Fall Fun with CDSA School-Agers!

Our Maple school-agers began the school year with a great celebration! There was singing, dancing, music, and, of course, Seahawks fans! Over three days the school-agers worked together to put together a spectacular show. They began by working together to design a wearable Seahawk, complete with blue and green construction paper feathers and a fierce face. Then they got to choose how they wanted to engage, dividing into “Noise Club” and “Dance Club”. Each club had their own role to play in the performance. Noise Club members learned about and used counting and rhythms to create music on plastic bins and musical instruments. Dance Club members learned how to move to the beat and learned how each member of the team was important to keeping the Seahawk up and flying. After dedicated practice on their own, both clubs came together to combine their new skills. This remarkable performance built on the interests of our young Seahawks fans and gave them opportunities to be creative and expressive, to learn invaluable skills around problem solving and teamwork, and to take risks in trying something new in a supportive environment.
A Note from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy Fall Everyone!

As the weather is shifting and the leaves are falling, I’ve been thinking about how fall represents the beginning of changes to come. So it’s only fitting that CDSA is moving into a time of change ourselves.

About a year ago CDSA began the process of redefining and reevaluating our brand. As we approach our 40th anniversary as a provider in this community, we wanted to take the time to stop and reflect on how far we’ve come and where we want to go. It was vital for us to consider what work still needs to be done for the children and families we serve, how we accomplish that work, and how we talk about the work we do with a cohesive message. For us, this rebrand is about capturing the full breadth of the work that we do with children and families. It will position us to expand the reach of our work to become more accessible to the people who should know about us within our communities and within our field.

We had an amazing team of CDSA staff, board members, and community partners who helped drive and inform the rebranding process. Families graciously spent their personal time to participate in focus groups and complete surveys that informed the direction we needed to go. CDSA staff and board members spent many hours having rich dialogues about our past, our present and our future. We are incredibly fortunate to have such committed individuals working for and on behalf of the organization.

By early 2016, we will be going live with our new name, logo, mission statement, and organizational values. We feel confident that our new brand will reinforce the incredible work of this organization as well as give clear direction on our journey into our next chapter.

As you begin to take in our new look and feel over the coming months, we hope our families and partners know that we’ll continue to provide the same great programs that we always have. The only thing changing is how we talk about the work we do – the core programs and services that our families rely on will not change. Keep an eye out over the next several months for the reveal!

Thank you,

Brianna Jackson, Executive Director

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Preschoolers at the Pumpkin Patch!

Last month our CDSA Preschoolers from Leschi, Madrona, and Beacon Hill teamed up to take a Pumpkin Patch field trip to Remlinger Farms. After a big yellow school bus picked up the children from their usual classroom locations, our preschoolers embarked on a learning adventure. They took a tour of the farm, jumped in piles of hay, sang familiar songs, fed the animals, and took home a pumpkin of their very own.
CDSA is building partnerships within the community to help children and families live full and successful lives. This year a key partner in educating our teachers and families on effectively interacting with children is David Lewis. David is a Licensed Mental Health Clinician with 14 years of experience working with school-aged children in various settings, including some of our CDSA elementary schools. His understanding of how Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Complex Trauma, and Toxic Stress impact the behaviors of children give teachers a framework for rethinking the traditional approach to problematic behavior. David suggests that the behaviors we observe are often logical responses to past the child’s past life experiences. If we can approach addressing the behavior from an understanding of where it comes from then we can really set our students up for long term success. David presented these ideas to our teachers during our annual professional development day in September. This training helped our teachers think about new ways to serve our children and families with long-term and lasting results.

Following the successful training and promising responses from staff, we invited David to help lead a three part workshop series for CDSA families seeking support in understanding child behavior and development. These workshops equip families with skills and knowledge that we use at CDSA and help to strengthen two-way home-CDSA communication and relationships. This creates consistency for the children and gives our families and teachers common ground to talk about how best to support a child. We held our first workshop in October with a turnout of 18 families from various sites. Families were impressed by David’s expertise and facilitation skills, and were appreciative of CDSA providing food and child care during the event. The final two workshops this school year will be repeated at 3 different CDSA locations, part two: February 9, February 23, and March 8, and part three: April 5, April 19, and May 3. These amazing educational opportunities for our staff and families are due in large part to support from our donors and partners. Thank you!

Save the Date for the CDSA Luncheon

Wednesday, March 23, 2016
The Westin Seattle
Registration: 11:30am
Program: 12-1pm

For more info or to host a table, email rehana@communitydayschool.org or call (206) 726-7972
CDSA Board Secretary Matt Adkins grew up in Cleveland, Ohio. He was the first person in his family to graduate from college (he studied engineering at Purdue University), so he says that experience made him truly appreciate the value of education. After graduating, he completed his Masters in Engineering at Case Western. He moved to Seattle to take a job at Boeing, where he’s worked on the 787 and on flight simulators.

Matt found out about CDSA because he was looking to get more involved in the community and took a class that presented opportunities to serve on nonprofit boards. He says CDSA appealed to him because “I’m really interested in education. Education is the key to unlocking opportunities in life. Education has allowed me to do a lot of things in my life, including having a good job. It also appealed to me that CDSA works with kids of all income levels and in diverse communities.”

Upon joining the board in 2011, Matt helped in the search for a new executive director when the former CDSA executive director retired after nearly 25 years. He says that being involved in the executive search was one of his proudest achievements in his time on the board because the executive director position is such a critical one.

Over the next few years Matt wants to help CDSA get additional resources and help the organization grow and become better and better. He’s very interested in hearing from CDSA staff, families, and the broader community and incorporating their feedback into CDSA. Matt is heavily involved in working with a school in Swaziland. He’s traveled there and shared with them some of the lessons learned from CDSA. When he’s not working or volunteering, he likes to go running and sailing.