

# Young Children/Priority One



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## Reaching Every Family Through Young Children/ Priority One by: Bart Regelbrugge, SW District Chair

The hardest job we have is raising the miracle children we are given. The volume of information needed to raise a child fills thousands of books. Knowing what needs to be done and when for developing minds and bodies is a monumental challenge. This is why there are so many groups, like AZ First Things First, universities, NM Parents Reaching Out, etc., have specialized on many needs of families. However, hundreds of thousands of families are unaware of these valuable resources. This is exactly why the Kiwanis Club of Albuquerque, NM had a Resource Fair.

In April of 2008, our Kiwanis club held our first Resource Fair. About 100 families and representatives from day care centers came. They were able to gather information they wanted from eleven booths, having a wide selection of resource information Plus, a question and answer panel including a pedestrian, TEACH Scholar recipient, a NM Children Youth Family Department supervisor, and Zero to Three representative, discussed their specialties and

answered questions. For about three hours including breaks, there were many valuable comments, questions, and answers. By the end of the event, we were anxious for feedback. The evaluation sheets were very positive. One comment was, "Had I known this when I was raising my kids, I would have done a better job." Another was, "Please invite me to your next Resource Fair." We were very pleased by this feedback. However, I realized we were just touching a fraction of the people in this area and in the Kiwanis SW District.

As the 2008-2009 Kiwanis SW District Chair. I set goals to reach more families. More families can be helped through Child Day Care Centers focused on 0 to 5 year olds. This includes partnering with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Specialists on this 100% preventable life altering physical defects, sponsoring an Autism research scientist, and developing a Resource Reference Directory . (Next page, please)

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### • Jane Judy-Miller sez:

- Have Fun!
- Commit to Young Children!
- Communicate Successes!
- Revitalize the Program!
- Revitalize Kiwanians!
- Cross Boundaries/oceans to do what is right for young children!
- Have Fun!

## **Reaching Every Family with Young Children/Priority One (Continued)**

### **Needs at Child Day Care Centers**

Child Day Care Centers are good avenues to reach families and their children. It turns out that about 80% of all children between 6 months to 5 year olds are in day care centers. In some cases, the parents are required to be involved with their children. But all of these centers have multiple needs. These lists include improvements to the buildings, new toys, volunteers, food, books, rewards for the teachers, child nurturing sessions, classes on low cost nutritious meals, and so on. As funds are available, books and toys can be supplied. But what evening activities could be held and have good attendance?

Parent-Teacher Workshops are the answers. The first workshop we held was on the power of play. The cost was low because of a simple meal. Attendance was very good because the parents and teachers wanted to learn more about play power. So they could be completely involved in the workshop, Kiwanians entertained their children. The next day, a teacher, who attended the power of play workshop, came running to her supervisor saying, "Come quick! You have to see this." All twelve 2 year old children were playing with an assortment of blocks. They were building according to color and/or size. Some did not even know what they were making, they were just building. They all seemed to have much more to say about their structures. Some children had things in mind to build and worked together. Later on as they ate their snacks, they discussed what they had made. What a great example of the power of play!

### **Maximum Language Absorption Happens By the Fifth Year of Life**

Another project that needs attention is how few kids are ready to learn as they enter kindergarten. English words are required to read beginner books. In many cases, they are not known. If you show some 5 year old children a picture of a sink, they can not tell you what it is. To remedy this situation, a school district has hired seven Spanish teachers from Spain to improve children's Spanish so they can learn English.

### **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, FASD**

FASD is 100% preventable! Since about 60% of pregnant women are drinking alcohol, the problem persists. As a matter of fact, one (1) out of every one hundred and ten (110) births has a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The emotional trauma is devastating to the child, the biological parents, and those who choose to help as much as possible. The best option is prevention.

### **Sponsor an Autism Research Scientist**

The feasibility of this project is being researched. Since many believe several factors contribute to Autism, finding the person to support will take time and much effort.

### **Resource Reference Directory**

Many people have realized this directory is needed. Several partial directories have been created. With the progress in electronic capabilities, the linking of these partial directories is in the near future.

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## Michigan Makes Children’s Lives Better!

By: Dee Hudson, District Chair

Currently the clubs are working with the First Lady’s project. The theme this year is battered women and how kids are affected. So we have been collecting clothing, jackets, boots, mittens, personal care items, diapers, baby food, and suitcases. Sometimes when the women leave the shelters they have nothing to put clothing etc. in and they leave with it all in plastic bags. The clubs have been taking the items to local shelters in their communities. We had a major drive in early November so the women and kids had winter items, and now we are doing another round with spring/summer items.

