

· CHILD'S PLAY ·



Spring 2005

USA-TLA, Promoting Development Through Toys and Play

Volume XXIX, Number 1



Celebrating 21: What's Playing for Toy Lending...Today & Tomorrow

USA-TLA will celebrate its 21st birthday in San Diego, Calif., on Saturday, May 14, 2005, with a special workshop. Everyone interested in learning about toy lending libraries, valuable play experiences and important aspects of early childhood development is invited to attend. The nominal fee for the day-long activity is \$45 plus the cost of lunch.

“We encourage all professionals working with young children, especially

newborn to age eight, to attend this learning experience,” said Mary Stone, president of USA-TLA. “We will exchange ideas, learn about toys and play and have some fun.” Raffle prizes are part of the playtime for attendees.

The conference site is San Diego, California, on May 14, 2005, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. See page 6 of this newsletter for reservation information and registration form.

Continued on page 3

Event: USA-TLA Workshop

Date: Saturday, May 14, 2005

Location: United Way Administration Office, 4699 Murphy Canyon Rd., San Diego, California 92123

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Fee: \$45.00, \$25 per student, I.D. Required

Deadline to Register: Wednesday, May 11, 2005

Where to Stay: Holiday Inn Mission Valley Stadium Hotel, 3805 Murphy Canyon Rd., 92123 – one mile from United Way offices

Hotel Phone: 858-278-9300

Room Rate: \$96

Conference Registration: See registration form on Page 6 of this newsletter. Send form with your check made payable to USA Toy Library Association, 1326 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, IL 60091 USA.

CONFERENCE AGENDA • SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2005

8:30 a.m. Welcome

Discussion Sessions

8:45 a.m. Outdoor Creativity – Tammy Byington

9:45 a.m. School Readiness Begins at Birth – Nina Hillery, Leslie Eslinger

10:45 a.m. What's in a Name? And other issues to finesse the funding conundrum – Tammy Byington, Leslie Eslinger

11:45 a.m. Raffle Sales

Noon Lunch

12:45 p.m. Raffle Drawings

Show and Tell Sessions

1:15 p.m. Lend & Learn Presentation – Tammy Byington

1:30 p.m. Top 21 Essential Toys Summary – Katherine Freeborn and others

1:45 p.m. Tactile Play the Recycle Way – Rhoda Redleaf

2:15 p.m. Visit to UCP Toy Lending Library and Augmentative Communications Lab

5:00 p.m. Depart from UCP

"Playing to Learn, Learning to Play: Why Play Matters for Today's Kids"

Leslie Eslinger, Director of Philadelphia Early Childhood Collaborative, Philadelphia, PA

What topic is important enough to bring together academia, corporate America, the entertainment industry, early childhood educators, families, and public policy advocates? Plain and simple – it's play.

"Playing to Learn, Learning to Play: Why Play Matters for Today's Kids" was the focus of this year's *Playing for Keeps* conference held in Washington, D.C. in October, 2004. *Playing for Keeps* is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving outcomes and the quality of life for all children by promoting healthy, constructive play. The conference had an international audience and includes a highly respected cast of speakers, workshop presenters, and authors.

I was lucky enough to be both an attendee and a workshop presenter. I spent two glorious days surrounded by people who are as passionate as I am about the significant role "play" has in healthy development. Whether it was Barbara Bowman, Erickson Institute; Jerome Singer and Edward Zigler, Yale University (Emeritus); Mr. McFeely (of Mr. Roger's fame); Brian-Sutton-Smith, University of Pennsylvania (Emeritus), or any other speaker, the message was the same. Play is magical, play is natural, play is universal, and play is here to stay.

There are numerous threats to the sustainability of good ol' fashioned play. The *Leave No Child Behind* legislation places the focus squarely on academic outcomes; the technological age replaces child-powered toys with chip-driven toys; and the overscheduled child leaves no playtime behind. But take heart. Some of the best and the brightest people in our field of early childhood took to the podium to keep play 'in play'. They've done the research, and they've authored books. Just read this list of book titles and rest assured that we will not let play fade into the Silicon Valley sunset:

Children's Play: The Roots of Reading by Edward Zigler, Ph.D.

Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture by Juliet Schor, Ph.D.

Fearless Parenting for the New Millennium by Helen Boehm, Ph.D.

The Child's Right to Play by Mac Brown, Ph.D.

