



March 2007
Volume 2 - Edition 3



Toy Loan Program News

Featured Toy Loan Staff member:
Breyaune Franks



The newest-not-so-new Toy Loan Program staff addition is our Assistant Toy Loan Coordinator, Breyaune Franks. Born and raised in Los Angeles, she is a native (so if you need to know where anything is, she is the one to call) and enjoys everything the city has to offer. She has been with the County of Los Angeles for four years, two years in DPSS—Special Operations, one and a half years with the Registrar-Recorder's Office and almost six months with Toy Loan. Her interests extend far beyond just work. Currently she is attending school in the evening to become a physical therapist, but don't let this fool you. She is very involved with all Toy Loan activities and is open to helping everyone out with whatever is needed in order to better your Toy Loan Center. So don't be shy in picking up the phone, calling and asking for her help.



Featured Toy Loan Center:

Lennox Park



(from left to right: Antonio, Mariana, Diana, Sheila, Noel and Vanesa)

Lennox Park houses one of the oldest, if not the oldest, Toy Loan Program in L.A. County. The earliest files that we can find regarding the Toy Loan Program at Lennox Park are dated back from 1973! The center has changed since the 70's and so has the neighborhood, but the Toy Loan Program is still there, lending out toys, making children happy and going strong. Every year, Toyrarian Evangelina Cruz sees new children coming to their after-school-programs, new adults signing-up for adult-education computer classes and even new toys coming and going. In a recent visit to the center, there were many children playing outside in the playground area of the park. As the time quickly approached for the Toy Loan Center to open, the children moved in closer and closer to the door trying to be the first in line. Once the center opened at exactly 4:00pm, the children anxiously filed in to gaze upon the toys. All of their little foreheads wrinkled with the look of deep thought as they pondered which toy they would take that week. When asked, some of the children were more than happy to share what their favorite toy is: Antonio Catalan said he loves Bionicles;

Sheila Gutierrez and Mariana Fuentes both agreed that their favorite toys are the craft-making toys so they "can make pretty bracelets;" and Noel Soto loves to play with the soccer ball. With more than 30 years of toy lending experience, we don't *need* to wish Lennox Park luck in their continued effort to serve the community, but we will. We wish Lennox Park another 30 years of fun and rewarding toy-lending days.



Best Practices

Some ideas when there is frequent interaction with special-needs children.

- **Size.** Small toys may be inaccessible to children with unrefined hand skills or limited motor control. Large toys may be inappropriate to place on a lap tray, table or small bench.
- **Construction.** How is the toy put together? Is it stapled or glued? What is it made of? These factors may influence the safety, weight or durability of the toy.
- **Stability.** Is the toy stable by itself? Does it require one hand to stabilize it while the other hand manipulates it?

Children & Play

(Special Needs Children)

Recently, during our January 25, 2007 Toy Loan Advisory Board meeting, a committee was formed for Special Needs/Educational Toys. The committee is currently in the process of developing a survey to identify the specific need for all Toyrarians. Below you will find a few suggestions for those individuals who interact frequently with special needs children. Certainly every child is different in regards to likes/dislikes and strengths/weaknesses.

(continued on Page 2)

Los Angeles County Toy Loan Program
 2615 South Grand Avenue, 2nd Floor
 Los Angeles, CA 90007-2608

Phone: (213) 744-4344

Fax: (213) 743-9998

E-mail: toyloan@ladpss.org

<http://www.ladpss.org/dpss/toyloan/default.cfm>



Addressee:

Special Reminder:

TLAB Elections will be held at the following TLAB Meeting on March 29. Please fill out ballots and mail in to Toy Loan Headquarters as soon as possible.

Special Needs... (Continued)

Children with disabilities are still children first and foremost. They usually have the same social interests as their "typically developing" peers. A disability can make it challenging to enjoy some of the same games, books, toys, hobbies and interest as a child that does not have a special need. Take into consideration the child's personal disabilities. If the child has physical limitations, for example he/she has limited use of their legs; you may want to consider a toy similar to a crawling tunnel. If your child struggles with tactile defensiveness, but happens to love trains, a stuffed, fuzzy train pillow may be a good choice. You will encourage sensory integration with a toy of their personal preference. If you are caring for a teen that has difficulties learning to define or spell basic words, Scrabble Junior is a great choice. This list of considerable ideas is a springboard to get everyone thinking about the possibilities of fun and creative developmental activities for the special needs children in your lives.



Did you know?

- More than 1.5 billion Hot Wheels have been produced since 1968.
- Placed end to end, all the Hot Wheels vehicles produced in the last 30 years would circle the earth more than two times.
- More than 1,000 different Hot Wheels models have been created.
- The number of Hot Wheels sold over the past 30 yrs equals two every second.

Q & A

- Q- How much did a Hot Wheels vehicle sell for in 1968?
 A- 59¢
- Q- What is the most popular Hot Wheels vehicle sold?
 A- The Corvette.

Upcoming Events

St. Patrick's Day 	3/17/07
Carolyn Rosas Park Grand	3/22/07
TLAB Meeting	3/29/07
Manzanita Park Grand Opening	4/5/07
Parents' Place Information Fair & Festival	4/29/07

We Want To Hear From You!

If you have suggestions on how to improve the program, best practices, recommendations for potential new Toy Loan centers, or any topics of interest for publication in this newsletter, please contact us at (213) 744-4347 or via email at toyloan@ladpss.org