

· CHILD'S PLAY ·



Winter 2007

USA-TLA: Promoting Development Through Toys and Play

Volume XXV, Number 3

National Educators To Focus on Play Betty Jones to Keynote at Spring Workshop

Highly regarded educator and writer Elizabeth (Betty) Jones, Ph.D., will provide the keynote address at an upcoming workshop in Salinas, Calif., hosted by USA-TLA and the Salinas Adult School Parent Center. Ms. Jones, long-time professor at Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, may be best known for her touted books, *Playing to Get Smart*, *The Play's the Thing: Teachers' Roles in Children's Play*, and *Master Players*.

"We are thrilled to know that Betty Jones will share her wisdom on early childhood," said Conference Chair Gay Spitz, parent educator, toy librarian and a director of the USA-TLA.

"Betty is a master at engaging teachers and parents alike in thinking about play. She will challenge us to consider the role of play for children in developing critical life skills such as thinking creatively and social problem-solving. She will discuss the important implications of play for young children of all ethnic and socioeconomic groups."

Ms. Jones' professional background is informed by one of the most prestigious teaching institutions in the world. Her remarks will target the teachers, students and other early childhood and social service professionals in the audience, helping them figure out how to provide opportunities for quality play. "Their take-away will be significant," added Ms. Spitz.

Entitled "**Playing to Get Smart**," the workshop will take place March 24, 2007, at Salinas Adult School on Sherwood Place from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. In addition to Ms. Jones' presentation, Nina Hillery, infant/toddler specialist, Child Care Connection--Ohio's First Steps Initiative, will lead a session on infant-toddler brain development and play, School Readiness Begins at Birth. Leslie Eslinger education and product development specialist, Becker's School Supplies, will present the topic, *What's on Your Toy Shelf? Using Play to Meet Early Learning Standards*.

Several other educators will lead a question-and-answer session on the nuts-n-bolts of toy lending libraries.

Events will wrap up with a toy raffle and tour of the Salinas Adult School, which includes English as a Second Language, Creative Living, Education and Skills Program and the Parent Center.



Elizabeth "Betty" Jones

Site Visit Targets Early Learning Areas

The Parent Center is the home to infant, preschool and pre-kindergarten classrooms, on-site childcare, and the Village -- a collaborative Early Childhood Site that includes the County Office of Education Early Intervention Program, Peaks and Valleys Resource Center, fully inclusive toddler classrooms, Early Head Start, Parents As Teachers Home Visitation Program and the Toy Lending Library.

"We really encourage all people and professionals interested in early childhood to take advantage of this workshop in Salinas," said USA-TLA President Martin Stone. "USA-TLA collaborates with educational groups throughout the country to host these events, and this is our first presentation in Salinas."

Monterey/Salinas Sight-seeing

The Monterey/Salinas area is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, art galleries, golf courses and historical sights. Several sights worth visiting include: the Monterey Bay Aquarium, National Steinbeck Center, Carmel by the Sea, Carmel Mission, Big Sur, Cannery Row, and Monterey Wine Country.

Individuals are encouraged to register for the workshop now by completing the enclosed form or visiting the USA-TLA website – <http://usatla.home.comcast.net>. Payment must accompany the registration form. See the form on page 5 for hotel details. ●

The Workshop Agenda can be found on page 2

Playing To Get Smart Workshop

AGENDA

8:30 a.m. Registration

9:00 a.m. Welcome

9:15 a.m. Keynote

Playing to Get Smart

Elizabeth Jones, Ph.D., Educator, Author

10:30 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. Workshops – your choice:

“Continuing the Conversation”

Elizabeth Jones, Ph.D.

“But They’re Only Playing” – Interpreting Play to Parents

Paula Stoddard Directory of Melody Park School. Paula is a Parent Educator, Trainer and former Toy Librarian.

School Readiness Begins at Birth: Infant and Toddler Brain Development and Play

Nina Hillery, Infant/Toddler Specialist, Child Care Connection – Ohio’s First Steps Initiative

Play in Action: Through the Camera’s Lens

A look at play through clips from 4 videos about play: *Play: A Vygotskian Approach*, *Growing Through Play with each of Parent’s Stages of Play*, *When a Child Pretends*, and *Child’s Play: How Having Fun Turns Kids into Adults*.

11:45 a.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. Workshops – your choice:

What’s on Your Toy Shelf? Using Play to Meeting Early Learning Standards

Leslie Eslinger, Education and Product Development Specialist, Becker’s School Supplies

Nuts-n-Bolts of Toy Lending Libraries

Learn the tricks of the trade from experienced toy librarians!

The Playful Family

Learn 5 ways to introduce more play into your family life, reduce stress and increase connection.

Kathy Bauer, Parent Educator in charge of the Speaker’s Bureau. She is a trainer of trainers.

Toys From Trash

Use everyday recyclables to make toys that support brain development. Hands on! You’ll go home with some new toys to share.

L’Shanna Klein is a Parent Educator, Preschool Teacher and Parents As Teachers Home Visitor

2:15 p.m. Closing remarks and final raffle

2:30 p.m. Tours



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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); usatla.home.comcast.net (website); usatla@aol.com (email). Articles, suggestions and letters are welcome. Edited, designed and produced by Iacuzzi Associates, Inc., 847-920-9020.

