



ALSC
Association for Library Service to Children

Curiosity Creates

INNOVATIVE LIBRARY PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN

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Introduction

In August 2015, the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) publicized the request for proposals for a new funding initiative, the Curiosity Creates grant, sponsored by The Walt Disney Company. This award was an opportunity for public libraries to receive funding to promote and develop creativity skills in children ages 6 to 14, focusing on one or more of the seven critical components of creativity, as designated by the Center for Childhood Creativity (CCC). Outside of the connection to the creativity components, the application requirements offered project flexibility. The major requirements were that the recipient must be a public library; the programming must serve the focused age group and demonstrate viability and reach; and that it must be completed, with all funds spent, between October 1, 2015, and May 31, 2016. The statistical material contained in this document comes from the applications and evaluations of the 79 Curiosity Creates grant recipients.

In September 2015, ALSC received 432 applications and awarded 79 grants of up to \$7,500 each. Each application was unique to its community, creating programming that would meet the needs of that community while also connecting to the research outlined in the CCC's 2015 white paper *Inspiring a Generation to Create: Critical Components of Creativity in Children*, written by Helen Hadani and Garrett Jaegar. (Available online at https://issuu.com/bayareadiscoverymuseum/docs/ccc_components_white_paper_36_x1a.) It was hoped that the research would encourage creativity and that public libraries would create programming based on the proven techniques and strategies. The age group of 6 to 14 was of particular importance, with emphasis placed on children 9 to 10—also known as the “fourth-grade slump”—where research sees a drop in creative thinking (6). As Linda Bartley, youth services manager of McCracken County Public Library (KY), stated in her application, “After reading the materials from the Center for Childhood Creativity and viewing the archived webinar, I realized that I need to make some changes for our children.”

The CCC research focused on seven critical components of creativity and included “research-supported strategies to promote” each component. They are as follows:

- Imagination and Originality: Imagine and explore original ideas
- Flexibility: Maintain openness to unique and novel experiences
- Decision Making: Make thoughtful choices that support creative efforts
- Communication and Self-Expression: Communicate ideas and true self with confidence
- Motivation: Demonstrate internal motivation to achieve a meaningful goal
- Collaboration: Develop social skills that foster teamwork
- Action and Movement: Boost creative potential through physical activity (8)

Libraries were given the option to focus on one or more critical components, with 47 percent choosing all seven components, and 71 percent choosing five or more components. The overall average was 5.5 components, with 92 percent of the applicants including the component of imagination and originality, followed by the component of communication and self-expression at 90 percent. The component that was chosen the least was action and movement at 59 percent. Interestingly, for the Portneuf District Library (ID) program titled “Take It, Play It Kits,” action and movement was the only component selected, singling out that program as one to monitor. Another component, motivation, was also selected with less frequency. This selection process is of interest as it is similar to findings in *Inspiring a Generation to Create*, which highlights the need for “communication, motivation, and physical activity—which are often overlooked in a narrow definition of creativity” (6).

Many of the research strategies to promote the components are already standard practice in a librarian's "toolkit," and the research confirms this, but others require us to examine and reexamine our programming, outreach, and philosophy. It is not hard to do and extremely rewarding, even when adjustments are made to promote and encourage creativity. For example, the component imagination and originality highlights the basic need of a safe and supporting environment, especially in the middle childhood years. This environment is provided for the Lee County Library (MS) program "Growing into Cosplay." Lee County Library is located in Tupelo, Mississippi, where they originally started a Teen Cosplay Club based on a patron's interest. "Growing into Cosplay" was created to ensure that the club would stay vibrant as the current teens aged out. As Hadani and Jaegar state, "Children need time to immerse themselves in creative activities, a place that feels safe to express ideas that are unconventional, and encouragement to explore the unknown so they can discover what they enjoy and unlock a universe of possibilities" (5). The fact that the Lee County Library was meeting this need was articulated by the parents in attendance at the program. One mother mused, "I almost cried when the library got this grant. My daughter was the odd man out—and now look at this" (a view of twelve excited tween and teen girls wearing comic, anime, and manga shirts).

The Baltimore County Public Library (MD) program “Mobile Makerspace” featured portable programming to reach each of the Baltimore County Public Library’s nineteen branches. In creating carts that could be transported on the library’s delivery trucks, these mobile makerspaces delivered flexibility to both the library system and the kids. When asked to expound upon the strongest library component connection, Marisa Conner, program coordinator, chose flexibility: “Having a multitude of materials on hand allowed programs to veer off in directions that the children wanted to explore. Before the grant, our programs were run with very deliberate supplies and could only accommodate a certain number of participants and only for a predetermined final product. The mobile makerspace allowed more children to participate and more outcomes to be created.”

The New Brunswick Free Public Library (NBFPL) (NJ) program “On the ’Zine with NBFPL,” administered by Chelsea Woods-Turner, described the connection to the creativity component communication and self-expression in their “’Zine” meetings: “At every meeting, students would engage in lengthy brainstorming and free writing exercises. Our goal was to jump-start the instinct to look at the world around them creatively. Even if we did not always end up with a published piece, it was important that the students had a grasp of how to start the creative process on their own. We would do verbal check-ins with them throughout these sessions in order to facilitate reflection on their ability to create original work.”

