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NEWS RELEASE

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Record number of children flocked to libraries for Summer Reading in 2010

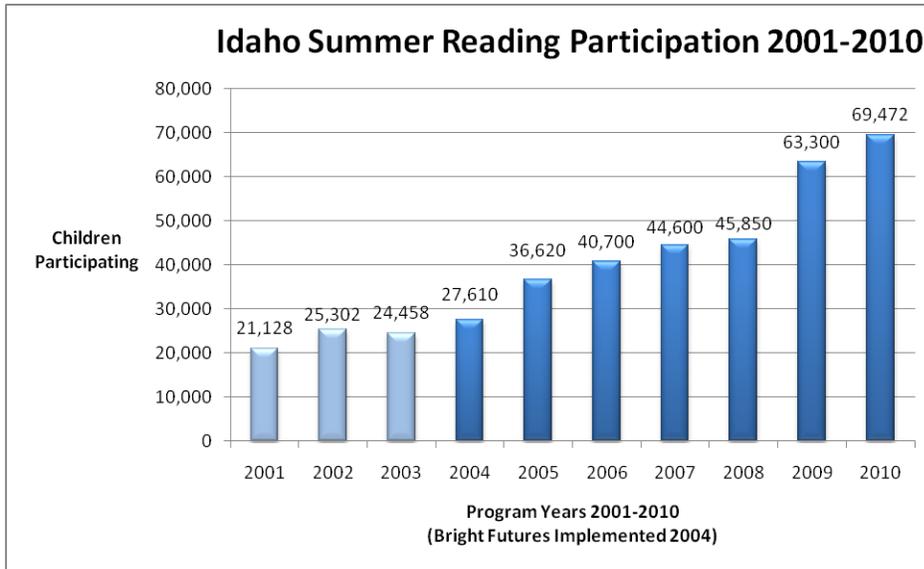
BOISE, ID – Over 69,000 Idaho children and teens participated in this year’s Summer Reading Program at their public libraries, a nine percent increase over last year’s record numbers. These programs are designed to help children build or maintain literacy levels and are one solution to the “summer slide.”

Summer Reading activities are offered free to children statewide, with support from the Idaho Commission for Libraries. “The Commission supports summer library programs because we know that children who read over the summer will maintain or improve their reading readiness when they go back to school,” says State Librarian Ann Joslin. “And the partnerships fostered between the libraries and other local organizations create meaningful and sustained impact within their communities.” The Commission’s Read to Me program offered a variety of incentive programs over the past five years, encouraging more libraries to increase participation through school and outreach visits. Since the Commission’s Bright Futures Program began in 2004, summer reading enrollment more than doubled— from 27,610 children participating in 2004 to 69,472 in 2010.

More Idaho children participate in summer reading programs than any other organized youth program in the state. Taking advantage of the “Make a Splash” theme, 131 Idaho libraries designed programs that offered opportunities for reading as well as arts, recreation, and youth development.

In their 2010 program evaluations, Idaho public library staff cited four main factors in the higher number of participating children this year: good partnerships with schools, the economy driving more families to libraries for free services and programs, increased outreach efforts, and a theme or activities that engaged many children. Other stats from the 2010 evaluations show:

- 59 percent reported an increase in participation this year.
- 66 percent reported targeting underserved children.
- 72 percent made personal visits to schools to promote summer reading.



Find out more about Read to Me, Bright Futures, and the Summer Reading Program at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/landing/summer-reading>. For more information about summer learning loss, see <http://libraries.idaho.gov/files/SummerLearningLossHandout2011.pdf>.

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The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL) assists libraries to build the capacity to better serve their clientele. To learn more about ICFL, visit <http://libraries.idaho.gov/>.