



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

 Office of Child Care

Sampling of Public Libraries & Various Possible Benefits to Early Childhood Programs and the Children & Families They Serve

The purpose of this document is to reinforce the early childhood commitment to partner with local public libraries to enrich the lives of families. There are 16,700 public libraries across the country that provide services for all ages, incomes, abilities, and ethnic groups. Making use of these services can have a significant impact on the early learning experiences of all children and their families. These services are particularly critical for children from high-need families, children who often reach school-age but are not ready to learn.

Many Head Start/Early Head Start agencies and child care providers have developed meaningful partnerships with their local libraries, which have resulted in valuable community-based learning experiences for staff, children, and their families.

Head Start/Early Head Start agencies and child care providers that do not already have such partnerships can and should reach out to their local public libraries to discuss what services are available and how they can leverage these valuable community resources to serve the needs of their families.

Public libraries have become integral to early childhood development in their communities. A sample listing like the one that follows cannot begin to include all of the various programs and services available in the thousands of libraries across the nation. These examples are provided to demonstrate that libraries of all sizes create programs and services based upon the unique needs of their own community.

Public libraries have a range of programming for young children which has grown out of a long history of supporting early learning. Many libraries have spaces that are specially designed for children and their caregivers. Libraries offer many different child-focused programs and services, including:

- A diverse collection of reading, viewing, and listening materials for all reading levels and in many languages;
- Classes and learning opportunities for parents, caregivers, and teachers on early learning and child development;
- Mobile units that visit Head Start and child care centers with books and other educational materials;
- Story times where children and their families can share the experience of reading;
- Enriched learning environments with a focus on literacy and learning; and
- Evidence-based programs to promote early learning and adult literacy.

A sampling of projects recently supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services:

**Teen Parent and Early Childhood Literacy
Montgomery County Public Libraries, MD
B. Parker Hamilton, Project Director
240-777-0012**

parker.hamilton@montgomerycountymd.gov

IMLS Funds: \$6,700; In-Kind Contributions: \$2,080; Total Cost: \$8,780

This program provides early literacy information and practice for pregnant and parenting teens (ages 14-18) currently enrolled in parent education programs at two high schools in Montgomery County, MD.

The workshops were developed to teach teenage parents how to use early literacy behaviors daily with their babies and young children in a variety of settings – at home, in the car, while waiting in line.

A children's services librarian from Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) talked to participants about early literacy techniques to use with their children and then demonstrated in a structured story time activities, the use of songs, rhymes, stories, and finger plays.

Participants were encouraged to use these techniques to engage their children in activities that will result in language development. Discussions also focused on the selection of books and the importance of reading with their child and using the library.

**Creating Connections to Grow Readers
Carroll County Public Library, MD
Lynn Wheeler, Project Director
410-386-4500, ext. 136**

lwheeler@carr.org

IMLS Funds Expended: \$17,745; Cash Match: \$2,780; In-Kind: \$3,646; Total Cost: \$24,171

Carroll County Public Library's Creating Connections to Grow Readers: Training, Promotion, and Online Access project provided information, materials, and training to parents, child care providers, and early learning professionals.

The emphasis was on the language and literacy learning domain for the purpose of increasing the abilities of parents and staff to foster school readiness for children in their care.

A priority was given to low-income, Title I, and at-risk participants.

**Early Literacy Station Project
State Library of Kansas
Roy Bird, Project Director
785-296-4105**

roy.bird@library.ks.gov

IMLS Funds: \$71,900; Cash Match: \$80,500; Total Cost: \$152,400

This project brought hardware with preloaded educational software to participating libraries. Thirty-three public and school libraries requested 70 stations, including 51 English versions and 19 Spanish (bilingual) versions.

The units encourage children's thinking and allow them to learn at their own pace; even children with no previous computer experience are using them. In one case, a local business owner noticed the high use of the library's unit and donated funds for an additional one. In another, a board member advocated for additional units.

Several libraries reported increased attendance of families of preschoolers or early elementary students because of the workstations.

Getting Ready for Kindergarten Calendar
RI Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS)
Cheryl Space, Project Director
401-574-9309

cheryl.space@olis.ri.gov

IMLS Funds: \$1,759; Match: \$97.00; Total Cost: \$1,856

OLIS created an online version of the Getting Ready for Kindergarten Calendar on the OLIS website (<http://www.olis.ri.gov/services/ready4k/index.php>). Parents and other caregivers can print calendar pages, activities, and book lists to use with the preschoolers in their care through the website. Currently, the activities and materials on the website are only available in English; the print version is available in both English and Spanish.

