

South Meriden YMCA staff,

Almost seven years ago James and I walked into the YMCA South Meriden daycare center for the first time. Words cannot express the anxiety and heartache I felt when dropping off our baby in a building we weren't familiar with and with people we didn't know. In fact, I made James do the drop-offs for weeks because it was just too hard and I couldn't go to work every day in tears!

We quickly came to realize that Maggie was well-taken care of and, most importantly, she was happy and was loved. We watched Maggie blossom and grow under your care. Her days were filled with laughter, friendship, and learning. In time, I was able to drop Maggie off in the mornings. Even though I didn't have any tears, my heart would fill with a little different ache, one that would be felt after she gave me a quick hug and then turned to run off and have fun with her friends and teachers. I knew that she was happy, and I knew that she didn't need us with her.

When it came time to drop off Colin, and later Tessa, we knew that they would thrive under your care in the same way that Maggie did. Every one of our children created special bonds with so many of you. When the kids had a tough morning and had trouble being dropped off, we felt so much comfort seeing their teachers scoop them up in their arms and hug them, or do something silly to distract them. We appreciate every time you picked up a book and sat with our children, when you listened to their silly stories, took the time to do their hair, and all of the other countless things you did to make them feel special. The smiles on all of our kids' faces when we picked them up at the end of each day told us everything we ever needed to know about their time spent with each and every one of you.

We also want to say that we feel so lucky to be in a position where so many of our former students are now the ones taking care of our children. Every time we see one of our students at the daycare, we are filled with so much pride and happiness. We love seeing you grow as individuals and we have really enjoyed getting to know you on more personal levels. Thank you for being people our children enjoy spending their time with.

I hope that you all know how much you impact the lives of the little ones under your care and, of course, their families too! Our children have always referred to their teachers as their friends and often ask us if their teachers can come over and play! Your kindness, thoughtfulness, compassion, and love have not gone unnoticed. We cannot thank you enough for the love and care that you have given our children over the years. We know that we can never give you a gift that is worthy of all that you have done for us over the years. However, we would like to send a special treat your way as a token of our appreciation and respect. In collaboration with Aidan and Evan DiCamillo and family, we have arranged a little "thank you" gift. Please be ready for a surprise on Wednesday, May 24h at 10:00, come hungry! If you are not scheduled for work at that time, please still feel free to join in on the fun.

With our love and appreciation,

James Flynn & Kelly Roman