

August/September  
2006

# TCS Times

*The Children's School/ 208-343-6840  
Nicole Shadduck--editor*

## From the Director

By Cindy Finch

I can think of many good reasons for young children to attend a high quality early childhood classroom. At the top of the list for most of us is this: in early childhood programs young children have the opportunity to develop skills, relationships and understandings that go beyond what would happen outside of the school setting. That's enough, and I often stop right there when I think of the value of the work that goes on at The Children's School. School is all about the children, right?

A school like The Children's School puts children's experiences first—how will this material or schedule or interaction impact an individual child's experience? How will this child's experience influence his/her next interaction, next decision, or next opportunity for growth and learning? And, with that question, my thinking about children's experiences at school becomes quite a bit more broad.

Part of this broader perspective comes from reading Bank Street College of Education materials and finding that part of their commitment—from the college's founding days in 1916—is to improve society through education. There are lots of directions for us to spend energy when we think about building a better society. Certainly participation in the political process is one way, as is charitable giving another way many of us show our concern for social issues. But, how do early childhood education and improving society go together? Those of us who have worked at TCS long enough to have students grow up know that *sometimes* those former students don't remember us at all when we see them out in public. So, what, from this experience, sticks with children and has the power to impact society in a positive way?

One of the strengths of TCS is our dual emphasis on what's right for children right now—that solid and important emphasis on development—and which experiences create whole, competent, capable human beings. Some programs might insist on social activism in curriculum, and, at TCS, we can go that direction in certain classrooms at certain times. When we do go that direction, it means that a topic and the experiences associated with finding out more about a topic have lead the children and teachers in that classroom to want to do something. Social activism is fun with children and I recommend

that you involve your family in working together for a cause you care about—children love working alongside parents on something important. However, in a school setting, taking curriculum to social action is only part of the picture for creating social change—and at its very worst can become just another way adults impose their more mature interests, knowledge, and will on children.

More important for young children in early childhood education programs is to have time to be: to be curious and discover ways of exploring and researching to find out more; to be challenged to try something new or to think about something critically; to be heard in finding voice, having ideas, developing interests, and working out problems; to be interested in other people, other ideas, new information, and new skills. I can't think of anything that will serve our society better than to have children and adults for whom these attributes are at the foundation of all action, all interactions, and all thought. Truly, an early childhood program that creates curriculum, schedules, environments and opportunities for relationships that give children "time to be" is thinking of children's immediate education, our hopes for children as lifelong learners, and, ultimately, how society will be shaped by these caring and capable beings.

This is my hope for what you will find as your experience The Children's School this year, our 27<sup>th</sup> year of educating young children in Boise. Welcome!

## Great Upcoming Events—Join Us!

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*"The bottom line is that raising kids is not for wimps."—Alfie Kohn, author of Unconditional Parenting, and The Children's School fall parent education speaker*

Each school year has its own emphases—and this year is no exception. You will have many opportunities to participate in activities with others at TCS. Shortly, you will receive information on projects related to fundraising, classroom volunteering, and communication (including a new family orientation evening on September 13<sup>th</sup> and the very best, most age-appropriate school carnival in town on October 14<sup>th</sup>!). Take some time as this school year begins to think about how you can be an active participant in the TCS community.

We have three unique opportunities that I want to highlight. They are:

\*On October 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> TCS is involved in sponsoring presentations by education and parenting author Alfie Kohn. Please look for information from the education committee from Parents for TCS and, please, plan to attend. Mr. Kohn has an admirable perspective on children and their experiences in schools and families, and it will be well worth our time to hear it.

\*The TCS Board of Directors, in collaboration with current and alumni parents and teachers, is exploring funding options for our much discussed and hoped-for remodel. The remodeling and expansion plans are posted on the bulletin board in the front hall, so take a look in some of your first trips into the school this year to see what TCS may become! Then, listen for ways to lend support to this effort.

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\*This year we will be looking for parent feedback and involvement during our NAEYC accreditation renewal process. Look for more information in these first weeks of school for ways you can work alongside school faculty and board members in developing shared understandings on key accreditation standards.

We look forward to welcoming you into your chosen ways of participating. See you soon.

## About TCS Policies and Practices

Parent handbooks are being revised to reflect new accreditation requirements and policy revisions from the past year. Until they are completed later this fall I will be dropping a few pieces of critical information into the newsletter as needed. This month I am including information on our 1) school immunization policy, 2) peanut butter processes for snacks and lunches, 3) late fee assessment procedures, and 4) guidelines for children and families upon arrival and departure. Old handbooks will be made available to new families; all families will receive newly revised handbooks when they are completed. Stay tuned.

