



# JOWONIO

## School News

Volume 9, Issue 2

January 2006

## The Director's Report

I was planning to write this column about how Jowonio is different from many other preschools...As I was drafting it, we had the unusual experience of a negative letter to the editor, which mentioned Jowonio, in the *Syracuse Post-Standard*. The letter was submitted by a freshman at Syracuse University as an assignment for a writing class; it was a combination of excerpts she had taken from a separate paper on the importance of training and paying preschool teachers well, with an opening sentence mentioning that she had volunteered at Jowonio (in fact she had spent some hours late in the afternoon in our afterschool program). The way the introductory paragraph was written implied that Jowonio was an example of unskilled and untrained teaching that she saw as prevalent in preschools. Needless to say, we were upset by the letter, which we felt portrayed us unfairly in a very public context. As we debated how to respond, several things were evident.

It is important to be clear with all families and volunteers about the vision and structure of the school. (This would include the fact that our afterschool program in the Enchanted Forest is child care to support working parents; its purpose is to provide a nurturing atmosphere for play and socialization while children wait for their parents to finish work.) I have no illusions that any program can be all things to all families or staff. I know that it is very important for there to be a match between the school and the family's philosophy. And we all have times where we wish we had paid more attention, done things differently, because we are juggling too much and something got lost in the process, or because personal maturity and skills are evolving but not quite there yet. The most important thing is to have in place systems of communication and problem-solving, so that we can work together to improve our process, to give and take feedback in a thoughtful and civil way, in order to meet children's needs. I hope that you feel that you and your child are warmly welcomed here (we have an "open door" policy for parents) and that you have relationships with staff that allow for dialogue.

In fact Jowonio has a somewhat unique niche in our community, due to our history. We are chartered in New York State as a private school (opened in 1969) as well as approved by the state as an inclusive early childhood program and with a contract with the Syracuse City School District to provide Universal Pre-K services. This means that we have certified teachers and appropriately licensed therapists in every classroom and that we are expected to meet standards of developmentally appropriate practice and provide regular in-service. Since we now also have a day care license, we must meet the on-going regulatory and training requirements of the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). In fact we have fiscal and programmatic oversight by four (whew!) state agencies: the State Education Department (VESID), the Department of Health, OCFS, and the Developmental Services Office! Needless to say, responding to them all keeps us hopping. Our organizational structure includes the role of Support Teacher, experienced staff members who serve as a resource, consultant, and liaison with the classroom and therapy staff and parents. The depth of our oversight and support is unusual for preschools, as is our weekly time commitment for staff development. Most importantly, our loving and skilled staff members are passionately committed to their work, and this is something that goes beyond credentials and pay. These people, totally engaged with their students and the vision of inclusion, make Jowonio unique. We hope this is evident to you and to the community we serve.

Ellen





## Thank you...

This year the Parent Volunteer Committee has been very active and we are so appreciative of the many things that parents have been helping out with around Jowonio. Thank you in particular to all of the parents and staff who helped with holiday gifts and preparations. Kristine O'Brien, Kristen Webb, Leigh Nolan and Daniel Chakin have helped with our Panera Mondays! We are especially grateful to Donna Schafer who transports the bread from Panera to Jowonio on a weekly basis. Thank you also to the parents who helped out at the Holiday Craft Sale.

From the Rainbow Room,

The Rainbows would like to thank all our families for the joy of getting to know your children! Every family has helped out in different ways and we really appreciate it. Sharing information about your child and ideas for the classroom, fieldtrip support, bringing in food to sell at our bake sale and raise money for our cooking fund, providing materials for the classroom and food for our monthly planning meetings are all ways people have supported us! Many thanks!!! We would also like to thank Ron and Amy Hunt, Ester Munt-Brooks and Art Brooks and Bonnie Marr for all they have done for us in the Rainbow Room.

We are grateful to those families who so generously rallied to our cause and wrote letters to the *Post-Standard* about their positive experiences at Jowonio.

### From the Star Room

The Star Room thanks the Hamlin-Navias family for gift cards; the Hunt-McManus family for a gift card; the Daino family who fulfilled our list; and to Jen Crownover for the reptile heater for our hissers.

