
EDUCATIONAL TOY FAIR

Lowndes County Valdosta, Georgia

In Lowndes County, the Educational Toy Fair increases parents' awareness of the best available educational toys and products that community stores will offer during the holiday shopping season. The items displayed are not available for purchase, but the participants have the opportunity to try the toys and products.

Planning and coordinating the Educational Toy Fair begins in September, with an actual date of the fair scheduled for early November. Pre-K, EIP, and Title I coordinators contact local Community Partners in Education to display educational materials at the fair. Each coordinator explains the fair to the vendors, receives a verbal response of participation, and follows-up with a confirmation letter. Vendors understand that items are for display only. They each contribute two items to be awarded as door prizes during the event. Coordinators also contact the local newspaper and radio and television stations for media coverage.

The Pre-K, EIP, and Title I programs spend no funds during this event because of donations. The Junior Woman's Club provides face painting for children and gives out balloons. Parents and children enjoy hot dogs and drinks donated by other community partners. And, vendors receive a meal, which is also donated.

The Educational Toy Fair has brought the community closer together during the past four years. Attendance, which is measured by sign-in sheets, has increased and become more widespread throughout the county over the years. The overall enthusiasm and anticipation by the parents and students for the event has increased tremendously.

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