



# JOWONIO

## School News

Volume 20, Issue 3

May 2017

## The Director's Report

Those of us in the education world have a calendar of June endings and September start-ups. We say goodbye to the teachers who are moving on, as they finish school in Syracuse or decide to attend graduate school elsewhere or move home or go on a grand adventure. We have been lucky to accompany many of our staff as they become professionals and we are happy to support their growth. Every year brings new learning with the experiences of each individual child and family and every team. We are so fortunate that our staff share a commitment to our inclusive vision, and that we hire people who are learners. Each person has their own unique path forward, and our goal is to provide the support they need...with the models of the lead teacher and other team members, the mentoring of the Support Teachers, the stimulation of our weekly inservice time, and the opportunity to be independent and create a learning environment that is a realization of their own vision. I am so grateful to all our staff members who make such a special effort to connect with all their students. They love your children and appreciate their relationships with your family.

Jim Greenman suggests that we should "create a nest for children as they navigate the demands of growing up and to make them believe that they can fly..." This is also what we hope to do for teachers, that they can create an environment for children to thrive but also where they have ownership of the classroom and are happy with it. When you tour Jowonio it is easy to see that each classroom has its own personality. That is a result of the decisions teachers have made about the set up of the physical space and the aesthetic arrangements in the room; a rich and exciting curriculum; classroom routines, including how flexible they are and how responsive to children's interests; the expectations teachers have for children's exploration and independence; and the dynamic relationships among the children, between the children and adults, and among the particular adults (teachers, therapists and parents).

Loris Malaguzzi, one of the founders of the Reggio Emilia approach, says "A school with young children is an integral living organism, a place of shared lives and relationships among many adults and many children. School is construction in motion, continuously adjusting itself." As we are starting to plan for the new year (September 2017) we are thinking about all these elements, including the new children and families who will be joining us and the new staff we are hiring. We also realize, as we say goodbye to those moving on, that every person has left an imprint at Jowonio. We have learned from each other and take that with us into the future. I urge you to cherish the adults who share your child's world every day.

Ellen

### Dates to Remember

5/29	Memorial Day	No School
6/14	Staff Appreciation Luncheon	NO AFTERSCHOOL
6/18	Father's Day	
6/15-6/23	Classroom Graduations-	see page 2
6/23	Last day of school	Dismissal at 11:15
7/3-8/11	Jowonio Summer Session	

## Graduation Dates

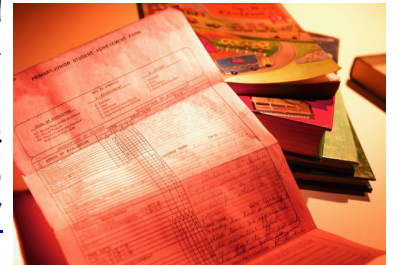
Join your child's classroom for their graduation ceremonies. This occasion gives us a chance to acknowledge each student's growth and celebrate the friendships that have been made within the class. The teachers have put thought into an event that will help our children and families remember their time with us this year. The teachers will let you know the details...

- 6/14 Dragonfly Room Graduation
- 6/15 Star & Koala Room Graduations
- 6/16 Treehouse Room Graduation
- 6/20 Earth & Waterfall Room Graduations
- 6/21 Bunny & Sunflower Room Graduations
- 6/22 Butterfly & Ocean Room Graduations
- 6/23 Kangaroo Room Graduation



## Jowonio Parent Survey... Please let us know what you think

Every year we survey families about the experience they and their child have had at Jowonio. We want your feedback in order to improve our program. In addition we hope to develop data about the outcomes that will demonstrate our effectiveness. Please take a few minutes to complete the 2016-2017 survey. We will send home a hard copy to everyone; you can also respond to it on a Survey Monkey format by typing in the link [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/jowonio\\_parent\\_survey\\_2017](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/jowonio_parent_survey_2017)



## Summer at Jowonio

Jowonio runs for 6 weeks from July 3 to August 11. Most of the staff are folks who have worked with us during the school year. While we have a schedule similar to that of the school year, we take advantage of the good weather and our great space to be outdoors every day and have special events like the Secret Garden Carnival. Children have to be registered with Connie to attend during the summer session.

## Staff Appreciation Luncheon

Our annual Staff Appreciation Luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, June 14, 2017 from 12:30—2:30. This is a lovely tradition that honors our staff.