The Great Outdoors: Restoring Children's Right to Play Outdoors by Mary S. Rivkin, Ph.D.

Brain Research and Childhood Education: Implications for Educators by Doris Bergen, Ph.D.

Toy Librarians hear the charge. Fight for funding, advocate for play, and support your friendly toymakers who understand that the best toys are imagination-powered. You can take the play out of learning but you can't take the learning out of play. The benefits are priceless and lifelong – brain connections are formed, muscles grow strong, and social and relationship skills take hold. So what are you waiting for? *Play for keeps!*

P.S. See you at our Toy Library Play Conference in San Diego this spring and at Playing for Keeps next fall.



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Child's Play is a publication of the USA Toy Library Association, 1326 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, IL 60091; (847)920-9030 phone; (847)920-9032 fax; <http://usatla.deltacollege.org>; usatla@aol.com.

Articles, suggestions and letters are welcome. This issue was edited and designed by Anthony Iacuzzi, Iacuzzi Associates, Inc., 847-920-9020

New Paramus toy library: gift of Elaine Adler

All parents want to give their children the best, and that includes toys. But for some parents who struggle to pay the bills, buying the latest toys is far down the list of necessities.

And at a time of year when toys are on the minds of every parent and child, the new toy library at the Turrell Child Development Center (Paramus, N.J.), part of Children's Aid and Family Services, can lift this one worry from economically struggling families.

At the toy library, the latest, the fluffiest, the most creative and the sparkliest toys are available to the children in the center's preschool and kindergarten.

Just the third such facility in New Jersey, and the first in Bergen County, the center's toy library is a labor of love for Elaine Adler of Franklin Lakes. Adler serves on the board of the USA Toy Library Association, a national group that supports toy libraries. There are about 300 across the country, according to the association's website.

The concept of toy libraries started in Los Angeles during the Depression, when a store owner noticed that some of his toys would go missing from time to time and realized that poor children were stealing them.

Just like at a book library, kids can "check out" a toy, play with it at home for a week, then return it to get another.

Adler, co-owner of Myron Manufacturing in Maywood, said she wanted to give the center's children the opportunity to have the same toys as everyone else.

"Children need toys," she said. "Especially in this time, in our economy, there are too many children who are without."

Some of these children "come from homes where parents can't afford to buy them toys," Adler said. And when the kids see toys in Christmas television commercials "they want everything, and it's just not possible," she said.

About 50 percent of the center's 200 children come from low-income families from across the region, said the child-care center's director, Sandy Richards. Many of their parents work in the borough's malls or in the many office buildings.

The toy library has a lesson for parents, too, said Robert Jones, president and chief executive officer of Children's Aid. The toy library enables parents to play with their children, which can help kids' self-esteem, he said.

At the toy library, a parent and child will choose a toy together. They can play with it in the library, then take it

home. "We have already set the stage for the family to play together," Richards said.

And with the toys comes responsibility. While parents sign a contract to receive a library card, each child "checks out" the toy by signing his or her name in a spiral notebook. Each child gets a colorful sticker when the toy is brought back in good order the following week.



Elaine Adler, USA-TLA Director

The toy library is run by "toyrarian" Cori Blake, an assistant at the school. Blake worked with teachers and the center's children, and used a list from the national group to choose toys with educational content but that are also appealing to children. The toy library is open Wednesdays and Fridays from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Adler cut the green ribbon to the 12-by-25-foot toy library, which is named for her. On one wall is a mural of Peter Rabbit with a white picket fence. Multi-ethnic dolls sit in a row. Three scary-faced dinosaurs look down from a top shelf. And a fluffy teddy bear rests on a mommy- or daddy-sized rocking chair.

Although the center cares for children from two months to six years, the toy library is for children in preschool and kindergarten. They're old enough to understand the library concept.

Some four-year-olds from the classroom across the hall tested the toys in advance of the library opening. Anthony Sanchez sat at one of the two child-sized tables with a "Dora the Explorer" Leap Pad toy. Lena May Piccinich colored at the Lite-Brite art easel.

Madalyn Lyon pulled off her black shiny shoes and put on purple mules with a feathery tassel. She put her arms into the purple sparkly fairy wings. "I love dress-up," she said.

By Merry Firschein

Extracted from The Record and Herald News

For information about Parents as Teachers National Center, visit www.patnc.org.

