Hi everyone. My name is Trish and I run your local toy library. Today I want to talk to you all about why you should join the toy library and how to do it.

Let me talk first about why to join the toy library. Playing is such a huge part of child development. We know from many studies that active play is vital for young children to develop their verbal, cognitive and fine motor skills. In other words - to teach them to speak, think and use their chubby little fingers. At the toy library we have lots of toys which can help with all of these skills. I know that one of your questions might be: but those toys are for older kids - two, three or four year old kids. My child is only a few months old! We do have lots of toys for kids who are 2-4 years old, in fact we even have lots of toys for kids in primary school and even board games for kids in high school. But we also have lots of toys for little kids. I've brought some along today to show you.

This toy is called the 'Amaze Curiosity Box': You'll probably get some lift-a-flap books for your baby - they love them. They love to lift up the flaps and feel or see the things underneath. But you know what - babies don't always know how to be gentle. They often tear off the lift-a-flaps straight away. This Curiosity box is like a lift-a-flap book. It has flaps you can lift up, little drawers you can pull out and things you can unscrew. And it's sturdy - very difficult to break. At about six months of age, your child will be able to start using it and they'll have great fun. We've got five different ones at our toy library - all with different things for kids to investigate.

Here's another one of my favourites - it's called the play-mobile. You probably all have mobiles: those things made up of stars, or glittering objects that hang above babies in their pram or cot. They stare at them in a fascinated way. This play mobile is interactive. You can put your baby on their back on the floor and put this above them. They can reach up and move the different objects along and around the mobile exploring and investigating what they do.

You'll notice that both of the toys I've shown you so far are made of wood and natural material. At our toy library we try to buy toys like this so children are interacting with things as natural as possible and not just stuff made of plastic which we know can have toxic elements in them.

So, there are lots of toys your young babies can use at the toy library and as they grow older, you can borrow lots of games, sports equipment and puzzles which will help your child develop those speaking, thinking and movement skills. It's a huge money saver - why keep buying toys when you can borrow them? And we get amazing new toys all the time.

The other important thing I wanted to add about why you should join the toy library is that it keeps kids off iPhones and iPads. I'm sure you've all seen it: kids glued to devices. Watching a bit of TV and playing games on devices can be great for kids - but not all the time. We know that their speaking, thinking and movement skills can really suffer if they spend too much time on devices. Coming to the toy library gets kids hooked on playing with real toys, not virtual ones.

I just want to tell you briefly now about how to join up. I'm handing you out each a pamphlet with our web address and information about the annual fees. To join up, simply visit out site and fill out the form and payment details on the 'join now' link. You'll see that there are two fees: a cheaper one for those of you who want to volunteer once a school

A Ticking Mind Resource
term to help out at the toy library and a more expensive one for those of your who are too busy.

O.k. Now I’m sure you’ve got some questions. Please ask, I’m here to help.

Jeff: Thanks for your talk today, Trish. I’m definitely interested in joining the toy library. With the volunteering, can you choose what days you do it on?

Trish: Thanks for that question. Yes, you’ll be asked to fill in a preference form and you can list three days which best suit. When I get everyone’s forms in, I work out a roster. We’re also flexible - last minute things always come up for people, so we have an email list to help people work out swaps with other parents.

Jeff: Great, thanks Trish.

Trish: Any more questions?

Stephanie: Hi Trish. I just want to ask one question, and I don’t want to sound like a crazy parent, but what do you do to make sure your toys are clean? I mean some of these toys are going to be crawled all over and chomped on by kids.

Trish: Thanks for that question and you’re not being crazy. We all want our kids to be safe and healthy - you’d actually be crazy if you didn’t. We do have a set of rules for cleaning toys when they are checked back in. Toys with green spots - like board games for older kids - don’t need to be cleaned. Toys with red spots - things like play mats or the curiosity box I talked about before - which are for younger kids do need to be cleaned. We’ve got natural cleaning products to wipe down the toys.

Stephanie: Great, thanks for that.

Trish: Looks like there’s no more questions. Well, thanks for your time and I hope to see you soon at the toy library.