The Ocean County Library (NJ) program “MAKE ME: Portable Maker Kits Designed to Help Children/Teens Get Creative, Make Mistakes, and Learn Resilience in a County Still Severely Impacted by Superstorm Sandy” created a user guide with not only kit descriptions and how to use them but also instructions on how to purposefully encourage each creativity component. For example, the guide explanation for decision making stated: “This focuses on refining all those great ideas and taking a look at all ideas and finding best possible solutions. All of the kits invite scientific inquiry. BUT the most important decision a child/teen will make is the decision to be creative. Creativity is a process, not a “gift.” Once children/teens understand this, they are free to have a lifelong relationship with their own creativity.”

From the outset of the grant, Mack Freeman and the staff at the West Georgia Regional Library System have actively embraced the concept of motivation. In their program “Picture This: Kids Create,” the goal was to move away from prizes and “trinkets” and to encourage intrinsic motivation. Freeman stated, “The goal was to gain skills and knowledge that enabled each child to express themselves no matter how good they thought they were at visual art. It wasn’t about a prize at the end but what they liked . . . They were proud of their work and wanted to continue, and that was the whole point.”

In connecting with the creativity component of collaboration, San Diego Public Library (CA) Program Coordinator Kathryn Johnson cited this example in her final evaluation: “The component of collaboration was especially apparent in the Discovery Corner theater program. Since many of the participants were between the ages of 6 and 9, we restricted the planned activity so that participants could engage in free play while receiving prompts from the library staff member. This worked wonderfully for the two knights who were engaged in combat and asked to add the giant walking chili pepper to their story.”

The Eastern Shore Public Library (VA) program “Making My World a Better Place” was geared towards second-grade English-language learners (ELL) exploring the ecosystems of the Eastern Shore. In their application, they listed all seven critical components, but when asked in the final evaluation which components resonated the most in the program, action and movement was highlighted, making them one of only twelve who selected this component. Doris Gebel, program coordinator, stated, “When the second-graders attended the Wednesday session, it was at the end of a long school day and they were tired. Activities, such as Migration Hopscotch, energized them for the rest of the program. In addition, there was no language barrier during any of the activities using action and movement, and thus easier to enjoy for these second-graders.”

What Is a Best Practice?

In determining which best-practice examples to include in this report, the following criteria was used for selection: Projects were selected that had strong connection to the research (focusing on one or more of the seven critical components) with a program reach that not only clearly reached the target audience of children ages 6 to 14 but also made a documented impact on the participants. Grant projects with meaningful partnerships with community organizations, or thoughtful and well-executed plans for diversity and inclusion are also highlighted. In order to create a timely best-practice document, those that demonstrated efficiency (within the time frame of October 2015 through May 2016) are included. It was important to also consider sustainability (which could include use of research strategies on a modified program) and the possibility of replication or reinterpretation, along with the overall use of funds. And, of course, effectiveness (must work and achieve results). It is hoped that the examples inspire libraries to “create creators.” No one project was perfect, but these projects stand out in meeting the criteria and go above and beyond meeting the goal, “to promote and develop creativity skills in public libraries.” As there were seventy-nine total grants, not all worthy grant programs could be highlighted. Efforts have been made to showcase projects in a variety of ALSC publications and presentations.

Additional criteria were taken into consideration for the best-practice report as the application process brought to light highly creative solutions and strategies to overcoming barriers to creativity. These barriers included transportation; food insecurity; language; lack of outreach to underserved populations; and experience barriers (that include novel experiences and foundation literacy, not just limited to ELL/ESL); perceptions of staff, administration, Friends, and trustees of what children’s programming at the library looks like.

Although not included in the best-practice examples, Amy Derrington and the Singletary Memorial Library (TX) program “Kids Being Kids” deserve mention for their creative transportation solution, a “walking bus.” The library is in walking distance to the elementary school. The library staff members met the kids at the stop sign by the school and walked the students back to the library. On rainy days, the library staff held umbrellas. Another example is the Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls (highlighted in the examples). They were assisted by their partner TRAILBlazers, an after-school program, in bringing the children to the library. Other libraries included transportation in their grant budget, while in the case of the Glen Ellyn Public Library (IL) program “STEAM Teams,” it was determined after the grant period “that transportation isn’t a problem for much of our underserved demographic.”

The application budget contained a line for food for programs. For some this was supplies for cooking projects or food for a training event or a final party, but for several, this budget line item represented a temporary solution to the larger issue of food insecurity in our communities. Claudia Haines from the Homer Public Library (AK) program “The Maker Club” addressed the issue head-on in their application: “Claudia will purchase food for the program to support hungry kids, particularly those who don’t have access to food after school.” Both the Derby Public Library (KS) and the Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls (PA) (highlighted in the examples) address issues of food insecurity in the best-practice examples, but this issue merits further study. It is difficult for a child to fully engage in the creative process when concerned about the basic need of being fed.

