

## Tasty Winter Plans For Department Of Recreation



--Photo By Judy Smestad-Nunn

Sydney Thomas, 7, who goes to Beachwood Elementary, Little Bakers teacher Jessica Durante of Toms River in the middle and Matthew Wissel, 6, of Beachwood. He's the only boy in the class.

By Judy Smestad-Nunn

TOMS RIVER – The Township Department of Recreation has plenty of activities scheduled this winter while residents count the days until summer.

The 2012 Winter Program Schedule has programs for every taste and every age, and many of the programs still have availability, according to Jared Tate, who is the program manager for the Department of Recreation.

Tate was at the Riverwood Park recreation building last Tuesday afternoon observing a new after school program called "Little Bakers."

The creative cooking class meets for nine consecutive Tuesdays from 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. for 4-6-year-olds, and from 5:30 to 6:15 p.m. for 7-10-year-olds.

"Little Bakers" has a third session for Discovery Kids—children with developmental disabilities—on Friday evenings.

The Recreation Department partnered with Cupcake Experience for Tuesday's class. Cupcake Experience is a

company that was founded by two women in central NJ whose mission is to provide fun, instructional classes for children that allow them to explore the world of baking and decorating.

Toms River resident Jessica Durante was teaching the 10 youngsters at the early session on Tuesday. It was the students' second week.

"We're decorating monkey cupcakes and banana tree cupcakes," Durante said as she handed out candy monkey eyes to the 4-6-year-olds.

"Last week, we made fondue pot cookies, and soon we're going to make cake pops, which is circular cakes on a stick that get dipped in chocolate and sprinkles," she said.

Six-year-old Milani Cantelme's favorite thing is baking cupcakes, because, "you get to eat them," she said as she was drawing a smile on her monkey cupcake with frosting.

Matthew Wissel, 6, was the only boy in the class. "I like to

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bake, and I'm going to eat my cupcake after dinner," he said. "I like making stuff."

Tate said that most of the programs cost \$25 for children and \$35 for adults.

"Sometimes programs—like this one—is a partnership; we provide them with the facilities and advertise it, and they provide the program," he said.

"Here they learn the basics of baking and kitchen preparation, and they make things they can take home," Tate said.

Eric Schubiger, who is the director of Recreation, said the department's goal is to provide a wide variety of activities.

"We understand that children have varied interests; Jared and I talk about

programming all the time," he said.

Schubiger said that the people who use the programs sometimes provide ideas that become programs, such as the recently added gymnastics and tumbling, held at Walnut Street School on Monday nights.

There is still availability in many of the programs, he said. In addition to the programs mentioned above, the other winter programs include Mad Science; Ceramics; Open Gym Night; Youth Basketball; Cheerleading; Sign Language; Game Night, Bowling (and Bowling for Discovery Kids); and Karate.

There is also a selection of high school and adult programs. For more information, log on to the township Web site at [www.tomsrivertownship.com](http://www.tomsrivertownship.com), and click on Recreation.