

“ The will of one man,
the future of many ,”



Fondazione
Valter Baldaccini

FROM THE ROOTS 17

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VALTER BALDACCINI FOUNDATION MAGAZINE

TOC TOC, A FREE SPACE
DEDICATED TO FAMILIES



>> PARENTS AND CHILDREN DURING ACTIVITIES PROPOSED BY THE EDUCATORS

A MESSAGE FOR YOU



Dear friend,

I would like to open this new edition of From the Roots by welcoming our new

editor, Maria Tripepi.

Maria is the journalist who, with great professionalism, directs La Gazzetta di Foligno and Radio Gente Umbra, and she has always been a dear friend of the Foundation. We are therefore truly delighted that she enthusiastically accepted our invitation to accompany us in producing our magazine. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts, Maria!

Together, we decided to dedicate these pages by sharing our experience in building TOC TOC over the past months. It is a free space for parents and children aged 0-6 that we run together with the outstanding educators of the social cooperative La Locomotiva.

This first TOC TOC experience took shape within the facilities of the F. Innamorati Nursery School in Borroni, and it will be described by Dr. Mariolina Frigeri, pediatrician and member of our Scientific Committee; by educators Silvia Mancinelli, Martina Spigarelli, and Alessia Silvestri, who planned and delivered the activities; and by one of the mothers who, together with her husband and child, spent many afternoons among books, games, colors, and new discoveries.

Our hope is that, in September, TOC TOC will be able to reopen its doors!

I wish you enjoyable reading and a wonderful summer.

Beatrice Baldaccini
President of the Valter Baldaccini Foundation

TOC TOC: WHERE PARENTING BECOMES A SHARED EXPERIENCE

By Mariolina Frigeri

Pediatrician and member of the Foundation's Scientific Committee



There is a question that accompanies many parents from the very first days of their child's life: "Am I doing enough?". It is a question born out of love, but often also from the fatigue, uncertainty, and loneliness that can accompany the parenting experience.

Today we know that no parent should feel alone in this task. We also know that a child's development depends not only on the material care they receive, but also on the quality of the relationships surrounding them, and on the opportunities for play, discovery, and learning they encounter from the earliest years of life.

That is why people say that it takes a village to raise a child. It is from this awareness that **"TOC TOC, Welcome Families"**, was created, a project of the Valter Baldaccini Foundation developed in collaboration with the La Locomotiva cooperative and aimed at children aged 0-6 and their parents. **It is an open and welcoming place where families can meet, spend time together, share experiences, and discover how even the simplest daily activities can become valuable opportunities for growth.**

Neuroscience and research on child development have confirmed how crucial early experiences are to children's growth. We know that the brain develops at an extraordinary pace during the first years of life and that experiences during this period leave deep and lasting marks.

Reading a story, listening to a song, playing together, observing what happens around us, exploring a new environment, drawing, and handling different materials are activities that may seem simple, but they help build children's cognitive, linguistic, emotional, and social skills.

Sophisticated tools are not necessary. What is needed are time, attention, and meaningful relationships. Every time a parent reads a book with their child, sings a song, answers a question, or joins a game, they help build connections in the child's brain and strengthen the emotional bond between them.

Inspired by the Villaggi per Crescere model, TOC TOC offers free opportunities for exploration and creativity that families can then recreate at home. Children discover, experiment, and learn, while adults observe, participate, and become more aware of the educational value of everyday actions.

A particularly important aspect of the project is the involvement of parents. Today we know that the family environment is the first and most important learning setting. Children learn by observing adults, listening to their words, and sharing everyday moments. For this reason, **supporting parenthood also means helping mothers and fathers recognize their own strengths and value what they already do every day with their children.**

At TOC TOC, parents feel welcomed rather than judged, supported rather than evaluated. It is a place where people discover that raising a child is a journey that can be shared with others.

The project represents a natural evolution of the experience gained through “With the families”, a home-visiting program aimed at the most vulnerable families in our area with children in their first year of life. Scientific evidence shows that **the most effective**

interventions are those that combine targeted support for particularly fragile situations with services open to the entire community.

Alongside home support, it is important to offer accessible spaces where people can meet and participate.

Investing in early childhood means investing in the future. It means providing children with opportunities to grow and parents with opportunities for support and sharing. It means building a community capable of welcoming, accompanying, and valuing every family, aware that the opportunities offered during the earliest years can make a difference throughout a person's life.

