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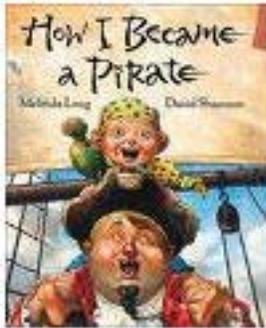
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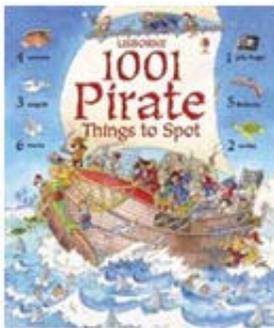
Welcome

This fun display at the Larsen-Sant District Library in Preston caught my eye and I thought it would be fun to share with everyone. Preston was one of over 20 Idaho libraries I've had the chance to visit during the past two months. I've enjoyed seeing all the creative things people are doing in their libraries and hope to share what's going on in all of them in upcoming issues of *The Scoop*. Share along with us by sending a quick photo or e-mail to [Stephanie](#) and we'll send you a free book for your collection!

Get free books for your Idaho Family Reading Week event!



The Read to Me program has paperback copies of *How I Became a Pirate*, by Melinda Long for Idaho public libraries who are planning events during Idaho Family Reading Week, November 16 – 22, 2008. Just complete the form by October 29th and we'll send you books to give to families. Quantities are limited (probably to about 90 per library depending on how many responses we get) and will be sent by November 5th. If you don't get enough to give to every family who attends your event, we suggest doing a door prize drawing throughout the event until they are gone. It's also a good way to capture names and information about who attended your event from the door prize registration slips. Complete the short form at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/content/free-books-idaho-family-reading-week> to get your books.



School libraries: We want to hear from you too and have 40 hardback copies of *1001 Pirate Things to Spot*, by Rob Lloyd Jones, illustrated by Teri Gower and Michelle Lawrence to give to the first 40 school libraries that complete the brief form at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/content/free-hardcover-book-elementary-schools-family-reading-week> .

Meet Kath Ann Hendricks



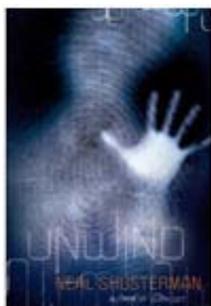
Kath Ann Hendricks is the Young Adult Librarian at Marshall Public Library in Pocatello. She's been in the library field for 25 years, the past 17 at Marshall. Pocatello's population is about 50,000+, and Kath Ann works with three public high schools, two private high schools, three middle schools, and three private middle schools.

Although she mostly works with teens in 6th grade through 12th, Kath Ann also has a hand in storyhours, programming, outreach, collection development, and teen programming. She recently presented a program at the Idaho Library Association Conference on YA literature and has been working on the library's "Big

Read” program, promoting e-audio books, and thinking about how to top this year’s Summer Reading program for teens.

Kath Ann has a degree is in elementary education. “I have worked with youth of all ages most of my life,” and she enjoys doing that in a library setting. “I am in my second year as YA librarian and I spent four years helping with storytimes in a previous library,” she said.

Kath Ann says “making contact with teens of all walks of life” is the best part of her job and the thing she cites as her biggest success. She also enjoys helping teens find good books and developing rapport with young adults. Her biggest challenges are feeling comfortable presenting to adults and “presenting what I consider to be successful teen programs.”



When we got into the “book part” of the interview, she said her “all time favorite book is *A Wrinkle in Time*, by Madeleine L’Engle. “As a child I liked to read everything, especially fantasy, science fiction, and historical fiction.” More recently she’s read:

- *Dracula*, by Bram Stoker
- *Unwind*, by Neal Shusterman,
- *The Declaration*, by Gemma Malley,
- *Blood and Chocolate*, by Annette Curtis Klause,
- *Dragons Keep*, by Janet Lee Carey, and
- *Tantalize*, by Cynthia L. Smith.

When she’s not working at the library, Kath Ann likes to “road bike, read, travel, enjoy a good glass of wine, or savor a cup of freshly ground coffee.” Her favorite flavor of ice-cream is mocha almond fudge.

