

Suggestions from around the State

Babysitting Clinic Leslie Massey, Children's Services Charlestown-Clark County Public Library Charlestown, IN

A Babysitting Clinic is an appealing and useful program for children in grades five through eight and a way to promote library materials. Charlestown-Clark County Public Libraries has two main goals for their clinics: first, to provide an activity that will bring this middle-school audience into the library for a successful experience, and second, to teach basic babysitting skills to children who want to learn them. Early April is a good time to schedule this program for it allows participants time to think about the information and plan their babysitting jobs before the summer vacation.

The program lasts four hours with a twenty minute snack break. Highlights include a parent panel discussion of what parents want in a babysitter and what they are willing to pay sitters, a policeman talking about safety on the job, and a nurse who speaks about first aid and CPR. The library staff covers subjects such as how to get started in babysitting,

estimating your babysitting skills, and how to discipline children and handle difficult situations. (Some role playing at this point is a good idea.) The last part of the presentation is devoted to using games, books, and crafts with children, and several simple craft activities are completed. A review of all material ends the program.

Children who participate in the Clinic take home a resource notebook on babysitting put together by the library staff, handouts on safety, first aid and child development, several completed crafts, a babysitter's "bag of tricks," and a course certificate of completion. Participants and speakers enjoy the program and many of the participants are now babysitting. This is one program that definitely meets the program goals.

Parent Volunteers**DaleAnne Cantrell****Children's Coordinating Assistant
Brownsburg Public Library
Brownsburg, IN**

The Brownsburg Public Library has a unique storyhour for three and four years olds. The theme, selection of books, fingerplays, and crafts are planned by a library employee, but parents sign up to participate in reading the story or assisting with the crafts once a session.

This parent-child involvement with books is what we want to encourage and we hope that it is repeated at home. Not all adults enjoy reading to a group; but they are surely accosted to read "just one more time" at home. Parents value this socialization opportunity for their preschoolers and are encouraged to continue the book-loving atmosphere on a one-to-one basis.

The mothers/grandmothers who are not scheduled in the story room that week cut out craft parts to be used later, assemble booklets and socialize with each other in a separate room.

Because of this volunteer effort the library is able to provide an excellent learning experience for twenty-five children six times a week during the spring, summer and fall—all this with the involvement of only one staff member. During 1988, 3,576 children attended 182 programs of this type. The program should work wherever there are mothers of preschoolers interested in helping provide a learning experience and socialization opportunities for their children.

One of the benefits of having these young patrons appreciate the library and consider it a friendly enjoyable community helper is that this positive attitude will be with them throughout their school years and life. The goal is

for young library users to become constant library users.

**"Read-In" for National
Library Week****Wava J. Furlong****Coordinator of Children's
Services****Mishawaka-Penn Public Library
Mishawaka, IN**

Do you need a literature-oriented activity for third to sixth graders, a group that is sometimes difficult to entice into library programming? Revive a bit of the 1960's and sponsor a Read-In. This audience is a good target for such a program because these children can read independently for an uninterrupted fifteen to thirty minutes.

For this event, consider making appliance-carton houses complete with skylights to allow adequate lighting for reading. Bean bag chairs make comfortable flooring, and book posters can decorate the inside walls. Have readers reserve a specific time slot of fifteen to thirty minutes. Your goal might be something like one full day of continuous reading.

A librarian will need to be available to help keep participants on schedule, and keep the rules simple.

1. No leaving the Read-In House during your time.
2. Only reading materials are allowed in the house.
3. No food, drink, or gum allowed.
4. One person in the house at a time.
5. No visitors allowed.
6. Stop reading when the librarian says time is up.

The houses are an eye-catching attraction for library patrons of all ages, the program is fun for the children, and, best of all, reading is encouraged.

Sticker Stashers and Finger Plays

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New Castle-Henry County
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At the New Castle-Henry County Public Library, preschool story hours run for twelve weeks in the fall and twelve weeks in the spring with four sessions each week. Two special features are "sticker stashers" and finger plays handouts. A sticker stasher can be made from any shape or picture one might choose. *The Stick Out Your Neck* series by Pattie Carson and Janet Dellosa is one good source for ideas (reproducible worksheets published by Carson-Dellosa

Publishing Co., Greensboro, N.C. 27416).

At the beginning of each storytime children choose a sticker to go on their sticker stasher, and at the end of the twelve week sessions they take their sticker stashers home.

Directions for some of the finger plays that will be used and a list of themes and books for the twelve weeks are distributed at the first storytime of each session. This handout encourages parent-child interaction as parents can enjoy doing the finger plays at home with their children. The booklists make things easier when the little ones want to borrow "the story we read at the library."