

MEDIA ADVISORY
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LIFETIME OF LEARNING BEGINS WITH DISCOVERY FOR HAWAI'I KEIKI

INPEACE Partners with Children's Discovery Center, Supercuts and Toyota Hawai'i's "On Board for Education" Program for Island Keiki

FREE "DAY OF DISCOVERY" KICKS OFF COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN

Kapolei, Hawai'i – For parents like Jazzery Kauhi, a "Day of Discovery" for her keiki Joshua is a dream come true. Thanks to a partnership between the Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture (INPEACE), the Children's Discovery Center, Supercuts and Toyota Hawai'i, 180 keiki like Joshua will be treated to a free day at the Children's Discovery Center to help them get ready for their first school experience.

WHAT: INPEACE keiki enjoy a day at the Children's Discovery Center; and are presented school supplies and a new haircut to get ready for school starting next week.

WHEN: Saturday, July 28, 2007; 10 am – 1 pm

WHO: Loretta Yajima, Hawai'i Children's Discovery Center
Lance Ichimura, Toyota Hawai'i
INPEACE parents and keiki, including the Kauhi family

VISUALS: Keiki and their parents will engage in learning, and keiki will have the opportunity to socialize with soon-to-be Kindergarten classmates.

Kindergarten is a significant educational and developmental milestone for children and their families, and the transition into kindergarten can often be a confusing and stressful time for families. Kindergarten teachers across Hawai'i report that many children enter kindergarten unprepared to succeed. The goal of this program is to help ease that transition and to get children excited about their first day of school.

"INPEACE is committed to a child's first years of learning," said Rae DeCoito, INPEACE Chief Executive Officer, "and we know the road to Kindergarten begins with discovery. We are so grateful and excited about the partnership with the Children's

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Discovery Center, Supercuts and Toyota Hawai'i," she added. "Rather than putting a child in a classroom with four walls, we encourage interactive learning experiences and make learning a habit for both families and children. We empower parents and guardians with the tools they need to promote lifelong learning in their homes, teaching them to be their child's first teacher."

A significant number of young children in Hawai'i lack access to quality early learning experiences before they enroll in kindergarten. The 2006 Hawai'i State School Readiness Assessment report reflects only 61% of entering kindergarten children have attended preschool prior to entering Kindergarten. Programs are needed to help ease children's transition to school by preparing them for what to expect in kindergarten and providing them with some tools to help them make their transition more successful. A major goal of Countdown to Kindergarten is to help get children feel special about their "big day."

By helping keiki successfully transition to their primary school experiences, they will enter Kindergarten knowing that it is an inviting and safe place. Said DeCoito, "Our programs are essential to the future of Hawai'i's keiki." She added, "Not only does it help to introduce them to their school careers but, it ensures a successful future."

Countdown to Kindergarten is sponsored by Toyota Hawai'i's On Board for Education program. "We are so pleased to have such wonderful corporate and community partners that are coming together for our keiki," said Loretta Yajima, President & CEO of the Children's Discovery Center. "Parents are an important part of the equation in helping to determine a child's success in school. By helping children get a good start in school, we hope to help them embark on a lifelong journey that will help them succeed in life."

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The Hawai'i Children's Discovery Center is located at 111 Ohe Street in Honolulu. Hours of operation are Tuesday-Friday 9am-1pm and Saturday-Sunday 10am-3pm. Parking is free at the Kaka'ako Waterfront Park. For more information call 524-KIDS or visit their website at www.discoverycenterhawaii.org.

Founded 13 years ago, INPEACE is committed to improving the quality of life for Native Hawaiians through community partnerships that provide educational opportunities and promote self-sufficiency. Through its free direct service programs, Keiki Steps, SPARK, Keiki Steps to Kindergarten, Ka Lama Education Academy, and Kukuluao, INPEACE offers families important education options. Visit www.inpeace-hawaii.org to learn more.

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