



# Young Horizons

Child Development Centers

www.younghorizons.org

Fall 2020

## “Educate Early”

### Read to Me

#### Volunteer readers answer the call

In the middle of March, the now-familiar novel Coronavirus struck, causing massive closures and shut downs across our state. Young Horizons pivoted quickly to provide instruction to children through distance learning. Staff learned how to use Zoom and connected with our children.

This is when we had a wonderful idea. We asked our community to join in the reading fun with the Read to Me program. We asked volunteers to record themselves reading a book that we then shared with children, families and our community on FaceBook. We were so grateful and overwhelmed by the response. Readers of all ages joined in the fun and shared videos of themselves reading to our children. The

videos were shared with parents for their children to enjoy reading time at home.

A heartfelt thank you to all participants who helped us reach a total of 32 videos: *Ajala, age 11; Christina Nigrelli; Debbie Whittaker; Esmeralda Duenas; Jodi Morinaka; Justin Rudd; Katie Larson; Lucia, age 7; Maria Liveratos (Gragson); Matthew, age 8; Michael, age 6; Nyssea, with special guest Ms. Hazelnut the horse; Ozma Dalton, Little Miss Long Beach 2020; Pat Paris; Rae Jillian Rivera, Miss Long Beach 2020; Rick Pinson; Sarah George; Sarah Soriano; Shyanne Harrison and Joanne Ruder; Staci Loveridge; Tamara Trujillo; and Teacher Valerie.*

View the videos on our [FaceBook page](#).



Ozma Dalton, Little Miss Long Beach 2020 Nyssea and special guest, Ms. Hazelnut



Katie Larson Michael, age 6

## COVID-19

### Meeting public health guidelines to keep families and staff safe



PPE equipment keeps staff safe



Masking tape shows children the required physical distance



Individual supplies for each child

In the early days of the pandemic, regulatory agencies such as the LA County Public Health Department, the Community Care Licensing Division of the CA Department of Social Services and the Long Beach Health and Human Services Department issued multiple guidance and regulation documents giving us instructions and guidelines on how to re-open our centers to safely serve children and families.

We took all precautionary safety measures to protect our staff, children and families. All staff were required to take COVID-19 training on safety measures and basic information that was known at the time of the virus. All staff and children 2 years of age and older were required to wear face coverings. Sanitizing measures were increased to multiple times per day to clean and disinfect highly-touched surfaces. Everyone's temperature was taken upon entering the center and children were monitored throughout the day for fever. Children were kept in their own group and did not mix with other groups or teachers. No one with any respiratory symptoms was allowed to enter the

centers. Parents no longer enter the center to drop off their children. Staff escort children from the entrance door to their classroom.

Food service was changed from family-style eating to individually served meals. The kitchen staff prepared meals in individual to-go containers. Milk cartons substituted pitchers of milk.

We closed our centers on March 18 and re-opened May 4th to serve Essential Workers only; 66 children and 40 staff returned. In June, when things started opening once again, we brought back an additional 84 children for a total of 160 children currently being served. We are grateful that, to date, there have only been three positive COVID-19 cases, and those were from outside of our centers. The cleaning, sanitizing and safety protocols are working.

This pandemic has brought our staff together to work towards keeping children safe. Our board stepped in to provide leadership and guidance. The commitment and dedication of our staff and board has been evident. For this, we are grateful.

## Executive Director Message



**Strong Together**

The world is not the same as what we have ever known. Since the pandemic caused shut-downs across our country in March, we have been living a very strange “new normal.” We have faced difficult and challenging times and we have made it through. We have come together stronger and continue our important work.

Our theme for this year is Hope. I was recently asked what I would consider the silver lining of this pandemic. Seeing our board, staff and community come together and support us has been heartwarming and reinvigorating. During some of the most difficult days, I found a renewed sense of hope. Hope for our programs—the board provided leadership and guidance, staff worked together on the difficult task of re-opening the centers to serve children. They demonstrated a true commitment to families and children. I am profoundly grateful.

We are not in the clear with this virus but we know we are strong and we have made it thus far. We will continue our important work of preparing children for the future.