Conference Speakers Reflect Dedication, Knowledge

The following individuals know the toy lending experience well. USA-TLA is fortunate to offer attendees such distinguished teachers and authors to lead the presentations in San Diego.

Tammy Byington

Tammy is the coordinator of Lend & Learn Boone County, a toy and equipment lending library in Columbia, Missouri. She has worked in the early care and education field for 18 years as a teacher, consultant, early care and education specialist, and family care provider. She currently serves as Vice President of the USA Toy Library Association. She also co-chairs the Boone County Parent Education Committee and is a member of MOAEYC and the Quality Child Care Network of Columbia. Tammy will take you through the creative outdoor experiences and inspire you with her special talents with kids, art and playgrounds.

Leslie Eslinger

As director of The Neighborhood Child Care Resource Program (NCCRP) of Northwest Interfaith Movement (partner agency for the Philadelphia Early Childhood Collaborative), Leslie has been involved in early childhood education for more than 22 years. She has taught toddlers, pre-school and school-aged children in a variety of early childhood settings. In her current position, Leslie seeks high-quality training, resources and technical assistance to help improve child care in the low income neighborhoods of Northwest Philadelphia. She is the past coordinator of the NCCRP Resource Room where she has installed a computerized loan system, created a range of popular theme-based kits, and developed an extensive library of teacher resource materials. Most recently, Leslie authored her first book, *Theme Kits Made Easy*, published in the Fall of 2002 by Redleaf Press.

Nina Hillery

As an Infant Toddler Specialist for First Steps, Akron Ohio's Infant and Toddler Initiative, Child Care Connection, Nina works toward strengthening the knowledge and practices of infant/toddler caregivers through training, consulting and mentoring. In addition she works on assessing infant/toddler environments and is a certified PITC (Program for Infant Toddler Caregivers) trainer which focuses on the importance of responsive relationships and intentional experiences with infants and toddlers. She is also adjunct faculty at Kent State University where she teaches a graduate workshop on "Toys in a Library: Play, Toys and the Literacy Connection." Past experience includes 24 years developing and managing a toy library, teaching 2-5 year olds with disabilities and working as a play therapist in a hospital setting.

Rhoda Redleaf

Rhoda is the founder of Toys 'n Things, one of the original toy libraries in St. Paul, Minnesota. Currently, she sits on the Board of Resources for Child Caring which was the parent organization of Toys 'n Things. She has served on the TLA Board of Directors since the association's inception. She is the author of books on handmade toys and creative field trips, including *Busy Fingers*, *Growing Minds*, a book about language development, *Open Door*, *Let's Explore More!*, and her latest, *Learn and Play the Recycle Way*, published in 1999.

Guide on Toys for Healthy Play

Adapted from www.childcareexchange.com, ExchangeEveryDay, Issue 1137

The 2004-05 TRUCE Toy Action Guide is now available online. For 10 years Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment (TRUCE) has been preparing the guide which is designed to help practitioners and parents promote creative, non-violent play and choose high quality toys and play materials for their children. The *Toy Action Guide* contains information on how to select toys that promote positive play and reduce the influence of harmful toys on children.

The Guide contains a list of TRUCE's 2004/2005 recommendations for "Toys for Healthy & Creative Play," as

well as a list of "Toys and Toy Trends to Avoid." The Guide also provides suggestions for "Shoe Box Gifts," an alternative gift idea that promotes play around themes with common objects often found around the house.

"How much easier it is to be critical than to be correct."

– Benjamin Disraeli

There are even suggestions for how parents and schools can work together to counteract the harmful effects of the commercialization of play.

To download the guide, go to: www.truceteachers.org <<http://mail.ccie.com/go/eed/0476>>.

Mobile Toy Library serves children with disabilities

Excerpted from the Union Tribune Community News Writer



Katherine Freeborn

- A frog that “ribbets” when its head is pushed.
- A 31/2-foot-tall kitchen.
- A puppet theater, pegboards and electronic musical devices.

More than 2,000 toys make up this special mobile toy library. It’s a cornucopia of fun and learning for children who have disabilities such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, autism, and hearing or sight impairment.

The mobile library, operated by the United Cerebral Palsy Center in Mission Valley, serves children with disabilities. Toys can be checked out at 16 sites throughout San Diego County.