Each year we have wonderful parents who donate their time, energy and delicious food to celebrate our staff. Thank you to all who have volunteered in the past. Please look out for sign up sheets on classroom doors and on line at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/16XwyVoDSYaZmIpYZ93ZECiG7FrAFZX9J09Gch3K82xY/edit?usp=sharing> . We will need help with: set-up, donations and clean-up. While there is no usual afterschool that day, we will set-up child care for helping.

## Fall Enrollment

If your child is going to be enrolled at Jowonio for the 2017-2018 school year, be sure to return your registration packet to Connie in the office as soon as possible. In order for your son or daughter to enter school, we must have a physical form, indicating that your child has had a physical within 12 months of the September start date and that immunizations are current. So, if needed, make an appointment for a "well child" visit with your pediatrician or family physician over the summer. If we already have a current physical/immunization record on file, you do not have to send another copy in. Always make sure your records are up to date with us. Call us at 315-445-4010 if you have questions regarding the forms.

## Classroom Placement

As anyone touring Jowonio can see, each of our classrooms has a personality of its own. This unique tone reflects the age, personalities and passions of the students; the way in which the curriculum, environment, and materials are organized; and the philosophy, interests and teaching styles of the adults. Parents ask how we place children in a particular room. Here is how we think of it. There are a number of factors we consider:

- ◆ A match between a child's learning style and the classroom approach;
- ◆ Insuring diversity in each class re gender, race, age, first language, and needs;
- ◆ Maintenance of relationships with adults and friendships with peers; and
- ◆ Parent input/request.

Our goal is to have classrooms that balance the strengths and needs of all the children. We usually maintain children in their same room unless a child is changing the length of day they are attending or if parents request that their child be moved to a different room. Conversations with parents focus on goals for their child and the kind of classroom structure that will be a good fit. We are not always able to guarantee parents' first choice, but we try to share information and be responsive to parental concerns. Our class lists are not finalized until the summer. If you have questions or comments, talk with the teaching and/or office staff.

## New Website

Thank you, Azusa! Please take time to look at our new website, developed by Azusa Tojo, whose two children Koharu and Mugen are at Jowonio. Azusa has created a site that is useful to potential and current families. It is in Wordpress which will make it easier for us to edit. Send us any suggestions you have to [connie.lutz@jowonio.org](mailto:connie.lutz@jowonio.org) or [ellen.barnes@jowonio.org](mailto:ellen.barnes@jowonio.org).

*"There are two lasting gifts we can give our children:  
One is roots, the other is wings."  
—Holding Carter*

## Endings & Beginnings by Ellen Barnes

There are a number of ways in which we try at Jowonio to support staff, parents and children in their leaving us and entering new schools. We want to celebrate the growth that children have made over the years, growth that leads them to greater independence and the life in the larger community. We also want to express our investment in the loving relationships that have developed among us: child and child, teacher and child, and teacher and parent. We have shared concerns and wonderful experiences over the year. Children will have "graduation" ceremonies in their classrooms. Photographs, address books, portfolios, and personal books are souvenirs that children may bring home to help them remember their year and make contact with their friends after school is out.

There are things that you can do at home to support your child in a smooth transition to new classrooms and new schools. It helps children if you can:

- ◆ Focus on your child's growth over this last year (use photos from early in the year to show how he/she is taller, looks different), talk about what your child has learned this year, and describe strengths your child has to meet new situations, make friends, build a relationship with a new teacher.
- ◆ Acknowledge the changes that are coming and give your child an opportunity to express his/her thoughts (be an empathic listener).
- ◆ Talk about your plans over the next two months, make a calendar for your refrigerator perhaps, indicating when your child will be home, at school, at camp, on vacation, and when school will start in the fall.
- ◆ Take pictures of Jowonio friends, teachers, and activities; make a photo album; frame the class picture; make a video of class events, graduation.
- ◆ Help your child pick out or make a card for teachers to express their feelings.
- ◆ Use children's books to help children think about and talk about separating and going to a new school; the children's librarian can help you find some. Possible titles are: *Will I Have a Friend?*, *My Teacher Said Goodbye Today*, *Willy Bear*, *Starting School*, *Nick Joins in*.
- ◆ Help your child maintain contact with Jowonio friends and teachers.
- ◆ Visit the new school, including the cafeteria, bathrooms, lockers; play on the playground in the summertime, and respond to next year's teacher if he/she makes contact, so that your child has met and started a relationship and so have you!