  
Sarah M. Soriano  
Executive Director

## Graduations

### Drive-through celebrations mark important milestone

Even though we could not celebrate the important milestone for our graduates this spring, we were able to hold “drive-through” graduations at our centers.

A preschool graduation is important for several reasons. First, it shows children the importance of marking accomplishments and celebrating as they are reached. Second, children have worked hard at play to reach the developmental levels to prepare them for lifelong learning and this is acknowledged when they are celebrated. Third, it teaches children that education is important and we celebrate this significant moment. Children gain a sense of pride

and accomplishment as they see their family take pictures and celebrate them for this first of many accomplishments in their life.

Each center prepared their unique “graduation backdrop” and children arrived—socially distanced—and walked up to receive their Preschool Certificate and have their picture taken.

We appreciate all our families who were very understanding and cooperative in this new process. Also, a heartfelt thank you to all our teaching staff for all their hard work in making this celebration a wonderful experience for children and families.



## Long Beach Gives

### Donors make a difference to Long Beach Nonprofits

Young Horizons was honored to be selected to participate in Long Beach Gives 2020. This was a 24-hour online giving day that took place on 9/24/2020. The goal of this giving day is to inspire individuals and businesses in our community to come together to make a difference for 154 participating Long Beach nonprofits. The overall fundraising goal set for this year was \$1 million to support nonprofits in Long Beach. This goal was surpassed with a total \$1,776,823 raised for 154 nonprofit organization.

We are grateful for our donors who helped us raise \$4,963 to support Young Horizons' programs. It warmed our heart to see our community, board, parents and staff giving and supporting us. Thank you to all.

Phil and Pat Appleby  
Lizette Borboa  
Andrea Carrasco  
Sandra Diaz  
Anna Garcia  
Kristian Gragson  
Mark gray  
Frank Gutierrez  
Danita Humphrey  
Brenda Ibarra  
Lailanie Jones  
Elia Kolp  
Elizabeth Krummell

Katherine Larson  
Abigail Mejia  
Sonnoya Meloncon  
Patricia Miller  
Jake Mooney  
Dinora Navarro  
Christina Nigrelli  
Eric Ochoa  
Estrella O'Dierno  
Gerardo Perez-Martinez  
Jessica Ponce  
Daniel Ramirez  
Saul Ramirez-Rodriguez

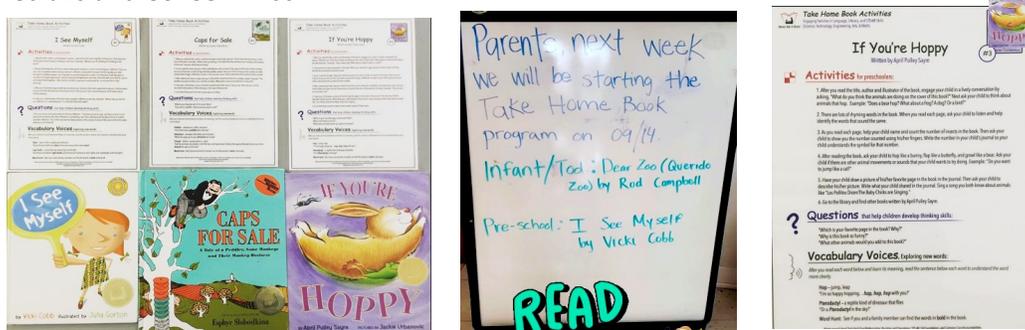
Gladys Rodriguez  
Angelica Romero  
Roger Scott  
Karissa Selvester  
Allison Slay  
Miriam Soriano  
Sarah Soriano  
Misi Tagalao  
Larry and Colleen Triesch  
Danielle Triplet  
Jeff Williams  
Ron Whittaker  
4 anonymous donors

## Take Home Book Program

*Reading at home continues*

Our Take Home Book Program had to be revised to accommodate the new restrictions due to the pandemic. This program is a great way to share the joy of reading while children are at home. The program originally involved sending home book bags with books, reading prompt questions for parents, and a journal every week. But, to reduce the risk of spreading germs, we modified the program so children can still enjoy the books, parents can use the prompts, and share their journal entries on social media parent pages.

