

Van Nuys Child Care UPDATE

Supervisor Yaroslavsky Hosts Groundbreaking Ceremony for Employee Child Development Center

It was sunny and warm on September 10, 2004, as people gathered at 14350 Sylvan Street in the Van Nuys Civic Center. Zev Yaroslavsky, County of Los Angeles Supervisor representing the Third District, welcomed everyone to the future site of the Van Nuys Civic Center Employee Child Development Program. Supervisor Yaroslavsky noted that quality child care services are critically important to children, parents, and employers. He was enthusiastic in describing how this project would promote school readiness among participating children; boost the workplace productivity of their parents; and support the County's commitment to service excellence. Acknowledging the work of his talented staff in developing the Van Nuys Child Development Center, Supervisor Yaroslavsky noted that this is the first newly constructed County employee child care center to be built from the ground-up.

Los Angeles City Council Member Wendy Gruel addressed the gathering and complimented Supervisor Yaroslavsky's leadership on this project. Speaking from her own experience as the working mother of a toddler, Council member Gruel stressed the importance of high-quality and accessible child care services. Arlene Rhine, representing the County Policy Roundtable for Child Care, thanked Supervisor Yaroslavsky for his vision and tenacity, the combination of which was needed to move this project from concept to reality. Ms. Rhine also praised the participating County departments



Arlene Rhine, Policy Roundtable for Child Care; Supervisor Yaroslavsky; and Wendy Gruel, Los Angeles City Council Member.

who made a commitment to support the program's operation and a scholarship fund. The scholarship fund will ensure that services are accessible to a broad spectrum of families. Following these remarks, shovels were distributed and the ground was broken! Bryce Yokomizo, Director of the County Department of Public Social Services; Amaryllis Watkins, Bureau Chief with the County Department of Children and Family Services; and Sandy Lacey, District Administrator with the Superior Court, joined Supervisor Yaroslavsky and members of the Third District staff in celebrating the beginning of the center's construction.

Also on hand to thank Supervisor Yaroslavsky for his work on this project, were: Katrin Aslanian-Vartan, Analyst with the Chief Administrative Office; Maggie Estrada, District Representative for Senator Richard Alarcon; Captain James A. Miller, Commanding Officer for the Los Angeles Police Department/Van Nuys area; Alycia Seaman, Field Representative for Assemblymember Lloyd E. Levine; William Villamil, Deputy Sheriff; Lari Sheehan, Assistant Administrative Officer with the Chief Administrative Office; Laura Zucker, Executive Director with the County Arts Commission; John Bwarie, Deputy for Mayor James K. Hahn; Nadia Varela, Human Services Administrator with the Department of Public Social Services; Bill Weiss, Head Deputy with the Public Defender's Office, Van Nuys Branch; and Michael Hoff, Assistant Supervising Judge with the Los Angeles Superior Court.



Construction Update

Despite the early rains, work is proceeding on the construction of the Van Nuys Child Development Center. In fact, more work has been completed than meets the eye, including the installation of underground pipes and site grading. Paul Greenwood, from the County Department of Public Works, reported that before the Christmas holiday, the excavation for the foundation will be completed and the slab will be poured!



Supporting County Departments

The Superior Court and the following County Departments will be supporting the operations of the Van Nuys Civic Center Child Development Center, which is scheduled to open in the fall of 2005:

- Children and Family Services
- District Attorney
- Probation
- Public Defender
- Public Social Services

If you need child care immediately, you can:

- Contact the Child Care Resource Center for child care referrals, at (878) 256-1000;
- Go to <http://childcare.co.la.ca.us> for information on licensed child care options; and/or
- Go to www.lacountychildcare.org for information on child care for County employees.



Wendy Aron, Deputy to Supervisor Yaroslavsky, and daughter Eliana at the groundbreaking.

Coming Soon to the Van Nuys Civic Center

The Van Nuys Civic Center Child Development Program is scheduled to open in the fall of 2005. Employees of the participating County departments will have priority for enrolling their children in the facility, which will operate Monday through Friday, from approximately 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Services will be available year round.

While the County has developed eight other child care programs for its employees, the Van Nuys site will be the first facility involving new construction from the ground-up. The facility will include 7,125 square feet of indoor space, and is expected to be licensed to serve approximately 70 children ranging in age from six weeks to six years. The facility will also include a 6,923 square-foot playground that will be landscaped. Both the indoor and outdoor areas will be designed to accommodate infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

The process to identify a program operator will begin early 2005. Child development organizations will be invited to respond to a formal request for proposal. A committee, including representatives of the participating departments, will review the proposals, and conduct interviews and site visits to determine which operator can provide the highest quality of service at a fair price to employees in the Van Nuys Civic Center.