



...Because every child deserves a childhood

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Astor's Hickey Center for Child Development in Bronx to Hold Fall Harvest Festival

Bronx, NY – Many of the children and families served by Astor face significant daily challenges that are the result of unemployment, poverty and stress. Yet Astor also knows that when children have the opportunity to just be children and participate with their parents and siblings in family-focused activities, cherished memories are created and lives can be transformed.

Through a generous donation from a funder, Astor's Lawrence F. Hickey for Child Development (a therapeutic early childhood development program) in the Bronx will hold a Fall Harvest Festival on Wednesday, October 21st from 10:30a – 1:00p at the Lawrence F. Hickey Center (Little Red School House) at 4010 Dyre Avenue in the Bronx.

Children enrolled in the Lawrence F. Hickey Center and their families will have the opportunity to participate in a fun-filled day that includes carnival games, pony rides, a scavenger hunt, arts and crafts, pumpkin decorating, a hay maze, and face painting. They will be joined by children and families who graduated from the Center last year and currently attend a therapeutic program at Astor's Tilden site, also located in the Bronx. Fun snacks such as popcorn, fresh orchard apples and cotton candy will also be served as a special treat for the children!

"Bringing this type of activity to the children and families in the Bronx will be a first for most of our families. It is going to have a great impact on them. The children will have the opportunity to be with their families in a fun and stress-free situation. In addition, parents and guardians will be able to further interact with our staff and see them as partners working with them and their children. We are looking forward to hosting over 140 children, siblings, parents/guardians and staff members," says Joan DiBlasi, Assistant Executive Director, Astor's Bronx Community-Base Behavioral Health & Prevention Programs.

Astor will hold a similar event for its children and families in the Spring of 2010.

Dr. DiBlasi says, "Again, I can't emphasize enough how important it is to focus on families in such a positive and fun-filled environment...and we are thankful to our donor for allowing us to provide our children and their families with such a memorable experience!"

Astor Services for Children & Families (formerly The Astor Home for Children), as it has since 1953, promotes the well-being of children, adolescents and their families through a range of programs that prevent and treat emotional problems and facilitate healthy development. Now serving over 6,000 children and families annually, Astor's current range of services to families in the Mid-Hudson Valley and the Bronx include: Residential Treatment, Therapeutic Foster Family Care, Early Childhood Programs, and Community-Based Behavioral Health and Prevention Services. For additional information about Astor Services for Children & Families, please visit their website at www.astorservices.org or call Astor Services for Children & Families: Home for Children Foundation at (845) 871-1117.