“I’m the mother of two mostly grown children, Justin (23) and Ronda (19); both are students at ISU. I recently married on a day I consider good-luck: 07-07-07 to a man named Jimmy, really Jim, but it does make for a good conversation starter. After all, how many people can claim they’re married to Jimmy Hendricks?! I’m slowly convincing him that books cannot be confined to shelves, my excuse for a book (or three) within easy reach on every flat surface of our home. Marriage also added instant grandchildren now aged four-years and 8 months. Additionally we have a cat and several fish and enjoy babysitting my daughter’s and other neighborhood dogs- which is kind of like being grandparents as you can spoil them and send them home,” she said.



Library to Library

Great high-tech and low-tech tips from Rigby!

Holly Mickelsen, Children's Outreach Coordinator at the **Rigby City Library**, has put all her storyhour songs on an MP3 player. She has folders for each storyhour and can organize them by themes and in the order she wants. She says it saves her from digging through four different CD's and cueing them up.

She always ends with "Blow a Kiss" by Laurie Berkner off of her Under a Shady Tree album. Holly encourages everyone to listen to the song on Rhapsody and consider getting it. "It's a WONDERFUL song!" she said. "I always ask my kids at the end of storytime, 'Does anyone know what time it is?' Then I start the song and basically tell them it is time for me to go and I wave to them. I also say that I will miss them and I would love it if they come back next week. Then I make a specific point of blowing a kiss to each child and no one is left out. If they blow one to me I try to be sure to "catch it" to let them know they matter. Then once the full music starts I hand out a take and make craft project or something special for the kids," Holly said.

A speaker hooked to the MP3 player and works great for large and small groups. "For budget challenged libraries you can use old computer speakers as long as you have power available. The jack just plugs right into the MP3 headphone port," Holly said.

Holly is pictured above with one of her storyhour buddies. The stuffed animals work like a charm for children who are a little shy when they get to storytime. Holly sometimes brings the buddies out to the hallway and shows them to the kids to encourage them to come in and join everyone. They get to hold them during the storytimes too.



Family Reading Week Resource

Stephanie Adamson from **Aberdeen District Library** found a resource for Family Reading Week that she wanted to share with *The Scoop* readers. It is a board game called "Aargh!" and is produced by the Simply Fun Company. Go to their website at <http://simplyfun.com/products/aargh/> to order. The description on the website says, "Go for the gold in this game of treasure matching using your memory skills. But watch out for the Skull & Crossbones, or your precious gold will get taken away. The pirate with the most treasure wins!"



Seen at the ILA Conference in Idaho Falls

Jeanne Farnworth, youth services librarian at the **Portneuf District Library** in Chubbuck, did two fabulous presentations at the recent ILA conference in Idaho Falls. Jeanne shared some of her favorite program resources and ideas, including:

- **A quick nametag:** Punch two holes in a standard size envelope. Connect the holes with yarn or string and you have a quick and easy nametag to hang around the child's neck. Children can write their names at the first program and leave the nametags at the library for subsequent programs. Jeanne has them mail

them into a play mailbox as they leave the children's area.

- **Program idea:** Once a month children at the Portneuf District Library take a "High Sea Adventure" and visit a different country around the world. Jeanne reads stories featuring the country, pulls books that kids may be interested in checking out, and plans a simple craft and snack. She doesn't worry about her programs taking a full hour or half hour. She likes to leave plenty of time for kids to browse the books and check some out to take home.

Way to Go ILA Award Winners and New President!



Congratulations to the new Idaho Library Association President **Susan Tabor-Boesch, Teacher-Librarian at Wood River Middle School!** The new president is not afraid to get her hands dirty, as seen here making a birdseed feeder at Jeanne Farnworth's Children's Programming session.

We'd also like to extend congratulations and best wishes to the 2008 ILA Scholarship award recipient, **Laura Abbott from the Nampa Public Library,** and to **Sarah Jackson, from the**

Idaho Falls Public Library who was the 2008 Gardner Hanks Scholarship recipient. **Karen Tate Pettinger,** director of the **Portneuf District Library,** was named the 2008 Librarian of the Year.



Ririe Public sponsors "BOO" kmark contest

Kids in Ririe were encouraged to use their creativity to create a "Boo" kmark design the library could reprint and use in October. Library Director **Jan Warren** targeted elementary-age children and was excited about their fun and colorful entries. The library is using Read to Me mini-grant funds to offer Saturday storyhours for the first time and they are off to a great start.