### 1) Immunization Policy and Practice

TCS recommends immunization for all children enrolled. We suggest that families contact their child's pediatrician or the Health Department for immunization schedule guidelines. Please provide the school with your child's immunization records within the first week of school and keep us informed as your child receives new immunization.

As allowed by current school immunization law, families may, for personal, medical or religious reasons, choose to exempt their children from some or all immunizations. As required by state regulations, parents of under-immunized children are required to submit a signed copy of the "State of Idaho Certificate of Exemption" to the TCS Office within the first week of school. At that time The Children's School will provide an informational hand-out to be reviewed with TCS administrative staff and signed by parents which states:

- \*TCS is concerned about the health of its students;
- \*The risk of under-immunizing children;
- \*Under-immunized children will be removed from the classroom during an outbreak within the school of disease with a required State of Idaho immunization; and,
- \*Under-immunized children may be removed from the classroom if there is an outbreak in the larger community of disease with a required State of Idaho immunization upon advice from Central District Health.

TCS community, including parents, teachers and staff, maintains confidentiality around immunization records for individual children. However, we may, if and when appropriate, release information to the school community about the number or exemptions on file for a given school year.

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### HANDWASHING

*Upon arrival at school, children and adults are expected to wash hands. There will be more information available in individual classrooms.*

2) Peanut Butter Guidelines for Snacks and Lunches (effective 8-28-06)  
 Many years The Children's School enrolls one or more children who are sensitive or allergic to peanut products, including peanut butter. Out of concern for children who may have a severe reaction to peanut products requiring medical attention or for whom ongoing exposure to peanut products may be harmful, The Children's School is establishing the following guidelines for teachers and parents.

\*The faculty at The Children's School will plan snacks and projects that do not include peanut products, including peanut butter.

\*We ask that families sending home snacks to a class refrain from using peanut products.

\*We ask that families packing lunches for their children use food products which do not contain peanut products.

\*The Children's School reserves the right, upon annual review of the needs of children enrolled in the school or in a particular class within the school, to modify these guidelines in either more lenient or more restrictive ways. These modifications may include the creation of peanut o.k. areas within the school or within a classroom for children bringing lunch to school. Other modifications may be created for the purpose of assuring a safe and healthy environment for all children enrolled in classes in The Children's School or for providing families the maximum freedom when packing school lunches.

\*Families for whom a child's peanut allergy requires medical intervention such as benadryl or an epi-pen will provide the school with the products needed to treat an allergic reaction and permission for the school staff to make decisions about when the products will be used if the family cannot be contacted or the severity of the reaction precludes family notification.

\*Families impacted by peanut sensitivities or allergies will be asked to sign a waiver releasing the school from liability if an allergic reaction should occur on-site despite the school's best efforts to prevent exposure.

### 3) Late fee assessment processes

Families who pick up children late from classes will be assessed a fee of \$5 for the first ten minutes and \$5 for each five minutes thereafter. Each family may use a grace period of up to ten minutes, 4 times a month. If you exceed this grace period allotment in a calendar month late charges will be added to your next month's bill. All pick ups that exceed ten minutes will be billed a late fee.

### 4) Guidelines for Children and Families on Arrival and Departure

We have expectations for children in the school that apply to classrooms, playyards, and common areas such as the halls, coffee room, and library. We need your help and cooperation in maintaining these expectations when you are here with your children before or after your child's school day, as well as for any special events held at the school. Please help us maintain a positive school climate by respecting and supporting our expectations.

We have three basic schoolwide rules. It is from these three rules that adults

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#### *The Three School Rules—*

*\*Children may not hurt people—children or adults.*

*\*Children may not hurt other's possessions or creations.*

*\*Children may not hurt animals.*

make decisions throughout the day about which behaviors need guidance. Although they do not specifically address behaviors like running through the hall, hanging from the basketball hoop, removing branches and leaves from the landscaping, or taking books randomly from the library shelf, these rules are available to help teachers and parents make decisions about which behaviors carry potential for harm to self, others, and school materials. Our three rules are:

- \*Children may not hurt people—children or adults.
- \*Children may not hurt other's possessions or creations.
- \*Children may not hurt animals.

Additionally, children in their parent's care must be supervised in the school library, the playyards, the hallways or in the coffee room.

Finally, teachers are unavailable to monitor children before or after class or in common areas of the school. If occasionally you are running late please let us know; it is important to us to make arrangements that are respectful of your child and your child's teacher.

