**Monday Morning Report**

**August 7, 2006**
To submit comments or items (3 weeks in advance) for this e-newsletter, please contact Vivien Hao, public affairs officer, First 5 LA at vhao@first5la.org or (213) 482-7563.

**Subscribe**  **Past Issues**  **Forward**

**IN THIS ISSUE**

Kindergarten Academy

Children's Park

Medical Van

Terri Nishimura Champion Profile

Evie's Desk

**CALENDAR**

August 19, 1 p.m.-6 p.m.: **Family Day**, presented by KCET-TV at 4401 Sunset Blvd., LA. Call (323) 953-5202.

August 19, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.: **Obesity Awareness Family Health Fair and Soccer Tournament** at MacArthur Park, 2230 W. 6th St, LA 90057 sponsored by State Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez. Call David Meza at (213) 620-6319.

August 19 & 20, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. **Health and Fitness Expo** at the LA Convention Center, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., 1201 S. Figueroa St., LA 90015. Free health screenings, entertainment, cooking demonstrations. Call (603) 929-7494.

**KTTV FOX 11 PREVIEW**

**Ensuring Kids Are Kindergarten-Ready Topic of “Good Beginnings” This Week**

What do children need to know to be ready for kindergarten? How can parents help them get ready well before the first day of school?

Viewers will find out Thursday and Friday as First 5 LA and KTTV Fox 11 present “Ready for School,” this week's installment of the TV news series, “Good Beginnings” on children’s early learning, health, and safety.

The videotaped segment, which will air Thursday 8-9 a.m. and 10-11 p.m., features preschoolers at LAUSD’s Queen Anne Place Ready for School Center in West LA.

Here, moms and dads go to class too in a four-week Kindergarten Academy, designed to prepare parents and children for kindergarten success.

On Friday, 8-9 a.m., an early learning expert, live at KTTV Fox studios, will give tips to parents about how to create everyday learning opportunities for youngsters.

"Parents’ involvement in children's education is a good predictor of academic success—and early learning can take place during daily household routines," said Nikki Dana, coordinator of Kindergarten Academy.

For tips and information about this segment and the series, visit www.first5la.org.

**Rosewood Community Park Creates Urban Retreat for Children and Families**

Marcia Lopez was so thrilled when First 5 LA funded a Children’s Bureau project to build a small playground on the property of the Rosewood United Methodist Church that she joined a parent group called Community in Action (CIA) to maintain the playground.

That group was recently awarded a $10,000 Community Beautification grant by the City of Los Angeles to expand the playground.

Last week, Lopez and more than 100 other community members beamed with pride as civic leaders led a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the new Rosewood Community Park in East Hollywood.
August is Time for Kids To Get Ready For Kindergarten

The more leisurely pace of summer is a good time for parents and caregivers to start to incorporate early learning into everyday activities.

A trip to the supermarket or even walking up and down stairs can turn into a fun lesson in counting, identifying colors, or reading letters.

Here’s a quick skills checklist to identify whether your child is kindergarten-ready, and where some extra help is needed:

- **Fine motor skills**: puts together a 10-piece puzzle, holds safety scissors correctly, holds pencil or crayon properly
- **Gross motor skills**: runs, jumps, skips, walks backward, walks up and down stairs
- **Social skills**: Speaks clearly in complete sentences, plays with others, expresses feelings and needs, follows simple directions, asks questions, waits turn and shares, says “please” and “thank you”
- **Academic skills**: Recognizes shapes/colors/sizes, identifies major body parts, counts to 10, recognizes written name, knows full name, address, telephone number, knows parents’ names, knows own age

Remember, there’s no substitute for spending time talking and sharing experiences with your child—everything you do now will reap rewards later.

---

“We live in an apartment with no yard, and there’s no other place nearby where I can walk or where my kids can play safely,” Lopez said. “This is a retreat for our whole family, where we feel safe and can have fun.”

CIA members include parents from the Children’s Bureau Oakwood School Readiness Program, as well as parents from nearby Alexandria Elementary School.

Each weekday, parents patrol the area and make sure the gated park is secured after closing at 6 p.m. The creation of the park was supported by the Rampart Division of the Los Angeles Police Department, Special Planning Area 4, Los Angeles City Council President Eric Garcetti, and Robert DeLeon.

Children’s Bureau helps 12,000 families each year throughout Southern California with school readiness, parenting, family resource, mental health, foster care, and adoption services.

For information, call Amy Schwartz at Children’s Bureau, (323) 906-1825, x 201.

---

**GRANTEE PROFILE**

**El Proyecto del Barrio Medical Van Brings Health Care to Families In Need**

When 4-year-old Saul Moreno needed his annual checkup and vaccinations for preschool, his mother, Claudia Batres of Huntington Park, had trouble getting transportation to a doctor’s office.

But thanks to the El Proyecto del Barrio Mobile Unit, a fully-equipped medical office on wheels came right to the Head Start Center in her neighborhood.

There, Saul was among more than a dozen children who received free vision, dental, and health exams, along with his shots.

“Many of our low-income families don’t have cars or health insurance for their children,” said Jose Zuazua, program manager for the East LA satellite clinic and mobile unit.

“By locating our medical van at child care centers, preschools, health fairs, churches, public parks, and supermarkets, we’re able to bring care to children who need it most,” he added.

The Arleta-based El Proyecto del Barrio has served San Fernando Valley families for more than 30 years, but only opened its East LA clinic four years ago when it received a five-year grant from First 5 LA.

To serve families throughout southeast LA County, the mobile unit was purchased and outfitted as a medical office. Last year, it served nearly 650 children under 5 years old.

After a routine physical by a bilingual physician’s assistant, children are treated for minor medical or dental problems right in the mobile unit.

Other more serious problems may be referred to East LA clinic or other providers for dental or mental health services.
CHAMPION PROFILE

Terri Chew Nishimura Develops Therapeutic Programs For Children

Champion Profile features individuals who exemplify First 5 LA's tagline: “Champions for Our Children.”

Terri Chew Nishimura is director of program development and a founding director of the nonprofit children's research, education and therapy center, Pediatric Therapy Network in Torrance.

Each week, the center provides physical, occupational, speech, and education therapy to 1,200 children, including infants and toddlers in its Leaps and Bounds early intervention program for special needs.

Nishimura serves on the Los Angeles County Policy Roundtable for Child Care Commission and co-chairs LA County's Education Coordinating Council's Early Childhood Education work group.

She chairs the nonprofit coalition of the Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce, on whose board she has served since 2002.

With a BS from UC Davis and MS in occupational therapy from USC, Nishimura has been a volunteer clinical faculty member for USC's Department of Occupational Therapy since 1989.

Which book has most influenced your life?
Sensory Integration and the Child by Dr. A. Jean Ayres, PhD.

Which historical figure do you most admire?
Eleanor Roosevelt who shaped expectations and created policy changes that resulted in critical social reforms.

What is your favorite way to spend time with an important child or children in your life?
I love to play and hang out at So Cal amusement parks with my two sons, Kenji, 12, and Kyle, 8.

What is your idea of a perfect world?
It would be where everyone could respect and trust each other through open communication.

What is the greatest challenge faced by children and families of LA County?
There are three: health care, education, and high quality child care.

Who was your favorite teacher?
Dr. A. Jean Ayres, who taught me to look at children in a unique way.

What is your motto?
"Have fun!"