

· CHILD'S PLAY ·



Spring 2009

USA-TLA: Promoting Development Through Toys and Play

Vol. XXIII, No.2

April in New Jersey – “All Work and Lots of Play”

Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 25, 2009, and a special opportunity to learn and network with many of your colleagues in early childhood. The Turrell Child Care and Early Learning Center, a division of Children’s Aid & Family Services, Inc., in Paramus, N.J., and USA-TLA will offer a premier conference for professionals working with children.

The daylong agenda is packed with a your-choice educational program led by well-regarded educators. Topics range from early learning development to autism to bilingual learning and optimal early childhood environments. Importantly, attendance for the day awards participants four hours of professional development credit.

“We anticipate at least 100 early childhood professionals will sign on,” said Elaine Adler, director of USA-TLA and founder of the toy lending library

on site at the Center. “The Turrell Child Care and Early Learning Center staff, in cooperation with Bergen County Office for Children, have planned a thoughtful program that will resonate deep into the community they serve. It is an outstanding opportunity for practitioners, toy librarians, and parents of young children. We are indebted to the planning and organization of other USA-TLA Directors Sandy Richards and Marty Stone, as well as Sandy’s superior staff at Turrell. ”

Details of the agenda may be found on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter. Included are hotel and registration information. Mail-in registration is open through April 25, and the pre-conference fee of \$30 includes a continental breakfast and lunch. The host site is a 20-minute drive from Newark Airport and an easy drive from many parts of the East.

Lots of play and learning in store – sign up now!

At 50, Barbie Is Something Else

Barbie turned 50 in March 2009, and according to *The New York Times*, she first appeared in March 1959 at the International Toy and Trade Fair in New York.

As every fan knows, she has taken on a variety of racial identities and more than 100 professions. And over time her nose is still pert, her gaze remains vacant, her plastic skin formula is dewier, hair-plugs are more abundant, forehead proportions more diminutive, and joint movement better,

reports Even Kahn, NYT reporter.

Barbie’s inventor, Ruth Handler, a founder and eventual president of Mattel, the company that brought Barbie to market and still produces her today, thought it was time that young girls had a doll with grown-up features to stimulate their imaginations and enhance their play.

What do you think? Is Barbie a valuable play icon or a fashion-conscious and toy product that panders to commercialism? Or neither or a little of both? Send your comments to usatla@aol.com and we’ll report in the next issue of C-P.

Happy Anniversary to USA-TLA...

As It Celebrates **25 Years** of Promoting Development Through Toys and Play

Spring Planting for Fall Nourishment

In the fall every child entering kindergarten in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, receives a *Kindergarten Kit* created by the Cuyahoga County Public Library and designed by the library's Youth Services Department to help kindergartners succeed. The kits support the library's initiative to ensure every child in Cuyahoga County enters school ready to learn. Each contains a copy of the book, *My Kindergarten*, by Rosemary Wells, and accompanying compact disc, a beginner pencil, Play-Doh®, and the library's award-winning *Splash Into Kindergarten* activity book that encourages families to practice at home the skills children are learning at school. *Splash Into Kindergarten*, which is based on the Ohio Department of Education's Academic Content Standards for Kindergartners, also includes wonderful suggestions for read-aloud books to borrow from the library.

Cuyahoga County kindergarten teachers distribute the kits to their students at public, private, parochial, and charter/community schools. Teachers also receive their own kits and teacher's guides. Parents or guardians of home-schooled children in kindergarten may receive kits through the Youth Literacy and Outreach Department of the library. Kits are funded by The Cleveland Foundation, the Cuyahoga County Board of Commissioners and Family and Children First Council, and are currently limited-use to residents of Cuyahoga County. USA-TLA knows that many local libraries offer wonderful, similar learning materials for children, and many loan their own versions of literacy kit.

Parents, caregivers, grandparents and friends are encouraged to play, read and talk with their budding scholars and set them on the wide, diverse and experience-rich path of lifelong learning. Such is manifest goal of the Kindergarten Kit in Ohio!

Playfully Green Matters

Healthful Eating a Matter of Lunchtime Leisure

*Excerpted from National Public Radio,
Eleanor Beardsley 2/16/09*

It's no accident that the French cook and eat some of the best food in the world. Table traditions and knowledge of food and eating are cultivated from the very youngest age. In Paris hot meals are prepared on the premises of each of the city's 270 public day care facilities. Nothing is mass produced, ingredients are more often fresh than frozen, and the chefs try to use organic products when they can. And the cost of the food is not exorbitant – only about \$2 per meal per child.

Continued on page 6



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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.org> (Web site); usatla@aol.com (email). Articles, suggestions and letters are welcome.

Edited, designed and produced by Iacuzzi Associates, Inc., 847-920-9020.