Keeping busy in Grandview



Kathy Chick, director of **Eastern Owyhee County Library** in Grandview, has her hands full! We featured Kathy in the last issue of *the Scoop* but did not have a photo at the time. Kathy is gearing up for the library's first Every Child Ready to Read workshop series, beginning October 9th and running through November 13th. She is also facilitating the Read to Me First Book program, partnering with Grandview Elementary to serve 90 three to eight year-olds. Kathy is

already stocking up on pirate regalia for Family Reading Week and is planning some swashbuckling events!

Young Adult Corner

Next Week is Teen Read Week: “Books with Bite”

Francine Rudine at the American Falls District Library received a free copy of *Breaking Dawn* for sending in their plans for Teen Read Week. They collaborated with the local high school counselor to come up with some new ideas. Here’s what they’ll be doing next week:

“We’re hosting a High School Only Open Mike on the election and politics here at the library community room on Wednesday, Oct. 15 from 7 - 8:30 pm. High school English and government teachers will give extra points for attendance. Refreshments will be served!”

The library will survey high school students on use of the library and their wants and needs as relates to services and materials. Fliers on library services will also be handed out at that time.

Teens will be encouraged to "Stop By for a Free Book". “I have new books to give to students. Some are new releases. Students who do not have a library card could sign up for a free library card at that time, too,” Francine said.

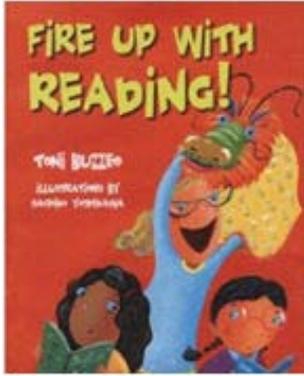


“We will advertise in the local paper as well at the local high schools. We are also contacting the Home School Association. And we’ll be advertising the drawing prize of *Breaking Dawn* to give away!”

It’s not too late to win a copy of *Breaking Dawn*, by Stephenie Meyer for your library!

Does your library have plans for the upcoming Teen Read Week – Books with Bite? If so, let [*Stephanie*](#) know what you’ve got planned or send us a photo from your event, and we’ll send you a copy of the book to use as a giveaway or to add to your collection. We’ve got five copies left, so first submitted, first served!

Book Look



I snagged a few titles that Cloteele Dahle at the Larsen-Sant District Library in Preston had picked out for her grant project (part of their grant focuses on dads and reading).

These books looked great:

- ***Daddies Give You Horsey Rides***, by Abby Levine
- ***Fire Up With Reading***, by Toni Buzzeo
- ***Say Daddy***, by Michael Shoulders

Cloteele had also selected ***Bats at the Library***, by Brian Les. I don't know how I missed this starred review title, but it would be great for this month. I love bats. Here are a few bat songs that would be fun to do before or after *Bats at the Library*. [Feel free to use the handout for Stلالuna too!](#)

Bat Songs!

Flutter Flutter Little Bat

(Sung to the tune of *Twinkle Twinkle*)



Flutter flutter little bat,
How I wonder where you're at.
Up above the midnight sky,
Peeking out with yellow eyes.
Flutter flutter little bat,
How I wonder where you're at.

Black Bat, Black Bat

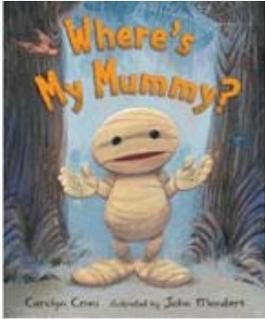
(Have your child pretend to be a bat and do what the chant says.)

Black bat, black bat fly around.
Black bat, black bat fly to the ground.
Black bat, black bat, fly up high.
Black bat, black bat, fly in the sky.
Black bat, black bat, fly down low.
Black bat, black bat fly just so!

More fun books for October

Here are a few more potential storytime books that sounded fun for October found at **ELSIE: Early Literacy Storytime Ideas Exchange**

Search ELSIE to find books that help children develop the early literacy skills necessary for learning success. Presentation notes show how to emphasize skills in a fun, interactive story sharing experience. Explore the site at <http://www.hclib.org/BirthTo6/ELSIE.cfm>. The project is a collaboration between Hennepin County Library and other libraries in Minnesota.



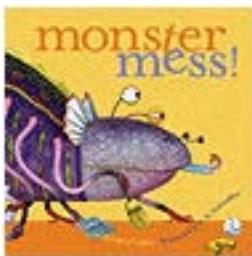
Where's My Mummy?, by Carolyn Crimi

One deep, dark night, as all of the monsters are preparing for bed, Little Baby Mummy bravely searches for his mother until he sees a truly terrifying creature.