“Children learn through playing,” said program coordinator Katherine Freeborn, a developmental specialist with the United Cerebral Palsy Foundation. “That’s really the way they acquire all of their social and motor skills.”

The toy collection comes to Rancho Bernardo branch library from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. twice a month. The library serves about 150 children. There is a \$20-per-year charge to check out toys.

The year-round service was founded in 1987 through a grant from Scott Paper Company’s Helping Hands program. Today it is primarily funded by United Way.

San Diego resident Felecia Wells discovered the program through the United Cerebral Palsy Foundation newsletter. Her 20-month-old daughter, Emma, has cerebral palsy, a disorder that affects the brain’s ability to control muscles. “My daughter has problems with her fine and gross motor

skills, so we really needed toys to help her,” Wells said. “Katherine will go ahead and pick certain toys for Emma that won’t frustrate her. . . . She needs really simple toys that she can grab and fit in her hand. This is a great way to try different toys and see what she likes and doesn’t like, and whether they’re worth buying.”

When a child visits the main toy library of the United Cerebral Palsy Center in Mission Valley or one of the mobile sites, Freeborn will sit on the floor with the child and spread out 10 toys. “We lay them out on the floor and just experiment with them,” Freeborn said. “The children choose two toys that they are most engaged with. Sometimes a teacher or a therapist will make a recommendation.

“While we’re doing all that play, the moms are talking to each other and to me, sharing resources...or providing a listening ear. It’s pretty hard to have a child with disabilities. There can be a lot of down times.”

Freeborn interacts with each child, showing them how to use toys. “Blocks are a wonderful way to use language and to help a child develop language,” she said. “That interaction really has an impact on how a child learns.”

A section of the library known as “Imaginary Play” contains child-size plastic castles, farms, arks, tents and tunnels. Switch-adapted toys help children who have a hard time using their hands. “It might just be a plate that they tap,” which makes a cow or other animal walk, Freeborn said. The library also rents walking devices that help nonambulatory children develop coordination and leg strength. For more information, visit www.ucpsd.org.

Book Week Idea Helps Toy Loan Center

Extracted from the Bridgetown News, New Jersey

Students in the district gave the gift of reading to a few less-fortunate individuals last holiday season. As part of a book drive for Children’s Book Week, children at the district elementary school brought in 244+ books. “I have a couple of kids who said they’d bring more in after Thanksgiving,” said event organizer, librarian Linda Ferrara.

Children’s Book Week has been around since 1919 and is usually celebrated the week preceding Thanksgiving. Ferrara got in touch with organizations such as the Shirley

Eves Center in Millville, N.J., which houses a toy lending library, and the Pediatric Ward of South Jersey Hospital. “We’re trying to keep things close to the community,” said Ferrara. Joyce Cossaboon, agency director of the Shirley Eves Center, said she loves to receive books for their children. She said the books are a perfect fit in the developmental and therapeutic center’s Toy Library Program. That particular program loans out books and toys to the families of the more than 100 children enrolled in it.

Neighborhood Child Care Resource Program's 21 Favorite Toys

Toy Name	Description	Optional Source	Approx. Ages
Animal sets – Polar, wild, jungle, farm	Made from soft rubber, or vinyl with realistic features	Any early childhood catalogue	2-5
Braille , Math, ABC Blocks			
Groovie Blocks	Updated version of 'old' ABC wooden blocks	Uncle Goose Toys	2 - 5
Building Topper Block Accessories	Wooden props such as street signs, block town building toppers, vehicles, and people figures		Any catalogue
Busy Box	4 sided with gears, chunky shapes, and handle to carry around	Lakeshore	1.5 - 3
Cherry Tree Blocks 2.5 - 5	Pieces look and feel like actual tree parts, smoothed and sized for small building activities		Magic Cabin
Cozy Coupe II™ Car	Classic kid-powered car	Little Tikes	1.5 - 5
Design Builders	hard plastic pieces with interlocking pegs to form letters, shapes, abstract designs	Lakeshore-	3-5
Eggz egg shakers	Egg-shaped rhythm instrument that fits in the smallest hands	Music specialty shops	3 - 5
Feels Real Baby Dolls	Multicultural baby dolls with very realistic facial expressions	Lakeshore	2 – 5
Folding Wooden Barn and Castle	These are 2 separate units made of wood with limited detail leaving play to the imagination	Melissa and Doug	2-5
Folkmanis Puppets	Big Bad Wolf	Folkmanis	All ages
Geomags	Geomag is a magnetic construction toy that is based on simple principles of geometry.		5 +
Magna-Doodle	Great for pre-writing exercises	Fisher Price	2 - 5
Mama Do You Love Me Nesting Blocks	Cardboard nesting blocks with images from the story and related facts	Lakeshore	2 - 5
Marble Run	Look for sets that encourage creative structures		4 - 5
No Ends	Hard plastic pieces with interlocking pegs to form letters, shapes, abstract designs. Open-ended building set with colored hard plastic pieces and connectors	Discount School Supply	3-5
O-Balls	Plastic, easy to grip, light weight, colorful balls	Environments	Infants – 2
Rhythm Music Makers	Set of 4 easy to grasp sound makers	Environments	1 – 2
Sight and Sound Tubes	Clear plastic large tubes filled with sensory materials	Lakeshore	Infants – 2
Spaghetti maker	Try to find one with all plastic parts and hand crank; Other models require close adult supervision	Lehman's catalogue carries all non-electric tools– see Atlas Noodle Maker	3 – 5
Zoob Tubes	Creative, connective, colorful, educational, requires dexterity and spacial relations ability	Many early childhood catalogues	3-5