Spring Matters for Children

USA-TLA Founding Director Rhoda Redleaf is a gifted teacher who consistently looks for creative, interesting and meaningful experiences for helping children and adults learn. Children's interests, needs and desires are at the core of all the activities she recommends. The following excerpts are taken from one of Rhoda's several books: *Busy Fingers, Growing Minds*.

The Melting Snowman (with dance)

(to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot")

I'm a little snowman, round and fat
Here is my scarf
And here is my hat
When the merry sunshine comes to play
Just watch how fast I melt away



(make large circle with arms)
(wrap pretend scarf around neck)
(hands over head to form hat)
(make round circle with hands for sun)
(slowly fall and curl up into a small ball)

Spring Things

Spring

I like to see the bright blue sky
I like the air when it's warm and dry
I like to watch the budding leaves
And the beautiful, flowering trees
I like to hear the birds that sing
Everyone is happy because it's spring

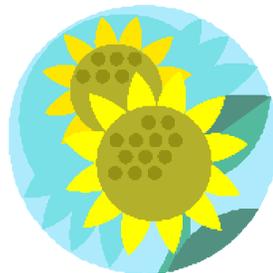


The Butterfly

Up and down the air you float
Like a little fairy boat,
I should like to sail the sky
Gliding like a butterfly
(pretend to fly and glide like butterflies)

Spring Is Here

Spring is here and how do I know?
Mr. Robin told me so
Spring is here and how do I know?
Robin told me so.
Spring is here and how do I know?
Pretty flowers told me so
Spring is here and how do I know?
Flowers told me so



Have the children suggest other things that tell us spring is here, such as warm sunshine, bright green grass, baby ducklings, and growing gardens.

Spring Collage Book

Ask the children to tell you all the things they like about spring. Write down their comments and continue adding to the list for several days. After you have many items on your list, group them into clusters such as the things that are related to weather (warm days, more sun and light), growing things, animal life, and playtime. Use these clusters as themes for spring picture collages on large sheets of paper, one for each grouping. Let the children draw or cut out pictures for their collages and write a description of each collage. Put the collages and the descriptions together into a "Big Book About Spring." You can always add to it as you discover new things about spring.



The **Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center**
 in partnership with the **USA Toy Library Association**
Presents



"All Work and Lots of Play!"

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2009

8:30 AM – 3:00 PM

Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center
 200 Robin Road, Paramus, NJ 07652
 Phone: (201) 261-5970 Fax: (201) 261-6019
 www.cafsnj.org/turrell

Schedule

Registration **8:30 AM-9:00 AM**
 Continental Breakfast & Networking

Welcome! **9:00 AM-9:30 AM**

Keynote Address **9:30 AM-10:15 AM**
 "Learning, What's Play Got To Do With It?"

Nina Hillery, Infant/Toddler Specialist, First Steps,
 Child Care Connection, Akron, OH

Morning Workshops **10:20 AM-11:50 AM**

A. Play: The Art of Discovery

Nina Hillery, Infant/Toddler Specialist, First Steps,
 Child Care Connection

Just like scientists our children eagerly experiment, examine and explore their world. In the arena of play, just what is it that young children discover and how do we as teachers foster these discoveries?

B. Playful Learning - A Bilingual Approach

Alison Sanna, Kindergarten Teacher, TCC&ELC,
 and *Kristen Cafiero*, Spanish Teacher, grades 1-3

This workshop covers a wide range of cross-curricular activities (with a bilingual twist!) that will enrich your curriculum.

C. Early Childhood Learning Environments

Cindy Gennarelli, M.Ed Adjunct Professor,
 Director-Child Development Center, William Paterson University

Come examine room arrangements and how a child

centered environment facilitates learning and guides behavior. You will compare and contrast the environmental characteristics of classrooms to come up with ways to incorporate softer, more home-like settings.

Lunch (included) &

Toy Library Tours **11:50AM-1:00PM**

Afternoon Workshops **1:00PM-2:30PM**

D. The Autism Spectrum

Martin Stone, Teacher, Special Needs Specialist

Gain an overview of the history, symptoms and strategies in dealing with autism.

E. Play: The Art of Discovery

Nina Hillery, Infant/Toddler Specialist, First Steps,
 Child Care Connection

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F. Early Childhood Learning Environments

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Prize Raffle **2:35PM-2:45PM**

Closing Remarks **2:45PM-3:00PM**

Judy Iacuzzi, Executive Director, USA Toy Library Association

Departure **3:00PM**

Special thanks are extended to the Bergen County Office for Children in appreciation for their assistance in planning this day

Participants will receive a certificate for four hours of professional development.

Come on Saturday for ideas you can use on Monday.