Presentation Notes:

Little Baby Mummy wants to play one more game of Hide and Shriek before bedtime, but he hides a bit -- too -- well. While looking desperately for Big Mamma Mummy, he meets a succession of night creatures who announce themselves with spooky sounds: Clank clink clank / Woo boo woo / Clank clink CLOO. Run your finger under the large spooky words to encourage Print Awareness.

With each creepy encounter, invite children to chant right along with Little Baby Mummy: "Mama Mummy, is that you?" "You're not my mummy!" "I'm not scared! And when Big Mamma Mummy finally puts Little Baby Mummy safely to bed, wrap your own little mummy up tight and practice snoring -- Wee wee wee / Snoo snoo snoo / Wee wee SNOO! This is pure mummy fun -- sure to foster Print Motivation, the enjoyment of books.



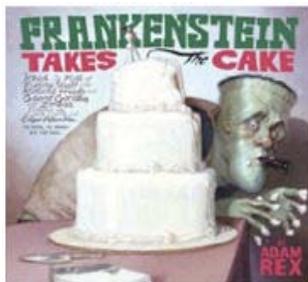
Monster Mess! by Margery Cuyler

A monster sneaks into a boy's room and cleans up while the boy is asleep.

Presentation Notes:

Yawn, yawn! A sleepy monster heads upstairs to get some rest, only to find a boy fast asleep in a very messy, stinky room. Piu, piu! Ick, ick! How can he possibly get any sleep unless he neatens things up a bit? Sweep, sweep Whishtt, whishtt! The monster's many hands make light labor, and finally he can kick his feet up (all 14 of them!) until the alarm goes off in the morning, and the boy has a big surprise.

This humorous monster tale features lots of rhyme and onomatopoeia to foster Phonological Awareness. Large, bold words like **Bang, Bang** nearly jump off the page, creating perfect opportunities to develop Print Awareness.



And here's one more we couldn't resist adding to this week's book look:

Frankenstein Takes the Cake, by Adam Rex

In a wickedly funny follow-up to the bestselling *Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich*, Adam Rex once again proves that monsters are just like you and me



Upcoming Events

October / November E-Branch in a Box Fall Training Schedule

<http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/2008-fall-training-schedule>

This fall a four-hour triage session will provide one-to-one assistance for existing e-branch accounts. Bring your greatest challenges to the e-branch Help Desk! Go to the website to register! If you have questions, please contact [Shirley Biladeau](#).

Events in November:

November 1 - **National Family Literacy Day** - National Family Literacy Day is officially celebrated on November 1st, but many events are held throughout the month of November. It's never been more important to spread the word in your community and build awareness for the importance of families working together toward a better educated tomorrow. For more see...

http://www.readwritethink.org/calendar/calendar_day.asp?id=681

November 11 - **Veteran's Day** - Is an American holiday honoring military veterans. It's always celebrated on November 11th each year. For teacher/student information see: <http://www1.va.gov/opa/vetsday/schoolkit.asp>

November 11 – **Young Reader's Day** - Schools across the country celebrate reading by participating in National Young Readers Day on the second Tuesday of November each year. This is an annual event that was co-founded in 1989 by Pizza Hut® and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. For more go to <http://www.bookitprogram.com/Teachers/nyrd.asp>



Pirate joke: What does the pirate want to be when he grows up?
(See the last page after "News Beyond Idaho" for the answer.)

November 16-22 – **Idaho Family Reading Week** – is an annual statewide celebration of reading as a family activity. The theme for the 2008 Family Reading Week is "**AR-R-R-R-R-RE** you reading?" Our goal is for 100 libraries and schools across the state to break out their eye patches, spyglasses, and hornpipes, and host a Family Reading Night or other event. We hope you will invite your local decision makers--mayors, city council members, library and school board members, and state legislators--into your library to see firsthand how librarians are bringing the read aloud message to parents and caregivers and making a difference in people's lives.

November 28 – **Thanksgiving Day** – Is a traditional North American holiday, which is a form of harvest festival. See <http://crafts.kaboose.com/holidays/thanksgiving/> for some fun craft ideas.

Authors' Birthdays in November:

November 4 - **Thomas Sterling North** (1906-1974). North was an American author of books for children and adults, including 1963's bestselling *Rascal*. North's book *Midnight and Jeremiah* was made into the Disney movie *So Dear to My Heart* in 1949. For more on history on North see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sterling_North.

