

For Immediate Release
January 20, 2011

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Great Photo Opportunities

**TINY TOTS PLAYSCAPE OPENS AT
EL NIDO EARLY HEAD START FAMILY CENTER IN SOUTH LOS ANGELES
-- BUILT PARADISE AND TORE DOWN A PARKING LOT--**

(Long Angeles, CA) Tiny Tots will now have a safe place to run and play outdoors in the heart of South Los Angeles. A ceremonial ribbon cutting on Saturday, January 22, at 12 noon, is set for the grand opening of El Nido Early Head Start Family Center's "Tiny Tots Playscape."

Many of the young children in the area live in small over-crowded households with multiple families and are often not allowed to play outside because of neighborhood safety concerns. This naturally impairs their motor development as well as contributes to the child obesity epidemic our community and nation are facing.

El Nido Family Centers realized the need for these children (3 months to 3 years) to connect with nature. They knew the space had to be as natural as possible. Using a reclaimed parking lot in the front of the Center on Manchester Boulevard, El Nido built paradise and took down a parking lot!

After many meetings with playground developers, El Nido Early Head Start staff and parents compiled a wish list that included greenery and challenges in the terrain – hence a slide now sits proudly in a small mountain. The Policy Council wanted a community garden space where children could learn where vegetables and fruit get their start. Now families are learning how to grow their own vegetables in pots and raised beds. Of course, there always has to be a place for art and music, so a water feature offers a splash zone for the toddlers.

Geri Fineroff and Grounds for Play, (groundsforplay.com) developed the Tiny Tots Playscape. Future plans include creating a sensory garden with safe plants for the children to smell and feel the different textures. Now the tots will hear grasses that blow in the breeze. That is Paradise.

El Nido Family Centers, a 501(c) 3 non-profit, is devoted to empowering at-risk children, youth and families in Los Angeles County through education and social services, to overcome trauma, gain self-esteem and achieve their goals. El Nido provides programs that focus on Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment, Family Development and Parenting Education, Teen Parent and Infant Development and Youth Development dealing with Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Delinquency Prevention and Gang Prevention. Started in 1925, it has now grown to serve large parts of Los Angeles County with ten Centers in South Los Angeles, Compton, Carson, Pacoima, Mission Hills, Palmdale and the Pico Corridor of Santa Monica. The staff, serving over 15,000 families a year, reaches out and goes where families need services – to schools, housing projects, health and community centers and the families' homes.
www.elnidofamilycenters.org

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The funding for the Playscape comes from federal ARRA stimulus funding. Early Head Start (EHS) is a federally funded community-based program for low-income families with infants and toddlers and pregnant women. Its mission is simple: to promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women, to enhance the development of very young children, and to promote healthy family functioning.

For press opportunities and additional information, contact E L Doran Public Relations at 818.238.9005 or email elaine@eldoranpr.com.

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