

# Room to Grow news

SPRING 2010



## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*This spring we will begin construction to physically expand our space, allowing us to comfortably welcome more families to our program, host larger corporate and school volunteer groups, and accommodate our growing team of staff and interns. Our physical and programmatic expansion during a time of retraction for so many other non-profits is possible because of the incredible generosity of a vibrant and diverse community of supporters. We are tremendously*

*grateful for your belief in our mission, and your willingness to collect and donate baby items, to volunteer your time and talent, and to contribute financially. Together, we are giving babies the best possible start in life. With your continued support, we look forward to growing our program to reach even greater numbers of families in need.*

**Saskia Epstein**  
Executive Director  
Room to Grow, Boston

## DID YOU KNOW?

Nutrition during the first years of life can have a profound effect on a child's ongoing health status, as well as their lifelong ability to learn, communicate, think analytically, socialize effectively and adapt to new environments and people.

Room to Grow helps families create a healthy lifestyle by giving them information and support about breastfeeding, nutrition, and the dietary needs of a growing child. Additionally, for three years, parents receive all the necessary breastfeeding supplies, feeding equipment and educational resources to promote proper nutrition.

(Source: UNICEF. "Infant and Young Child Feeding" Global Strategy on Infant and Young Child Feeding. 2003. <http://www.unicef.org>)

## CLIENT SNAPSHOT: A Mother's Devotion

**W**hen she first came to Room to Grow, Monica did not know she was going to be a mother to a child with a major medical disorder. Her daughter Julietta, who is now 12-months-old, was born with a seizure disorder. Monica's relationship with her Room to Grow social worker provides her with invaluable support while she raises her daughter in circumstances that are less than ideal - Monica and Julietta are homeless and living in a shelter. As a parent, Monica is juggling many important priorities; a housing search, a part-time job at a department store, and Julietta's medical and early intervention appointments. Despite the challenges, Monica is determined to provide Julietta with a better life. She insists that her daughter be seen as the amazing girl

she has grown into and she refuses to allow Julietta's medical needs or their homelessness to define her future. Room to Grow provides Monica with referrals to other services, parenting information, emotional support and guidance along with all of the essential material items needed to ensure that Julietta will thrive. Monica's resiliency is truly an inspiration and Julietta could not have asked for a more devoted parent.



## RECENT HAPPENINGS

November 7 | 2009

### Room to Grow Fall Gala

Room to Grow and 400 guests celebrated the leadership, strength and generosity of our city's families at the Boston Center for the Arts. The evening included an exciting program honoring a Room to Grow family alongside Fredi Shonkoff and Dr. Jack Shonkoff. The event raised nearly \$400,000 helping to prepare Room to Grow for physical and programmatic expansion.

December 1 | 2009

### A Year of Giving

We are extremely grateful for the remarkable generosity of 500-plus families who donated more than 27,000 clothing items,

3,000 toys, and 4,200 books during the last year. One-third of the baby items came to us through our wonderful community partner Isis Maternity, located in Arlington, Boston, Brookline and Needham. We also received support from hundreds of schools and companies who organized collection drives and donated baby items. Many of the volunteers and supporters first learned about the organization from Isis Maternity. Along with all of our new and longstanding partners, Isis helped us pair an excess of 20,000 essential baby items with parenting support information and guidance for families at each visit to Room to Grow.



In February Boston Cares and the Boston Globe collected 805 pairs of shoes for Room to Grow.

## SAVE THE DATE

November 6, 2010

Room to Grow  
*Fall Gala*  
Boston Park Plaza Castle

Featuring wonderful chef tastings, a silent and live auction and a program celebrating our fifth year of enriching the lives of babies born into poverty.

To purchase tickets or learn more about sponsorship opportunities contact Phumelele Trasada at [phumelele@roomtogrow.org](mailto:phumelele@roomtogrow.org).

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## DONOR AND VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Halo® SleepSack™ Founder Bill Schmid.

### Halo and Room to Grow promote safe sleep

Room to Grow places a high priority on educating parents about safe sleep practices. We are proud to partner with an important leader in the fight against SIDS, Halo Innovations, Inc. Halo has generously donated hundreds of SleepSacks to Room to Grow and made a commitment to provide every new baby at Room to Grow with a SleepSack. Families also receive SIDS prevention materials and resources in English and Spanish. We are so appreciative of Bill Schmid and the support of the wonderful team at Halo.

### What We Need Now

Room to Grow currently needs strollers. Please help our families safely navigate the streets of Boston with their babies by organizing a stroller collection drive in your neighborhood or by donating your own new or nearly new stroller.

Find us on  
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