November 13 - **Robert Louis Stevenson** (1850-1894). Some of Stevenson's works include: *Treasure Island*, *A Child's Garden of Verses*, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and more. See <http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/stevensonbio.htm> for more.

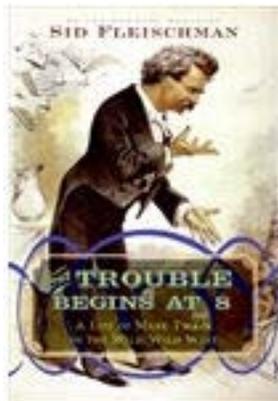
November 14 - **Astrid Anna Emilia Lindgren** (1907-2002). This Swedish children's book author and screenwriter is best remembered for writing the *Pippi Longstocking* and *Karlsson-on-the-Roof* book series. More on Lindgren can be found at www.astridlindgren.se/eng/index_1024.htm.

November 24 - **Sylvia Louise Engdahl** (born 1933). This science fiction writer is best known for her novel *Enchantress from the Stars*. For more on Engdahl see www.sylviaengdahl.com/.

November 25 - **Marc Brown** (born 1946). Author of *Arthur Babysits*, *Arthur Lost and Found*, *Arthur Writes a Story* and many more Arthur stories. www.kidsreads.com/authors/au-brown-marc.asp or <http://pbskids.org/arthur>

November 29 - **Madeleine L'Engle** (1918-2007). Author of *A Wrinkle in Time* and many others. You can read about the author at www.madeleinelengle.com

November 30 - **Samuel Clemens, aka Mark Twain** (1835-1910). Author of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper* and other fiction. www.underthesun.cc/Classics/Twain/



Note: Speaking of Mark Twain, we just heard about this new book at the ALSC conference . . .

The Trouble Begins at 8: A Life of Mark Twain in the Wild, Wild West, by Sid Fleischman. Great for ages 9-12. The presenter had this to say about the book, "There is nothing not to like in this look at Twain's life and its connections to the American West. The anecdotes are satisfying, the pace lively, the art exceptional, the bookmaking a pleasure, and the language reminiscent of Twain's own speech and style."



Summer Reading News

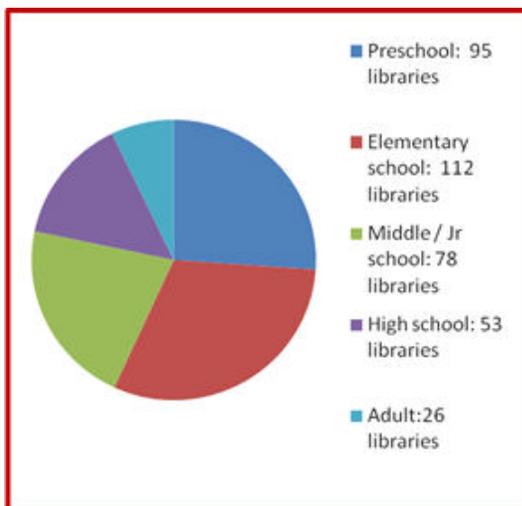
From the “2008 Idaho Summer Reading Program Report”



- Summer readers at the Midvale District Library celebrate the end of summer reading.)

Idaho public libraries annually report on their summer reading participation through an online survey, and the information they provide is the basis for this report. In 2008, 112 main and branch libraries (80% of library jurisdictions) reported that 45,850 children registered to participate in summer reading (a 2.8% increase over 2007). Libraries also provided outreach in their communities with book give aways and summer reading activities and 37,153 children attended these programs. (Above

Who attends summer reading programs? Idaho has 374,180 children between the ages of birth and 18. (2005 US Census). Libraries provide summer reading programs for all ages:



95 libraries have programs for preschool children

112 libraries have programs for elementary age

78 libraries have programs for middle school or junior high

53 libraries have programs for high school

26 libraries have programs for adults



School Zone

Collaborating in the Schools: Benefits of the librarian/teacher partnership

“Collaborative planning is teachers and library media specialists working together as an instructional team to plan for instruction that integrates information literacy skills and resources with curriculum objectives.” – *the Nebraska Educational Media Association (NEMA)* as defined in *Collaborating to Meet Standards, Teacher/librarian partnerships for K-6*, by Toni Buzzeo (Linworth Publishing, 2002).