The Getting Ready for Kindergarten website contains all of the calendar content from the printed version as well as additional content, including expanded booklists and additional book-based activities.

Children's librarians statewide produced 17 additional book-based activities for the Getting Ready for Kindergarten website. The books, outstanding read-alouds for preschool children, were selected by the participating librarians. When the books were complete, the Youth Services Coordinator met with two members of the OLIS Web team to plan how to integrate the new books and activities into the existing calendar website.

Parents, librarians, and caregivers will find the new activities integrated into each of the domains, as well as being listed independently as a single, printable handout.

Services to Youth/Early Literacy Activity Center
Shelby County Libraries – Amos Memorial Public, OH
Bonnie Banks, Project Director
937-492-6851, ext. 111

banksbo@oplin.org

IMLS Funds: \$22,773; Match: \$7,592; Total Cost: \$30,365

The purpose of this project is to provide a welcoming environment where parents and children may engage in age-appropriate activities that promote the growth of early literacy skills in young children.

Specific objectives of the proposal were to have the following:

1. Fifty unique families engage in early literacy activities with children in the Early Literacy Room during the first year of operation;
2. Fifty percent of the parents who frequent the Early Literacy Room become aware of the early literacy skills and the importance of the skills for the future reading success of their children, as indicated by feedback received through a follow-up evaluation of families visiting the Early Literacy Room; and
3. Twenty-five percent of the parents visiting the Early Literacy Room utilize the other services, programs, and materials that the library offers for the acquisition of early literacy skills.

The room was outfitted with toys, equipment, and furniture to be used by families with young children.

Guidelines for the use of the room were created with input from parents with young children. Brochures were designed and created to promote the Center.

A billboard was designed and hung during the month of September.

Invitations and brochures were sent to organizations with clientele who may benefit from having access to the Center.

Ads were run in the local newspaper promoting the Center. A newspaper article featuring the Center was also featured.

All patrons attending early literacy programs at the library were given brochures about the Center.

A visit by participants of other children's library programs to the Early Literacy Center has been incorporated into some preschool story time plans.

Stories for Learning, Laptops for Growth

Central Washington University (CWU), James Brooks Library, WA

Patricia Cutright, Project Director

509-963-1973

cutright@cwu.edu

IMLS Funds: \$17,987; Total Cost: \$17,987

CWU students and community members received dedicated access to 15 laptop computers, books, electronic resources, and well-trained staff to help them identify and apply to jobs.

While parents were performing their employment search, their children were engaged with story hour, *First Book* books donations, and early childhood literacy embedded learning kits, thus serving the whole family in a supportive environment, with the primary goal of connecting employee with future employer.

Ready to Read Resource Center

Anchorage Public Library, AK

Sherri Douglas, Project Director

907-343-2840

douglasss@muni.org

IMLS: \$77,081; Match: \$27,046; Total Cost: \$104,127

Nearly half of Alaska's young children enter kindergarten unprepared to read. They lack fundamental receptive and expressive communication skills, and print concepts, such as alphabet knowledge.

This grant promotes early childhood literacy by providing books and other resources to those who work with infants and toddlers, and by providing information and practical training on early literacy development for early childhood professional and family caregivers.

The Ready to Read Resource Center lends Ready to Read tubs, Lapsit bags, and Read-to-Me at Home kits to public libraries across Alaska. In towns without a public library, the Center mails these reading kits directly to child care agencies and professionals.

During 2010 – 2011, the goals of this ongoing project were to:

1. Promote the services of the Ready to Read Resource Center (RRRC) throughout the state through advertising and partnerships;
2. Increase early literacy awareness statewide; and
3. Encourage use of RRRC materials by providing return postage for patrons residing outside of Anchorage and exploring ways to make it easier for parents and caregivers to use these materials.

The Story of Food: Growing Healthy Readers

Peabody Early Childhood School/School Within a School Library, DC

Susan Bloom, Project Director

202-698-3277

susan.bloom5@verizon.net

IMLS Funds: \$19,980; Total Cost: \$19,980

The intention of this project was to:

- Actively involve all 245 students of the Peabody Early Childhood School in learning where their foods come from and which ones help their bodies grow healthy and strong;
- Show children how to grow food themselves and how to help prepare healthy foods to eat; and
- Show how different traditions influence food choices and preparation in different regions of the U.S. and the world.

