



Cambridgeport Children's Center

65 R Chestnut Street Cambridge, MA 02139 617 868-4275, fax 617 868-3100 www.totlot.org

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Dear friend of Tot Lot:

Forty years ago, Richard Nixon was president, phones and TVs had dials, and you put a stamp on a piece of paper if you wanted to send a message. In the neighborhood of Cambridgeport, a group of principled people realized that working families sorely needed quality childcare, and created a non-profit co-op to provide it. Committing their time, expertise, funds, and sweat equity, they converted a former garage to a safe space where preschool children could learn and grow in an atmosphere of love and respect.

The early 1970s may seem like a faded Polaroid to many of us, but today Tot Lot is needed more than ever. The burdens on working families have only increased. Massachusetts unfortunately has the most expensive childcare in the country*, while the overall high cost of living in Cambridge continues to impact diversity locally. In light of this, Tot Lot recently adjusted its sliding tuition scale to help keep quality childcare within reach of families of all incomes. We realize that fostering economic diversity among Tot Lot families is a key part of our unwavering commitment to diversity in our community.

For four decades Tot Lot has stayed true to its founding families' goal of providing excellent child-directed childcare. Recently, our staff and families have worked hard for Tot Lot be fully accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and to comply with state and federal standards for childcare centers. Tot Lot continues to provide enrichment programming to our children (swimming, art shows, field trips). Unlike many childcare centers, Tot Lot owns and maintains its own building to ensure a healthy space conducive to learning. Finally, Tot Lot appreciates its talented and dedicated staff members, and as a matter of principle provides competitive salaries as well as health care coverage and professional development opportunities.

Today, on the cusp of 2012, to do all of this creates serious financial demands. As the Treasurer of Tot Lot, I am writing to ask for your financial support so that Tot Lot may continue its mission. As always, a donation to Tot Lot is tax-deductible. And as a fun inducement this year, those who donate \$100 will receive a colorful yellow Tot Lot 40th anniversary T-shirt featuring the handprints of Tot Lot kids (see design below).

For all your support in the past, I thank you. It's truly humbling to think of the hundreds of people who have pulled together to keep Tot Lot going for forty years.

Please find attached the latest issue of the Tot Lot Times, for you to see what our kids and the center have been up to recently. And if you have any memories or mementoes of Tot Lot in years past, we'd love it if you shared them with us! It's a privilege to be part of the Tot Lot story.

Thank you,

Stefan Economou
Treasurer, Tot Lot



* (CNNMoney.com, Sep 27, 2011).