

February 16, 2008

Dear Inside Out,

I am writing to thank you and your amazing team (Camille, Hadley, Logan, Joselyn, KT and Cleo) for the extraordinary experience my daughter Francesca has lived these past few months. Your program is unlike any other my daughter has been involved in and it has exceeded my expectations both as a parent and educator in many ways.

First of all, the professionals working with you are truly incredible people! It is rare to find a group of individuals who accomplish the goal of giving one hundred percent of themselves to create an environment where children of such diverse backgrounds can blossom, both spiritually and intellectually, in the realm of the arts. They were able to create a strong sense of community where everyone's ideas and feelings were respected, where the values and morals I teach my daughter at home were reinforced in a nurturing setting, and where your caring team taught not only the artist in each child, but their spirit. I saw my daughter blossom into a young lady who regained her confidence around her peers and was able to express and explore her ideas in a safe and caring environment, which in turn helped her to become more assertive.

I found it pleasantly surprising to see how the students are guided in order to discover what you want them to learn, versus feeding them the information directly. As an educator, I have seen first hand how this approach to teaching is so much more rewarding and challenging for the children than being handed a script to memorize. Francesca was able to participate in creative writing, visual arts, voice, theatre games, casting, theater dialogue, etc., most of which, I have had to pay for separately at other places. As a parent, I feel my daughter was very lucky to have been provided with such a variety of learning opportunities, especially because she participated in taking an idea from inception to conception, which was made meaningful by connecting all the children did to real issues affecting our world. Taking part in so many different aspects of performance arts has helped her to learn different problem solving skills, to understand the interdependence of team work, and most of all, realizing that even young people her age can make a difference in many ways.

Your program has been an important stepping stone in my child's life and has definitely made an impact which I am sure will last a lifetime! Inside Out is a great asset to any community! I certainly hope you can expand and give other children what you have shared with mine.

You have most definitely brought out the best in my child "from the inside out"!

With infinite gratitude,

Marlene Wieden