I have asked the Lt. Governors and clubs around the state to collect soaps, shampoos, conditioners, tooth brushes etc. that they get when they stay in hotels and to bring that to the shelters. At our Spring Divisionals in March & April I have asked the clubs to have every member who attends bring Diapers and Baby Items to donate at the Spring Divisionals and the Lt. Governors will take them and distribute them to a local shelter where they are needed.

The state of Michigan is also doing a huge Kids Against Hunger project on April 4th I think it is. The first Saturday

in April. We will have around 10 – 14 locations around the state where we will be packaging food for kids and needy families.

Michigan Clubs are very busy with YCPO – The list is longer than I have time to put in here, but the above are projects that the clubs are working on TOGETHER to make a difference.

Kiwanis One Day with emphasis on helping the local communities right now when the needs are so great. For More Information– Please Contact-Dee Hudson, Michigan District Chair—[dhudson@premiertravelinc.com](mailto:dhudson@premiertravelinc.com)



## Philippine South District, Division 4B, Iligan City!

Among the various projects and activities, of particular interest that I wish you would include is the dental mission project which caters to children in a cramped, dilapidated roofed building of a day care center where they were lectured on dental health care and actual dental check-up/tooth extraction, providing them with set of toothbrush and toothpaste.



Our plan is also to repair the dilapidated roof structure and eventually improve the facilities of that small day care center for the benefit of the children, who are among the poor families in our city.

District Governor Marit Remonde is quite proud of the work in Division 4B and the leadership of Lt. Governor “Jess” Ramiro. This is a very active Division in Phillipines South District and has many projects that “serve the Children of the World.”

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**Builders Clubs Read By: Col. Harry Lombard**

The Kiwanis Club of Gadsden sponsors 8 Builders Clubs. We handle our three RIF dates by having our smaller builders clubs associate with area elementary schools that have a Head Start Class. We partner the Head Start class and the Builders Club in such a way as to minimize travel time.

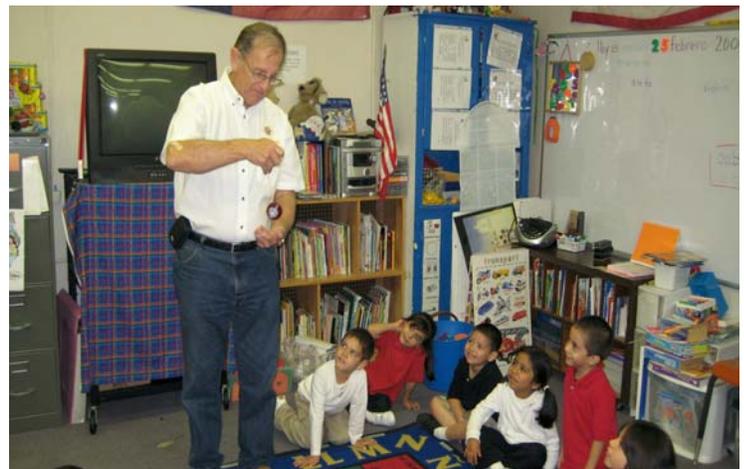
We have four larger Builders Clubs and they go to the main Head Start Center where there are a large number of classes. These sessions are so well supported that we are finding it necessary to schedule an extra reading day because we have so many readers who want to take part. These sessions are very much anticipated by the Builders Clubbers. One club will bring 60-70 members, another brings 25-30, another brings 50 to 60 and the fourth brings over 50.

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**Mr. "Yo Yo" Lt. Governor Carl Reese**

The Greenville Golden "K" Kiwanis here in Greenville, Texas has many Young Children/Priority One projects, but a favorite is to visit with a special ART/PE/Music class at the L.P. Waters Head Start/PreK school each month. 12 of my members meet from 8:50 to 9:35 in one of the classes and we help the teachers with the children and do anything we are asked. The pace is very fast because each class of students will go to two of the three classrooms in the 45 minutes allotted.

The PE kids are usually running a relay of some sort in the gym and the members try to keep some order to the chaos. The Art class paints, make cut-outs and really test the member's dexterity. The Music kids have some great songs that they sing and act out. Also I (I'm called Mr. YOYO) perform yoyo tricks for the 3 and 4 year olds. We all really have a good time. The children at this age



really eat up the attention and our members know how to give out the hugs.

Carl started yoyoing when he was a paper boy in Little Rock. He used to wait on the papers in the afternoon after school on a street corner and the Duncan and Cheerio yoyo reps would come by trying to sell yoyos and also teach us tricks. He has 15 to 20 tricks he is comfortable with. He can keep a group of kids excited for 15 to 25 minutes or until his yoyo finger turns blue.

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