

# Special Thank You's

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- Longmont Community Foundation
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## Leaving a Legacy!

Charitable gifts we receive from supporters who designate The Tiny Tim Center in their estate planning can provide a significant portion of our revenue. These gifts are particularly important to the organization because they often provide a consistent revenue stream we can count on to assist the children. One-time gifts give us a boost in funding that can help with special projects and scholarships. Ideas for you to leave a legacy include:

- \* Naming The Tiny Tim Center as a beneficiary in your will or living trust
- \* Making a gift of cash or appreciated securities to establish a charitable gift annuity
- \* Creating a charitable remainder trust
- \* Naming The Tiny Tim Center as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or retirement account

We hope you will consider leaving a legacy with The Tiny Tim Center. We strongly encourage you to consult with your tax attorney or financial advisor to help with your planned giving. If you would like more information please contact Marc Cowell at 303.776.7417.

If you are receiving multiple copies of our newsletter or have a name/address change, please email Michelle at [mhenry@tinytimcenter.org](mailto:mhenry@tinytimcenter.org)



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promoting diversity, empathy, respect and friendship

# Tiny Tim Tales

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## Building empathy at The Tiny Tim Center



Last week a parent told me a beautiful story of how Tiny Tim has impacted her daughter Louise's life. Over the weekend her family was playing at the park and there were many children there. Among the children was a child whose hands were not fully developed. Several of the children were uncomfortable playing with this child and made inappropriate comments, but not for Louise. When Louise talked about it with her mom she said "It's ok, everybody is born different." Louise's mom's first thought was "That is why I send her to Tiny Tim!"

The Tiny Tim Center is the perfect opportunity for children to build one of the most important skills to succeed in life, empathy. Empathy is the ability to understand another person's feelings and to be accepting of who they are. Children

who are empathetic tend to do better in school, in social situations, and in their adult careers. When a child is feeling confident socially and comfortable with their surroundings their esteem is much higher, their willingness to learn grows and they become leaders.

At the Tiny Tim Center each classroom is an inclusive environment where children of all abilities participate. The classrooms are filled with a community of friends with blond hair, brown skin, wheel chairs, leg braces, eye glasses, sign language, and Spanish speakers. From day one the children are building their social skills, helping one another out, and celebrating each others differences. The teachers and therapist at the Tiny Tim Center do an amazing job of creating a classroom environment where each child feels safe and included and each child's needs are met. The children see one another as a peer and are not scared of their differences.

In the world we live in today, empathy is more important than ever. It is crucial that our future leaders are exposed to the many colors, life styles, physical developments, and cognitive abilities of the people in our neighborhoods, state, country, and planet. If our children learn about differences, feel compassion instead of fear, and want to help instead of run they will have a successful life. They will grow their own self-esteem, learn to help others, and hopefully be a part of a society that includes all walks of life.

It warmed my heart when Louise's mother told me that story. To hear that Louise viewed someone with a disability as just another child is a direction I hope our whole society can take. Where we welcome all walks of life, help one another, and function as one community.

## OUR MISSION:

The Tiny Tim Center provides comprehensive early childhood education and therapeutic services to assist each child in reaching his or her highest potential.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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**Yoga with Children: Fitness, Fun and Flexibility**  
Mia Girard, MS, OTR

**HISTORY OF YOGA**

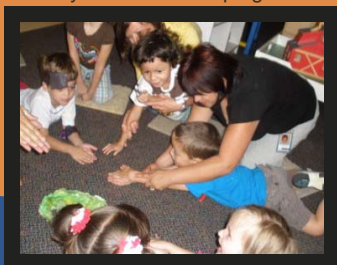
Yoga, developed thousands of years ago, is an ancient form of exercise that combines asanas (poses), breathing exercises, and guided relaxation. Yoga means "to yoke" or to join, and was designed to unite body, mind and spirit. Traditionally, it was practiced by all age groups. It is a popular choice these days for adults to exercise and find balance in their lives, this may be in part due to the increasing pressures of today's world. Yoga with children is also growing in popularity. It is now offered in some schools and yoga studios. It allows children a unique opportunity to share fun times, build physical strength and coordination, and to lay the foundation for lifelong coping strategies to calm or energize as needed throughout a day. It encourages children to interact physically and mentally, increasing their understanding of themselves, their bodies, and the environment around them.