The library media specialist has familiarity with a wide range resources, as well as expertise in information literacy; the teacher has intimate knowledge of the students and the various content areas. When the two team up as equal partners to plan, implement and assess curricular units the entire school community benefits!

- Communication between faculty, administrators and ancillary staff becomes more frequent, resulting in a better understanding of the media specialists' role.
- Teachers become more familiar with available resources, and resource sharing is increased.
- Information literacy skills are integrated into the curriculum in meaningful and authentic practices, rather than taught as separate skills.
- Students' critical thinking and problem solving skills are strengthened.
- Creativity can be ignited by building on each others' ideas, thus improving the quality and excitement of lessons.

There have been several recent studies measuring the impact of school libraries on student achievement. Familiar to many school media specialists are the collection of Northwest States studies by Keith Curry Lance and RSL Research. In the 2000 Colorado report, Lance writes:

A central finding of this study is the importance of a collaborative approach to information literacy. Test scores rise in both elementary and middle schools as library media specialists and teacher work together. In addition, scores also increase with the amount of time library media specialists spend as in-service trainers of other teachers, acquainting them with the rapidly changing world of information.

You can view the Colorado study in its entirety at www.lrs.org/documents/lmcstudies/CO/execsumm.pdf; studies by state can be found at www.ala.org/aaslTemplate.cfm?Section=resourceguides&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=14760

Professional Development Service: The ICFL has some great books about the librarian/teacher partnership. Check them out at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/landing/professional-development-service>.

[Collaborating to meet standards: teacher/librarian partnerships for K-6 / Toni Buzzeo. Buzzeo, Toni. 2002](#)

[Collaborating to meet standards: teacher/librarian partnerships for 7-12 / Toni Buzzeo. Buzzeo, Toni. 2002](#)

[Collaboration and the school library media specialist / Carol A. Doll. Doll, Carol Ann, 1949- 2005](#)

[Collaborative library lessons for the primary grades: linking research skills to curriculum standards / written and illustrated by Brenda S. Copeland and Patricia A. Messner. Copeland, Brenda S. 2004](#)

[Partners in learning : students, teachers, and the school library / Ray Doiron and Judy Davies; foreword by Ken Haycock. Doiron, Ray. 1998](#)

The on-line faculty lounge... Share your experiences about building partnerships with the teachers in your school. What works well? What are some challenges? Blog with us at <http://libraries.idaho.gov>



School Library Survey Featured at ILA

As mentioned in previous issues of The Scoop, the Idaho Commission for Libraries has contracted with RSL Research to study the impact of Idaho school libraries on student achievement. Hosting informational breakout sessions at ILA were ICFL field consultant Dr. Frank Nelson and RSL researchers Dr. Keith Curry Lance, Marcia Rodney and Bill Schwarz. Several school media specialists and librarians, administrators, teachers and support staff attended the sessions, which provided details about the design and administration of the survey. Though not identical to previous state studies such as Colorado, Iowa, California, and Illinois, Idaho's study will focus on the impact school librarians have on student achievement.

Critical to this study is the collection of names and contact information for all school librarians in the state. This information is not on file in any statewide database; currently the survey administrators have names and contact information for approximately 50 percent of our school librarians. You can help by sending your information to Debby Wylie at debby.wylie@libraries.idaho.gov or 800-548-6212.

The more librarians surveyed, the more accurate the results will be.

Know the Numbers

Reading Aloud Better Prepares Kids for School

There's more evidence that reading aloud to young children—especially in an engaging manner—promotes emergent literacy and language development and better prepares them for school.

From the study “Reading Aloud To Children: The Evidence” by Elisabeth Duursma EdD, Marilyn Augustyn MD and Barry Zuckerman MD published in May, 2008 in the journal *Archives of Disease in Childhood*: “Promoting healthy child development lies at the heart of pediatric practice, yet a major challenge facing the field is applying “evidence based standards” to our practice. In one area of this effort though, reading aloud to children, the evidence is clear. There is ample research demonstrating that reading aloud to young children promotes their development of language and other emergent literacy skills (e.g., Adams, 1990; Sénéchal & Levre, 2002; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Storch & Whitehurst, 2001) which in turn helps children getting ready for school (e.g., Ezell & Justice, 2005; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

The practice of reading aloud promotes a love of reading, which is even more important than improving specific literacy skills.

