



## Bulwell Toy Library awarded funding to continue successful children's service

The Bulwell Community Toy Library in Bulwell, Nottingham has been awarded £25,000 to continue its highly successful Language Through Toys and Play service by a UK charitable trust.

Staff and volunteers at the toy library are understandably over the moon at the news that this unique project can keep going for another year.

Language Through Toys and Play has been running for 11 years and uses play to encourage children under 5 years of age to talk and communicate, especially children with mild speech and language difficulties and delays.

Via the service, specially trained staff from the toy library work with families in their own homes, using simple games and play techniques to encourage children to talk, think, communicate and use their imagination.

By intervening early in this way, the service tackles potential problems from the word go, which means that many children don't need specialist support later on, from a speech therapist for example. It also helps children to get the most out of pre-school and school activities, including social skills such as making friends.

The service has proved highly successful and families are often referred to it by their health visitor or Children's Centre for instance.

Parents and carers can also contact the service directly, on behalf of their children.

### **Steve Parkinson, Project Manager at the toy library explains:**

*"It's naturally very worrying for parents if their children seem behind other children when it comes to talking.*

*In many cases though, there's no physical or medical reason for children not talking, they simply need a little extra support and encouragement.*

*The Language Through Toys and Play service offers this support, in families own homes, so it's very convenient and practical for parents. Plus of course, children feel relaxed and comfortable because they're in familiar surroundings.*

*The service has been running for over a decade now and is well respected and trusted by local people. It would have been heart-breaking to see it close so this new funding is very, very welcome."*

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**A parent whose child has benefited from the service says:**

*"My son wasn't talking as well as we thought he should for his age so the Health Visitor suggested Language Through Toys & Play. It was a real help and when he started school they couldn't believe he'd ever had speech problems and he wasn't behind the others in class."*

**Steve concludes:**

*"Last year we brought over £100,000 worth of funding into Nottingham, every penny of which goes on providing much-needed children's services.*

*The vast majority of these services are free to local families.*

*With this new funding we'll be able to help even more children, which is great."*

The charitable trust awarding the money said that they preferred not to be named as they are not looking for publicity for themselves.

They were happy to support the toy library after hearing about the services it provided to families in Nottingham, including Language Through Toys and Play.

**To find out more please call Steve Parkinson on 0115 975 3898  
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