

## **Play & Learn Teaches Young Children the Importance of Giving**

Family get-togethers, crowded shopping malls, soaring wrapping paper, and one ton of confetti released over Time Square each year as the ball drops. This is what comes to mind when thinking about the holiday season.

For Play & Learn, the meaning of the holiday season is more. Throughout the year, our children are taught the meaning of giving and sharing with others. Teaching children this important lesson builds character and teaches empathy, kindness, consideration and generosity.

During this past holiday season, more than one thousand families at our ten Play & Learn centers reached deep into their hearts and supported a variety of charities, teaching their children the importance of helping others.

Abington Memorial Hospital, a 665-bed, regional referral center and teaching hospital, conducts a community gift drive each year, supporting the residents of Abington township. This year, the children at the Abington Gerstadt Center teamed up with the hospital to collect baby items to be given to new mothers who are in need. The center donated over 100 baby items including diapers, pacifiers, receiving blankets, clothing, books and more.

Toys for Tots, sponsored by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, collect new, unwrapped toys for needy children in local communities. This year, the children at our center in Ardmore collected two barrels full of toys that were donated to these children.

The Mattie Dixon Community Cupboard, a “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” community organization in Ambler, where qualified individuals can go to receive food and clothing, received \$500 worth of new clothing, non-perishable food items and new toys from the children at the Blue Bell Play & Learn.

A Baby’s Breath, a self-help non-profit organization helping parents and parents-to-be develop the skills they need to provide a stable and loving environment for their children, received over forty generous gift donations from our children at the Collegeville Play & Learn.

The Hatboro and Bryn Mawr centers collected an enormous amount of food donations for the Preston and Steve Food Drive for Philabundance, the region’s largest food rescue organization distributing roughly 17 million pounds of food last year to low income residents.

Laurel House is a comprehensive domestic violence agency serving individuals, families and communities throughout Montgomery County. Our center in Lansdale collected approximately 35 winter necessities including gloves, mittens, scarves and hats. The Lansdale center is also currently collecting new pajamas and books for the Pajama Program, an organization that delivers warm sleepwear and nurturing books to children in need.

Fort Washington Infant and Toddler center and Preschool center children collected donations of new, unwrapped gifts for approximately 50 children at Wordsworth Academy, a facility that provides quality Education, Treatment and Care to children and families with special needs.

The Green Lane Play & Learn “adopted” two families through The Open Line, a non-profit, social service agency dedicated to helping adults and families in the greater Upper Perkiomen Valley. Each family received generous donations of toys, clothes and household items to provide a memorable holiday for their children.

Overall, the Play & Learn children came together this holiday season to give the gift of joy to those less fortunate than ourselves. We are proud of our children and families, and will continue to help families in need throughout the year. If you would like more information about Play & Learn, contact 215-643-4142 and visit [www.playandlearn.com](http://www.playandlearn.com).

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Photo Caption: The children at the Abington Gerstadt Center are proud to display their gift drive results.