Several of the Curiosity Creates programs focused a large portion or all of their efforts on reaching an underserved population. For the Attleboro Public Library (MA), this was a new program, while for the Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls (PA), it was an expansion of a successful summer outreach. At the Perry Public Library (OH) program “Arts in the Library,” it was opportunity to reconnect. Kara Cervelli, program coordinator, had noticed a drop in homeschoolers using the library and wondered

if the families who homeschooled had aged out. She learned that another area in the county had a vibrant homeschooling population. In planning their programming, she made efforts to reconnect with homeschoolers. She asked the question, “Was it just something that I wasn’t giving them that they were interested in or that they needed?” She used the grant to fund five separate programs, two of which were aimed directly at homeschoolers—“Music Explorations” and “Homeschool Art Class.” The programs had waiting lists and parents traveling from more than twenty miles away for their children to attend.

Libraries have the unique flexibility to offer the communities they serve novel experiences. For the Stair District Library (MI), Colleen Leddy, program coordinator for “Sculptamania!,” offered a project based on exploring not only sculpture but also the concept of public art. The library arranged school field trips to communities where public art is displayed: this opened up a dialogue between the library, the kids, and the greater community on the question, “Why doesn’t Morenci have public art?” Language and foundation literacy exposure came in the Orange County Library System (FL) program “Fairy Tale STEM.” None of the participants at the South Trails Branch had ever heard the story of “The Three Billy Goats Gruff.” They were also introduced to the term *raft*. Nicole Suarez not only explained the concept of a raft, but the children also built their own successful floating rafts. For the Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls (PA), unknown concepts like scale and skyscrapers were the beginnings of the novel experience of exploring architecture and engineering. Terms, concepts, and words most take for granted highlighted the gravity and opportunity that literacy and libraries play in encouraging creativity.

Many grant recipients were truly creative in marketing and promoting their programs. The branding and marketing of several was innovative, from catchy titles, such as the Pio Pico Koreatown Library (CA) program “Science Chariot,” to cutting-edge logotypes, creativity was also shown by the librarians themselves. For example, the Warren P. Sewell Memorial Library of Bremen (GA) worked with the city water department to include advertising about the “Yes, You Are Creative!” program in the monthly water bills. In an effort to reach all patrons, the North Plainfield Memorial Library (NJ) produced all the promotional materials for the program “Talk It Up!” in both English and Spanish.

The methodology for determining those projects that might be considered a best practice was as follows: All seventy-nine recipients were contacted by e-mail during the grant period; some recipients had multiple interactions. Additionally, twenty-five were interviewed by telephone, nine were interviewed in person off-site, and eight site visits were conducted, with multiple staff members, parents, and children interviewed. Two sites were visited multiple times. All applications and final evaluations, press releases, journal and news articles, and social media (including YouTube videos) submitted were reviewed. Several focus groups were held, including one that was specifically directed to librarians. Two others contained University of Pittsburgh library student Courtney Siska, parents, and special education, health, and education professionals. This was accomplished within the budget and scope of the project.

Examples of Best Practices

Practical examples are provided on pages 6 to 41.

“Coding is creative and powerful. It’s how words turn into image and action. It truly is magic.”

Gene Luen Yang, *Secret Coders: Get with the Program*

ALEXANDRIA LIBRARY–BEATLEY CENTRAL LIBRARY (VA)

“STEAMtivity”

Introduction

Diana Price, youth services manager of the Alexandria Library–Beatley Central Library (VA), administered “STEAMtivity,” a series of twenty-one low- and high-tech programs to foster open exploration of a wide variety of STEAM areas. Children were given the chance to create original works of art, video, music, and photography, as well as come up with creative solutions to problems by using common materials in new and different ways. The program gave children an opportunity to explore technology that may not be otherwise available to them. The target audience of the program was children 8 to 14, with a focus on reaching out to low income and immigrant families. In the application, program administrators made it clear that it was equally important for the caregivers, not just the children, to come away with an understanding of the importance of the components and encouragement of creativity, and that the library was a safe environment for all to “learn, explore, and create.” The program fostered many of the research-supported strategies reported by Hadani and Jaegar, including the idea to “provide children with a rich variety of new experiences and encourage active participation in these experiences” (21).

Implementation

The library had multiple partners for this program. UpCycle Creative Reuse Center was the partner for providing supplies for the “Make a Musical Instrument,” “Make a Marble Run,” and “Make a Holiday Card for a Veteran” programs. Project Play partnered with the library on play events in the park adjacent to the library.

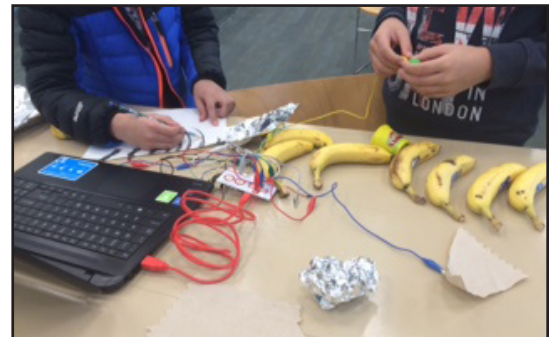
Outreach to the community for this program was essential. The Alexandria community is extremely diverse and serves a large immigrant population. There is a perception in the community that people are not allowed to use the library if they are not citizens. The library does extensive outreach, including going to doctors’ offices in areas with large immigrant populations, to spread the word about the library and to dispel misconceptions.