Directions

From Route 17 South: Go to the Century Road West exit and bear right. Robin Road is the first right turn after passing the Motor Vehicle Inspection Station. The building is at the end of the road on the right.

From Route 17 North: Take the Century Road West exit. Go over Route 17 and bear left onto Century Road. Robin Road is the first right turn after passing the Motor Vehicle Inspection Station. The building is at the end of the road on the right.

From Route 4 East/West: Go to Route 17 North; follow directions above.

From the Garden State Parkway North: Take Exit #160; make a left onto Passaic Street, which becomes

Paramus Road. Follow Paramus Road over Route 4 and continue to Century Road. Make a right onto Century Road and continue on this road through 3 traffic lights. After the third light make a left turn at the next corner onto Robin Road. The building is at the end of the road on the right.

From the Garden State Parkway South: Take Exit #163. Continue on Route 17 South to the Century Road/Paramus Exit. Take Century Road West exit and bear right. Robin Road is the first right turn after passing the Motor Vehicle Inspection Station. The building is at the end of the road on the right.

Use the rear entrance by the play yard.



Accommodations

The brand new Courtyard by Marriott Paramus hotel is a short drive to the finest shopping Paramus has to offer. The Town Center Mall, Garden State Plaza, Paramus Park Mall and the Shops at Riverside all offer tax-free shopping on clothes and shoes. Each hotel room features free high speed Internet. Guests also have access to the indoor pool.

Specially-priced rooms have been reserved for attendees, just minutes from the conference location.

Reserve by 4/10/09 to qualify for the group rate of \$94.00/night.

Call 800-321-2211 and ask for the Paramus Courtyard in NJ, and the USA Toy Library group rate.

Conference Registration Form

All Work and Lots of Play! | Saturday, April 25, 2009 | 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Workshop Choice: (enter your 1st and 2nd choice for AM and PM workshops)

Morning Workshops (A-C) 1st choice _____ 2nd choice _____

Afternoon Workshops (D-F) 1st choice _____ 2nd choice _____

Cost:

Registrations received by 4/21/09: \$30.00

At the door: \$40.00 per person cost includes breakfast, lunch, and workshops

Make checks payable to Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc.

Send registration form and payment to:

Liesl Fernandes
Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center
200 Robin Road, Paramus, NJ 07652
Phone: (201) 261-5970
Fax: (201) 261-6019
<http://www.turrell.cafsnj.org>

Register Today!

Heroes Welcome New Rescue Wardrobe

As the Education and Product Development Specialist for Becker's School Supplies, I'm always seeking new playthings that offer exceptional play and educational value for children. Ideally, the play experience builds on the child's existing knowledge and skill set. The plaything needs to have broad appeal yet not be connected with any television-based commercial products. That's a tall order.

Enter Rescue Dress-Ups! This collection of new dramatic play attire fits the bill. They are designed with the young child in mind – what child doesn't want to play hero? The teacher's goals are met as well: the outfits double as teaching tools. You'll find that there's a lot more to

these dress-ups than meets the eye. It actually has to do with the eye and the hand, as in eye-hand coordination. Each dress-up vest has buttons, ties, zippers, and Velcro intended for practicing self-help skills. I promise you that children will be much more motivated to zip and button when they're getting dressed to fight crime or save a life!

The rescue dress-ups are really cool-looking and offer a welcome alternative to princess outfits or oversized man's jacket. And there's more. Each vest has secret



interior pockets that can be filled with weighted bean bags. Your dress-up vest has just become a weighted vest. Weighted vests are used by some children who require help with sensory processing or self-calming. Typically an occupational therapist will include this recommendation, as appropriate, in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individual and Family Service Plan (IFSP).

If you're not convinced of the full value yet, consider these child-friendly features. The vests are constructed with elastic on the sides to accommodate young children of all shapes and sizes. They look great and feel better, made from washable cotton that has a pre-washed softness. They each have safety strips along with the rescue name (POLICE, FIRE, or EMT) on the back of the vest. I can tell you from personal experience, when you put this vest on, you feel the part. Something about the design, fit and fabric will transform you into your favorite rescue hero.

Did I hear someone call for a rescue squad?

Gotta Go!

Leslie Silk Eslinger
Education and Product Development Specialist
Becker's School Supplies
1-800-523-1490
www.shopbecker.com

Playfully Green Matters

Continued from page 2

At La Margeride day care, delicious smells waft out of the kitchen. By 9 a.m., the preparation of lunch is well under way. Chefs Elizabeth Morel and Martine Belaud have been happily working together for the past 14 years.

A giant pot of apples and clementines simmers away on the stovetop, and cauliflower au gratin bakes in the oven. While Morel cuts up garlic and onions to season the braised lamb in fresh rosemary, Belot peels tomato skins to fashion decorative roses for the pasta-salad appetizer.

