



Sheltering Arms

EARLY EDUCATION AND FAMILY CENTERS

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October 1, 2010

Ms. Robin Ferst
Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy
PO Box 1327
Madison, GA 30650

Dear Robin:

Sheltering Arms Early Education & Family Centers enthusiastically endorses the Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy's request for funding from the Rotary Educational Foundation of Atlanta. The quality books provided by the Ferst Foundation are key to our early education strategies aimed at raising third grade reading scores.

Each day Sheltering Arms provides nationally-accredited, effective early education, child care, and family support to 2,500 metro Atlanta infants, toddlers, and preschoolers attending 17 neighborhood centers. Founded in 1888, Sheltering Arms is different because of its quality, because it serves all families regardless of income, and because it provides comprehensive services that build strong families and communities to support children as they grow.

Research has pointed to lack of books in low-income homes as one of the greatest obstacles to narrowing the educational achievement gap. In response, five years ago Sheltering Arms launched Operation StoryBook with the goal of providing a new book every month to each of the 2500 children we serve. Our partnerships with the Ferst Foundation and the Rotary Clubs of Atlanta and Atlanta West End are helping us to meet that goal for children at our East Lake center and for 40 infants and toddlers at our downtown Atlanta location.

Partnering with the Ferst Foundation has provided a "value-add" for our Operation StoryBook book distribution program. The books are always top quality, age-appropriate classics. With children receiving the same book each month, we can coordinate lesson planning in our classrooms and discussions at parent meetings to build on learning from the "book of the month." The newsletter gives us one more important way to make sure parents understand how they can encourage reading at home. And the fact that the children are receiving their own mail each month makes reading something that they look forward to.

Thank you for the opportunity to be included in your important, much-needed work with our city's next generation of leaders.

Sincerely,

Elaine P. Draeger
President & CEO

www.shelteringarmsforkids.com



Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and supported by Head Start, United Way, the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, and center communities.

The power of education begins here.™