“STEAMtivity” consisted of twenty-one planned programs and four bonus programs:

- “Arduinos, Part 1 and 2”: Explored coding following the instructions on Sylvia’s Super-Awesome Maker Show website.
- “Clothing Alteration/T-shirt Design”: T-shirts were provided for this event, but children were welcome to bring their own. Stencils, fabric makers, beads, and scissors were provided along with

cutting options for redesigning the T-shirt. The project offered children freedom to design and create, with the main support from staff being assisting with card stock to place in-between the front and back of the T-shirt, and embroidery hoops to secure the fabric in place when working with the stencils.

- “LEGO Mindstorms Robots, Part 1, 2, and 3”: Having multiple sessions allowed the children to build upon the previous set of idea; this was done on three consecutive days. The coding and robots became more complex each day.
- “littleBits, Part 1 and 2”: After brief instructions and information on circuits, children were given time to explore on their own, building on this exploration; additional examples were also shown. Price wrote, “They never got tired of playing with littleBits, and we had to shoo them out the door when the program was over.”
- “Make a Marble Run”: A mini lesson in gravity that promoted collaboration; small groups first drew sketches of their marble runs. Parents acted as extra hands and came in handy being taller. Challenges of making crazy zigzag runs encouraged flexibility.
- “Make a Mixed-Media Collage with Local Artist and Teacher Sara”: Children used recycled materials, paint, tissue, and decoupage to create representational collages about themselves. “Make a Musical Instrument”: This was in partnership with UpCycle Creative Reuse Center.
- “Make an Ornament with Alexandria’s Mobile Art Lab”: This partnership program had kids creating with toilet paper tubes and other “up-cycled” materials.
- “Make a Puff Mobile”: This idea comes from the Virginia Science Museum, where children are given card stock, scissors, tape, tissue paper, straw, clay, paperclips, and Life Savers. The challenge is to create a vehicle that will move by wind power (in this case a portable fan.)
- “Makey Makeys, Part 1 and 2”: Keyboards and game controllers were created out of bananas, carrots, Play-Doh, aluminum foil, and pencil drawings. Using Makey Makeys to create floor keyboards, kids played video games in a “full body way.”
- “Nebulae and Clusters and Galaxies, Oh My! with Local Scientist Cal”: A program for the entire family, Cal Powell shared the wonders of the night sky.
- “Photography Challenge with iPad Minis”: Encouraging collaboration, children worked in small groups, first taking photos and then enhancing the photographs with photo and augmented reality apps such as Space Effects.
- “Pop-up Play in Holmes Run Park with Project Play”: Partnering with Project Play, this program takes advantage of the adjacent park. This is a great model to promote the CCC research strategy “Encourage movement as a modality for learning and provide opportunities to participate in active learning environments that engage both the mind and body” (49).
- “Stop-Motion Movies with iPad Minis”: Using the Stop Motion Studio app, the basics of animation were covered, and children created shorts using LEGO bricks, puppets, and stuffed animals.
- “Strawbees Straw Building, Part 1 and 2”: Open-end construction based on straws and connectors. An optional challenge was given to build a structure one meter tall.



Makey Makeys

- Bonus Programs
 - “Make a Holiday Card for a Veteran”: This was in partnership with UpCycle Creative Reuse Center.
 - “Make a Recycled Alien”: Recycled materials were key to STEAMtivity open-ended design projects. In this program kids were encouraged to create imaginative aliens.
 - “STEAMtivity Film and Photography Festival”: A finale program for children and their families highlighting photos of all the STEAMtivity programs and the kid-created stop-motion videos from the “Stop-Motion Movies with iPad Minis” program.
 - “3,2,1 Blast Off!—Make and Launch a Paper Rocket”: A mini lesson in aerodynamics using an air-powered rocket launcher and kid created paper rockets.

Results—Outputs and Outcomes

Price summed up the positive rewards of the creativity programming experience: “Adopting an open-ended program style was my biggest ‘wow’ moment of the grant! Children love it and take more away from the programs. They are easier to plan and present for staff. More levels can be accommodated. All around awesome!” A father agreed, stating, “I wish libraries had this when I was a kid!”

Along with gathering attendance statistics, the program used surveys after each session and at the end of the series, and informal interviews to assess the program’s success. The cumulative results from sessions surveys were as follows: “90 percent of children rated the program excellent or good, 82 percent worked with others, 98 percent would like to come to more programs like this, and 75 percent learned something new.” From the final session, additional survey questions determined that “43 percent came to 6 or more programs . . . and 100 percent would like to come to more programs.” In addition, e-mail updates with photos were sent to ALSC and the grant consultant, documenting the program throughout the grant period in real time. The initial project estimate was 420 children, with the final number coming in at 481, a 15 percent increase.

