

LITTLE PHOENIX PEOPLE'S VOICES: "What's the one thing you want most for Christmas?"



Therman Greene
"...a jeep..."



Clifton Davis
"...a jump car..."



Peyton Switzer
"...a big water gun like my cousin's..."



Tiffany Walker
"...a doll house..."



Brittany Wilson
"...a 'go-go' doll..."

WSSU Center Cares About Kids

By Patricia Smith-Deering
Phoenix Managing Editor

These four-year-olds have that gleam in their eyes that most children get this time of year. Santa or his designated representative is on his way to make their fondest wishes come true. Recently, they took a brief timeout from their activities at the Winston-Salem State University Early Childhood Center to share their Christmas lists.

The rest of the time, they spend their days with other children, ages 3-5, at the Center in what can best be described as "creative play." Actually, their activities are part of what Center Director, Barbara Richardson, calls a "developmentally- or age-appropriate curriculum." In explaining how activities that seem like play can be instrumental in building feelings or self-esteem and skills like risk-taking, she believes strongly that what children usually get at the preschool level does not foster those traits.

"The 'pushdown curriculum' (from public schools) is inappropriate," Dr. Richardson says.

Continuing, she adds, "Young children do not learn like older children or adults. They can't sit that long." So, what the staff of three teachers and four teacher's aides concentrate on is creative "play" which is specifically designed to include activities that are based on the children's own life experiences.

When you look around the Center, located in the basement of what was the Infirmary on the WSSU campus, you can see various activity areas where children can learn the "three-R" fundamentals as they follow their artistic bent, using art, blocks, toys, and other materials. Dr. Richardson points out the multiple uses that ordinary things can have, when placed in the hands of a child and his or her imagination with a little help from the teacher. For example, you can do all kinds of things with an empty toilet paper roll, according to Dr. Richardson. Putting a child's imagination to work proves that

The WSSU Early Childhood

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Rahni Sumler
"...a Big Bird..."



Emeka Udezulu
"...a red jeep..."



Stephen Walker
"...a Turtle tape..."



Garrison McCormick
"...a Care Bear..."



Sharee Posey
"...A Barbie Sound House..."



Justin Henderson
"...some blocks..."