“When parents hold positive attitudes towards reading, they are more likely to create opportunities for their children that promote positive attitudes towards literacy, and they can help children develop solid language and literacy skills,” said authors Duursma and Zuckerman of the nonprofit literacy organization Reach Out and Read in Boston and Marilyn Augustyn, MD, of the Department of Pediatrics at Boston University School of Medicine. When parents share books with their kids, the authors say, they also promote in them an understanding of the world, their social skills, and their ability to learn coping strategies.

In fact, this may be more apparent among high-risk children from low-income families who have parents with little education, belong to a minority group, and do not speak English. The reason is because they're less likely to be exposed to frequent and interactive shared reading.

Reading aloud to young children clearly prepares them for school. Phonological awareness—the ability to manipulate the sounds of spoken language—is an important prerequisite for learning to read, and reading aloud promotes preschoolers' sensitivity to alliteration and rhyme. Exposing this to kids ages four and five, for example, contributed to their progress in reading and spelling at ages six and seven, the report says. And children's knowledge of nursery rhymes at ages three and four is related to detecting alliteration and rhyme at ages four through seven.

“When children do well at detecting and manipulating syllables, rhymes and phonemes, they tend to learn more quickly to read,” says the report, which goes on to say that children's oral language skills can be stimulated by parent-child literacy activities such as shared book reading.

“Children learn the meaning of new words during book-reading interactions with their parents [because] reading aloud familiarizes children with the language found in books and stimulates vocabulary growth,” the report says.

“You can imagine if someone technologically came up with a widget that would stimulate all aspects of a two-year-old’s development, everyone would want to buy it,” said Zuckerman.

Studies show that children who are read to from an earlier age have better language development and tend to have better language scores later in life. Most important, though, said Zuckerman, is that reading aloud is a period of shared attention and emotion between parent and child. This reinforces reading as a pleasurable activity.

“Children ultimately learn to love books because they are sharing it with someone they love,” Zuckerman said.

Sources: *School Library Journal*, 6/30/2008, (www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6573874.html); www.reachoutandread.org/press_article.aspx?id=97, and www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/may/13/schools.uk4



A Closer Look at Writing a Needs Assessment Statement

How many of us have discovered a grant source and tried to think of a project we could apply for? Good programs and services begin with planning, and the first step in planning is often a needs assessment. Since you never know when the opportunity to apply for funding to help your youth services programs may appear, having a project idea developed will give you a head start. Here are some tips for preparing that first step---a good needs assessment statement for grant applications.

Gathering the data: Choose an appropriate data gathering tool for the type of information you are seeking. Here are some general guidelines, from Library Coach Ruth Metz (Ruth Metz Associates, Needs Assessment Workshop, 2008):

1. **Information scan:** Do a preliminary search for local information and/or sources in which you can find relevant information. This will help you determine which, if any, additional data gathering tools you will need. Examples: Census data, school free and reduced lunch data, IRI scores, county profiles, current research recommendations, etc. Your own library statistics will also provide relevant information, such as average number of families that attend storyhours, number of teens in your Teen Advisory

Group, average attendance of teen programs, number of library cards checked out each year, summer reading participation numbers, etc.

2. Key Informant interview: Set up a meeting with those who have knowledge in your area of interest. These “experts” can be school principals, counselors, library consultants, teachers, agency directors, etc. These individuals can provide data, as well as personal insight about trends and needs.

3. Stakeholder interview: If possible, set up some meetings with the people who will most benefit from your service, in order to determine their wants and needs. Examples include parents, teens, child care providers, etc.

4. Focus group: If possible, hold a meeting for a group of 8-12 stakeholders on a specific topic. Make sure someone effectively records the groups’ comments. This tool should be used in conjunction with an information scan and/or key informant interview.

5. Survey: This can be useful to establish broad-based data about the “target” community, but should be used in combination with credible data gathered from information scans or key informant interviews. Surveys should be kept to a minimum number of questions. A word of caution: Surveys can be very time-consuming and the data can be unreliable if the sample is too small. When conducting a large-scale needs assessment, it is better to hire a professional to conduct your survey.

Writing a statement: Depending on the grant application, needs statements can take a variety of forms. Be sure to read the grant criteria carefully before determining how you will present your assessment findings. If you are simply summarizing your findings in a paragraph, be sure to cite your sources and use hard data. Applications based on solid data are more likely to be funded than applications based solely on observations or anecdotal stories.