"Parents are like shuttles on a loom. They join the threads of the past with threads of the future and leave their own bright patterns as they go."  
--Fred Rogers

"The remarkable thing is, we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we embrace for that day."  
--Charles Swindoll

## Jowonio's HERO'S FUND !

The HERO FUND is an initiative to hire and retain quality Jowonio staff members. Our amazing teachers, therapists and administrators, (our "heroes"), have been the foundation of the school since its doors opened in 1970. Part of what makes Jowonio so special is the degree of love, compassion, and dedication that its employees provide to all our students and their families. These professional, educated and creative teachers and therapists, implementing our mission, have built the school into a leader in inclusive early education and family services.

To continue the quality programming at Jowonio, the school needs your help. We receive most of our funding through the State Education Department. Today's reimbursement rates, by themselves, make it difficult for private preschools to provide competitive, living wage salaries to our staff members.

In order to support our employees adequately, as well as keep tuition rates low so Jowonio remains accessible to all families, the Board and administration have developed the HERO FUND to facilitate outside donations in which every dollar will be spent to hire and retain quality staff.

To make a contribution, send a check to Jowonio School, 3049 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, N.Y. 13224 or you may send us information to charge your credit card:

\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_ MC Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Name on the Card: \_\_\_\_\_ 3-digit Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

You can also go to our website ([www.jowonio.org](http://www.jowonio.org): Give to Jowonio) and donate through Pay Pal.

## Jowonio Anniversaries

We are so lucky to have staff members who have been with us for a number of years. In June, at our Staff Appreciation Luncheon, we celebrate those having five year anniversaries.

Happy  
Anniversary

Five Years (started in 2012): Jennifer Kelly, John Soltys

Ten Years (started in 2007): Andrea Engelmann, Audrey Evans, Jennifer Petrie

Fifteen Years (started in 2002): Melissa Hyman, Cynthia Johnson

Twenty Years (started in 1997): Ewa Zietek

Thirty Years (started in 1987): Judy Miles

Thirty-five Years (started in 1982): Bob Pandori

## Celebrate Jowonio

Our Celebrate Jowonio event on May 5th at St. Sophia's Church was a great success. We appreciated all who came to support Jowonio and share in the company of current and former parents, staff, and community supporters. As you can imagine, an event like this requires the efforts of many people and we had an amazing planning committee who put in great vision and many hours of hard work. Please give special credit to Kristen Antonacci, Sophia Meskos, Elizabeth Rabozzi, Jennifer Kelley, Connie Lutz, Lori Saile, and John Soltys. Contributions from many parents, staff and community supporters for the raffles and auction make this happen, including all our generous sponsors; special thanks to Stickley Audi & Company who donated their beautiful Signature Collector Edition Cabinet for special raffle. Delicious food and drinks were contributed by Carnegie Catering, Gardenview Diner, The Chop House on Waring, T.J. Sheehan, and Half Moon Bakery; we encourage you to patronize their establishments.



When we celebrate Jowonio's over 40 years, we remember how many children, families and staff have come through our doors. It is joyful every day to be with our current students and also celebrate our graduates and the powerful adults they are becoming. The children are what it is all about! At our event we had a lovely statement from Ella Neville, a junior at SUNY Cortland majoring in education, who has been part of Jowonio and other inclusive settings since she was a preschooler, including teaching with us and participating in Ballet for All as she grew older. Ella shared her story and how her experiences informed her values.

In addition to the terrific staff at Jowonio, we are so lucky to be part of a collaborative community. Each year we want to acknowledge people whose work has supported Jowonio's mission of quality inclusive education. This year we recognized Dr. Gail Ensher, Professor of Education at Syracuse University, and the CNY Autism Society of America (CNYASA), represented by Board members Jean Leiker and Kristine O'Brien.



For over 40 years, Dr. Gail Ensher has taught graduate level courses at SU in early childhood special education, and has encouraged a range of students to enter and then successfully complete their graduate work and certification. Close to home, both of her daughters Kim and Lindsey, are early childhood special education teachers who have taught at Jowonio. Gail has authored a number of books on working with families and young children at risk, and some of Jowonio staff have contributed chapters. Jowonio and SU have had a mutually valuable collaboration for many years, where students do placements and our staff help with supervision and class instruction. We are pleased to recognize Gail's contribution to quality teacher preparation, support to families, and inclusive programming for preschool and primary children.

# Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

## Celebrate Jowonio cont...



We recognized CNYASA for all the support they offer to children and youth on the autism spectrum and their families. In 2005 a group of mothers with young children with autism (some attending Jowonio) were seeking information about strategies and program options. While there was an ASA chapter in Binghamton and a Support Group in Syracuse focused on the needs of teens and young adults, nothing really addressed families with preschoolers. So beginning in 2007 these families created a chapter of the Autism Society of America, based in Syracuse. Their goals over the last 10 years have included promoting autism awareness, providing information and referrals, and creating innovative sustainable programs such as a variety of inclusive summer camps, in conjunction with community agencies like the Y. They are a great model of what can

happen when parents think creatively about their children's needs and the needs of the community. We are happy to acknowledge the CNYASA, and their Board members Jean Leiker and Kristine O'Brien.

**Team Jowonio.** We would like to thank all of those who joined the Jowonio team for the "one piece at a time" Autism Awareness Walk at Longbranch Park. The rain fortunately held off and we had over 100 people come out and show their support by walking with the team. Thank you to those of you who raised money for this wonderful cause. The team raised a total of \$3,075! Our team captain, Lauren Sibble (ocean & earth room parent), raised \$1,345 and Lauren Boldon (koala room parent), raised \$670. Several other team members raised just under \$200. We would also like to thank Kristen Antonacci for ordering our "awesome" blue tie-dyes! We will continue to walk for this cause in the future so please join us again next year! —Kim Ensher



**Trivia Night.** The Music Education Class of 2017, (Masters in Music) at Syracuse University held a Trivia Night event on April 29th, at the Beer Belly Deli on Westcott Street. We met the music students of Professor David Knapp, when they came to observe the ways that music is imbedded in our preschool classrooms. The trivia questions

were about Betsy DeVos, the Trump-appointed Secretary of Education and other inclusive education topics. At least 30 Jowonio staff, parents and friends played and enjoyed good food and drink. Some adult Jowonio graduates participated as well. The winning team was from the Sunflower Room!

## Staff Notes

Life changes have occurred for some of our staff prior to the end of the school year.

\***Amy Ezekial**, Speech Therapist, with the help of Pooh Corner colleagues, has completed her move to Albany with her family. **Danielle Cann** and **Cheri Lauffer** are covering Amy's hours and we welcome Danielle to our therapy team.

\*Congratulations to **Katie Boyce**, member of our Pooh Corner Speech Therapy Team, who is getting married in May!

\***Katherine Walton**, Koala teacher, leaves in early May to begin her Occupational Therapy program at Ithaca College; **Meghan Cafarelli** who is graduating from Ithaca, will take Katherine's place. **Victoria Cunningham** from the Bunny Room starts her public school K-2 student teaching in May; **Stephanie Borowve** and **Gurupriya Ramanathan**, both grad students at SU, will be joining the Bunny team. **Brett Grenert** (Treehouse Room) is taking a break to be with her family, including her baby Avery.

\***Kenzie Goldsnider** joins the Star Room until the end of Summer School.

\*The beautiful baby boy pictured here is Lucas Miles Perez was born April 13th at 7 pounds 13 ounces to **Martha Perez**, a teacher in the Ocean Room.



## S.U. Engineering Students Support Jowonio



Syracuse University bioengineering students built a custom 'Otto-mobile' for Jowonio students with limited mobility as part of a senior project this year. Seniors Katie Cooper, Brendan Butcher and Zach Reers worked with our staff to develop an SU-themed toy car for kids with motor needs to use at the school. The students worked with Occupational Therapist Lisa Neville to outfit the car in such a way that

using it would give students more mobility and an opportunity to socialize using the vehicle. The Otto-mobile has a joystick control that can be adjusted and moved to fit individual students' needs. It also has an iPad mounted on the dashboard for kids to use for help communicating. The first customer was 5-year-old Luna, who has a neurodevelopment delay and uses a wheelchair. You can see Luna's reaction to the new car and her interaction with the students in a video produced by the college. The Otto-mobile won first prize in the engineering capstone competition.





# Scrapes and Bumps in the Lives of Preschoolers

Ellen Barnes

Children love the exhilaration of moving and climbing! This starts with babies learning to crawl, to stand, to walk. The skills of balance and movement develop by trying them out, falling, and doing it again. The 3 year old watches peers climb up the slide, perch anxiously at the top, and then with encouragement go flying down! So then she may try it herself. On Trike Town we have vehicles of all sizes and kinds (scooters, trikes, bikes, wagons), requiring different motor skills; over time we see amazing growth in these skills as children do them over and over. Every time they practice, they learn a little more about how to move, their motor memory increases and their muscles get stronger. In this process there may be falls, but there are also thrills and a sense of accomplishment. Children may be drawn to exploring heights, enjoying speed, engaging in chase and rough and tumble play with peers. And scraped knees and a bumped elbow can be part of this experience!

