Message from the Executive Director

The end of the year always feels like a whirlwind. Between November and December, we've been busy with presentations at the annual National Association for the Education of Young Children Conference, Dr. Junlei Li's visit to China to provide professional development on the Simple Interactions approach, and connecting with our partners on a recent trip to the TEC Center at Erikson Institute.

Through it all, it's nice to take a moment to reflect on the things that are important during this festive time of year. I recently shared one of my family's holiday traditions on our blog, and it reminded me of a wonderful quote by Fred, "I like to compare the holiday season with the way a child listens to a favorite story. The pleasure is in the familiar way the story begins, the anticipation of familiar turns it takes, the familiar moments of suspense, and the familiar climax and ending."

Whatever your holiday "story," I hope you share in the traditions that bring you joy, fond memories, and many happy new tales to tell. May we all feel a little more child-like wonder and know that it is not the fancy paper, shiny bows, or pretty boxes that make the holidays special—but the gift of our presence—that creates connections to last a lifetime.

Warmest wishes,

Rick Fernandes

In the Archive

New On the Blog

Digital Media and Learning Project Manager Tanya Baronti shares her takeaways from the National Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference in The Power of the Profession, Connection, and Relationship.

Happy Retirement

Please join us in congratulating our friend and advisor, Marge Petruska, on her retirement from the Heinz Endowments where she has served as Senior Program Director, Children, Youth, and Families. Marge has been an incredible champion for early childhood, and a force for positive change.

Annual Giving

There is still time to support the Fred Rogers Center this holiday season. All gifts are currently eligible for matching funds through the end of 2015. Visit us
This holiday season, you can visit with some of the Neighborhood puppets at the Senator John Heinz History Museum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On loan from the Fred Rogers Center are Dr. Bill and Elsie Jean Platypus, Grandpere, and Cornflake S. Pecially. The puppets will return to the Fred Rogers Archive in 2016. The Heinz History Center exhibit also includes set pieces from *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, as well as a wax figurine of Mister Rogers. Please click [here](#) for more information.

**Carrying the Legacy Forward -- In My Own Words**

Fred Rogers embodies all of the qualities I would like to cultivate in my own life; moreover, these are the qualities I would hope for in my children and their friends. If only we can see ourselves and those around us as valuable, beautiful, wonderful--just the way we are.

Sincerely your neighbor,

Brian

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**Words of Wisdom**

"Love isn't a perfect state of caring. It is an active noun like struggle. To love someone is to strive to accept that person exactly the way he or she is, right here and now." -Fred Rogers

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