One unexpected outcome was a by-product of outreach: homeschoolers. Price noted, “We had many homeschool families attend our programs, and most of them had not come to programs before. Based on the feedback from these families, we are hoping to start a special weekly homeschool program group in the future with a similar format to our ‘STEAMtivity’ programs.”

Lessons Learned

“STEAMtivity” contained such a large sample space of programs that the experience model provides valuable purchasing, time commitment, and programming insight. One of the strengths of the program was Price’s willingness to use the grant to “test the waters” and see which projects were successful and well received by the community. In regard to Arduinos, Price had the challenge that, “for Arduinos to work, I found they needed to download a sizeable software update that let the laptops recognize Arduinos. As our Wi-Fi has two speeds—slow and no—after more than ten hours, we only had six of the ten ready to go.” In regards to littleBits and Mindstorms, they received feedback from the kids who attended multiple programs: “They preferred the Mindstorms now, as they felt they had mastered the littleBits and like how the programming aspect of Mindstorms made it more interesting as there was more to do.” The upside to littleBits is that “littleBits requires a lot less staff assistance as it’s easier for kids to figure out independently.”

“STEAMtivity” had a variety of strong partners with a shared vision who brought expertise or children to the library. Price reached out early and communicated often, and together they shared resources, feedback, and ideas. Not all partners were those that were originally thought of when applying for the grant: “It was difficult for us to connect with some agencies we hoped to partner with,” Price said. “In other instances, as we moved through our programming, we discovered new organizations that were easier to partner with and more beneficial for the library and the partner.”

Conclusion

Price, youth services manager, sees the long-term sustainability of this project. Summer programming was created around the equipment bought with the grant funding, and they plan to share the equipment with the other Alexandria branches. The Friends and trustees are supportive of the programs funded by the grant, helping to ensure long-term viability. The staff learned a multitude of skills in this program, and a by-product of “STEAMtivity” is staff creativity. An e-mail received from Price after the grant period shared the following: “We just demoed our Makey Makeys at an evening event yesterday celebrating the redesign of our reading garden. My staff created really amazing keyboards and drums for patrons to play to display how the technology works, and they were a big hit.”

When queried about the replicable aspects of the project, Price stated, “the overarching theme of our program is an ‘open-ended’ format and letting children explore and learn without step-by-step instructions. As this can be applied to almost any topic, it would be an easy aspect for other libraries to implement.” She broke down the program into three tips: the first focused on the cost of doing STEAM programming, encouraging the use of “low-tech programs that can be done with inexpensive or recycled materials.” The second stressed consideration of how children respond to open-ended programming: “Trust your child participants to be able to succeed without step-by-step instructions.” And third, “children need to work in small groups.” A statement that goes hand in hand with Hadani and Jaegar’s message on supporting collaboration to “provide project-based opportunities that are structured to avoid merely splitting of tasks in favor of sharing and co-creating” (42).

Keys to Success

- Collaborate with partners with a shared mission and vision.
- Simple survey tool to measure outcomes and document success.
- Strong outreach program that goes into the community.
- Meaningful connection with the research.
- Sustainable and replicable at a variety of budget levels.

Other Curiosity Creates Recipients with a Focus on Science

Pio Pico Koreatown Branch (CA) “Science Chariot”

The program was created to expose children to a wide range of fun scientific activities. Kids had the opportunity to pretend to be scientists. This effect was achieved by the kids wearing lab coats, protective goggles, and latex gloves while engaging in actual experiments. The importance of the lab coats and goggles cannot be overstated, as the lab coats had not arrived at the beginning of the program, and a noticeable difference in enthusiasm was observed when this element of play was incorporated into the program. Activities included creating lava lamps, soap making, lemon clocks, slime in a bag, balloon cars, kaleidoscopes, fizz inflators, brush bots, and tornadoes in a bottle. An emerging significant trend out of

the program was the high ratio of girls to boys. Out of twelve programs, 188 participants were boys and 248 were girls. Kevin Awakuni and Shirley Ashe wrote, “a number of our female program participants who were initially hesitant about attending these programs became our most enthusiastic members.”

Further Reading

Todd, Sylvia “Super-Awesome.” 2014. *Sylvia’s Super-Awesome Project Book: Super-Simple Arduino*. Torrance, CA: Constructing Modern Knowledge.

Young author Sylvia teaches Arduino microcontroller programming to young readers ages 8 to 12. With easy-to-follow instructions and illustrations, the reader will learn engineering, science, coding, and electronics by inventing an adjustable strobe and two playable digital musical instruments.