Morel says it's worth decorating dishes for 2-year-olds. "It builds their appetites, and they love when we decorate. Presentation is very important. Before tasting, you

look. So when you see something nice, you want to eat it," she says.

The savory lamb is a big hit at La Margeride. Most of the kids eat nearly everything, and even if they don't, their delight in discovering the meal is obvious. While the food is delicious, the meal is clearly about more than what's on the plate. The tots are encouraged to use their silverware and are reminded to say please and thank you, and to sit up straight in their chairs.

Sandra Merle, a dietician for the Paris day care system, says it's important to start young to lay the foundations for a lifetime of healthy eating.

"These lunches help children develop the potential to enjoy a proper sit-down meal with an appetizer, main plate, cheese and a dessert while taking their time in a convivial atmosphere," she says.



Toy Library Resources

Resource Order Form

Quantity		Member	Non-member
	Child's Play Newsletter (One-Year Subscription) Included with Membership. An 8-page periodical full of news and information about toy libraries and related topics.		
	USA Toy Library Association Operator's Manual Everything you need to know about setting up and operating a toy library.	\$12.50	\$25.00
	Read It! Play It! by Joanne and Stephanie Oppenheim An illustrated, 112-page book of fun activities that build literacy through reading and playing. Now in English and Spanish!	\$12.50	\$25.00
	Learn and Play the Recycle Way by Rhoda Redleaf and Audrey Robertson An illustrated, 200-page book loaded with suggestions for homemade toys that teach.	\$18.00	\$36.00
	Theme Kits Made Easy by Leslie Silk Eslinger 161-page book of clever ideas based on "teaching themes" (fairy tales, animals, city life, etc.) packaged as "kits." A great teaching tool for providers, parents and teachers.	\$20.00	\$40.00
	The Power of Play A discussion about early childhood education with Dr. Michael K. Meyerhoff, The Epicenter Inc.	\$5.00	\$10.00

Sub-Total \$ _____

\$7.50 Shipping & Handling (Does not apply to *Child's Play*) \$ _____

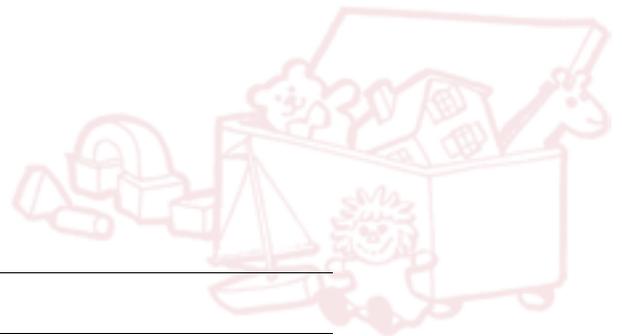
Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Check No. _____



To order, complete this form and return it with payment to:

USA Toy Library Association
 1326 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, IL 60091
 Phone (847) 920-9030
 Fax (847) 920-9032
<http://usatla.org>



Name _____

Title _____

Institution/Organization _____

Ship-To Address _____

City/State _____

Province/Zip/Country _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Member

Non-member



USA Toy Library Association
1326 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, IL 60091

If you've already received a copy of Child's Play, please pass this along to a friend or colleague. Thank you.

L.A. County Toy Loan Branches Out

Local kids from Pico Rivera, Cal., can look forward to new toys to play with and new skills in responsibility, thanks to a program that started this year and is an outgrowth of the first toy library in the United States.

Pico Park became the next branch of the Toy Loan Center, the L.A. County Dept. of Public Social Services program that allows kids to check out toys each week.

"We're trying a pilot program here," Parks and Recreation Deputy Director Jose Rico said. "We're hoping to expand to multiple sites."

The center will supply toys to be stored at Pico Park and will become part of the city's existing Tiny Tots and Walking Crew programs, which serve preschool and elementary school-aged kids.

According to L.A. County Toy Loan spokeswoman Marcia Benitez, the program provides a variety of toys to kids who have little to play with and gives them a chance to try something new,

while learning responsibility and courtesy.

If a child returns a borrowed toy in good condition after a week, he or she gets points for good behavior. When she earns a certain number of points, she may choose a toy to keep.

Toy Loan began as a private program near Inglewood, out of a resident's home in 1935.

"It was started because two children went into a five and dime store and stole some wood and glue," Benitez said. "They wanted to make their own toys and had no money to buy supplies."

The program grew, and in the 1960s, the county took over. Now it is funded by the Board of Supervisors and receives donations from toymakers and county employees. Benitez said six staffers are dedicated to the program, which serves about 1,000 children, usually ages 3 to 10, each month. A warehouse near USC houses about 30,000 toys, which are distributed as needed to the program's 46 sites.