Earth Room Thank you... to the Chakin family for the brand new refrigerator and to the Matthews for the CD player.

Jowonio has just received a check for \$260 from the General Mills' Box Top for education program. Thank you to Cynthia Johnson at our front office for coordinating this effort and to all of you who have contributed box tops. Keep on clipping!!

## Box tops for Education

In addition to the box tops, Jowonio can earn additional money if you shop online at the Betty Crocker Catalog and from Box Tops for Education Visa Cards. For more information, contact Cynthia or visit

[www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com)



## Special Spring Event Coming!

**Jowonio  
35th  
Anniversary!**

Save the evening of May 18 for a celebration of Jowonio's 35 Anniversary! Friends of Jowonio is planning a party and silent auction/raffle at the Corinthian Club, where we can share good food and company and bid on gifts which will raise money for the school. We are seeking advertisements in the program,

sponsorships for the event, and donations of goods and services for the auction and raffle. Please contact Beth Hoey (636-9903 or [bhoey@ywcny.rr.com](mailto:bhoey@ywcny.rr.com)) and Lori Ann Williams (655-5782 or [lwms2000@aol.com](mailto:lwms2000@aol.com)) with ideas, offers to help and donations. Stay alert for the upcoming flyer!

## Enhancing Literacy Skills At Home By Niki Collier

Young children are like sponges. Every day they learn new skills that will help them become readers. Most children become aware of print long before they enter school. They see print all around them, not only in books, but also on signs, on billboards, in labels and in magazines. Seeing and observing an adult's response to print helps children recognize its various forms and functions. Children with this perception can begin to understand that written language is related to oral language. They see that printed language, like spoken language, carries messages and is a source of both enjoyment and information.

The ability to understand how print works emerges with constant exposure to print in a child's environment. This understanding comes about through the active intervention of adults and peers who point out letters, words, and other features of print that surround the environment. Classrooms use print to label areas of the room. Children's names are displayed through out the room (on attendance boards or birthday charts, etc...); there are daily schedules and the calendar. Some children benefit from having their own personal written schedule to keep in their pocket. Parents are invited to ask teachers which books are available in the classroom, to reinforce at home what the child is reading in school.

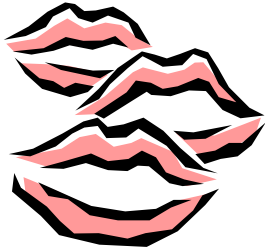
Even toddlers and pre-schoolers can become aware of print and learn about sounds and letters. Children begin to comprehend how the system of print functions when they are read to regularly, when they play with letters and when they engage in word games. They also learn about book handling: how to turn pages, how to find the top and bottom of the page and how to identify the front and back cover of a book. Who are the author and illustrator? It's an exciting and important time of learning.

The most important thing to remember is that reading should be an enjoyable experience. Following are some suggestions that can help you stimulate your child's interest in reading.

- Talk with your child long before he even speaks. This will help him learn important language skills. Use short, simple sentences. You can talk about your daily activities, about what he is seeing and doing in his environment. As an example, you can label sizes/ colors of objects.
- Read to your child every day. Run your finger under the print as you read. This will help your child notice that printed words have meaning.
- Sing songs and recite poems and rhymes that have repetitive sounds.
- Model good reading habits. Let him see you reading maps, books, recipes and directions.
- Visit the library. Let your child choose some books to take home.
- Write short notes to your child. Write down his schedule; put a note in his lunch bag.
- Encourage activities that require reading and share these experiences with your child. Use cook-books, read directions or look up something in a reference book
- Give your child writing materials. Reading and writing go hand in hand. Emergent writing is a child's first effort to create and use print in a meaningful way. Children want to practice and learn to write. If pencils, crayons, and paper are available at all times, your child will be more inclined to initiate writing activities on his own.

Reading for pleasure and interest will help your child to develop an aptitude and appetite for reading. They will be motivated to read; this results in a strong foundation for language and literacy related skills.