The project involved families in food preparation and sharing what they made, and provided a cookbook to each family of participants' recipes.

The children wrote songs about food with their music teacher and every class performed at a celebration of food in late spring, which was followed by selecting a free book about food and/or gardening and sharing in the healthy snack offerings made by families.

Pueblo of Santa Clara – Espanola, NM

Ms. Teresa Naranjo, Library Director

505-692-6295;

scilib@santaclarapueblo.org

IMLS Award Amount: \$150,000

The Pueblo of Santa Clara's Community Library will continue to develop its literacy programs for all ages, including the Every Child Ready to Read® (ECRR) program, which will include training parents in ECRR techniques and adapting the program to the Santa Clara community.

It will also build on the intergenerational elder-and-child activities of the Tewa Language Program and coordinate with other tribal programs to integrate literacy development activities into programs for at-risk families, children, and youth.

Other activities for adults and teens will integrate the use of traditional Tewa stories into adult book talks, teen book clubs, and monthly topical awareness activities such as health and environmental awareness, civic engagement, and economic literacy.

By sponsoring such activities, the library hopes to foster multicultural language development and reading readiness and bring families together in a traditional manner.

Nisqually Indian Tribe – Olympia, WA

Faith Hagenhofer, Tribal Librarian

360-456-5221, ext. 1125

hagenhofer.faith@nisqually-nsn.gov

IMLS Award Amount: \$149,604

The Nisqually Tribe will expand its children's library services beyond the walls of the newly refurbished tribal library to include the isolated reservation and allotment land communities where tribal youth have difficulty visiting the library.

The Tribe will offer weekly bookmobile services to a variety of tribal facilities, providing year-round children's services with a tribal member serving as a youth services coordinator.

The library will partner with the Nisqually Day Care Center, Head Start program, the Youth Center, and the Timberland Regional Library (TRL) to provide children's programming and an expanded children's collection.

Part of the main collection will circulate through the bookmobile as well, expanding the reach of the rich Native American collection at the tribal library, and access to the TRL collection through a resource delivery partnership already in existence will be actively promoted.

Sample Local Library Websites:

Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy <http://www.clel.org/> and <http://www.storyblocks.org/>

Michigan West Bloomfield Township Public Library <http://www.growupreading.org/>

Sample National Resources:

American Library Association: Great Websites for Kids <http://www.ala.org/greatsites>

Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/ecrr/index.cfm>

Research:

The study, "[Children's Access to Print Material and Education-Related Outcomes](http://www.rif.org/documents/us/RIFandLearningPointMeta-FullReport.pdf)", (<http://www.rif.org/documents/us/RIFandLearningPointMeta-FullReport.pdf>) was commissioned by Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) and conducted by Learning Point Associates, a nonprofit education research and consulting organization and affiliate of American Institutes for Research (AIR).

The meta-analysis found that access to print materials:

- *Improves children's reading performance.* Findings from the rigorous studies suggest that providing children with print materials helps them read better. Among the studies reviewed, kindergarten students showed the biggest increase in reading performance.
- *Proves instrumental in helping children learn the basics of reading.* Providing children with reading materials allows them to develop basic reading skills such as letter and word identification, phonemic awareness, and completion of sentences.
- *Causes children to read more and for longer lengths of time.* Giving children print materials leads to more shared reading between parents and children. Children receiving books also read more frequently and for longer periods of time.
- *Produces improved attitudes toward reading and learning among children.* Children with greater access to books and other print materials — through either borrowing books or receiving books to own — express more enjoyment of books, reading, and academics.

Additional Research Links:

“Giving Children Access to Print Materials Improves Reading Performance”

<http://www.rif.org/us/about/literacy-issues/giving-children-access-to-print-materials-improves-reading-performance.htm>

Early Learning Initiative for Wisconsin Public Libraries

<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/pld/pdf/earlylearning.pdf>

Library preschool story time: Developing early literacy skills in children

<http://www.nald.ca/library/research/storytimes/storytimes.pdf>

Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development

http://www.scls.info/building/making_cities_stronger.pdf

Raising a Reader http://www.raisingareader.org/site/PageServer?pagename=about_impact

The Role of Public Libraries in Children's Literacy Development: An Evaluation Report

<http://www.ifpl.org/Junior/studies/Role%20of%20Libraries.pdf>