

Subject: ThinkingOfAdopting.com Newsletter Update: 9/10/06

From: "Robin Bartko"

Date: Sun, 10 Sep 2006 01:15:03 -0400

Adoption Friends:

Wanted to remind you that time is running out to register for two upcoming webinars and share with you what I believe are some great ideas from Tatyana Komarova on the type of toys you might want to take to the orphanage to play and interact with your new child.

This Week's Adoption Webinars

To learn more or register go to the "Adoption Telecourses" page by clicking on the following link:

http://www.thinkingofadopting.com/html/adoption_telecourses.html

- **Monday (9/11/06) 9PM Eastern:** "Russian for the Adoption Traveler I" w/ Tatyana Komarova (Live 4 part webinar [4 hours total] plus 4 CD set, \$99.00)
- **Wednesday (9/13/06) 9PM Eastern:** "Share Your Story: How to create your own Adoption Blog" with Dennis Bartko (Live 1 hour webinar, free)

What Type of Toys Should I Take to the Orphanage?

If you will be traveling to visit your new child in an orphanage you might have wondered what types of toys might be best for you to take to play and interact with him or her. Tatyana Komarova, native speaker and Russian language instructor, recently provided some great advice on this topic during the last offering of her ThinkingOfAdopting.com webinar, "Russian for the Adoption Traveler I" that I'd like to share with you. I think you might find her advice useful even if you are not adopting from Russia.

Tatyana recommends you take toys that are both fun for the child and help you play and interact with them. After all, what you want more than anything at this point is to get to know him or her! One such toy is a book with big pictures and little (or few) words. "You don't have to read any of the words," says Tatyana, "you can just say, 'This is a bear, this is a duck, etc.' while you point to the pictures." If you say "this is" in Russian (Eta bear; eta duck), you've created a little game in which you are starting to teach English! Of course, the game could be turned around. By pointing to the pictures and asking "What is that?" in Russian (Shto Eto?), they can help teach you Russian!

Another very nice present is a little coloring book & fun pencils. Tatyana believes they have a shortage of pencils in Russian orphanages and certainly do not have as many fancy ones as we have here in the United States -- fun ones with bright colors, designs, and/or sparkles on them. Tatyana says, "They would really be amazing for them." You can draw pictures for them, they can draw pictures for you, and you can draw pictures together. Stickers are also a good present. Says Tatyana, "They would love them."

Bubbles are another good toy - universally fun - and easy to carry. However, if you're afraid that they might somehow spill or leak in your suitcase on your trip, Tatyana advises that you can probably buy your bubbles in Russia instead.

Of course, what child doesn't like to play with what's in a purse? Therefore, Tatyana recommends that you make sure that you have a lot of "little things" that they can play with in your purse. Like all children, they do like "real" things (they always seem to be more attractive than the toy version). "Whatever is in a woman's purse they would like. Everything you have in there - keys, cosmetics, credit cards, they will play with them" says Tatyana.

Speaking of "real things", cell phones make a great toy. Tatyana says, "If you don't want them to use your

phone, have another one to give them. I even bought a toy cell phone that was the same color as mine." Tatyana also mentioned that your old cell phone could make a very good toy ... "They don't need anything else".

When visiting the orphanage Tatyana recommend that you first allow them to play with their own toys, and try to interact with them using whatever they are playing with. Do not give them your gift right away. One game you might try is saying (in Russian) "Show me your toys". When he or she loses interest in their toys you can say, "I have this for you!" Make it like a surprise.

While it's so tempting for any parent, Tatyana recommends against taking stuffed animals such as teddy bears. "Yes they are cute, but there is not really anything to do with them compared to a book, pushing buttons, or coloring. [It's better to] take something you can do with them."

Of course, being able to communicate with your new child during your visit to the orphanage in their native language is a big help. The fourth session of Tatyana's webinar, "Russian for the Adoption Traveler" is all about child's talk and helps you prepare for that visit. Tatyana says, "The whole session is your scenario for your 1st and 2nd visit - the scenario for you to meet your child and interact with him or her."

The next offering of "Russian for the Adoption Traveler I" with Tatyana Komarova will begin tomorrow (Monday, September 11, 2006). You can join in if you register today. To register or for more information go the Adoption Telecourses page on ThinkingOfAdopting.com by using the following link: http://www.thinkingofadopting.com/html/adoption_telecourses.html

My best to you on your adoption journeys.

Sincerely,
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