# Staff Profiles



## POOH CORNER

**Name:** Alissa Friedman

**Classroom:** Speech- Language Pathologist

**Years at Jowonio:** 3 years

**My family consists of:** My husband Ira

**What fills my life outside of school:** Enjoying the outdoors, spending time with friends and family.

**What I love about my work:** The kids and their families

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** My parents for all their love and support.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Smile

**Name:** Megan Roberts

**Classroom:** Speech-Language Pathologist

**Years at Jowonio:** 6 months

**My family consists of:** My husband Matt

**What fills my life outside of school:** Reading, knitting, cooking and hiking.

**What I love about my work:** Being flexible and creative collaborating with other team members.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Discover something new

**Name:** Michelle Case

**Classroom:** Speech-Language Pathologist

**Years at Jowonio:** 1 year

**My family consists of:** My husband Bill, my parents, a younger sister and 2 younger brothers, Bill's parents, his brother's family of 5 and his sister's family of 6.

**What fills my life outside of school:** Visiting my family and friends in Delaware, Rochester and Albany, Scrap booking, going to hockey and baseball games.

**What I love about my work:** knowing that each day I make a difference in a child and their family's life.

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** My parents were my coaches and mentors; they always supported and believed in me.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Laugh

**Name:** Allison O'Brien

**Classroom:** Speech-Language Pathologist

**Years at Jowonio:** 3

**My family consists of:** My husband of 1 year, David; Also my dad and 3 sisters, Rachel, Elizabeth, and Mandy.

**What fills my life outside of school:** Baking, gardening, jigsaw and crossword puzzles, going to concerts with my husband.

**What I love about my work:** I love helping kids find ways to express themselves, but my favorite part about this job are the cuddles, giggles and bits of wisdom our kids share generously.

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** My mom, she showed me the power of unconditional love.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Are joyful.

**Name:** Susan Blanchard

**Classroom:** Speech- Language Pathologist

**Years at Jowonio:** 12 years

**My family consists of:** My husband Tom, son Chris, daughter Caitlin, dog (Ben), cats (Oliver & Buster), my mom and my sister.

**What fills my life outside of school:** My family (including dates with Tom, shopping and going out to lunch with my mom & sister) going to our cottage on Charleston Lake in the summer, skating in the winter, reading and volunteering at church.

**What I love about my work:** Seeing progress from year to year in the communication abilities of the kids as well as the "funny" things that come out of their mouths.

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** Each and every teacher whose team I had the pleasure of working on.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Notice small wonders of nature often over looked.

**Name:** Kimberly Doto

**Classroom:** Speech- Language Pathologist

**Years at Jowonio:** 1 year

**My family consists of:** parents: Mary and Marty; 2 younger sisters; Kristen & Andrea

**What fills my life outside of school:** Exercising, guitar lessons, traveling, spending time with family and friends.

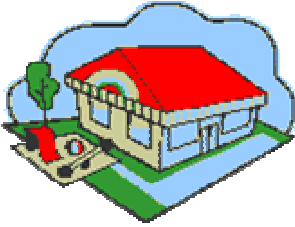
**What I love about my work:** Spending everyday with wonderful children and a supportive, friendly staff.

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** an older woman from my church who is constantly trying to improve herself, always looking for new things to try, can find the good in any situation, and has an unwavering faith.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** are happy, laughing, and enjoying themselves.



# Staff Profiles



## BERNICE WRIGHT COLLABORATION

**Name:** Elaine Mason  
**Classroom:** Bernice Wright  
**Years at Jowonio:** 5 years  
**My family consists of:** My husband Larry, grown up sons Tom and Jonathan.

**What fills my life outside of school:** Travel and thoughts of travel.

**What I love about my work:** Everyday is different and challenging.

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** Captain Kangaroo, Jim Henson, BevBoss, Fred Rogers, creative ways of presenting things to children.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Say "Do it again!"

**Name:** Brenda Cafarelli  
**Classroom:** Bernice Wright  
**Years at Jowonio:** 17 years

**My family consists of:** My husband Carl , 10 year old daughter Meghan

**What fills my life outside of school:** Being with my family

**What I love about my work:** Interacting with the children and getting to know them.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Are happy and feel successful.