Being physically active and enjoying the outdoors is a part of our curriculum at Jowonio. We also want all children to feel confident in their bodies, know that it's all right to learn from mistakes, and consciously work on conquering fears. Each child has a different range of physical abilities and therefore what is an appropriate challenge for one child (for example, different surfaces) may be hazardous for another. Our job as adults is to reduce risk and supervise well, maintain our site and provide appropriate equipment (e.g. helmets, safe sneakers instead of flip-flops) and environmental elements (e.g. the gate, new mulch, dig out the poison ivy). We should always be good observers and judge each child's skills and limitations. We want to encourage appropriate independence, but also be sure to review safety guidelines ahead of time, stay in close proximity, keep children in view, offer a hand when needed, hang out at the bottom of the slide to catch the child, and provide cues about slowing down or ways to manage equipment.

As parents and teachers, we should be aware of our own reactions to adventurous activity and be sure that we are supporting active play, trying out new experiences, and feeling competent rather than making our children more anxious and timid. They can become skilled at assessing challenges themselves, and bounce back when things haven't gone well. There is a risk in no-risk: we remove the opportunity for children to learn how to make sensible decisions and keep themselves safe. We want our students to learn the joy of an active life, be adventurous in trying things new and know that nurturing adults will be there to support them along the way.



"How do you learn to walk? You crawl. How do you learn to balance? You fall... We all want children to be good balancers. And good jumpers. And good walkers and runners. But to become good at all those things children have to try them out, practice and fall. It is our job as adults to allow children to test their skills in 'risky' but safe ways. These activities become rites of passage and steps along the path of life. It is the natural way we grow."

Rusty Keller

# Whats Happening



# Whats Happening



## Autism Awareness Walk 2017



## Walking back from Mary Poppins



## Family Support Corner

It has been a busy school year full of family activities, events and programs. We will miss all of the families who will be leaving us this year that the Family Support team has gotten to know so well over the past few years. We are so appreciative to have had the chance to get to know many of you and your families, from whom we learn so much and who make Jowonio such an enriching and fascinating place to work.

As always, a big thank you to Scott Floyd for continuing to pick up and deliver all of the wonderful bread and baked goods that are donated to us every Monday from Panera in Fayetteville. And of course, thanks always to Panera for generously providing this gift to us for the past 5 years!

We are so fortunate to have spent the year with Amanda Shames, our social work intern from SU, who will soon be graduating with her bachelor's degree in Social Work. Amanda has been delightful to work with in all aspects of family services and programming at Jowonio. We have appreciated her easygoing nature and genuine care and thoughtfulness when working with children, parents and staff. Amanda has jumped enthusiastically into team collaboration, working in classrooms, home visiting, and organizing, planning and facilitating events and projects. We are so happy for Amanda and will truly miss having her at Jowonio. We know that she will be a powerful advocate and provider for children and families as her career develops, and we look forward to see where she lands!

Good luck to all in the summer and next school year, those who will be staying with us and those who are moving on. Please keep in touch - you are always part of the Jowonio family!

Melissa Hyman and Emily Vercelloni

## Social Work Student

As a Syracuse University student, I've learned a wide range of topics from Social Work skills, theories, and competencies. I have had the pleasure of interning for the Family Support Team under Emily and Melissa, where I have learned more than I could have ever imagined. I have gotten the opportunity to grow alongside passionate staff, inspiring families, and motivating children.

Due to the strength I see in parents, progress in the children, and resources we have strived to reach, Jowonio will always hold a special place in my heart. I want to thank all those whom have welcomed me into the Jowonio family and provided me with opportunities to learn.

Everyday spent in Jowonio has been exciting, challenging, and fulfilling. Jowonio has assured my career path into pursuing a master's degree while also working with children with special needs. As I graduate SU and conclude my time in Jowonio, I will be leaving with incredible and special memories that have shaped the person I am and how I will embark onto my next journey. —Amanda Shames

# The Power of Inclusion

by Ellen Barnes

After the Jowonio Spring Follies, my face is tired from smiling. It is joyous to watch all of our children perform to the songs and dances that are part of their daily routines in the classroom. I am charmed by those who clearly have a future in musical theatre; they wave and dance, sing and sign, with no inhibitions, no self-consciousness, just the pleasure of the music and the attention. I am also so proud of those students who last year were overwhelmed by the "scene"...the noise, the adults in the audience, the heat, the out-of-the-ordinariness of it all... and wouldn't even approach the stage, and now this year are up and singing. There are children for whom this is a great challenge, and they happily rose to meet it. I am grateful to our teachers who planned to involve all our students, so that everyone was a part of the group; they creatively designed ways within the song or skit for that to happen, as they do all day every day. I love the rainbow in our school...preschoolers with many gifts and needs, from a variety of families and cultures, who are learning to care for one another as part of a classroom community. It is magic, and the Follies is one of the few times of the year that we get to see us as a whole.

