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January 3, 2017

Dear Families,

Happy New Year!

We hope you had a great holiday season filled with family traditions, good food, and quality time with your children. All that being said, we are now looking forward getting back to the comfortable routines of school and work - we imagine many of you are as well.

Please join us January 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 when Enrique Feldman returns to work with our parents and teachers on short, fun, effective ways to increase brain development on children of all ages. We will meet for an hour and child care will be available. We know you will benefit from attending and hope you will make time to come. Child care will be available.

Attached to this newsletter is a survey we hope you will fill out and *return to us tomorrow*. The survey is part of a national accreditation self study process we participate in regularly that ensures high quality standards at Outer Limits. As you may know, in addition to attaining 5 Stars with Quality First, we also are nationally accredited by the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education (NAC) and have been for over 20 years! Thank you ahead of time for being willing to complete the survey and return it to us this week.

Thank you to those of you who helped make the holiday season better for 20 of our children by donating time, money, food and energy to our food backpack program. Karin Elliot, the community member who runs the program, was overwhelmed by the community's generosity and was able to coordinate piles of presents and large holiday meals for 20 children and their families. A special thank you to the team at R&A CPAs and the nurses who staff the NICU at TMC for their extraordinary contributions.

We imagine your thoughts are now turning from holiday presents to tax refunds and catching up from the expensive holiday season. As we wrote about last month, the

United Way has three ways for you to receive FREE tax preparation. Families earning up to \$64,000 qualify for free tax prep or free online software from H&R Block. Free online H&R Block tax software will soon be available at [www.unitedway.org/myfreetaxes](http://www.unitedway.org/myfreetaxes). In person free tax preparation by certified preparers will be available beginning January 24<sup>th</sup>. See the schedule at [www.unitedwaytucson.org/financialstability](http://www.unitedwaytucson.org/financialstability).

As we know you are aware but we will remind you anyway, a small rate increase went into effect this week. Please ask us if you have any questions.

Let's talk about family dinners! Did you know that children who eat dinner with their family perform better in school, have higher self-esteem and have a lower risk of substance abuse, teen pregnancy and depression? Learn more at [www.thefamilydinnerproject.org](http://www.thefamilydinnerproject.org) where you can download a free guide to making family dinners easy and fun for both parents and children. Of course, we know many of you work through the dinner hour – that's why we try to recreate that family style atmosphere with caring conversation for the children who eat with us!

Our solar panels will be turned on and working soon. We're very excited about them and the reduced impact Outer Limits will soon have on our environment. The construction process, while slow, was very exciting for our kids. It was very hard to describe what was happening and the children had all sorts of creative guesses. If you ask them, we are building a high dive, getting a new pool, fixing the old pool.....children's ideas and thoughts are sure fun to listen to! *Just to be clear, there will be no jumping from the solar panels into the pool this summer!*

We hope you will help us. Please be sure to.....

- Sign the book and use the computer EVERY TIME you drop off and/or pick up.
- Walk your child all the way to class or to the playground your child's class is playing on.
- Say hello to the teacher when you arrive to drop off or pick up.
- Sign the book on the way out if your child eats dinner here and stays through dinner. We can receive reimbursement for dinner only if your child is signed out after 5:15.

Take care,

*Blanca, Minnie & Bill*