

NEWS SHEET

VOLUME 81 • NUMBER 2

SPRING 2009

THE MAGAZINE OF THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF BIRMINGHAM

INSIDE

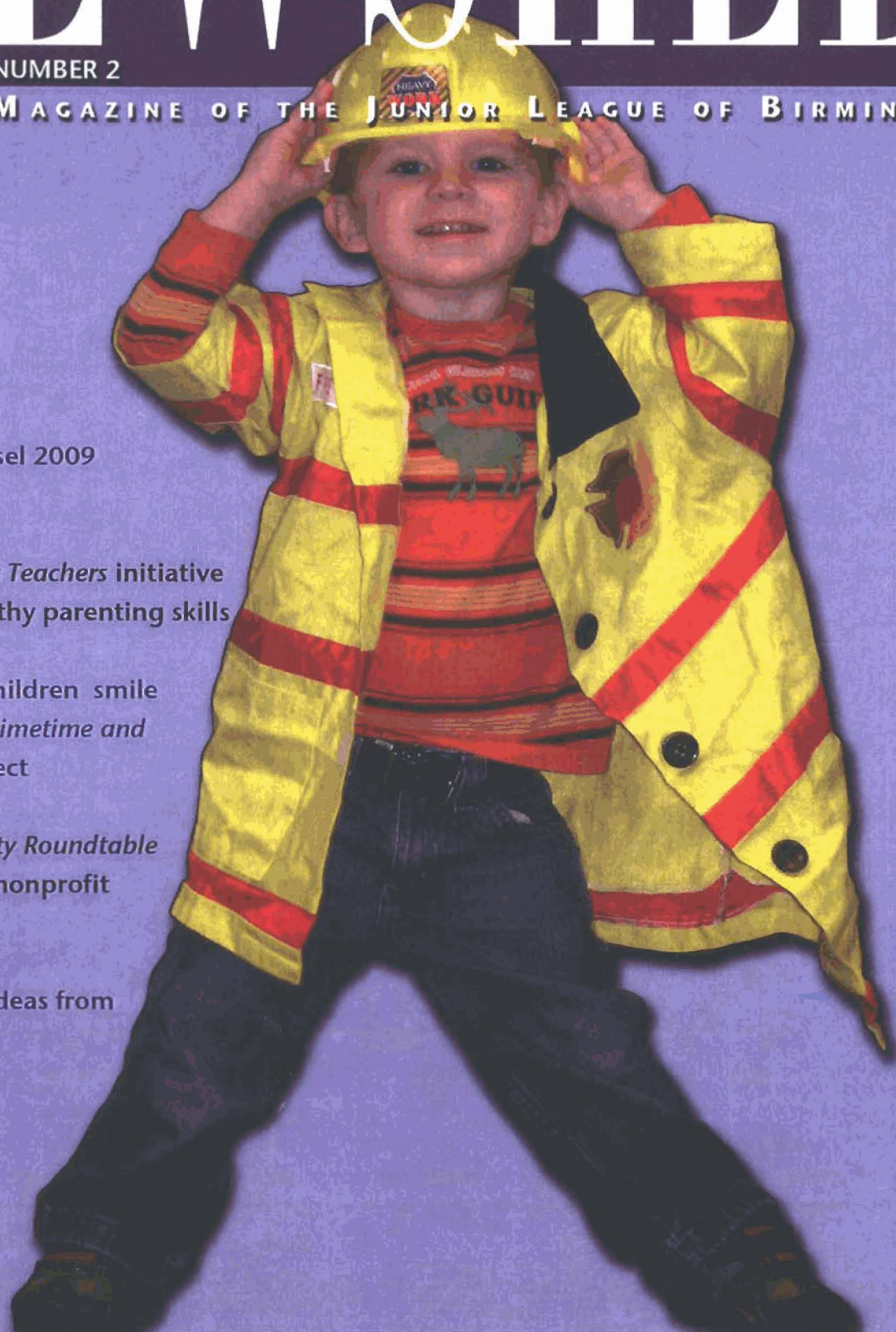
Bargain Carousel 2009
We Can Do It!

JLB's *Parents As Teachers* initiative
addresses healthy parenting skills

Hospitalized children smile
through our *Primetime and
Weekends* project

JLB's *Community Roundtable*
supports area nonprofit
agencies

Spring menu ideas from
JLB cookbooks
Yummy!