The teachers and administrative staff are available to facilitate smooth and safe transitions for children coming to or leaving school. We respect your role as parent, and we see you as "in-charge" of your child during transitions. Please let us know if you need our help or support during transitions. We want this to be a successful part of the day for you and your child.

## How Many 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cars Can You Fit in a 20<sup>th</sup> Century Parking Lot?

As a reminder, we have designated parking spaces closest to the building as compact spaces. You can help traffic flow through the parking lot during busy times of day by parking medium cars in the spaces facing Thatcher Street, and larger vehicles in the alley. Through some trying driving experiences by families through the years we have found that two larger vehicles back to back in the lot can become a traffic barrier. We'd love for your parking experience at TCS to be something close to as good as your experiences inside the school(!), so thanks for considering the size of your car when you choose a parking place.

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*As the faculty of TCS begins to review the revised accreditation standards, we wish to communicate new guidelines to families who contribute Home Snacks to our programs. The following foods can no longer be served in classrooms serving four year olds and younger. Please let us know of any questions or comments you have.*

- \*Hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds*
- \*Whole grapes*
- \*Nuts*
- \*Popcorn*
- \*Raw peas and hard pretzels*
- \*Spoonfuls of peanut butter*
- \*Chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole*

*Source: NAEYC Health Standard 5.B.14*

## TCS Faculty and Staff Biographies

### Cindy Finch - Director

Cindy received her BA in English and Psychology from Austin College (Sherman, TX) and her MA in Education, Emphasis in Early Childhood from BSU in 1983. From 1982-1986 she taught in the 4-5's and Kindergarten classes and facilitated the development of the 3-4's and Parent-Toddler program. Cindy returned to TCS in 1997 as a Primary teacher. In the years between 1986 and 1997 she worked for Head Start, taught CDA classes at BSU and consulted with various early childhood programs.

She was the school's Project Director for the Pathways to Competency project during which she collaborated on the creation and development of the Children and Conflict video and companion materials. Cindy was named the Director of TCS during the 2000-2001 school year. Cindy is married to Ken Smith and is the mother of two children who are TCS alumni, Patrick and Evan. Cindy likes to hike, travel with her family and read.

### Andrea Laird - Administrative Assistant

Andrea received her BA in Developmental Studies and Justice and Law from the University of Winnipeg, Manitoba and her MA in Psychology from NCOC in San Francisco. She has worked in public school nursery (pre-K) and in preschool in Canada. Andrea also worked in an infant and toddler program in California. She has worked at TCS for over 10 years. Andrea has taught in the All Days, the Primary 5-7's and Toddlers and is now the Administrative Assistant. Andrea is married and has one son. She enjoys reading and travel.

### Megan Jones – 3-4-5s Teacher

In addition to teaching at TCS, Megan is the Director of The Cooperative Preschool at St. Michael's. She also teaches in the Parent/Toddler program at St. Michael's. Megan worked at TCS from the early '90s until March 2000 when her first son was born. She is married to David, a potter, who teaches art at Boise High. They have two children, one who attends TCS. Megan has an AAS and BAS in Child Care and Development from Boise State. Megan has completed the coursework and project for a Master's of Education, Early Childhood (also at BSU). For her project she created a video explaining the Developmental-Interaction approach, the philosophy on which both TCS and The Coop preschool are based. She is married to David, a potter, who teaches art at Boise High School. They have two children, one TCS alumni and one who is currently attending TCS.

### Sherri Lauer - 3-4s Teacher and Discussion Facilitator, Parent/Toddler Program

Sherri is returning for her sixth year as facilitator for the parent group, and is beginning her second year at TCS in the 3-4s class. She has her master's degree in Developmental Psychology and has been working with young children and parents for more than 20 years. Sherri's experience with TCS began when her own children attended school here. Sherri's many roles in the early childhood community include teaching a Child Care class at BSU, parent volunteer in her own children's classrooms, Accreditation consultant

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*We are able to turn in  
your used printer ink  
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paper through Office  
Max! Through your  
donations, we did not  
have to purchase paper  
for children or office  
use! Keep up the work,  
parents!*

*Also we can also use  
your outdated stationary  
and/or envelopes!*

*Please see Andrea in  
the office if you have  
paper or ink donations.*

for the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, and board member for Treasure Valley Association for the Education of Young Children (TVAEYC). Sherri has lived in Boise for 13 years with her husband, Bill, and her children, Shaun, Karly, and Alexandra (TCS alumni). They have two dogs, two cats, one turtle, and a fish.