**Name:** Lakeisha McCall  
**Classroom:** Bernice Wright  
**Years at Jowonio:** 4 years

**My family consists of:** My mother, 2 younger brothers, new step-father, numerous Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, Cousins and a niece.

**What I love about my work:** Working with the children and watching their progress and of course my wonderful co-workers.

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** My two teachers from middle school, I've known them since 7<sup>th</sup> grade and they have been there for me through everything. I want to be able to do for my students what they have done for me.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Want to play with me.

**Name:** Elizabeth Rabozzi  
**Classroom:** Bernice Wright  
**Years at Jowonio:** 4 years  
**My family consists of:** My husband, Jimmy Francescotti mom & dad, brother & sister in-law, 2 nieces & 1 nephew.

**What fills my life outside of school:** Spending time with my husband & family, exercising, bicycle riding, reading, gardening & kayaking.

**What I love about my work:** Working with the kids

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** My brother- he struggled through school but knew what his goal was and is now a jet pilot for a major airline.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Achieve a goal that we have been working on and when they laugh out loud.

**Name:** Jessica Smolinski  
**Classroom:** Bernice Wright  
**Years at Jowonio:** 2 years

**My family consists of:** My son and our black lab "Boo Boo" and our big extended family.

**What fills my life outside of school:** Being a mom and doing all the cool stuff that I both did as a child and what I missed out on.

**What I love about my work:** Being part of an intimate school and working with all these funny little kids.

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** My co-workers- they give me insight into children everyday.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Giggle.

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## BELLEVUE HEIGHTS COLLABORATION

**Name:** Barbara Edwards  
**Classroom:** Bellevue Heights Nursery School  
**Years at Jowonio:** First year at Jowonio  
**My family consists of:** My partner Dick Higby and our 5 children (3 of mine and 2 of Dick's) who all live away from home.

**What fills my life outside of school:** Wonderful friends, great neighbors, working in our flower gardens, art (primarily sculpting), and interior decorating.

**What I love about my work:** It stretches my imagination, creativity, and understanding and compassion for others.

**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** Roberta Braen is now a retired art teacher from Nottingham High School. Roberta is a gentle and loving person who sees art in everything. She has dedicated her life to inspiring others and imparts her love of art/expression in all that she does. She is one of the most affirming and accepting people I have ever known.



## Staff Profiles

**What I love about my work:** The children  
**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** My 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher for leaving such a wonderful impression on me all these years and Carol Spartano who's been there through thick and thin with me @ Jowonio.

**Kids bring me joy when they:** Do their thing-just being innocent.

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RAINBOW ROOM

**Name:** Nancy Seal  
**Classroom:** Rainbow Room  
**Years at Jowonio:** 1st year  
**My family consists of:** My two sons, Anthony & Josh  
**What fills my life outside of school:** Family  
**What I love about my work:** The Children  
**Kids bring me joy when they:** Always...



**Name:** Lucy Mumford  
**Classroom:** Rainbow  
**Years at Jowonio:** 1 year  
**My family consists of:** My mom, dad, older brother Dan and younger siblings Cath and Pete.  
**What fills my life outside of school:** Spending time with my family and friends, traveling, dancing, being outside, going to concerts, movies, and reading books.  
**What I love about my work:** Learning so much from the kids and teachers while having a lot of fun!  
**Kids bring me joy when they:** Express their wonder of the world.

**Name:** Evan Potter  
**Classroom:** Rainbow  
**Years at Jowonio:** 10 years  
**My family consists of:** Sons Noel 8 & Kian 17 and daughter Aliza 12 and a large extended family.  
**What fills my life outside of school:** My children, family and playing guitar.  
**What I love about my work:** When a child does something for the 1<sup>st</sup> time and I had a part in their learning.  
**Mentor(s) who inspired me and why:** All of my Uncles and my Mom. They gave me confidence, and let me learn and grow on my own.  
**Kids bring me joy when they:** Exist and have fun.