Ultimately, this is the deepest meaning of “TOC TOC: Welcome Families”: opening a door—a door that leads to new experiences, new relationships, and new opportunities for growth, for children, for their parents, and ultimately for the entire community.



The Voices of the Educators Silvia Mancinelli, Martina Spigarelli and Alessia Silvestri

TOC TOC was designed to strengthen the parent-child bond and foster children's social, cognitive, and motor development in a rich, stimulating, and welcoming environment. *“Over these months, to engage parents and their children, we offered a variety of activities including cooking workshops, sensory and hands-on activities, painting sessions, motor-skill courses, and water games. In addition, by involving specialists such as a speech therapist, a pediatrician, and a psychomotor therapist, we created opportunities for discussion aimed at supporting mothers and fathers.”*

At TOC TOC, the activities are done together, with parents taking an active role. *“During shared activities, children were able to stimulate their creativity and curiosity, experiment with movement, and build confidence in themselves. Through painting, sensory play, and cooking activities, children created crafts and treats together with their parents to take home, preserving a memory of the shared experience.”* TOC TOC also became an important opportunity for sharing, both between educators and families—who became an integral part of the



educational environment and enjoyed precious moments with their children—and among the families themselves, who formed friendships with one another.

The activities also proved to be excellent sources of inspiration for continuing interaction and learning at home.

“More than 70 families attended TOC TOC during these first six months. Some came only once or twice, while others did not miss a single appointment. We are delighted by the level of participation and involvement we witnessed.

TOC TOC has also energized us, and we cannot wait to offer new opportunities for growth and sharing. Thank you to all the families!”



Fondazione
Valter Baldaccini



Since 2015, the Valter Baldaccini Foundation has been committed to preserving the life testimony, values and actions of Valter Baldaccini, a Christian man and enlightened entrepreneur. Every day it supports those who are most in difficulty by carrying out projects in three areas: family, education and work, in the area and around the world.

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Ketty's Story: One of the Mothers Who Attends TOC TOC

"Together with my husband Filippo and our little Mattia, who is two and a half years old, we have been attending TOC TOC ever since we happened to discover it through a social media post."

Ketty, one of the mothers who attended regularly over the past months, shares her experience: *"It is the space that was missing in our area—a place for open and equal exchange. It is an opportunity for children, but also for parents. For us, attending TOC TOC has been a source of relief and a way to feel part of a community."*

For Ketty, who moved to Foligno from another region, TOC TOC was also an opportunity to build friendships and create new relationships. *"Over these months, the weekly meetings have been a remedy for loneliness. The educators were wonderful with the children, but they also served as a bridge in helping parents connect with one another. TOC TOC has been a safe place for our family."*

"We are all immersed in our daily routines, and even though we try as parents to be attentive to the educational activities and experiences we offer Mattia, at TOC TOC, under the guidance of an exceptional team of educators, we experimented with activities that never would have occurred to us."

The experience also included meetings with professionals: *"After the session organized with the speech therapist, we purchased new games designed to support language development. Our toolbox has been enriched with so many new experiences and useful, simple yet meaningful suggestions that we first tried with the educators and then recreated at home. TOC TOC has truly meant a great deal to us—it has become an appointment we would never want to miss!"*

With great humility—just as the person who preceded me in this role taught me during the fourteen years we worked together—I am joining this wonderful editorial project, which gives voice to the essential work that the Valter Baldaccini Foundation carries out every day for so many people, both in our area and beyond, who need someone to reach out a hand and ensure they do not feel alone during life's difficult moments. I accepted Beatrice's proposal with great pleasure and deep emotion, and I thank her wholeheartedly for her trust.



>> MARIA TRIPEPI IN THE CENTER, TOGETHER WITH PRESIDENT BEATRICE BALDACCINI AND PAOLA TAGLIETTI FROM THE FOUNDATION

She is a dear friend to whom, as I often say, I could never say no, because of the immense respect I have for her, the deep affection that binds me to her, and that connects us to Fabio Luccioli, as well as the valuable collaboration we have built over the years. I firmly believe in the Foundation's mission and am honored to contribute. I will do so alongside another great friend, Paola Taglietti, always with humility and in continuity with the work carried out before me by our Fabio, who, I am certain, will continue to guide us.

Maria Tripepi