### **Mary Griffin - 3-4s Teacher and Parent/Toddler Program Teacher**

Mary completed her undergraduate degree in psychology and masters work at the University of Illinois in Urbana. While in central Illinois, she taught at the university lab school supervising student teachers, working with preschoolers and their families and teaching classes. She also spent three years at Chicago Child Care Society teaching in a multi-age setting. She has lived in Boise for ten years with her husband and three daughters, all TCS alumni. Mary has been an active volunteer and substitute teacher in her children's classes and looks forward to her third year teaching in the 3-4s class, and her second year with the toddlers.

### **Julie Gill - 2-3s Teacher and Parent/Toddler Program Teacher**

Julie is beginning her 13th year teaching at TCS. She has taught in the Parent-Toddler class, Young 3s, 3-4s, 4-5s, All Days, and Extended Day Primary program. Before teaching at TCS, Julie was a teacher at Boise Head Start. She has two children, a current TCS student and a TCS alum. Julie has her CDA, and has studied Elementary Education at BSU and Liberal Arts at Albertson College. She lives with her husband, Al, her two children, and her dogs Buddy and Cinnamon. Julie enjoys spending her time with her children, gardening, swimming and playing in the yard.

### **Mark Zimmermann - 4-5-6s and Extended Day Primary Teacher**

Mark has an AA Degree in Child Care and Development and a BA in Applied Science with Emphasis in Child Care and Development from BSU. He has been a graduate assistant in the Masters Early Childhood Program at the BSU School of Education. Mark has taught at TCS for 19 years. Mark is a former president of the local and state chapters of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Mark enjoys camping and travel.

### **Betsy Robinson - 4-5s Teacher**

Betsy received a BS in Child Development and Family Relationships with a specialty in Early Childhood Education from Colorado State University. She graduated with honors and has studied in child development at Iowa State University. Betsy has taught for 25 years. She has taught 3-4's and 4-5's and in the Parent/Toddler program at other schools in Boise. Betsy is in her 11th year at TCS and has taught in the 3-4's, 4-5's and Afternoon Kindergarten. Betsy enjoys travel, reading, gardening, exercise and working with teenagers as well as young children. Betsy has been married to Kerry for 34 years and has two grown children.

### **Patty Head - 4-5s Teacher**

Patty received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from the University of Idaho and Master of Arts in Education, emphasis in Early

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*At TCS, 83% of the faculty/staff have BA or higher levels of education. This is compared to 31% of early childhood faculty/staff, nationwide.*

Education from the University of Alabama Birmingham and Boise State authoring a thesis on mentorship for administrators, master teachers and first year early childhood teachers. A 17 year veteran, Patty has taught first grade, Kindergarten, preschool, and for two years was the 3-4s teacher at TCS. Patty recently completed an internship to become a Child Life Specialist at St. Luke's Hospital and is a certified EMT. She has been married for 30 years to Alan and a mother to Max, 16 and Betsy, 25. After a ten year "retirement", Patty is thrilled to be back at The Children's School.

#### **Nicole Shadduck - All Day Preschool Teacher**

Nicole graduated from BSU in 1997 with a BA in Elementary Education with an endorsement in Early Childhood Education. Nicole has worked with infants and toddlers in an at-risk program for teen mothers and in Kindergarten in a Boise public school. She has started developing and presenting workshops at conferences for early childhood professionals. Nicole is in her ninth year at TCS and teaches in the All Day class. She is the editor of the school newsletter. She has a son, Corey. Nicole enjoys reading, exploring new local restaurants and travel.

#### **Lynn Hanson - All Day Preschool Teacher**

Lynn is in her fifth year of teaching at TCS. She has a BA in Child Care and Development and is working towards her MA in Reading. She has taught K-8 in a one room school house in Yellow Pine. She lives with her husband and has four grown children. She enjoys quilting, sewing, and art.

#### **Tonya Palsulich - 2-3s and All Day Preschool Teacher**

Tonya received a BA in Human Development and Child Study from Stephens College in Missouri. She joined the staff of TCS in December 2000. She is married and has two sons. Tonya enjoys music, reading and traveling.

#### **Susan Gardner - Primary Teacher**

Susan received her BA in Elementary Education, with a minor in English, from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. She has taken post graduate classes at the University of Minnesota. She has taught public school in grades K through 3 in the Idaho communities of Salmon, Leadore, and Emmett before moving to Boise and working at TCS. Susan is in her tenth year of teaching at TCS. She has a daughter (a former TCS student) and three stepsons with her husband, Dick. Susan enjoys life with her family, traveling, camping, and exploring the West!