Teachers are now reading the books in the classroom with the children who are present. For children distance learning at home, teachers post the book title, author and illustrator and, if possible, a YouTube video link of the book being read on the individual centers' closed social media parent pages. Prompt question cards are also posted or the questions are typed out. The journals have been sent home for children to keep and parents are invited to share pictures or journal entries. We are grateful for the continued partnership with Bring me A Book Foundation and their dedicated staff, Dale Petrulis and Colleen Trisch.



### **SAVE THE DATE:** **Center Closures**

Centers will be closed to observe the following holidays and special events:

- 11/26-27 Thanksgiving & Day after
- 12/23-25 Christmas Break
- 12/31/2020 - 1/1/2021 New Years

### **PARENTS SHARE WITH US**

We asked our parents to share what Young Horizons means to them. Here are some of their responses:

"I love all the staff at Young Horizons. All my three children have attended. Teachers are always loving and caring. I feel that my child is safe and well taken care of."

*"Muchas gracias por la buena atención y cariño brindado a mi hijo y hacia nosotros."* (Thank you for the great attention and care given to my son and to us)

"Every single teacher from North Pacific have done such a great job."

"The receptionist is amazing and infant staff are great with babies. Everyone has always been so helpful and understanding. The site supervisor is also someone I can trust and approach anytime."

"All the Grisham employees are excellent, friendly and lovable to all the children, and my son loves them."

"The site supervisor has the best communication skills, makes you feel comfortable talking to her and is very helpful. All staff is very friendly."

"Everyone is amazing."

## Long Beach Camerata Singers Music Program

*COVID-19 did not stop the music*



Early in the year, we planned to bring a wonderful music program with the Long Beach Camerata Singers (LBCS) to provide basic music instruction to our children. When the pandemic hit, we quickly converted the plan to a virtual program, piloting it at our Kohn Center first.

We held three workshops with 40 preschool children. Next we will offer it to our Grisham and North Pacific children. The program introduces vocabulary words such as melody, tone, and pitch. Mr. Joe used Row, Row, Row Your Boat as a theme for the workshops. A big-screen television with built-in camera and microphone was donated by LBCS for the Zoom lessons. At the end of the program, the LB Camerata Singers provided a performance for the children.



In the future, we will incorporate kazoos, shakers, and other musical instruments to augment the learning. The goal of this program is to provide music enrichment to children who may not have this opportunity. Also, it helps us enhance our teaching because it fits perfectly with our curriculum framework and the CA Learning Foundations.

In a follow up email, Mr. Joe reported, "Everything went so well, and without a hitch! It seems the technology we set up was very easy to use. The kids were quite responsive to the workshops and the accompanying performance."

Thank you Long Beach Camerata Singers for bringing music to our children through this wonderful program and generous donation.





**Young Horizons**  
 Child Development Centers  
 501 Atlantic Avenue  
 Long Beach, CA 90802

Address Service Requested

2019-2020  
 ANNUAL REPORT  
 ENCLOSED

To our friend (s):

«First Name» «Last Name»  
 «Title»  
 «Organization / Company»  
 «Address»  
 «City, State, Zip Code»

**ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE**  
 Please email us at [info@younghorizons.org](mailto:info@younghorizons.org) if you prefer to connect electronically.

**Our mission is to provide quality childcare and preschool programs in a caring, loving and learning environment.**

Young Horizons is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization serving children in Long Beach. Donations are tax deductible to the limit allowed by law.



**Board of Directors**

**Founders:**

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- Axel Dubon
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- Abigail Mejia
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- Christina Nigrelli
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**Advisory Board**

- Dr. Martha Bernadett
- Katie Larson
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- Michael Mais
- Glenn Ray
- Roland Spongberg
- Ed Sudario
- Ron Whittaker

*Serving 416 children in five Long Beach locations  
 (pre-COVID-19)*

**Kohn Center/Main Office**

501 Atlantic Ave.

**North Pacific Center**

2418 Pacific Ave.

**Grisham Center**

11 A W. 49th St.

**Central Pacific Center**

1840 Pacific Ave.

**Ludloff Center**

2650 Pacific Ave.

License #198000638

Young Horizons is an equal opportunity provider and employer

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