

# RePlay for Kids Newsletter

WWW.REPLAYFORKIDS.ORG



## Summer 2025



## Message from the Director of Operations

It is hard to believe we're already halfway through 2025! Thanks to the incredible efforts of over 1,000 volunteers, we have adapted more than 1,400 toys and built 1,200 switches—all ready to be shared with families, disability agencies, schools, and libraries across Ohio.

This year, we have also launched adapted toy lending libraries in several new locations, increasing access to play for even more children with disabilities.

We are excited to announce our upcoming Adapted Toy Giveaway Events:

- September 30 – Lorain County
- November 15 – Stark County
- November 22 – Cuyahoga County
- Dates coming soon for Medina County and Eastern Ohio

Do you want to help make these events possible? We are offering a volunteer training in August and September for those who would like to help us get toys ready for distribution. We would love to have you on board!

**-NATALIE WARDEGA**  
**DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**

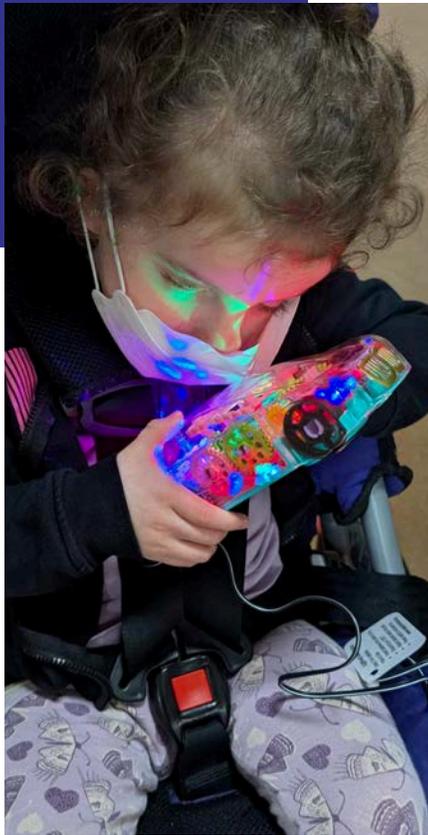
## Impact in 2025

Adapted Toy Lending Libraries in Ohio

Amos Public Library  
Eastlake Public Library  
Geauga Public Library  
Lorain Public Library  
Medina County District Library  
Public Library of Youngstown &  
Mahoning County  
Wayne County Public Library  
Wood County Public Library

01/04

Contact us at  
[replayforkids.org/contact](https://www.replayforkids.org/contact)



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE, ONE CHILD AT A TIME

One of the children I work with had a pretty rough start to life and continues to work on overcoming constant health challenges thanks to the amazing family who has adopted her. The doctors have told her family that her prognosis is not always good and has been described as having no light perception for vision. This is something that the team wasn't ready to quite give up on. Thanks to RePlay For Kids, we were able to obtain a switch and switch adapted bright white light strands to wrap around her play bar. Switches had not ever really been used as she does not usually do any purposeful movements. It only took one session to show her how to use the switch and she was pushing the button! Not only was she pushing the button with purpose, she was smiling and looking up at the lights. This was so huge for her and her family and team of therapists couldn't be happier. The team is now introducing switches more consistently and we are planning on using the switches to build upon her purposeful movements and visual responses. The gift that RePlay For Kids helped in giving this family is invaluable and will forever be a part of this sweet little girls journey from here on out!

-Early Intervention Specialist, Cleveland Sight Center.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Volunteers come together from businesses, clubs, and community organizations to adapt toys or repair assistive devices. Small, portable toolkits make it easy to set up our workshops almost anywhere. We host these events several times per month. It's easy and fun to participate in 2025! See the workshop schedule below or on our website - [replayforkids.org](http://replayforkids.org)

Toy adapting is a hands-on activity that involves opening a toy and attaching some wires. However, no previous experience is needed. No supplies or special equipment are needed, but volunteers will be working with small wires, so feel free to bring reading glasses if you need them. Minors need to be accompanied by an adult.

## Volunteer Spotlight KEN MALEC



Ken is a RePlay for Kids volunteer and a retired mechanical engineering & leadership professional. He enjoys building switches, adapting toys, and repairing adapted toys at his home. Every 2 to 3 weeks Ken sends a message to RePlay for Kids about picking up more toys to get ready for kids with disabilities.

As one of our newest volunteers, Ken has an interesting story about how he heard about volunteer opportunities at RePlay for Kids. In 2012, he saw an article in the Cleveland Plain Dealer newspaper about RePlay for Kids' work that ended with the statement "...tinkers take note..." This was a perfect fit for Ken's interests, but the Medina Ohio location was not convenient. It was not until after his retirement that Ken heard about the new Creative Space in Solon Ohio which is closer to his home. It is a perfect match!

Ken really enjoys the work, a sense of accomplishment, and the opportunity to help children with disabilities. It is also very manageable work that allows him to assist at workshop events or conveniently work at his home. Ken's advice to volunteers includes, "If you like working with devices and smaller tools, it is very satisfying to be a toy volunteer. It helps to keep you mentally sharp, your schedule is very customizable, and helps you to feel like a boy again."

RePlay for Kids and Ken are lucky to have found each other.



## Upcoming Workshops

All workshops take place at RePlay for Kids  
Creative Space

6190 Cochran Road, Suite E, Solon, OH 44139

Saturday 7/12/2025 10AM-12PM

Saturday 7/19/2025 10AM-12PM

Saturday 8/9/2025 10AM-12PM

Saturday 8/23/2025 10AM-12PM

### Volunteer Training -Play Packing Crew

Saturday 8/23/2025 12:30-2:30

Sunday 9/14/2025 12:30-2:30

To RSVP please visit our website  
[replayforkids.org/events/](https://replayforkids.org/events/)



### Helping the Community

“These toys have allowed my patients to experience the simple pleasures that come with childhood play.”

## REPLAY FOR KIDS FUNDRAISER EVENT

### Save the Date

### HALLOWEEN 5K AND 1 MILE FUN WALK

**Date:** October 26, 2025

**Time:** 9 AM

**Where:** 4691 Windfall Road,  
Medina, OH 44256



For more information  
and to purchase tickets, go to  
[replayforkids.org/fundraisers/](https://replayforkids.org/fundraisers/)  
or scan the QR code



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