My own experience growing up was much more homogenous; in my school there were no children with disabilities, no children of color, no children whose words and voices grew out of a radically different family life. I had to find those experiences as an adult. But my own son and daughter had Jowonio and the city school district. They are comfortable with peers who look different from themselves, who speak another language, or who don't speak at all. Prejudice and stereotypes come from ignorance and fear. At Jowonio we have such a wonderful opportunity to create a community where all are respected, where teachers model that it is okay to ask questions because that's how understanding of others is developed, but the rule is that "you can't say you can't play". In our world everyone has a place and is valued. We want each child to take that memory with them, that knowledge that they are valued and what it means to value others. As these children grow up, we hope that they will be kind and tolerant and find in themselves an openness and interest in other people, find in themselves the habit of reaching out and giving attention, not just asking for it. It is true that to change the world you must begin with the children. As I looked out over the crowd at the Follies and at the beaming small faces on the stage, I felt so lucky to be a witness to this joy and so hopeful for the future.



"What we leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others" — Pericles

## Kindergarten Transition

The move to a new school can be challenging for parents as well as children. There are tasks that will smooth the way for both you and your son or daughter. While transitions are the natural order of things, they bring with them anxiety about the unknown. Any way that we can reduce the surprises and engage ourselves in the positives will help make the changes more manageable.

- Visit the school (be alert to notices about a "visiting day" or "Kindergarten Orientation")
- Over the summer use opportunities to play on the playground of the new school, practice the walk or ride route from home to the new school, if possible meet the new teacher.
- Take pictures of the new school and any of the people working there to make a book (Jowonio staff can help with this)
- Make a Social Story about going to the new school (again Jowonio teachers can help)
- Be sure you have completed all the school paperwork and gotten copies there (e.g. physical forms from your doctor, Jowonio reports if you want them passed on)
- Listen to your child's fears and suggest strategies for addressing them (e.g. "ask your teacher or another student if you are not sure what to do")
- Give your child opportunities to talk about anything that worries him/her, and be positive and reassuring (remember that there was a first day at Jowonio too)
- Set up playdates with children going to the same school
- Engage your child in getting things ready...buying a backpack, lunchbox or new school clothes if needed (however, remember that for some kids the old and familiar may help them feel more secure), putting name labels on things
- Get clothes ready for the first day and let your child have some say in what he wears...so that it is comfortable (e.g. tags are cut out and any new clothes washed)
- Use Jowonio memorabilia (e.g. photos) to talk about how much your son/daughter has grown and also to reassure him/her that relationships with preschool friends can continue, that you can come to the Jowonio playground, and visit the classrooms and teachers. You are always welcome back!

### Social Story about Going to Kindergarten

**Kindergarten is a lot like Jowonio. It is a place where children learn new things while they work and play. A teacher helps the children learn.**

**In kindergarten children meet new friends and teachers...just like at Jowonio.**

**In kindergarten children learn to read and write...just like at Jowonio.**

**In kindergarten children learn to count and solve problems...just like at Jowonio.**

**In kindergarten children go to the gym, the library, the art room, and the playground ... just like at Jowonio.**

**Many things in kindergarten will be like Jowonio. But some things will be new.**

**I can have fun trying new things. It is exciting going to kindergarten!**

# Children's Books About the Transition to Kindergarten

Look for books that talk about the transition and focus on several features:

Transitions can be both scary and exciting.

There is much to be proud about as you grow and move on to a new school.

Many children have the same feelings.

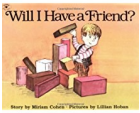
Talk with your local librarian about available books. After you read a book, ask your child about the events, the feelings of the characters, what worried the child in the book, and what helped her feel better. Some books you might want to check out include:



Countdown to Kindergarten (McGhee)



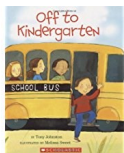
Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!  
(Carlson)



Will I Have a Friend? (Cohen)



A Place Called Kindergarten (Harper)



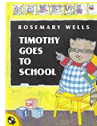
Off to Kindergarten (Johnston)



The Kissing Hand (Pena)



Welcome to Kindergarten (Rockwell)



Timothy Goes to School (Wells)

## Summer Plans for the Family

This summer when the days seem less busy is a good time to plan activities that will help your children have a happy summer and prepare for a smooth return to school in the fall.

