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Kidango Receives \$10,000 Candle Lighters Grant

Fremont, CA – January 31, 2011—Kidango, a nonprofit child development agency with 41 centers in nine Bay Area cities, has received a \$10,000 grant from the Tri-City fundraising organization Candle Lighters. The grant will enable Kidango’s Ruschin Center in Newark to refurbish its playground and increase the benefits of physical education for the center’s 134 toddler and preschool children.

Enhancing physical activity and exercise is essential, given the alarming rise in childhood obesity across the country, a condition which the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has likened to an epidemic. Childhood obesity has more than tripled in the past 30 years.

“Physical education is an important component of Kidango’s mission to develop healthy and well-rounded children,” said Kidango Regional Director Kathy Rose. “We are thrilled and grateful for these funds from Candle Lighters to enhance the Ruschin Center play area.”

The structures which the Candle Lighters grant will enable Kidango to purchase for their Ruschin toddler and preschool yards will provide opportunities for the children to develop both their gross and fine motor skills through physical activity. The structures will also allow children to incorporate problem solving skills through activities associated with each structure and develop socially and emotionally through collaborative play with their peers.

The outdoor play area is as important as indoor “Interest Areas” for promoting each child’s whole development at Kidango. Kidango believes that all children deserve the opportunity to play outdoors on structures that are age and size appropriate and provide multiple opportunities for physical, social-emotional and cognitive development. Currently, there is only one stand alone play structure at Ruschin that is limited in the number of developmental opportunities that it provides for the children at the center.

Kidango has provided early care and education services to young children since 1979. Their parents rely upon Kidango’s quality affordable services so they can go to work or school. The children receive a quality education that enhances their development and prepares them for school and beyond.

“Kidango addresses a great need for child care and education to low-income and underprivileged young children,” said Maria Garnica of Candle Lighters. “The value that this organization contributes to the community is immeasurable and we are delighted to be able to contribute to support Kidango’s mission.”

About Candle Lighters

Candle Lighters is a nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to raising funds for nonprofit groups and community-based projects in the Tri-City Community. (Fremont, Newark & Union City). The organization raises money solely through its annual Ghost House. Open during the last two weeks of October and based in a historical 19th century Carriage House, the Ghost House is a wonderful family-oriented event for all ages.

About Kidango

As a leader in early care and education, Kidango offers a wide variety of programs to meet the diverse needs of children 0-12 years of age and their families. Currently, Kidango operates 41 child development centers and serves more than 2,500 children and families in Alameda and Santa Clara Counties. Please visit the Kidango website at <http://www.kidango.org/>.

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