

S U C C E S S S T O R I E S



Our Success Stories series was created as a way to communicate with our friends and donors in an efficient, inexpensive format. Each month, we feature one of our programs and the inspiring story of a child whom the program has helped. To be added to the Success Stories email list, send your email address to ccarnahan@eliada.org.

Imagine being a four year old, coming to a new school, and not understanding the language being spoken by your teachers and peers. Illya, a native Russian speaker, came to Eliada's More at Four classroom in August. More at Four is a pre-kindergarten initiative designed to help children learn new skills and become more prepared for school. Initially a very shy child, Illya didn't get involved in classroom activities and shed many a tear when his parents dropped him off in the mornings. Most often, he played alone and rarely interacted with other children. Illya couldn't write his name, and most of his drawings were little more than scribbles. Inhibited by the language barrier, Illya's main form of communication was gesturing or pointing.

Now we are almost at the end of our More at Four school year, and Illya has made great progress. He is speaking in complete English sentences, copying words that are written down for him, and interacting with his peers. He loves to express himself through creating block structures in our manipulative play center. His block structures are very complex and detailed. Illya becomes deeply involved in imaginative play with other children and even suggests ideas and roles for them. Affectionately known as our classroom movie critic, he loves movies and can describe basic story lines and characters. He loves to talk to his teachers and peers about the latest movies. A bright and vivacious child, Illya has benefited from the individual attention and opportunity for creative expression afforded by the More at Four program. His teachers feel confident that with his newfound communication and social skills, Illya is now ready for kindergarten!



Illya, April 2006