

Room to Grow news

JUNE 2008



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am delighted to introduce the inaugural issue of Room to Grow's newsletter. Fittingly, the launch coincides with our Tenth Anniversary, helping us to mark a decade of work enriching the lives of babies born into poverty throughout their critical first three years of development. Over the past ten years, almost 800 children have passed through the program, with their families receiving crucial parenting and material support in order to provide these babies with

the best possible start in life. We are poised to help many hundreds more in the years ahead, and look forward to keeping you informed of our continued success.

We are so grateful to have you as a part of Room to Grow's growing family!

Lexy Mayers

Executive Director

Room to Grow, New York

DID YOU KNOW?

There is a direct correlation between reading scores and the number of books in the home.

While the ratio of books to children in middle-income neighborhoods is approximately 13 books to 1 child, the ratio in low-income neighborhoods is 1 book to 300 children. Room to Grow is proud to provide 130 books to every child during their time in our program.

(Source: Susan B. Neuman and David K. Dickinson, ed. *Handbook of Early Literacy Research*, Volume 2. New York, NY: 2006, p. 31.)

CLIENT SNAPSHOT: A Young Mom Working Hard For Her Children

Hassania is a French born immigrant referred to Room to Grow by the Baby Steps Program in Harlem during her first pregnancy with her daughter Awa in 2003. At the time, Hassania was living with her daughter's father Ben, an immigrant from Africa. Both came to the United States to build a better life for themselves. Hassania has continued in our program with her second child, Adam, and is now managing single parenthood. Struggling to cope with her new homeland, working as a waitress, and raising her children by herself, Hassania has shown extraordinary determination and grace as a parent. She wants her children to have every opportunity available in life, and with Room to Grow, she can ensure the stability and support they need.

Hassania says "I was very comfortable when I first came to Room to Grow to ask for help. It makes me feel like a better parent to give my children things I wouldn't be able to give otherwise: toys that teach them; and my kids have more books than any kids I know, thanks to Room to Grow. When I come, I don't feel like I do when I go to other places, where I am nervous to speak about how difficult parenting is. At Room to Grow, they encourage me to talk about everything and help me make better plans; help me figure out what to do next."



Ramatu Sandy and her daughter Grace with Room to Grow clinician, La Shell Wooten.

RECENT HAPPENINGS

January 30 | 2008

Relaunch of Room to Grow Website

Room to Grow has launched a new and improved version of its website, www.roomtogrow.org. The new site includes extensive information about our program, client profiles, and you can even take a virtual tour of our sites! Visitors can also sign up to receive updates on news and events. We hope you will visit www.roomtogrow.org soon.

May 1 | 2008

Friends of Room to Grow Spring Mother's Day Event

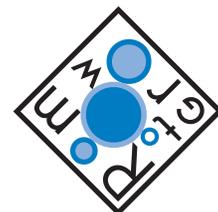
Friends of Room to Grow hosted a cocktail reception and VIP shopping experience

at Petit Bateau's flagship Madison Avenue store to celebrate the exciting partnership between Petit Bateau and Room to Grow. The partnership includes a generous in-kind donation from Petit Bateau, volunteer support, and donation drop-off locations at Petit Bateau boutiques in NY, NJ, CT & MA.

May 1-11 | 2008

Mother's Day Stroller Drive

The first annual Mother's Day Stroller Drive was a resounding success, with over 110 strollers purchased. These strollers will ensure that every Room to Grow family has this critical piece of equipment. Thank you to all of our generous Stroller Drive donors!



SAVE THE DATE

December 2, 2008

Room to Grow
10th Anniversary Gala
at Christie's

The evening will feature
a silent and live auction,
cocktails and program.

To purchase tickets or learn
about sponsorship opportunities,
contact Veronica Farje at
veronica@roomtogrow.org

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What We Need Now

Room to Grow is in need
of toddler clothing sized 2T-4T.
Please help with your donations
of new or nearly new toddler
clothing. It will make all the
difference to our families.

Thank you!

Join Room to Grow's email list!

Sign up at www.roomtogrow.org to receive
email updates and details about events.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Linda Brazda

Room to Grow volunteer since 2003

When Linda first heard about Room to Grow, she knew it was just the place for her. She's always loved volunteering, including her weekly stint as a garden volunteer in

Central Park. Linda says she was especially drawn to Room to Grow's focus on early childhood: "I felt very strongly about the mission of helping underserved families with very young children, it really matches my priorities." She says these last five years of weekly work at Room to Grow have been incredibly rewarding and enjoyable. Born and raised in Rochester, NY, Linda and her husband have most recently settled in New Jersey. A mother herself, Linda is now planning her daughter's August wedding and come this fall, she will be moving to Michigan. "I will very much miss Room to Grow!" Linda says. We will all miss Linda and her generous dedication to us even more!