



DECEMBER 2020

## GREETINGS FROM OUR COMMITTEE

Hello Everyone and 2020/21 greetings to you from your International Young Children Committee. Our holiday celebrations with COVID-19 stipulations have undoubtedly changed but our young children remain our most important assets. Your committee has been working to secure a young children liaison in each district in North America so that communication can be ongoing with you. Out of our 53 districts, we now have 19 districts that have an appointed or elected young children chairperson and each of these 19 districts has a liaison representing the International Young Children Committee. As district governors continue to appoint a young children chairperson, we will assign a liaison from our committee. We hope this can continue to grow internationally as well.



Barbara Day



Kelly Boswell

Our new Strategic Plan (your liaison will send this to you) directs us to communicate monthly in a variety of ways, including a Bi-Monthly Newsletter featuring a project idea for your club (like the one in this publication by Ava Adams), our facebook page, Project Resource Guidebook, updates, and more.

Barbara Day and Kelly Boswell, Co-Chairs

### IMPORTANT DATES

**World Aids Day (UN)**

December 1

**Human Rights Day (UN)**

December 10

**Global Family Day (UN)**

January 1

**Family Literacy Day (Canada)**

January 27

**Street Children's Day (Austria)**

January 31



**Kiwanis**  
COMMITTEE ON YOUNG CHILDREN

## FEATURED PROJECT: READING CORNERS

Reading Corners in a venue in your community are a perfect fit with Kiwanis' Young Children program. Set up is a relatively low cost project (\$200 or less) and can have a huge impact for local families and young children. Once set up, you may find that your local library will supply your club with gently used books, or club members and friends can be asked to donate gently used books to replenish the supply of books. What better way to change a child's life, than to promote literacy and the love and joy of reading!

### WHY ESTABLISH A READING CORNER?

1. Almost 60% of children entering kindergarten are not prepared. They have not had access to letters, numbers and colors. This number is increasing with the covid-19 pandemic and the closure of preschool facilities and childcare programs.
2. Parents spend time with their young children doing necessary chores at community venues. This time provides a wonderful opportunity for families to spend quality time reading with appropriate books for young children to enjoy.
3. The interaction at laundromats or other venues can promote not only basic literacy but also early math and science concepts that build different parts of the brain and complementary skill sets.
4. These reading corners are also attractive for venues because they set them apart from other competitors, offer a resource for customers, demonstrate their involvement in the community and engage children in productive activities.



### MATERIALS NEEDED

Each corner would consist of an attractive book holder; a rug that promotes letters, numbers and geometric shapes (if space allows); and books that parents can use in the moment. Books can be provided in various languages to meet the needs of the community. Kiwanis Clubs need to contact the laundromat owner personally and encourage them to participate. In addition to laundromats, try one of these venues to partner with: health care facilities, barbershops, hair salons, credit unions, and family court facilities.

You can get inexpensive new books several ways. One of these is through [www.FirstBook.org](http://www.FirstBook.org). This organization sells new, quality books at very low cost – ordinarily you would need to be approved as an organization that serves disadvantaged children.

*(Continued on next page)*



# YOUNG CHILDREN: UPDATE

*(Continued from previous page)*

Other options recommended by other Kiwanis members are companies such as Reading Warehouse or Books-a-Million or Scholastic Literacy. A month's supply of books can cost from \$0 to about \$50. Books must not have religious, political or controversial themes, should include math/science topics, and should feature diverse characters in terms of race, ethnicity, physical ability, etc. Sponsors can also get used books through donations from employees or civic groups, as well as purchased at thrift stores, libraries, etc. The venue owner and Kiwanis are responsible for any liability coverage or issues.

## DO YOU HAVE A GREAT PROJECT IDEA THAT BENEFITS YOUNG CHILDREN?

Please submit your project to the Kiwanis International Committee on Young Children:  
[youngchildren@kiwanis.org](mailto:youngchildren@kiwanis.org).

## COMMITTEE UPDATE

“Dr. Wil” Blechman who is a Past Kiwanis International President and often called, “Mr. Young Children”, has been a major voice on behalf of young children. Wil has moved on to various roles in Kiwanis, but will always remain an important part of our service to the youngest among us. We are grateful for his stellar contributions and send him our very best wishes. We would also like to thank Karen Mancuso, soon to become First Lady of Kiwanis, for her service on our committee.

We would like to welcome our new co-chair, Kelly Boswell, from the Illinois-E. Iowa District, as well as Koji “George” Yoshida from Japan. Both are past Kiwanis Governors.

Never more important than now, *Kiwanis needs Kids* and *Kids need Kiwanis*. Our committee members have all been voices for children in many arenas; we value serving you and the children.

### **Kiwanis International Committee on Young Children**

Barbara Day, Carolinas, Co-Chair  
Kelly Boswell, Illinois-Eastern Iowa, Co-Chair  
Ava Adams, New England and Bermuda  
Beth Kindschi, Wisconsin-Upper Michigan  
Alan Penn & Jeri Penn, Ohio  
Linda and Steve Steinbrunner, Ohio  
Kevin Thomas, Pennsylvania  
Jennifer Wolff, Capital  
Koji “George” Yoshida, Japan  
Pam Norman & Elizabeth Warren, Staff