Registration Form USA-TLA Spring 2005 Workshop May 14, 2005 • United Way Administration Office

Name _____

Title _____

Program _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Fee (Includes Lunch):

Adult professional \$45.00

Student (submit valid ID) \$25.00

Total Submitted \$ _____

Make checks payable to the USA Toy Library Association and mail to: USA Toy Library Association, 1326 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, IL 60091. Registration deadline is May 7, 2003 – don't delay!

Questions? Contact Judy Iacuzzi , Executive Director, USA-TLA, 847-920-9030 or usatla@aol.com.

Please check all the populations that your program serves.

infant/toddler special needs low income

preschool school-age multi-lingual

Other _____

Toy Library Products

Order TLA Products and Memberships Today!
All prices include shipping and handling.

**Please also use this form to notify us of any
change in your address.**

- \$_____ Student Membership (Child's Play subscription) \$15 (Please provide student I.D. proof)
- \$_____ Individual Membership (Child's Play subscription, discounted publications and conference fees) \$55
- \$_____ Comprehensive Membership (Child's Play subscription, full set publications, discount conference fees) \$165
- \$_____ USA-TLA Operator's Manual: Members \$12; Nonmembers \$24
- \$_____ *A History of Toy Lending Libraries in the U.S. Since 1935* by Julia E. Moore: Members \$10; Nonmembers \$20
- \$_____ *Learn and Play the Recycle Way* by Rhoda Redleaf and Audrey Robertson: Members \$23; Nonmembers \$38
- \$_____ *The Oppenheim Toy Portfolio* by Joanne Oppenheim; Members \$8.50; Nonmembers \$17
- \$_____ *Theme Kits Made Easy* by Leslie Eslinger: Members \$18.00; Nonmembers \$28.00
- \$_____ Total Amount Enclosed

Name _____

Organization _____

Street _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Please make your check payable to USA-TLA and mail it along with this form to:

USA-TLA
1326 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, IL 60091-2560

Address inquiries to:
USA Toy Library Association
847-920-9030
847-920-9032 fax
usatla@aol.com

You can visit us on the Web at
<http://usatla.deltacollege.org>

USA-TLA MISSION

The mission of USA Toy Library Association is to provide a national network and information resource that supports toy libraries; and to promote the importance of developmentally appropriate toys and play.



USA Toy Library Association
1326 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, IL 60091-2560

USA-TLA 2004-2005 CALENDAR

MAY 2005

USA-TLA Workshop

“Toy Lending At Its Best.” Celebrating USA-TLA’s 21st Birthday
San Diego, CA

<http://usatla.deltacollege.org>

Details to be announced

MAY 28 – 30, 2005

Middle East Toy Fair

Showcase for Toys, Baby and Pre-School Products
Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai

MAY 2005

5th Annual World Play Day

SEPTEMBER 2005

Tenth International Toy Library Conference

“Building a Better World through Play”

Johannesburg/Pretoria area, South Africa

Registration will be less than \$370 US and will include all lunches, visits to toy lending libraries and two evening social events that include dinner.

For more information go to <http://www.itla-toylibraries.org>