Resources

Project Play, <http://novaplays.org>

Sylvia's Super-Awesome Maker Show website, <http://sylviaishow.com>

UpCycle Creative Reuse Center, <http://www.upcyclecrc.org>

Voice of America's "Library STEAMs Ahead with Creative Program" video, <http://www.voanews.com/content/library-steams-ahead-with-creative-program/3304772.html>

References

Price, Diana. E-mail correspondence with the author. November 6, 2015; December 11, 17, 21, 23, 2015; February 5, 10, 11, 2016; April 5, 2016; May 8, 2016; June 17, 2016; August 3, 2016. Attleboro Public Library (MA)

ATTLEBORO PUBLIC LIBRARY (MA)

“Everyone Explores @ Your Library: Encouraging Inclusive Creative Opportunities for Children of All Abilities”

Introduction

The goal of the Attleboro Public Library (MA) Curiosity Creates grant project, “Everyone Explores @ Your Library: Encouraging Inclusive Creative Opportunities for Children of All Abilities,” was to create an inclusive, hands-on, sensory, active learning space built for imagination and creativity in the children’s room. Amy Rhlinger, assistant director, administered the grant. The library used the grant funding to develop programs, train staff, and provide an interactive play zone. Activity bins and sensory stations that accommodate children of all abilities made the children’s room a welcoming experience for a diverse community. The project’s target audience is ages 6 to 14, with a special emphasis on fourth-graders transitioning to fifth grade at the middle school. Prior to receiving the grant, Attleboro Public Library engaged in a community-wide survey. One aspect of the survey was to find out the needs of the community, including residents and community nonprofit organizations. Instead of telling them what the library could do, they asked what they could do. From this first step emerged the partnership with The Arc of Bristol County (a community partner supporting children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities) and the plan to better serve children of all abilities in exploration and learning.

Implementation

The implementation of the program connects with the research-supported strategies, especially in the areas of imagination and originality, flexibility, decision making, and action and movement.

Much of this program was centered on creating an environment where children and families felt safe to create and explore. Training was an integral aspect. The library embraced Hadani and Jaegar’s research-supported strategies to “provide children with a rich variety of new experiences and encourage active participation in these experiences” (21). The Arc conducted a one-day in-service disability awareness training for the entire library staff. Additional training was provided on conducting a sensory storytime. Sarah Scales, a graduate intern at The Arc, did an observation of how the staff conducts storytime. Scales provided constructive input on how to make storytime more inclusive. She shared simple techniques such as making a picture schedule of storytime to aid in making the library more welcoming. Scales brought an additional dimension to the project, as she grew up in the community and used to visit the

Attleboro Public Library. The training connected with the research strategy to promote imagination and originality. Encouraging the critical components of creativity went beyond just the children to the entire staff, encouraging everyone involved to be more flexible and imaginative in finding ways of welcoming all populations to the library. This aligns with strategies suggested by Hadani and Jaegar: “Establish a safe and comfortable community so that spontaneity and the changing of routines does not disrupt children’s sense of safety and belonging” (21). In addition, The Arc also provided guidance in purchasing sensory materials and furniture. The sensory table was custom built to the specifications recommended by The Arc. For example, to ensure wheelchair accessibility, the table was constructed with a hexagonal top on a rectangle base. The entire project was designed for “collaboration, encouraging children to be inspired by their peers. Programs also feature collaboration and flexibility, acknowledging that everyone will participate differently.”

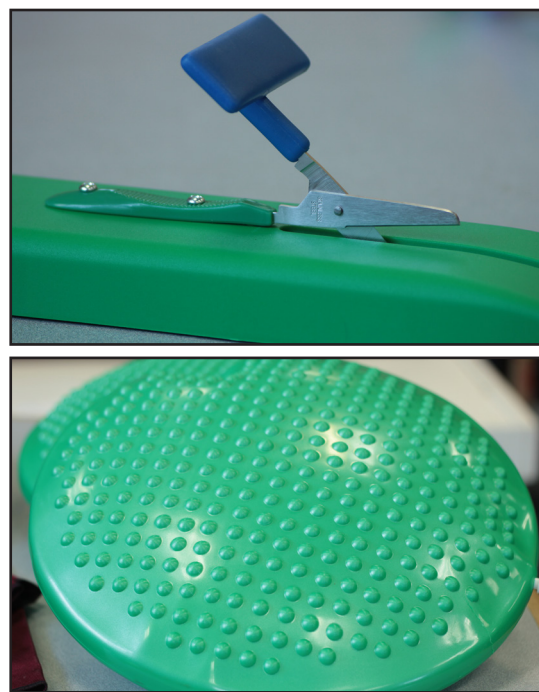
On April 15, the library provided an in-service session for thirty special education teachers. Staff demonstrated the sensory table, sensory materials, adaptive scissors, wobble chairs, water table, weighted blankets, and activity bins with items that interact with the sensory table. The open house offered teachers an opportunity to give input on their needs and feedback on the program. The immediate feedback was that two noise-canceling headphone sets were not enough. After that feedback, additional headphones were purchased. On April 30, the library hosted a community-wide open house for “Everyone Explores @ Your Library: Encouraging Inclusive Creative Opportunities for Children of All Abilities.”

In addition to creating an inclusive exploration space and training staff to ensure all programming and library services are inclusive, specific programming was offered for parents. One topic was how to create a home sensory bin. Sensory storytimes were offered for a wide range of age and interest levels.

Results—Outputs and Outcomes

At the community-wide open house, a simple form was available with the following: “I wish the Attleboro Public Library had _____,” and “For more information, I can be most easily reached at _____.” This easy survey resulted in three responses at the DIY sensory bin workshop and five returned at the teacher open house. This, along with the comments and conversations, was vital for the library and The Arc staff to get to “know new patrons and meet their needs.”