**WHAT IS YOGAKIDS?**

YogaKids International, Inc. was founded by Marsha Wenig over 25 years ago, and provides yoga, education, and fitness products (a DVD series and more) that promote working with children in yoga. Marsha began teaching yoga to children in a preschool, after working with adults for several years. The YogaKids program quickly blossomed, inspired by Dr. Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (linguistic, logical, visual, musical, kinesthetic, naturalistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal). Marsha states, "all that's needed is a little flexibility on the adult's part because, as I quickly found out when I first started teaching the practice to preschoolers, yoga for children is quite different than yoga for adults". Rather than a series of poses, YogaKids allows for a creative mix of storytelling, music, games, and art to engage the "whole child" in learning through yoga. YogaKids is internationally recognized as a leader in facilitating yoga with children, and is available in 23 countries and 32 states. Marsha developed the original and most in-depth training program in the world on yoga education for children designed for adults who want to become YogaKids facilitators. Recently, the company designated The Tiny Tim Center as its lead Colorado sponsor, which means that they have chosen to hold their Colorado trainings at our facility.

**THE MANY BENEFITS OF YOGA**

**Physical:** The benefits of yoga for children are numerous and impressive. A number of resources listed below state that practicing yoga with children, both with and without special needs, has been shown to improve not only physical fitness, but also self-esteem, behavior, emotional balance, and even academic performance. More specifically, the physical benefits include improved body-awareness, strength, flexibility, balance, coordination, motor planning, and reflex-integration. When integrating yoga with education, students of one school were shown to exceed physical fitness standards by over 23%, compared to peers in the district. Another school with students who all practice yoga, showed a decrease in obesity. Yoga is also a non-competitive physical activity, which makes it nice for all children. **Social-Emotional:** There are various social-emotional benefits for children who participate in yoga. It has been said to improve self-esteem, self-discipline, calmness, imagination and concentration. Additionally it increases coping



strategies, positive social interaction, respect for nature, and maybe most importantly confidence. In a 2003 study, with a sample of 48 fifth graders, those who participated in yoga "became more emotionally balanced and experienced less fear, aggression, and helplessness", utilizing breathing techniques in and out of school. Mira Binzen, co-founder of Global Family Yoga, describes yoga as "an incredibly effective means of facilitating wellness in children". She describes its 'side-effects' as the ability to self-calm, energize, improve self-esteem, and create emotional equilibrium.

**Academic:** Schools that are incorporating yoga are boasting better academic performance in their students. For example, The Accelerated School in Los Angeles integrated yoga with education, and over 4 years showed improved academic abilities as measured by "an increase by 93%" in students' Stanford Achievement Test scores. Another study, by cardiologist Herbert Benson, stated that students who participated for one year in a relaxation curriculum, which yoga provides, were able to attain a higher GPA, and marks in work habits and cooperation. These improvements were maintained for a minimum of 2 years in both the social and the academic areas. Yoga is believed to teach children techniques to sharpen their focus, increase concentration, and quiet their mind.

**Children with special needs:** Success has been shown when yoga is used with children who face additional challenges in life. There are therapeutic centers, such as Yogabilitation in Fairfield Connecticut, which now integrate yogic techniques with traditional therapies such as physical therapy and occupational therapy. Yoga has been shown to be particularly helpful for children diagnosed with ADHD, Down syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and Autism Spectrum Disorders. In a study by R. Fridholm, improvements in emotional regulation for children with autism spectrum disorders were shown, due to the use of yoga postures, breathing exercises, and guided relaxation. Subjective outcomes included "improved focus, flexibility, and balance; improved sense of self-awareness and pride; and improved ability to calm." Another source quoted a child with Asperger's Syndrome in saying that yoga has helped him to overcome certain struggles like the sensation of having his head upside down. He said it also helped him to feel brave and strong, and to stop "flapping" so much at the bus stop when he was bored and nervous about his school day. A mother with a daughter diagnosed with hemiparesis, a form of Cerebral Palsy, credits yoga as a major contributing factor in her daughter's motor development. She states that her daughter "started to crawl by incorporating the 'rocking table' and 'downward dog' poses into her movements". Another mom, Sonia Sumar, wrote Yoga for the Special Child, and has dedicated her life to teaching yoga to children with special needs, after experiencing first-hand the benefits of yoga with her daughter with Down syndrome. By the age of 10, her daughter, Roberta, had shown remarkable progress, entering third grade and mastering all the basic yoga poses.

