

# Room to Grow news

FALL 2010



## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Recent studies published in the journal *Pediatrics* indicate that breastfeeding babies throughout the first six months of life can have significant benefits, including reduced risk of respiratory, gastrointestinal, and other infections, as well as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Room to Grow social workers meet new clients during the third trimester of pregnancy and provide information about feeding infants, including tips for breastfeeding. We recently introduced

check-in calls within two weeks of birth, when new mothers face the greatest challenges in breastfeeding. We are happy to report that all new mothers enrolled since April have been able to breastfeed their babies. Providing individualized support to parents is what Room to Grow does best. We are so grateful for your partnership in our efforts.

**Lexy Mayers,**

Executive Director  
Room to Grow, New York

## DID YOU KNOW?

A recent study by Northwestern University scientists published in the journal *Child Development* showed that regularly talking to babies as young as 3 months old can significantly influence their cognitive development. Room to Grow social workers reinforce with parents the importance of talking to their babies from the moment they are born, and provide books and toys that encourage verbal interaction between parents and infants.

## CLIENT SNAPSHOT: Cynthia and daughter Priscilla

Cynthia came to Room to Grow in 2007. She was living in a shelter, her family was in Canada and Ghana, so she had no social network in New York. Cynthia's Room to Grow social worker La Shell helped her to apply for subsidized housing programs, and, once daughter Priscilla was born, to apply for supplemental food programs.

Cynthia has been eager to use all of the tools her social worker has shared about child rearing and development. Her daughter Priscilla has developed into an independent, verbal two-and-a-half year old. She likes to bathe, brush her teeth and dress herself. Cynthia is a very hard worker and wanted desperately to support herself and her daughter. She got a full time job in a Subway sandwich shop, and over time



became a manager. Cynthia and La Shell researched culinary schools and now it looks like her dream of becoming a chef is underway. Cynthia is currently working in the kitchen of a popular Soho restaurant and will begin culinary school with the support of her new job.

## RECENT HAPPENINGS

July 12 | 2010

### Graduate Family Gathering at Victorian Gardens, Central Park

With the support of the Marks Family Foundation, Room to Grow now maintains contact with families who complete the program. Social workers call at six- and twelve-month intervals to check on goals, make referrals, and collect data on child well-being, and there is a get-together one year following graduation. This year graduates were treated to a day of children's rides, crafts, and refreshments at Victorian Gardens in Central Park. They welcomed the opportunity to socialize with other parents and Room to Grow staff. "It was so

good to see La Shell again. I am glad we had time to sit and catch up. I also got to meet a couple of parents I never met when I was at Room to Grow."

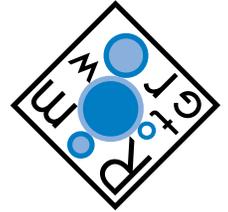
June 2010

### Stroller Drive

Thank you to all who purchased strollers for Room to Grow families. We received a match from Dorel Juvenile Equipment (which also provided the purchased strollers at cost), and will receive 70 new strollers. The donation could not come at a better time – Room to Grow is enrolling 100 new children this year, and these strollers are essential equipment for our new families.



Program graduates enjoy rides in Central Park



## SAVE THE DATE

December 2, 2010

### *Celebrate Room to Grow*

Join fashion designer  
Liz Lange and ABC News  
Correspondent Deborah Roberts  
for our benefit gala at Christie's.  
The event features silent and live  
auctions as well as Room to  
Grow's annual awards program.  
Tickets may be purchased at  
[www.roomtogrow.org](http://www.roomtogrow.org), or contact  
Veronica Farje  
([veronica@roomtogrow.org](mailto:veronica@roomtogrow.org)) for  
sponsorship details.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## WHAT WE NEED NOW

**Room to Grow needs fall and  
winter clothing, especially for  
boys sizes 2T-4T.  
Please donate to these efforts  
at [www.roomtogrow.org](http://www.roomtogrow.org)  
or call to make a donation  
of new baby items.**

Join Room to Grow's email list at  
[www.roomtogrow.org](http://www.roomtogrow.org). Follow us on  
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## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

### **Kim Bloom, Owner, Rosie Hippo toys**

In 2009 Kim Bloom visited Room to Grow seeking a charity partner that would fit with her toy company's commitment to the positive development of children. Rosie Hippo offers classic, earth friendly, educational toys that nurture a child's innate curiosity and imagination—a perfect fit with our mission. Rosie Hippo hosted Room to Grow's online toy drive for the Family Holiday Party, and Kim pledged to donate toys for the infants and toddlers in our program through a matching sale over the winter. This spring, Rosie Hippo donated more than 1,000 new toys to Room to Grow, including rattles, blocks, dolls, and



the adorable tea set pictured above. We are grateful to Kim and Rosie Hippo for the wonderful donation.

You can participate in the partnership: Visit the Room to Grow registry at [www.rosiehippo.com](http://www.rosiehippo.com) to purchase a toy and check back this winter for our Family Holiday Party registry.