The Attleboro Public Library and The Arc actively promoted the project in local media outlets and with open houses. Thirty special education professionals attended the first open house. Prior to the second open house, the library was fielding phone calls from interested parents in neighboring communities and other libraries. Several of the teachers registered for library cards and others are now library volunteers.



Top: Adaptive scissors. Bottom: Sensory materials from the sensory table.

Lessons Learned

The library's key partner is The Arc, but after receiving the grant, the library held meetings with other local organizations that provide services to the grant's target audience. Assistant Director Rhilinger said, "There has been so much conversation about what a library in 2016 actually is and does, as opposed to what people *think* it is. We knew this mindset was out there, as it was inspiration for writing the grant, but personally I didn't realize how prevalent it was. Letting caregivers and service providers see how library services and programs can be tailored to their needs is a win for all of us."

Disability awareness training was presented to all the staff, not just those in the children's department. The library staff also acknowledges that it will require more than one training session to create a library environment that is welcoming, accessible, and a place where it is safe for kids of all abilities to explore. Both the program coordinators and The Arc know that achieving that goal will come with practice.

Furthermore, the implementation of compensatory problem-solving tools helps to foster creativity among all children. The ability to be creative should not be hindered based on ability. Things such as specialized table scissors support the inclusion of children of all abilities in library programming. By using assistive tools, children are allowed to express their creativity without the barriers that might demotivate them. Rhilinger cited the example that parents didn't bring their children with fine motor delays to storytime because the craft at the end of storytime was too frustrating for their children.



Craft materials from the activity bins

Conclusion

The grant created strong partnerships within the library community, The Arc, and the community as a whole. These relationships are an example of how lasting partnerships help not only to create strong projects but also to encourage new community outreach programs targeted towards special populations.

For those interested in replicating or reinterpreting this project for their library, the cornerstone for this project is to listen to the needs of the community. Rhilinger broke the process down into four steps: "Discovering the need, purchasing necessary equipment, providing staff training, and creating programs around it all. That is what libraries and librarians do every day." Multiple opportunities for feedback from a variety of stakeholders allowed continuous refinement of the program, along with identifying which tools should be purchased to allow children to be successful.

The final evaluation included the question, "Did you have a 'wow' moment?" Rhilinger's response demonstrates the power of the grant funding and the lasting connection to the research: "The 'wow' moment was when we realized that the project was so much more than purchasing tools and toys and hosting programs with community partners. The 'Everyone Explores' project, and the Curiosity Creates grant, has become a philosophy for our children's room, and the library itself, for becoming a place that includes everyone and eliminates barriers to access."

Keys to Success

- Allowed children of all abilities to be creative together.
- Project connected to the research, ensuring inclusive creativity programming.
- Outreach to underserved populations with a clear plan and partnerships.
- Collaborated with a partner with a shared mission and vision.
- Partner is a known expert in the area and provided training for all levels of staff throughout the library.
- Additional partnerships formed as the project developed, widening the outreach to the community.
- Marketed the program through open houses inviting key players who work with the outreach target population.
- Library was not afraid to reexamine themselves.

Other Curiosity Creates Recipients with a Strong Partnership

Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls (PA) "Building UP: Architecture" (see page 19)

Further Reading

Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC). 2015. *Library Service to Special Population Children and Their Caregivers: A Toolkit for Librarians and Library Workers*. Chicago: American Library Association. <http://www.ala.org/alsc/sites/ala.org.alsc/files/content/professional-tools/lsspc-toolkit-2015.pdf>.

Tullet, Hervé. 2005. *The Five Senses*. London: Tate.

This book includes pages that look like they have been eaten, pages the reader can scrunch up, some with braille, some with optical illusions, and more creative imagery to stimulate the senses of children from ages 1 to 8.

Resources

The Arc of Bristol County website, <http://www.arcnbc.org>

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Rhilinger, Amy. E-mail correspondence with the author. February 11, 2016; April 28, 2016.

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“Children are masters of creation—they are very intuitive and it is this instinct and their unedited ability to create art that inspires me.”

Hervé Tullet, *Art Workshops for Children*

AVON FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY (CT)

“The Creative Edge”

Introduction

The Avon Free Public Library (CT) program “The Creative Edge” offered open-ended art experiences, with creativity and individual expression encouraged. The program was coordinated by Kari Ann St. Jean, children’s and teen services manager, and Mary Fletcher and Megan Grosch, children’s library specialists. Training for the staff was key to the implementation of this project, and the library took advantage of the proximity of the Eric Carle Museum for Picture Book Art and attended Hervé Tullet’s “Ten Art Workshops for Children.” Programming included an Open Art Studio for all ages, creative art for grades 1 to 6, teen art focusing on discarded books, story art based on book illustrations, and the yoga-based “Stories in Motion” and “Yoga Poses and Rhymes,” where children creatively interpret stories while learning mindful movement. The goal of the library program is to provide a “tech-free zone” and to be a facilitator for creativity in the community. (Note that *tech-free* addresses parent-child engagement, not technology as a tool or creative device.) The target audience was children ages 6 to 14, with extra emphasis on reaching those at risk during the “fourth-grade slump,” while providing an inclusive environment for all. It was important to Avon to promote the CCC research strategy “Protecting time for play and unstructured exploration during the middle childhood years, when many children experience highly structured and adult-led activities” (16).