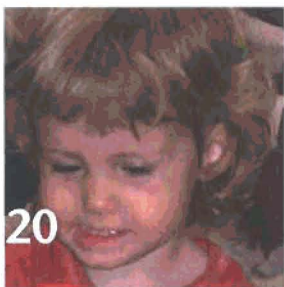


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Building Partnerships for a Better Birmingham

The Junior League of Birmingham, Inc. is an organization of over 2,700 women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.

About the cover: A little boy plays dress-up while participating in JLB's 1.2.3 PLAY WITH ME PROGRAM

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FAMILY PLACE LIBRARIES™

JLB'S 1,2,3 PLAY WITH ME PROGRAM

WRITTEN BY MELANIE GRANT

create



A GRANDMOTHER PLAYS WITH HER GRAND-DAUGHTER IN THE PUPPET CENTER AT THE AVONDALE LIBRARY.



TRANSFORMING LIBRARIES INTO WELCOMING SPACES FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

“Since becoming a Family Place Library, our library looks different, sounds different and feels different,” said a participating Family Place coordinator who was recently asked how this program changed the face of her facility. “The training has provided us with a springboard, propelling us into creating new programs and partnerships and acquiring new resources for our community.”

The Junior League of Birmingham is entering its second year of involvement

in Family Place Libraries™ and the *1,2,3 Play With Me* Program. This program is an organized play and learning time which includes educational events and early childhood materials and manipulatives within the Birmingham Public Library system. The five-week *1,2,3 Play With Me* program involves toddlers and their parents or caregivers and features local professionals such as speech pathologists, nutritionists, child development specialists, music and movement specialists and more who serve as resources for parents or caregivers. This program emphasizes the role of parents as the first teachers of their children facilitates early intervention and teaches strategies for healthy child development and early literacy.

Birmingham Public Library is proud to be the first library system in Alabama to implement the Family Place Libraries™ model. The target popula-

tion of this program is families of children aged one to three in the Avondale, North Avondale, Huffman, Center Point and Roebuck neighborhoods. According to recent census information, there are over 16,000 children under the age of five living in Birmingham and 25% of Birmingham households are headed by single mothers. This program offers training and materials to participating families so they can prepare their children for a lifetime of learning and reading.

In addition to organizing the *1,2,3 Play With Me* program, JLB volunteers also created the physical space within each library where young children and their parents or caregivers can play and learn together. One new resident in the Avondale community said, “I brought my two-year old to the Avondale Library for the first time after moving into the neighborhood last year and

OPPOSITE: JESSIE AND HER FATHER PRE-TEND TO MAIL LETTERS IN THE DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER AT THE NORTH BIRMINGHAM LIBRARY.

Community Projects: 1, 2, 3 Play with Me



Create. Change. Thrive.

"There is not only an educational benefit for the children, but there is also a distinct social benefit for the children and their parents as well as a community-strengthening support system."

HOLLY MEADOWS, CO-CHAIR OF 1,2,3 PLAY WITH ME

was thrilled with all the amazing activities and toys it offered. We also participated in the *1,2,3 Play With Me* program and were impressed with the materials and projects we were given to take home. We worked on them together and were excited to come back the next week to see what new activity we would be able to do!"

Junior League of Birmingham's *1,2,3 Play With Me* Co-Chair Holly Meadows explained: "The benefits we are seeing from the Family Place Libraries™ are multi-faceted for the participants served. There is not only an educational benefit for the children, but there is also a distinct social benefit for the children and their parents as well as a community-strengthening support system."



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WHAT IS A FAMILY PLACE LIBRARY?

BASED ON A MODEL OF COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY-CENTERED SERVICES, A FAMILY PLACE LIBRARY™ IS A CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD INFORMATION, PARENT EDUCATION, EARLY LITERACY, SOCIALIZATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT. EXPANDING THE TRADITIONAL ROLE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES, FAMILY PLACE BUILDS ON THE KNOWLEDGE THAT GOOD HEALTH, EARLY LEARNING, PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN YOUNG CHILDREN'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

FAMILY PLACE LIBRARIES™ IS A JOINT INITIATIVE OF MIDDLE COUNTRY PUBLIC LIBRARY (MCPL) AND LIBRARIES FOR THE FUTURE (LFF), THE PROGRAM ARM OF THE NATIONAL NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, AMERICANS FOR LIBRARIES COUNCIL.