**THE JOY OF YOGA WITH CHILDREN**

While yoga is not a magic cure, it is a joyful and creative way for children to grow stronger, increase flexibility of body and mind, and gain confidence. Yoga is fun, easy, low-cost and ANYONE can do it! During a 6 week yoga class that I co-taught in Fort Collins with a certified YogaKids facilitator, I was amazed to see how much children's motor abilities improved, especially with regards to their balance and motor

imitation. Several of the youngest simply observed the first few sessions, but were able to gain the skills and the confidence needed to participate in the activities during the hour long class before the 6 week session was over. Children are encouraged to participate at their comfort level and developmental level, and the affirmation "Can we do it? Yes we can!" became our motto. Believe me, it is an incredible sight to see eleven children aged 3 to 9 squatting in owl pose and balancing as they turn their heads to 'hoot' at their friends on either side of them. It is equally impressive to see the group quiet, focused, and restful during a guided relaxation exercise for MINUTES at a time. Their favorite relaxation became rolling themselves up in their yoga mat or 'cocoon' to imagine growing colorful wings and taking flight. When asked where they flew, the children described special places like an ice cream store, the beach, and even the rainforest. I especially enjoyed seeing a 4 year old girl roll her mom up, then her dad, then herself, and talk to them about becoming a butterfly and flying wherever their wings could take them. I consider this a huge success, when children are able to bring yoga home for themselves, and their families!

**YOGA KIDS CLASSES STARTING THIS FALL**

We are very excited about the bringing yoga and YogaKids to Tiny Tim and our community. While yoga has been a piece of the preschool's motor groups for some time now, look for additional opportunities to experience yoga later this fall. For more information on yoga enrichment opportunities at The Tiny Tim Center, contact Shari Karmen, OTR (Coordinator of Therapeutic Services) at 303-776-1373 ext.301.

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Itsy Bitsy Yoga for Toddlers and Preschoolers, Helen Garabedian. Da Capo Press, 2008.  
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 "Yoga for Kids", Marsha Wenig. Yoga Journal. 9 July 2010. <<http://www.yogajournal.com/lifestyle/210?print-1>>  
Yoga for the Special Child: A Therapeutic Approach for Infants and Children with Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and Learning Disabilities, Sonia Sumar. Special Yoga Publishers, 1998.

Special thanks to the Valmont Station with the Excel Golf tournament



A special thank you to Glen Nishimoto and the entire staff at Excel's Valmont Station. The Valmont Station raised \$10,000 at this year's charity golf tournament. The check was presented to Vicki Schlagel and Marc Cowell On September 8th.



**A message from the board president**

Hello, I am Vicki Schlagel the new Board President. My two year term as Board President began in June and I could not be more excited to be the leader of such a wonderful non-profit organization.

Wow, it is hard to believe that another school year is upon us and summer vacation is behind us. We at The Tiny Tim

Center are excited to have our halls filled with children eager to learn new skills. Our classes this year are a great mix between non-typical and typical children. We will have four morning classes and three afternoon classes. Our lunch bunch program last year was such a hit that it will be continued through this year.

As many of you are aware, Liz Smokowski, our Executive Director stepped down in June. The board has been searching for a replacement for Liz and is pleased to announce that we have found that person in Marc Cowell. Marc comes to Tiny Tim with 18 years of experience in the human services field; including the last two years as an Executive Director. Please stop by and introduce yourself to Marc.

Our Therapeutic Services Department continues to do a wonderful job in serving the family needs of our community from birth up to age 12. From January to June this department has seen 213 children. These services include Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech Therapy. As of this writing we are working very hard on our Christmas Tree Festival. This is one of our largest fundraisers of the year and because the holiday season is so special, this is one of my favorites. I hope that you can make plans to attend either the evening event or the Sunday event. Thank you again for your support of The Tiny Tim Center. I look forward in helping The Tiny Tim Center achieve its goals over the next two years that I am Board President.



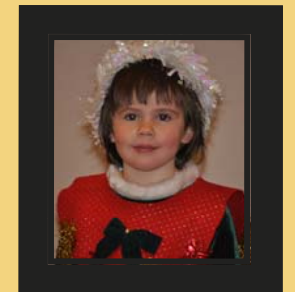
Vicki Schlagel  
Board President

To find out more ways on how you can help The Tiny Tim Center please contact Marc Cowell 303-776-7417 or visit our website at [www.tinytimcenter.org](http://www.tinytimcenter.org)

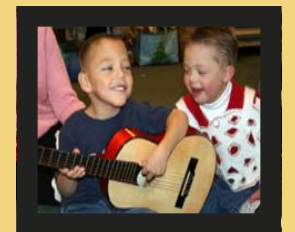


Save the Date!

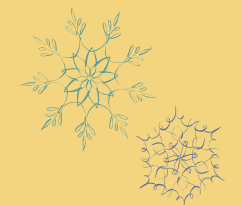
Special events



Christmas Tree Festival  
December 4, 2010  
December 5, 2010



The Tiny Tim Center Winter Program  
December 16, 2010  
9:30 am for morning classes  
10:30 am for afternoon classes



All of us here at The Tiny Tim Center wish you and your family Happy Holidays.