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Toy Loan Program News

Featured Toy Loan Staff member:
Lisa Urias



Lisa Urias is the veteran of Toy Loan and Volunteer Services. She has been here for over 30 years serving as the most efficient and competent Secretary in Toy Loan history! I'm sure all of you have heard her professional voice answering your questions as you call the Toy Loan Headquarters. But don't let that business-like attitude fool you, Lisa is a prankster at heart. Anytime someone in the office is missing their car keys, you can bet Lisa has hidden them and she's in her office laughing away. Some of her favorite things include road trips with her husband, shopping at the 99¢ store with her mother and freshly cut flowers... Yeah, who doesn't?

Best Practices

- Child-proof your center's cabinets and closets for security purposes, but also for the safety of the children.
- Lock all closets with any type of chemicals so young children don't accidentally get into trouble.
- Simple childproof items such as: door knob covers, cabinet locks and outlet covers can make your center much safer.
- Be clear with all children as to the limits of where they can and cannot go around your center.

Featured Toy Loan Center:
(Rafael Navarro)

Amigo County Park

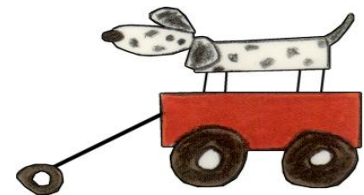


Amigo County Park is probably the smallest park that I have visited in my life. Tucked away in a small cul-de-sac in Whittier, it is in the middle of a residential neighborhood with a beautifully green background of maple trees. It is truly a community park. In an area once known as "JimTown," a parcel of excess land, created by the construction of the San Gabriel River Freeway, came into the possession of Los Angeles County in 1985. In 1992, the County of Los Angeles performed additional improvements that brought the park up to ADA standards. The park was renamed, "Amigo," which means friend in Spanish. The Toy Loan Program has been at Amigo County Park since March of 2005 and serves the children that are active with the many other programs offered by Amigo.



Programs such as after-school, teen and tiny tot programs, summer, winter and spring day camps, senior coffee break and a walking club

offer a wide variety of choices in the neighborhood. Toyrarians Vanessa and Lulu, love the Toy Loan Program and look forward to each Friday when they allow the children to choose their own toy for the week. The children get so excited they forget how to walk. As I was standing there observing Lulu check out toys, a young girl was running up to the toy shelves and she almost tripped as she could not take her eyes off the toys. "Are you alright?" I asked and she quickly responded, "Yes. I know what toy I want!" This is the enthusiasm that makes my job worthwhile.



Children & Play

(Ancient Toys)

Do you remember building blocks, jumping rope or playing hopscotch? What about Play-Doh? Well, thanks to technology, the children of today consider these toys "ancient." Traditional toys are far better for children to learn with than the now high-tech educational toys and videos. Psychologists are warning that many expensive games are actually restricting a child's progress by stifling their creativity and hindering their social skills. Children spend too much time in front of the television and computer screens when they could be playing with basic toys. The supposed 'smart toys' fail to teach kids to play imaginatively.

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Toy Loan



Ancient Toys... (Continued)

In contrast, wooden blocks, books, crayons, costumes, paints and balls help them to develop crucial lifelong skills such as problem-solving and perseverance. Today's children don't need to be fed information through toys. They need to combine facts in innovative ways to become creative problem solvers.

We are increasingly substituting activities such as reading, playing and singing rhymes for the easier option of placing them in front of computers or videos. Value children's playtime and talk to them about their playing. We often say "I like the way you are working," but rarely, "I like the way you are playing." If you pay attention to and engage in children's play, they get the message that it is valuable. Take a look at your center and start with creating a playful atmosphere that includes the fundamentals of playing (i.e. blocks, books, costumes, push cars, etc...) as well as some of the new technical toys.



Did you know?

- Nearly one billion Barbie dolls have sold since 1959.
- Barbie is sold in more than 140 countries around the world.

Q&A

Q. What is Barbie's middle and last name?

A. Her middle name is Millicent and her last name is Roberts.

Q. What are Barbie's parents names?

A. Barbie's parents names are George and Margaret.

Special Reminder:

Monthly Reports are due on the first day of the month. Please contact Toy Loan Headquarters if you need additional copies or have questions.

Upcoming Events

Tracy High School Grand Opening	5/18/07
May TLAB Meeting	5/24/07
Supervisor Antonovich's Annual Remembering our Veteran's Event	5/26/07
Norwood St. School Health Fair	6/02/07
Toy Loan Summer Cleaning Event	6/15/07



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) 744-4344 or via email at toyloan@ladpss.org