Toys That Are Bright, Shiny and Dangerous!

In 1929 a booklet marketed by a paint company claimed that its paint could be used on toys and furniture in children's rooms to lift the youngsters' moods. "The Dutch Boy Conquers Old Man Gloom" it promised, and pictured the Dutch Boy painting a toy truck and a dollhouse with bright, shiny lead paint, with delighted children looking on. Lead made paint durable, bright, and easy to clean. It was an easy sell to parents.

For decades before this ad appeared, however, health experts had warned that even small amounts of lead can permanently damage the developing brain of a young child. Lead poisoning can make it harder for a child to learn. It interferes with the attention span a child needs to learn to read and can cause life-long difficulties reaching other developmental milestones. Research also points to a link between lead poisoning and impulsive and aggressive behaviors, which can make learning through interactive play difficult for the lead poisoned child and can disrupt the learning environment for others.

It may come as a surprise that our environment is still full of this toxic metal. After all, lead in gasoline and in residential paint can no longer be sold.

Children can be lead poisoned by chewing on toys and objects made of lead or covered with lead paint. A leaded object with a surface coating of another metal can also cause poisoning if a child chews or swallows it, because the lead is exposed and released into the body.

It may come as a surprise that our environment is still full of this toxic metal. After all, lead in gasoline and in residential paint can no longer be sold. But toys and trinkets that children play with can still contain lead.

New toys continue to be manufactured with high amounts of lead in them, and many old toys have lead. That old fire engine or truck stored in the attic or picked up at a garage sale may be made of lead parts or covered with lead paint.



A few states have recently passed laws regulating the amount of lead in children's toys, but every year products marketed to children are recalled because of lead content. This December, investigators in Washington D.C. found high levels of lead in souvenirs sold in gift shops on Capital Hill. Of the 13

products examined that were most likely to end up in the hands of children, seven contained high levels of lead, and five had enough lead to cause serious and permanent medical harm, or even death. Gift shop officials immediately removed those items and vendors are now required to certify that products sold in the Capital shops are lead-free.

The Federal Government is acting to ban children's jewelry that contains more than tiny amounts of lead and officials may eventually have more power to restrict the import of lead-containing jewelry and to punish companies that make or import it.

Meanwhile, parents should remain alert that the bright shiny toy or trinket they hold in their hand may contain lead and should ask the retailer whether it is lead-free. Many imported toys are not regulated for lead and small items from vending machines should be avoided.

In addition, responsible retailers who sell children's toys should be your partners in making sure that the toys they sell are safe. Parents can check recalls of children's products by contacting the non-profit organization Kids in Danger at www.kidsindanger.org. For more information about childhood lead poisoning, see www.leadsafeillinois.org. ●

Mary Burns is the Community Projects Director at Lead Safe Housing Initiatives, Loyola University Chicago School of Law

Greetings from Japan!

New Year's greetings and update from the Japanese National Council of Toy Libraries in Tokyo indicated the following:

On May 21, 2006, we joined the Masonic Children's Festival and opened a one-day toy library to celebrate the *World Play Day*. Many children visited the site and enjoyed the event.

On July 16, 2006, we held the National Conference of Toy Libraries at the Tokyo Big Sight, or Tokyo International Exhibition Center, where the International Tokyo Toy show was being held. At the conference Mr. Yamashina, chairman of the Japan Toy Library Foundation, awarded the testimonial and a toy card worth 10,000 Japanese yen to seven toy libraries for their 20-year-long activities. After the conference the participants had an opportunity to see various toys from all over the world.

This year we organized seven regional conferences as usual. Thanks to generous donations from Japan toy Library Foundation, the Masonic Foundation and subsidies from the Japanese government, we were in full activity throughout the year.

In May 2007 the Asian Conference is going to be held. We are looking forward to seeing our friends in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Sincerely,

Yasuyo Koizumi, Director of the Japanese National Council of Toy Libraries (JNCTL)

Noriko Minejima, Board member of JNCTL and ITLA
renrakukai@toylib.or.jp

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PLAYING TO GET SMART WORKSHOP

MARCH 24, 2007

REGISTRATION FORM

(One form per person, please)
Mail Deadline: March 19, 2007

Name _____

Title _____

Program _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

FEES

Adult professional (pre-registered) . . . \$40.00

Adult professional (at the door) \$50.00

Student (pre-registered with valid ID*) . \$20.00

Student (at the door with valid ID) . . . \$25.00

Amount submitted _____

• Please submit a photocopy with this form.

Make checks payable to the USA Toy Library Association and mail to:

Playing to Get Smart
Salinas Adult School Parent Education
20 Sherwood Place
Salinas, CA 93906

Registration deadline is March 19, 2007
Don't delay, sign up today!

Questions? Contact: Judy Iacuzzi, Executive Director, USA-TLA, at 847-920-9030 or jqj@comcast.net;
or, Gay Spitz, Toy Lending Library, at 831-753-5611 or gspitz@salinas.k12.ca.us.