- Make an appointment to have your child's physical done.
- Check to be sure each child's immunizations are up-to-date.
- Make an appointment at the dentist.
- Spend time together in the kitchen and garden, eating healthy fruits and vegetables. Make regular trips to the farmers' market.
- Encourage lots of outside play and exercise...take walks, ride bikes, play ball at the neighborhood playground.
- Take your children to the library and check out books they choose; join one of summer book clubs at your neighborhood public library.
- Talk with your children about staying healthy (re: eating, exercising, not smoking, etc.) and remember that your example is the most important teaching tool!

## Parent Thoughts on Leaving Jowonio

Graduation is the biggest lump in EVERY Jowonio parent's throat. I surely know it is mine. My daughter, Eden, graduated from the Treehouse room last year, and this year, Euriah, my son, graduates after spending two years in the Sunflower room. There are many words I have to say about our experience at Jowonio...But none of them will do justice to the supportive, nurturing, loving environment that occupies that little hill on East Genesee Street...I will try to convey my gratitude in some semi coherent way.

Every day, when I drop Euriah off, he squeals with excitement as we pull into the driveway. He truly looks forward to his day, as he speeds into the Sunflower room, barely able to wriggle out of his coat as he tears through the door. He's always greeted enthusiastically by his teachers, his best friends, and immediately immersed in a choose and do activity. I am then usually given an update on the previous day's activities by Gen, Maddie, Leslie or Rebecca. They tell me about his current interests, fills me in on what happened in his therapy sessions, and more often than not, whip out their phones to show me a bevy of adorable photos that they snapped. They offer insights into what we can work on at home, ways to successfully carry over what he is learning in school, or relay an adorable story. I cannot tell you how imperative all of their insights have been to Euriah being able to navigate his world with a greater degree of success.

One of the greatest gifts for a parent, is knowing that your child is respected, cherished and treated well. I have not a doubt that all the children in the Sunflower room are all of the above. The first time I saw Gen hug Euriah, and tell him that she loved him, I knew this school was unlike any other. Where else do teachers tell your child that they are loved, but Jowonio?! These teachers are absolutely selflessly dedicated to the work that they do.

The transition to kindergarten is a very difficult one for any parent, even more so for the parent of a child with an extensive IEP. The Sunflower teachers, Lori Lawless, and Euriah's therapists, Laura and Sylvia, have gone above and beyond to help make this transition smooth for our family. I have no idea where we would be without their undying support, advocacy and understanding as we navigate this difficult time. Jowonio does not end with the child, it's the full range of support and service for the entire family. As we near the end of our time, my eyes get misty thinking about 'life after Jowonio'. But then the gratitude sets in, and I realize that it's time to move on. It's time to give other children the space to move through this community. It's time to use the undeniably strong foundation we were given over the last two years to branch out and smash new goals in kindergarten. Gen, Maddie, Leslie, Rebecca, Matt, Courtney, Laura, Lori, Sylvia, Pam...You are all incredibly special humans. We. Love. You. All. Euriah was so fortunate to have spent time in your caring embrace. We will NEVER forget you, your efforts, and the light you shine on all your kiddos. Thank you.



Teresa Martini



## Parent Thoughts on Leaving Jowonio

Jowonio has been life changing for Emily over the past year. Our daughter has made a tremendous amount of progress. This is thanks to all the teachers/therapists/staff and her amazing little friends she has made.

It has also become life changing for us as well. We now have an amazing community of other parents that "get it". They understand firsthand the struggles and the triumphs. We will forever be grateful for that!

Thank you.  
Laura Ray

Farewell message from Maria Gamba, a Waterfall Teacher last fall, left Syracuse in December to return to Uruguay with her family, and is now teaching in an inclusive preschool there. She recently sent us this note. "It is so hard to leave a place you love so much... To me and my family, Jowonio means home. From the minute I walked through the door my life changed. I am definitely not the same person I was before having the privilege of becoming a member of this amazing community. Words can not express my gratitude to Ellen, Lori, staff members, children and families that make this place so special and unique. I have been blessed to have had the opportunity of getting to know so many people that day by day, little by little make the world a better place. Thank you for giving me the chance to play with such brave, smart, loving kids that will stay in my heart for ever. I will do my best to spread Jowonio's message of love and acceptance wherever I go!

