also appear elsewhere, and what solutions and actions might help. Most importantly, they will discover ways that they themselves can make a difference.

Focus Areas:

Preschool: The S.P.C.A.

Kindergarten and First Grade: Bellingham and Park Lane Senior Living

Second and Third Grades: Stewards of the Environment

Fourth and Fifth Grades: The Kanner Center, West Chester Food Pantry, and Heifer International

A pre-designated focus area will be highlighted each month. The classes which have researched this area will briefly share with the others what they have learned. All classes will then spend approximately 45 minutes completing a project relating to and serving this awareness.

The remainder of this time will be used for reflection, discussion, and journaling. It is very important for questions which arise to be addressed, for the children to brainstorm their own ideas, and that purpose and value of such an experience be reiterated.

Throughout the year, guest speakers may come on campus to share personal experiences, students may take related field trips, and information about focus areas will be tied to other areas in the curriculum. Often we will run donation drives to both raise family awareness of the issues discussed and to, of course, benefit those in need. Participation in such drives is voluntary but certainly encouraged.

Kids Care

Our very popular **Kids Care** program is entering its third year. On the third Wednesday of each month, approximately 30 preschoolers to fifth graders, siblings, parents, and staff walk to Bellingham and Park Lane to have fun playing games, making crafts, and chatting with residents of our neighboring senior centers.

We meet in the fifth grade classroom at 3:00 pm, have a light snack, discuss the day's activity, break into two pre-determined groups, and head over to the independent, assisted living, and skilled nursing facilities. We return to the GFS Extended Day room by 4:15 pm for pick up. Preschoolers must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. All participating kindergarten to fifth graders will be supervised by school staff at all times, though their parents or guardians are always welcome to join us.

All students are encouraged to experience this program at least once. As we have learned, "Try it, you'll like it." The activities are simple and the environment is relaxed. The seniors just love seeing the smiling children, and the children enjoy various activities as they grow comfortable in such a setting.

Goshen Friends School Kids Care Permission Slip

Since, for the past two years, we have seen many of the same faces attend many or all of the Kids Care events at our neighboring Bellingham and Park Lane senior centers, we would like to make sign ups a bit easier. This permission slip can be used for those who know they would like to be regular participant. For those who are less sure of their schedule, fill out what you can and know that a reminder slip and sign up for new participants will be sent home in Friday folders every couple of months. NOTE: At any time, if a child who is signed up cannot attend, please call the school office.

*****Please complete and return to your child's teacher*****

(Child's name) _____ in (class/grade) _____
has my permission to participate in the following Kids Care after-school activities from 3:00 pm to 4:15 pm (Activities may change as, we hope, the children will generate ideas.):

- ___ October 21st -- Snack Attack Bingo
- ___ November 18th -- Share Art Work, Talent, Collections
- ___ December 16th -- Seasonal Celebration
- ___ January 20th -- Pantry Snack Pack
- ___ February 17th -- Bingo
- ___ March 17th -- Spring into Spring, Favorite Stuffed Animal or Toy
- ___ April 21st -- Earth Day
- ___ May 19th -- Planting

He/She

_____ will be picked up at 4:15 pm in the GFS Extended Day room.
_____ is contracted to stay in Extended Day until (time) _____.

This child is a preschooler; the accompanying adult will be: _____

_____ I would like to attend these events also
_____ and bring with me (names and ages of additional children) _____

Parent's Name (print): _____ Emergency Phone #: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____