

The Stars Come Out Fashion Show

*Roger Wolcott Early Childhood Center
Windsor, Connecticut*

The stars shone brightly at Roger Wolcott Early Childhood Center during a fashion and variety show featuring the kindergarten students who attend the center's before- and after-school program. The youngsters from the after-school Tree House program were the stars on stage, of course. They modeled clothing and performed a song in sign language.

There were also community members who shone in important ways behind the scenes. One of those was the owner of a new consignment shop who supplied the clothes for the models and provided refreshments for the event. The owner also offered discounts to parents who bought the clothing the children modeled.

A local Girl Scout troop also took a supporting role while working on a leadership badge. Its members volunteered to assist in designing and creating the backdrop of the stage. They decorated the backdrop with stars with self-portraits of the students and created a "walk of fame" with each child's handprint on a large square tile, decorated with a star and autographed by the child.

The school's outreach to the community and the resulting support from the community helped make this fashion extravaganza a great success. The parents were delighted to see their own children shine in the production. They were also asked to help the youngsters practice at home and accessorize their outfits.

In addition to building community support and parent involvement, the fashion show celebrated the end of the Wolcott Center's

first year, and attracted good publicity for the young school. A public access television channel filmed the show to air at later dates. The local newspapers also covered the show and published photographs and a story about it.

"It was an overall positive experience for everyone participating," commented one of the organizers.

Wolcott's Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) used fliers to advertise this event. Members of the ATP and school staff served as greeters, servers, seamstresses, and organizers.

The young participants gained the most from The Stars Come Out Fashion Show. Students learned how to speak sign language, behave on stage, and perform in front of an audience. They also had the chance to use their creativity in designing their self-portraits. As a result of the show's success, Wolcott has decided to bring its stars out again next year.

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