

Countryside Montessori School

ANNUAL PENNY HARVEST

Once again, Countryside will be collecting pennies, and all other coins, to raise funds for our selected charity, "Charlotte's Emergency Housing's Rainbow Room".

Charlotte's Emergency Housing's facility is called Plaza Place. Plaza Place is a 14-bedroom facility that provides short-term accommodations and case management for homeless families and women. Until this month, it was the only shelter, in the Charlotte region, which accommodated two parent families with children, men with children, and families with adolescent boys. Over 60% of the residents are children. Adults must already be employed, and require short-term help (60 days) to obtain housing again. The Rainbow Room is the name of the in-house daycare for these working families.

The state of our economy has effected us all in different ways, some more than others. Foreclosures have had a huge impact on our particular area and there has been an unfortunate additional fall out from these foreclosures. County officials estimate that there are over 5,000 homeless people in Mecklenburg County on any given night, with 40% being families. Families are currently the fastest growing segment of the homeless population. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System has identified 2,493 homeless children in our public schools. That number is up 20% from last year. These children typically fall 2-3 grade levels behind in school, are twice as likely to be sick, and suffer anxiety and mental health challenges 3 times more than their housed peers. So how exactly does that affect you??? For these children school is typically the only stable part of their day. Plaza Place and The Rainbow Room also provide that stability while helping to transition these families to more stable housing. Stabilization reduces OUR end cost for medical, judicial and social services. In our Montessori classrooms, our children receive lessons in helping each other, courtesy and responsibility. The Penny Harvest is an extension of these lessons. Our donation, to The Rainbow Room, is children helping children.

Each classroom has a decorated "penny bucket" to collect change each day between February 2nd and February 13th. We are asking that you take any spare change and give it to your child to fill up the "penny bucket". Each classroom will take the money given and combine it with the other classrooms in the "penny jar" located at each campus.

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Countryside Montessori School Parent-Teacher Organization