#### **Mary Helen May - Primary Teacher**

Mary Helen received her BS in Elementary Education with an Emphasis in Early Childhood from Oregon College of Education (Western Oregon University). She taught Kindergarten at Adams, Roosevelt and Garfield Elementary Schools in Boise from 1973-1978. She helped facilitate workshops for the new kindergarten program. Mary Helen taught in K-3 in Oregon public schools. She then moved to Wyoming and began her preschool teaching

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*Thank you to Nancy Cole for the flower boxes! It's a nice welcome back to school.*

career. She taught toddlers, 3-4's and 4-5's. Mary Helen has continued her education, taking classes in early childhood curriculum at a variety of universities. She joined the staff of TCS in 1998 and taught in the 3-4's and 4-5's and toddlers programs. This will be her fifth year teaching Primes. Mary Helen is married and has 3 children.

#### **Rebecca Crosswhite - Extended Day and Summer Primary Teacher**

Rebecca has completed her CDA credential at BSU. She has also almost completed her course work in Elementary Education with an endorsement in Literacy. She joined the staff of TCS in 2001. She is one of the extended day primary teachers and works during the summer as a Summer Primary Program teacher. Rebecca is married and spends time with her family camping, skiing, reading and golfing.

#### **Ruthee Fuentes - All Day Preschool Teacher**

Ruthee joined the staff of TCS in May 2005 after completing an internship in the All Days class. She is currently pursuing a BAS in Early Childhood Development at Boise State University. Ruthee graduated from Nampa High School with her career pathway in Early Childhood Development. Ruthee has been involved with children as a camp counselor for the last seven years. She has taught preschool for two years at New Horizon. Ruthee enjoys reading, fishing, traveling, and spending time with her family in her spare time.

#### **Taira Lee – 3-4-5s and 4-5-6s Teacher**

Taira received her BA from Boise State University in Early Childhood Studies and Early Childhood Special Education in May of 2006. Some of her student teaching experiences include working in a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom at Shadow Hills Elementary in the Boise School District. She also worked with Spanish-speaking families in the Nampa area with a Bilingual Developmental Specialist with the Idaho Health and Welfare Department. In the fall of 2005, she spent eight weeks completing student teaching in the 3-4-5's and 4-5-6's classes at TCS. While finishing her undergraduate work at Boise State University, she was employed at the BSU Children's Center for five years and taught in the looping program for infants and toddlers as well as several preschool classes.

During the summer months, she spends her time in Erendira, B.C., Mexico on a work project focused on providing an educational opportunity for children living in the poverty of Mexican labor camps. She also enjoys traveling, spending time with friends and family, reading, and exploring the outdoors.

#### **Lisa Wirtanen – 3-4-5s Teacher**

Lisa has worked in the field of early childhood education for over 20 years as a teacher, staff development coordinator, director, accreditation facilitator, adjunct faculty member and curricula developer. She is the parent of two children, one currently attending TCS and one alum of TCS. Rejoining the professional staff at The Children's School is a life change to which she is looking forward to.

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*67% of our faculty/staff  
have worked at TCS for  
6-17 years.*

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*Quotes from Children*

*"I will always remember  
The Children's  
School."—Emma, TCS  
Alumni, Age 8*



## **The Children's School**

1015 N. 8th St.  
Boise, ID 83702

PHONE:  
208-343-6840

FAX:  
208-429-8153

E-MAIL:  
[info@tcsboise.org](mailto:info@tcsboise.org)

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We're on the Web!  
See us at:  
[www.tcsboise.org](http://www.tcsboise.org)

## **Potluck Schedule**

We would like to ask you to take note of your family's potluck date(s). We always hope to see all of your faces to welcome the new school year. This schedule is intended to give you a day and time to block out on your calendar. There will be specific information, including signup sheets, available in individual classrooms. Please talk with a classroom teacher for more information.

Primes- Wednesday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-7:30

All Days- Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 5:30-7:00

4-5-6s- Friday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 11:00-12:45

2-3s- Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 11:30-1:00

3-4s- Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 11:30-1:00

3-4-5s- Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 11:15-12:45

4-5s- Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 11:30-1:00

## **Important Dates...**

Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup>-- All Days Resume  
Primes and 4-5-6s Begin

Monday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, All Classes Closed

Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2-3s, 3-4s, 3-4-5-s, and 4-5s Begin

Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, New Family Orientation, 7:00-8:00

Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, Parent/Toddler Programs Begin

Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, Alfie Kohn, BSU SPEC Center, 7:00-8:00

Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, TCS School Carnival, 3:00-6:00

Please refer to above schedule for this month's individual class events. We are looking forward to a great school year together!