**Name:** Pam Johnson  
**Classroom:** Rainbow Room

Jowonio has been a great match for me and it has taught me a lot over the last sixteen years! Its team teaching approach is what initially attracted me but its commitment to families and belief that everyone has the right and ability to be included are pieces of the philosophy that has kept me here. I love working with children! It is fascinating to get to know each one and find their strengths and figure out how to use those to support them to become active participants in our Rainbow family. Seeing all behavior as communication is another important belief that separates Jowonio from the other places I have worked. It is our job to figure out what need inappropriate behavior is communicating and the best way to meet that need. I also enjoy designing classroom space and I actively seek out ideas for making my own materials. Once in a while I have an original idea but mostly I recognize the brilliant ideas of others :0) Outside of school, I love painting, reading, puppetry, storytelling and creating with whatever I have available. Being in the woods, near a stream or anywhere near the ocean brings such a sense of peace for me. Walking, kayaking, snow shoeing and camping are some of the things I enjoy outdoors. Hopefully, Iver and I will be buying new bikes in the spring. Any ideas out there of what to get?

I am so lucky to have Iver as a partner! We have been together since 1974 and have had quite a menagerie over the years. Currently, we share our life with Rosie and Manny, two very fuzzy little beasts. Our families are important to us and we stay connected with Iver's mother and brother as well as my parents, six brothers and sisters and their families.

### Dates to Remember

<b>2/16</b>	Jowonio Board Mtg.
<b>2/20-2/24</b>	February Break
<b>3/15</b>	March Follies

## **Books for Those Challenging Preschool Behaviors by Melissa Hyman**

At a recent Breakfast Club meeting, in which parents discuss a different topic each week, we spent the morning discussing behavior issues. Carol Spartano, one of our support teachers here at Jowonio, joined us as our guest speaker and shared a great deal of information about identifying causes of behavior trends in preschoolers. We spoke about some strategies that are used with kids at Jowonio to address challenging behaviors and how these can be carried over at home, keeping in mind differences in children's personalities and skills, parenting styles and the amount of flexibility a family has to adapt new routines into daily life. The challenges discussed as well as the suggested strategies could be common among children with autism but can also be displayed by any preschool aged child. Listed below are some of the books Carol shared with the group as good resources. *Please check out our Parent Resource Library in the Family Support Office for these and lots of other books that are available to borrow.*

Carol Gray: [My Social Stories Book](#) and [The New Social Story Book](#)

Carol Gray and her social stories have become a well known phenomenon in the Jowonio environment, often utilized by teachers and adapted by parents at home. Used more and more in recent years with children with autism, social stories are tools that can be created by anyone and in any environment to assist a child in adapting to new or repeatedly challenging situations by breaking them down into straightforward, step-by-step expectations and actions. The books are full of hundreds of common daily routines (brushing teeth, going to the grocery store, getting dressed) as well as less common events (taking medicine, going to a birthday party, getting a haircut). These stories can be used exactly as written or act as examples for parents, teachers and other caregivers to be adapted for specific children and situations. Social stories have worked very well with children with and without autism, so if you have a child who could use some assistance getting through a challenging situation, this is a great place to start.

Linda A Hodgdon: [Solving Problems in Autism: Improving Communication with Visual Strategies](#)

Another communication tool often used in the Jowonio world, this book discusses the use of visual strategies to provide descriptions of routines, expectations of behavior, emotions and communication with preschool children. Through the use of pictures to illustrate meaning in daily schedules, calendars, rules and behavior guidelines, body language, etc., this addresses the concept that children with autism, as well as children in general, are often visual learners and that information can be processed more efficiently when paired with visual prompts.

## **Staff Recommendations: Children's Books**

The Jowonio staff was recently asked to list their all-time favorite children's books. Amazingly, almost every response was different! Here are some of the titles (and more to come), if you're looking for some good ideas to check out at the library or bookstore:

Where the Wild Things Are, The Lorax, Rain, Corduroy, Goodnight Moon, Guess How Much I Love You, The Kissing Hand, The Tiny Seed, Bear Snores On, Mike Mulligan, Mr. Putter and Tabby Bake a Cake, The Giving Tree, Charlotte's Web, I Love You Forever, Alexander and Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day, Tacky the Penguin.