With love, Maria (Earth, Ocean and Waterfall Room)"

Over the course of past six years, all three of my children have attended Jowonio. At the end of each year I'd come for the graduation celebration and each time it was difficult to hold back the tears. It was always a mix of happiness and sadness. They were tears of joy for seeing just how many children feel happiness from being here. And although I celebrated seeing how much my children had grown over the school year that passed, I always wished that I could keep them at Jowonio longer. Each year my comfort was in knowing that I still have one other little one that will attend here in the following year. But this year is our last year. The youngest of my ducklings is all grown up and ready for kindergarten. A day doesn't pass that I'm not amazed at the progress he has made at Jowonio. I will miss all the teachers dearly. I will miss those halls and classrooms and mostly, I will miss those reassuring and loving faces that my children and I have grown so accustomed to. It is my sincerest hope that I will have an opportunity in future to return even a portion of kindness and care that my children have received here.

With much love... Azra (Dzemila's, Fatima's and Omer's mom)

# Thank You



We have all learned and grown so much over the course of the school year. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the families for sharing their amazing and inspiring children with us. We appreciate family support, donations, and involvement. We will miss the kiddos headed off to kindergarten; please come visit! Thanks for a wonderful school year.



A special thank you goes out to all the Earth Room Families. You make it possible to do the things we do! You greet us with smiles and enthusiasm each day and you support our efforts with your own time and resources. We have thoroughly enjoyed this year and we thank all of you for sharing your beautiful children with us. We will certainly miss them all! Be sure to come back and visit us!



The Star Room would like to thank our wonderful families for sharing their amazing children. We appreciate all the parent involvement and availability when we need you. We will miss those transitioning on to Kindergarten and welcome those returning! Thank you for a great year.



The Dragonfly Room teachers would like to thank the Dragonfly parents for their help this year. Thank you for coming on field trips and for participating in our classroom activities, Thank you for sharing your delightful children with us. It has been a pleasure to be a part of their young lives.



The Kangaroo Room teachers would like to thank our families for their support & generosity throughout the year. You have provided us with toys, donations and with ideas for attending events out in the community. We have had a wonderful and fun year with your children and we can't thank you enough for your trust and support.



The Ocean teachers would like to thank all of our families for sharing and entrusting your precious children with us. They have made such progress this year and it has been wonderful watching them grow. We want to thank all of our families for everything they've donated and thank you to the families for coming in to celebrate birthdays and special events. It has been a fantastic year!



Thank you to all the Butterfly Room families for entrusting us with your amazing children. They have all grown in so many ways. We are going to miss them as they move on. We could not have asked for a better first year!!

*You never leave a place you love;  
Part of it you take with you,  
Leaving part of you behind.*

## Thank You cont.



The Bunny Room teachers would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all of our parents for sharing and entrusting us with your child this past year. It has been wonderful getting to know everyone, and to watch all of the children grow. We also want to say "thank you" for helping us replenish the materials (pasta, flax seed and beans) for our sensory table and coming with us on our Mary Poppins Fieldtrip.



The Waterfall Teachers would like to thank all of our families for sharing their amazing children with us this year! Thank you to all of you who have supported us, contributed supplies to our classroom, joined us on fieldtrips and appreciating all that we do.



Sunflowers would like to thank all our families for the gift of their children and for all the ways each family has contributed to make this year a remarkable one. Thanks to all our families who have donated money & materials, their time and for joining us on fieldtrips. A big thank you to our families who have come into present, demonstrate or discuss their family traditions. You have helped to make our classroom what it is today.



The Koala Teachers would like to thank all of our Koala families for a wonderful year. Thank you for all your support, attendance on field trips, donations to our classroom, but most of all your beautiful children. We all thank you for sharing them with us. It has been a great year, but only because of your child. If your not with us this summer, please stop in for a visit. We'd love to see you all and stay connected.

Bellevue

The Bellevue Heights Jowonio teachers extend a warm Thank you, Thank you, Thank you, to our amazing families for all you do to support our program, the kindness and gratitude you have shown us and most of all, for sharing your children with us! We appreciate all you do.

BMW

The Bernice Wright Jowonio teachers would like to thank all of our families for sharing your children with us this year. We have enjoyed getting to know all our wonderful families and we want to thank you for your continued support!

# THANK YOU

If you teach children what you know,  
they may remember enough to follow in  
your footsteps,

but if you teach children how to learn,  
they can go anywhere.



**Jowonio**

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**Monday, August 7, 2017**

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