



# AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Austin's Largest Bilingual Celebration of Books, Reading, Culture and Family Learning Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros**

Celebrate with us the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros, Austin's largest bilingual celebration of books, reading, culture and family learning. The event will take place on Saturday, April 25, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the St. John Branch Library/Community Center in Northeast Austin (7500 Blessing Ave.).

Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros 2009 will feature entertainment for all ages. There will be performances by children's dance groups and musical groups from around Austin such as Roy Lozano's Ballet Folklorico de Texas, Los Pollitos from Graham Elementary, Pan Am Recreation Center Ballet Folklorico, Rhythmic Force, and others. The event, which is free and open to the public, will also include hands-on educational activities, free books, and snacks and the opportunity to meet Ronald McDonald as well as some of your favorite PBS characters, Clifford the big red dog, Maya and Miguel.

Día de los Niños, or Day of the Child, is an annual celebration throughout Mexico, which recognizes children, pays homage to their importance in society, and endorses their wellbeing. Pat Mora, a Texas native and nationally recognized author of children's books, first heard of this Mexican holiday in 1996. Mora saw a natural link between promoting literacy and supporting the wellbeing of children. After contacting several organizations, including the American Library Association, and engaging the work of individuals and organizations, Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros became a reality on April 30, 1997. This event is now celebrated in numerous libraries and schools throughout the United States.

Austin first celebrated this event in April 1998 and has continued the tradition each year at selected Austin Public Library sites. The goals of the event are: to promote family sharing of books, reading and learning; to increase family awareness of community resources that provide shared literacy/learning opportunities for parents and children; and to celebrate culture and heritage as powerful tools in promoting learning and communication within families.

Austin's Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros event has been honored for its success as an innovative, collaborative community outreach project. It has received several awards: Highsmith Award for community collaboration, Hotho Award for model family literacy outreach, and REFORMA'S Mora Award.

Each year over 2,000 children and their parents attend this unique community celebration and over 4,500 new books are given to children to support reading in the home. This year 40 community organizations and over 100 volunteers will be present to provide activities and information to participants. Please come and join us.

For more information, contact Elva Garza, Austin Public Library- 462-1033, or visit [www.main.org/ninos](http://www.main.org/ninos).

**2009 Collaborative Agencies:**

ACEE ~ AmeriCorps for Community Engagement and Education; Amerigroup; Austin Independent School District Bilingual Education Department; Austin Independent School District Parent Support Office; Austin Parks and Recreation Department ~ Virginia L. Brown Center; Austin Public Library; BESO~Bilingual Education Student Organization of St. Edward's University; Book Spring, El Buen Samaritano, Child Inc.~ Head Start; Community Newstart; Con Mi MADRE; El Consulado General de México; FamilyConnections; Family Resource Center; La Fuente; City of Austin Health and Human Services Department @ St. John; KLRU-PBS; Latinitas; REFORMA, El Corazón de Tejas; Univision Radio; Univision TV.

**2009 Sponsors**

Our Presenting Sponsors this year are ¡Ahora Sí! and the Austin Public Library.

Additional sponsors include: Univision TV; Univision Radio: La Qué Buena 104.3; Hitz 107.7 FM, The Austin Stone Community Church, Child Inc. and McDonalds.

**2009 Participating Agencies**

4H CAPITAL – Travis County, 21<sup>st</sup> Century After School Program @ Pickle, 211 Texas United Way, Amerigroup Corp., ¡Ahora Sí!; Austin Children's Museum; Austin Museum of Art, Austin Nature & Science Center; AmeriCorps for Community Engagement and Education, City of Austin Health and Human Services Department; Badgerdog Literary Publishing; BookSpring; El Buen Samaritano; Catholic Charities of Central Texas; Child Inc.~ Head Start; Communities in Schools ~ ASPIRE; Community New Start; Con Mi MADRE; El Consulado General de México; FamilyConnections; Girl Scouts; Kent Cummins Magic Camp; KIPP Austin College Prep; KLRU-PBS; Latinitas; McDonalds; Partners in Hope; Safer Routes to School; Seton Health Plan CHIP; Shots for Tots/ Big Shots; City of Austin Healthy Neighborhood Unit @ the St. John Community Center; WIC; WorkSource Child Care Solutions; Univision 62; Univision Radio: Hitz 107.7 FM and La Qué Buena 104.3 FM; YHPAA ~Young Hispanic Professional Association of Austin and many more.

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