

Sanford-Springvale Rotary Club Donates Learning Center

The Sanford-Springvale Rotary Club has donated \$4000 for a Learning Center in the new Autism Therapy Wing to be built at Waban's Fraser-Ford Child Development Center in Sanford. The new \$1.5 million addition will have four classrooms and one large multipurpose room. Each classroom will be for eight children and will contain a specialized Learning Center that is designed to meet the children's individualized needs.

Every Learning Center will have the following equipment and furnishings: a floor sensory covering, work/learning-space furnishings, a sensory table, a social integration center, and an iPad. Each Learning Center will meet the needs of preschool children ages 3-5 years old with autism by providing a physical learning environment that minimizes sensory distractions and maximizes the impact of the Center's evidence-based autism curriculum.

Shawn Sullivan, Rotary President, said, "Waban does incredible and important work throughout our community, and we in the Sanford-Springvale Rotary Club are proud and glad that we're able to contribute to the organization's efforts to expand its autism wing and services."

The Fraser-Ford Child Development Center, which serves more than 150 children ages birth to five annually, provides therapeutic preschool programs for children with Autism, Pervasive Developmental Delay (PDD), Down Syndrome, and other developmental/intellectual disabilities. The existing center is currently operating at full capacity and is not able to meet the needs of children waiting for services.

Neal Meltzer, Executive Director of Waban, expressed his thanks. "The Sanford-Springvale Rotary Club's generous donation will help ensure that children with autism have the best opportunity for success. Rotary's commitment to Early Intervention Services speaks to their long term commitment to our community and what true 'service above self' is all about. We are very grateful for all of their efforts."

The incidence of childhood autism is growing rapidly throughout Maine and the United States with 1 in every 68 children having this diagnosis. The construction of the new Autism Therapy Wing will provide an additional 6,000 square feet of space and address the increased demand for Waban's specialized autism services. The "Building Success for Kids, One Piece at a Time" capital campaign is underway, raising funds for the new wing.

With more and more Kindergartners struggling with basic social, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive skills, early intervention programs such as those at the Fraser-Ford Child Development Center are crucial. The Center provides evidence-based, special purpose therapeutic preschool programs in inclusive, professionally-staffed 1:1, 2:1 and 3:1 environments. The Center's dedicated staff, therapists, and clinicians create individually tailored treatment plans leading to the optimal success for each child.

Waban was started 50 years ago as Camp Waban, a summer camp where people with special needs could learn to swim. Today, the organization offers a variety of programs for children and adults, including the Fraser-Ford Child Development Center in Sanford. For information on the new Autism Therapy Wing and how you can donate, go to www.waban.org and click on the Capital Campaign link.



Shawn Sullivan, President of the Sanford-Springvale Rotary Club presents Neal Meltzer, Executive Director of Waban, a check for \$4000 toward the Fraser-Ford Child Development Center's new Autism Therapy Wing capital campaign.