As an exemplary example, a recently funded Read to Me Minigrant application contained the following components in their needs assessment description:

- Description of the town: geographical, population, number of K-12 students, number of schools, free and reduced lunch rates, Title One information, Head Start information, budget shortfalls.
- Chart of the 2007 Poverty Guidelines from the Federal Register
- Average income in the county
- Research connecting poverty rates, parent education level, and student achievement
- IRI scores: local school district compared to state
- Current research on early literacy and brain development
- Rationale of library’s proposal as it relates to data collected

Though many of the Read to Me mini-grant grant applications contained data such these, many applications simply described why the staff thought the proposal would

benefit the target community. Some applications included data that was unclear, or did not cite a source. Many applications included statements that were not based on objective data. Here are some statements we found, along with suggestions that include data:

- “Many of our parents want...” could be stated as, “A recent survey of current storytime attendees shows that ___ percent would attend this program if offered.”
- “There are a lot of...,” could be stated as, “The 2007 census indicates that ___ percent of the population is”
- “We have a high rate of poverty,” should include specific numbers from the census, free and reduced lunch rates, etc.
- “Many do not...,” should state the number of people based on some sort of gathering tool.

Here are a few useful links for finding supporting documentation:

- Census information: www.factfinder.census.gov
- Idaho Reading Indicator scores: www.sde.state.id.us/IRI/iristats/irianalysis.asp
- Free and reduced lunch rates, by Idaho school district: www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/statistics_finance.htm
- Other Idaho nutritional information: www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/
- Idaho Schools’ Report Cards (test scores, district info, statistics, etc.): www.sde.state.id.us/ipd/reportcard/SchoolReportCard.asp
- 2008 Child Care in the State of Idaho: www.naccrra.org/randd/data/docs/ID.pdf
- Child Welfare League of America, “Idaho’s Children 2007”: www.cwla.org/advocacy/Statefactsheets/2007/idaho.pdf
- Annie B. Casey Foundation “Profile for Idaho”: www.kidscount.org/cgi-bin/clihs.cgi?action=profile_results&subset=ID
- Idaho Kids Count: www.idahokidscount.org/

Tips & Tools



Election and Voting Information for Kids

- Annenberg Public Policy Center’s Classroom Fact Check <http://www.factchecked.org/> Offers materials to teach students to “see through the spin” of the presidential elections, including lessons to analyze political advertisements and claims made by candidates during the debates.
- CNN’s Election Center 2008 <http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/>

The cable news channel's Web site features maps, summaries of the key issues, tallies of campaign contributions, blogs, podcasts, and video coverage.

- C-SPAN Classroom
http://www.c-spanclassroom.org/Campaign2008_Resources.aspx
The classroom resource of the nonprofit public-affairs channel provides explanatory guides, lesson plans, student activities, and video clips.
- Kids Voting USA www.kidsvotingusa.org/
Information on state and local affiliates for a program that provides curriculum and mock-election events designed to engage students in the democratic process.
- The Constitutional Rights Foundation www.crf-usa.org/election_central/election_central.htm
"Election Central" offers historical resources related to democracy and elections.
- Pearson's Election Kit
www.phschool.com/sales_support/marketing_websites/election_kit/index.html
Free materials from the publisher include an online catalog of classroom activities, free printable posters and maps, and links to Internet resources on the presidential candidates.
- Countdown to Election 2008
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/election2008.htm>
Web site sponsored by Scholastic includes interactive election map, news coverage from student reporters, lesson plans, puzzles, and online discussions of the campaign.

(from *Education Week*, 1/23/08)



Professional Development Collection

The Idaho Commission for Libraries Professional Development Service (PDS) provides access to numerous titles in the field of library and information sciences. Free shipping to and from your library is provided! See <http://libraries.idaho.gov/pds> for more information.

News Beyond Idaho

Idahoans help break world record!

Last Thursday on October 2, over 425,000 people joined Jumpstart's Read for the Record by reading the book *Corduroy* by Don Freeman to children across the nation. We shattered a world record and brought early education to a national stage. For more information on this exciting campaign, see <http://www.jstart.org/>.

Here in Idaho, over 2,100 copies of *Corduroy* were distributed through 25 public and school libraries to children through the Idaho Read to Me First Book program. Congratulations to everyone who participated to this worthwhile program.



Pirate joke: What did the pirate want to be when he grows up?
Answer: An aaaarrrrr-cheologist..



Talk Back: We welcome your feedback on anything in *The Scoop*. Just e-mail Peggy or Stephanie and we'll print your comments in *The Scoop*.

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