## Nurses Notes

Winter is almost half over!!! However, we have had our fair share of upper respiratory infections and vomiting/diarrhea illnesses and I thought it would be a good idea to review the school policy on illness in the school setting. For the sake of all the children, **we ask that you not send your child to school when he/she is not feeling well and is unable to participate fully in the daily program.** Also, please do not medicate you child with Tylenol or Motrin in the hope that they will be “fine” during the day, as the medication often wears off and the children do not feel well later on. During that time they have also been exposing other children to their illness. For review, children should not come to school when they have

**COLDS** (accompanied by fever, sore throat, cough or generally not feeling well)

**FEVER** (must stay home until temperature has been normal for 24 hours)

**NAUSEA or VOMITING** (must stay home for 24 hours past last vomiting episode)

**DIARRHEA** (must stay home 24 hours past last episode of diarrhea)

**HEADACHE** (especially if accompanied by fever, vomiting or generally not feeling well)

**RASH** (accompanied by fever, runny nose, headache, itching or generally not feeling well)

Additionally, with lots of talk about the flu, you can use the chart below, provided by the Onondaga County Health Department, to distinguish between a cold and the flu. Thanks for all your assistance in helping Jowonio provide a safe and healthy school environment for all our children.

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Fever	Rare in adults and older children, but can be as high as 102 F in infants and small children	Usually 102 F, but can go up to 104 F and usually lasts 3 to 4 days
Headache	Rare	Sudden onset and can be severe
Muscle Aches	Mild	Common, and often sever
Tiredness and Weakness	Mild	Often extreme, and can last two or more weeks
Extreme Exhaustion	Never	Sudden on set and can be severe
Runny Nose	Often	Sometimes
Sneezing	Often	Sometimes
Sore Throat	Often	Sometimes
Cough	Mild hacking cough	Common, and can become severe

## School News

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E-mail:

**We're on the Web**  
[www.jowonio.org](http://www.jowonio.org)



### Web Notice

By February we hope to have launched our new website. Thanks so much to Megan Roberts for putting the website together and to Iver Johnson for all his help in the process.

## What does the Staff Do on Wednesday Afternoon?

At Jowonio we have a long-standing commitment to the growth of adults as well as children. We believe that a vibrant program is one where reflective practice is encouraged and there are a variety of opportunities for staff development. A number of years ago we made the decision to provide a weekly inservice time (Wednesdays 1-3 p.m.) instead of the half-day and full-day conferences days that school districts take. We use this time to present workshops for the teachers and therapists; to create time for teams to work on specific projects (including parent conferences and monthly planning); and to give information about and receive staff input on whole school issues. Teachers and therapists from different classrooms have an opportunity to share with each other. Inservice topics include child development and developmentally appropriate practice (e.g. literacy), supporting students with special needs (e.g. transition to kindergarten, teaching children with autism), and general child care regulations. For our license as a child care center, the Office of Children and Family Services requires a certain number of hours of training each year. Teachers in the classrooms with Universal Pre-K students also are required to attend UPK sponsored workshops. In addition to our Wednesday on-site trainings, we encourage staff to attend local and regional workshops to stimulate their thinking and expose them to new ideas to bring to the school.

### Classroom Wish lists

**Star Room** - Bubbles, White Paint, Markers, Easel Paper, Duct Tape, Can opener,

Dress up clothes + hats + shoes + old jewelry,

12 x 12 bound carpet, Carpenter to build loft.

**Rainbow Room**—2 sets of AA rechargeable batteries with re-charger, D & C batteries, Keys, corks, buttons, bottle caps, feathers.... Unscented shaving cream

Gift certificates—staples— Discount School Supply

Digital Audio Recorder, Paper 8 1/2 by 11 all color paper, Cardstock paper 8 1/2 by 11 white.

Wooden train tracks, bridges, - anything but curves

Coupons—Michaels & JoAnn fabric (on a regular basis)

Bells,, Pine (not cedar) wood chips for bunny cage. Someone to sew/fix dress up clothes, markers—only Crayola Washable so all tops fit.

**Creative Arts Dept.**—CD Player, Blank CD recordable CD's

8 1/2 by 11 paper white and all colors

Sea shells, feathers,

fancy shoes for dress up (any size)

Crayola Washable markers (any colors)