Please check all the populations which your program serves:

infant/toddler special needs low income preschool school-age multi-lingual
 other _____

Hotel Accommodations

Courtyard Marriott
7225 El Rancho Way
Salinas, CA 93907
Phone 831-775-0491 and ask for Tammy to obtain
the \$129.99 per night rate. Senior rates are available.

Local Attractions/Sightseeing

Whether you love art, nature, shopping, historical tours, wine tasting or golf you can find it all in Monterey County. Local highlights include: Monterey Bay Aquarium, National Steinbeck Center, Cannery Row, Carmel by the Sea, Big Sur, Carmel Mission, Monterey Wine Country, Check out these and many other attractions as www.montereyinfo.org.



"Peak and Squeak"

Column written by Leslie Eslinger, USA-TLA Director, Play & Product Specialist

Some toys just tickle my fancy. Take this Peek & Squeak Bunny™ for example. How can you not smile by just looking at it? Fisher Price had on their thinking caps for this one. Let's start with the aesthetics. The colors are pleasingly bright but not shockingly so. The bunny's face has just enough detail and cuteness to generate smiles. The textures are varied and pleasing. There's felt, satin, cotton, and plastic along with bumps, ridges, and fraying for added effect.

Developmentally, it's right on. The black-and-white pattern on the ears offer high contrast for a baby's developing vision. The magnetic catch allows the door to pop open easily and close without a struggle. Think back to the original Jack-in-the-Boxes - they had a little too much surprise in store for the unsuspecting baby. This bunny pops up just enough to get the baby's attention. A pleasant squeak adds to the delight. But the fun isn't over just yet. The bunny is designed to come out of the box completely. It's now a soft and huggable toy. The box without the bunny is still a toy. There's a handle for easy gripping and rings for teething.

Fisher Price® labels this toy for Birth and up. I think the full play value will be realized when the baby can

sit up supported or independently and have hands free to open the door and explore!

Toy Librarians might be concerned about the challenge of keeping this toy sanitized. The instructions read "surface washable." I know Toy Librarians are masters of creative solutions for toy cleansing so I hope this doesn't deter you from adding this toy to your collection.

This toy stayed on my desk for quite a while before I was willing to pass it on to a room full of babies. Such is the life of a product specialist. At some point, we have to let go. ●

*For more information, please contact: Leslie Eslinger
Education and Product
Development Specialist,
Becker's School Supplies,
Philadelphia, PA*

Leslie Eslinger



Kudos to Elaine Adler

Aphasia Center in WSJ, on CBS Evening News

USA-TLA Director Elaine Adler and her husband Mike have founded the Adler Aphasia Center in Maywood, N.J., that in just one year has captured the attention of the country. The Center opened early in 2006 and enjoys a popularity that is hard to contain. Now the media are some of the most enthusiastic and recent supporters.

In January 2007 Katie Couric, featured the Center on the *CBS Evening News*, and the result was a deluge of mail from around the country wondering where to find such a service locally. There are few aphasic centers, which provide psycho-social support to those individu-

als afflicted with the brain disorder affecting speech patterns, but chances are growing they will develop thanks to the prodigious work of the Adlers. CBS picked up the story from a feature in *The Wall Street Journal*. We send our congratulations and best wishes to them both! ●

*Elaine Adler, Director of USA-TLA,
Co-founder of Adler Aphasia Center*



Toy Library Resources



RESOURCE ORDER FORM

| Quantity | | Member | Non-member |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| | Child's Play Newsletter (One-Year Subscription) An 8-page periodical full of news and information about toy libraries and related topics. | Included w/ Membership | |
| | 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. | \$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 Oppenheim Toy Portfolio by Joanne and Stephanie Oppenheim "The Best Toys, Books, DVDs & Music for Kids" | \$12.50 | \$25.00 |
| | The Power of Play A discussion about early childhood education with Dr. Michael K. Meyerhoff, The Epicenter Inc. | \$5.00 | \$10.00 |



Thanks for your support!

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
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Fax (847)-920-9032
<http://usatla.home.comcast.net>



Name _____

Title _____

Institution/Organization _____

Ship To Address _____

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Country _____ Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

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Non-member

USA-TLA: Promoting Development Through Toys and Play



USA Toy Library Association
1326 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, IL 60091

Sign Up Now for
USA·TLA's
Spring Workshop


The Mission of the 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.

"Playing to Get Smart"

Event: Workshop hosted by USA Toy Library Association & Salinas Adult School Parent Center

Date: Saturday, March 24, 2007

Location: Salinas Adult School, 20 Sherwood Place, Salinas, CA 93906

Time: 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Fee: \$40 – adult professional; \$20 – student

Deadline to Register: March 19, 2007

Where to Stay: Courtyard Marriott, 17225 El Rancho Way, Salinas, CA 93907

Hotel Phone: 831-775-0491

Room Rate: \$129.99 plus tax per night.
Rate guaranteed to 2/20/07

Registration: See registration form on page 5 of this newsletter. Send form (with your check made payable to USA Toy Library Association) to: Playing to Get Smart / Salinas Adult School Parent Education / 20 Sherwood Place / Salinas / CA / 93906

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