

# BERGEN COUNTY ACADEMIES HOSTS SPRING PLAYGROUP

March 21, 2009



“It’s raining, it’s pouring, the old man is snoring...” Three year-old Juliana Frattini sang the “rainy day song” as she twirled around the room holding onto a brightly colored parasol she had just painted at a Dumplings playgroup. Juliana was one of nearly two dozen children that attended the playgroup held at

Bergen County Academies (BCA) in New Jersey. Student members of the BCA China Care Club host the playgroup each month to bring together families of children who have been adopted from China.

“It’s a great program for her to understand her culture,” said Lynn Roehrich, who has been bringing her five-year-old daughter Paxton to these playgroups for the last two years. “They celebrate all the holidays and I like that she can play and connect with other kids that are similar to her.”

On this March morning, club members entertained the children by painting the parasols, drawing pictures, reading a story and playing games like duck duck goose.

“We generally find a theme for the month and I search online for good crafts that would work for both older and younger kids. A game is a great ice breaker because it’s active and the kids love moving around!” explained the club’s president, Jessica Wang.



*Juliana Frattini twirls her parasol*



*Children and parents listen at storytime*

Simon Li, who started the club at BCA four years ago, and is now a freshman in college, made a guest appearance to the March playgroup. He was as excited to see the kids as they were to see him. “With Dumplings, you see the impact you are having on America and our own local community here,” said Li, who plans to start a playgroup as co-president of the NYU China Care Club next year.

“We all know there is that dreaded day to come when our child will look at us and say, ‘where is my real mom and why did she leave me?’” confessed Stephanie Byers, whose three year-old daughter Natalie sat at a table coloring a dragon. “What’s great about this group is that when the question comes up, because they have been here and see all these other kids in

the same situation, they know they are really not alone.”