

Hello Friends of Uni-Pres Kindercottage!

From Brenda Crisp, Executive Director

Many of you have called or stopped by since we re-opened on June 8, 2020. We thank you for your prayers, concerns, donations and best wishes. We are thankful to have a relationship with so many of you and want to update you on our current situation.

In order to remain open, we are required to follow the state's guidelines of allowing only 10 students per class for a total of 40 students. This number is down significantly from our capacity of 82 students. Of course, that impacts us financially both in terms of state funding and tuition. We continue to lose money each month that we operate. You know too, that we will not cease to operate because each of these children is precious to us. We are and always have been concerned for the wellbeing of each child and their families. Many of our families have been with us for generations and we stay in contact with them. We have tried to continue to offer fresh produce and other foods to the families who have suffered from unemployment or curtailed employment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Each month, we continue to have a food giveaway, thanks to the St. Louis Food Bank and the TWIGS program sponsored by Prairie Farms. Each week, David and Carol Shanks have delivered 40 milk boxes and crates of one-half gallons of milk to the center and people of our community. Each month, we have received donations of masks, gloves, disinfectant, bleach and foods. Our thanks to each of you!! You are indeed a GOD send.

Those seeking new employment use our computer space. We are grateful that some of you have continued to donate supplies to us so that we may remain open and share some with our families. The State of Illinois mandates that we sanitize our space every two hours and we wash our hands constantly—before and after every activity. That increases our need for sanitation products and soap. Sometimes it seems that all we do is WASH OUR HANDS! We must wear masks daily (adults and children ages 2 and older), we have our school aged children and their chrome books here to be sure school continues and they are safe.

We, are unfortunately, unable to allow you to enter the center to visit, read or any type of volunteering with the children. You may enter, have temperature checked and enter my office to donate or even visit with me briefly, but you may not enter the classroom space at all. I am sure each of you understand. Our world has changed just as it has for many of you.

During the pandemic, we also had a major storm. One of our families lost their entire home to that storm. A tree fell on their home and the hot water tank exploded which caused the rain and water to flood the entire home and destroy their belongings. Mom is a former student and all seven children have attended Uni-Pres. A BIG THANKS to all who have made donations to help our family to have another home and life.

CHRISTMAS!!! Each year, Christmas seems to come earlier, and I am already receiving calls from you. YES, we do want to continue our Adopt a Child for Christmas program. Yes, we need hats, gloves and mittens. HOWEVER, due to COVID-19, we are told that we cannot accept homemade goods. They must be purchased. You will hear more from us in mid-October. We are trying to put together a video that will soon be posted to our website at <https://www.unipreskindercottage.org/> so that you can ZOOM to see us in person. It will not be perfect, but we will try our best. Our blessings and thanks for all you do. Be safe and stay healthy!