Implementation

The Open Art Studio at the library was open from 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays during the grant period of October 2015 to May 2016, culminating with an Art Day on May 21, a celebration with art programs and experiences for all ages. The Open Art Studio is a “process art” studio. Fletcher, library specialist, explained that means that the “process is guided by the child’s choices, curiosity, and imaginative exploration, the journey is the destination.” Projects have included making a mural of the town, working with clay, making masks, collage, and illuminated letters.

The library supplies the materials and the technical assistance. The studio was set up with tables of three different heights; a low toddler table to accommodate the earliest artists, a middle height for elementary-school-age children, and a larger height table for those in the middle grades. The carpet was removed

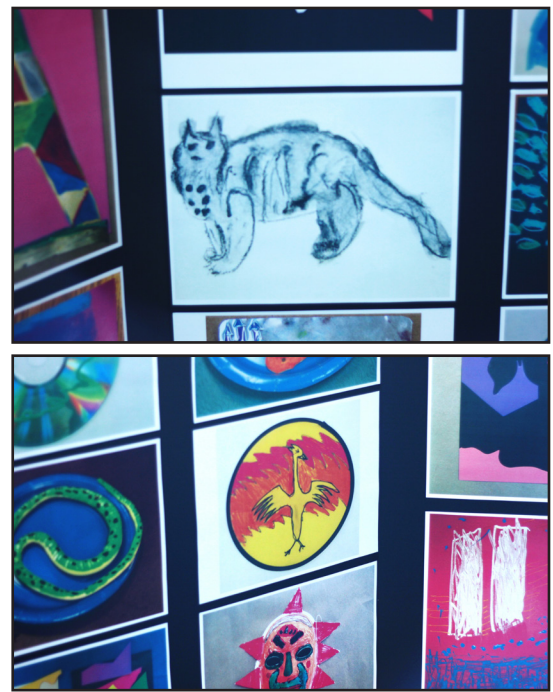


Art space with a low toddler table

because art can be messy. The room is also outfitted with a sink and wonderful natural light. Outside the studio, an underutilized showcase now features color photos of the work created inside.

The Open Art Studio is a “tech-free zone”; when parents and caregivers are in the studio with their children, they are present and in the moment with their child. They put away their cell phones and tablets and engage the art and artist. The studio welcomes adults to not simply help their child but to join in and make their own art.

In addition to the Open Art Studio, the Avon Free Public Library held three family dances with themes of Elvis, a Valentine’s Dance, and a Barn Dance. They also stressed the importance of the creativity component of action and movement and communication and self-expression by incorporating “Stories in Motion” and “Yoga Poses and Rhymes” into their grant programming.



Artwork on display outside the studio

Results—Outputs and Outcomes

More than 1,430 patrons have visited the Open Art Studio, and the total participants of “The Creative Edge” activities during the grant period was 4,284. The entire population of Avon is 18,465. The original estimate of participants in the grant application was 600, and the outcome was 614 percent greater than estimated. The multiple visits from Favarh (The Arc of the Farmington Valley), a nonprofit supporting people with disabilities, demonstrate the success of the inclusiveness of the program. There is no right or wrong with process art, verses crafts that give a “right way” perceived expectation. Fletcher and Grosch stated in the final evaluation that these same qualities made the program inclusive for ELL families, and “recent immigrants from Russia, Ukraine, Eastern Europe, and Ethiopia successfully participated in our art groups, even though they could speak little or no English. They shared the universal language of art.”

Fletcher also made this observation: “The most surprising outcome of the grant was the change that took place for us as a staff. Without a doubt, we have all become more inspired in our work together. We have a fresh energy and enthusiasm, from rearranging the furniture in the children’s room to redesigning storytimes by focusing on the illustrations rather than the words in the book. Just as we are now more attuned to listening to what children say, as a staff, we are more at ease and open to one another’s ideas.”

Lessons Learned

The original funding request for the Open Art Studio at the Avon Free Public Library was initially turned down by the Friends of the Library group. The program coordinators had a strong belief in bringing creativity through process art and movement to the library and looked for an alternative funding source that shared their goals and vision—the Curiosity Creates grant. The Open Art Studio has now received additional funds from the library board and the town of Avon for art supplies.

Education of library stakeholders was an important aspect of creativity programming and adding creative space to the Avon Free Public Library. When asked what art has to do with a public library, St. Jean, children’s and teen services manager, stated, “If we can grow readers, we can grow artists.”

The staff looked at what they were doing in regards to arts and crafts before the program began and saw that what was being produced was not encouraging creativity but an assembly craft that could lead to frustration, was often completed by the parent, and was a product that was a memento but not art. They made the change to process art, art that cultivates the components of creativity. This change also works towards addressing the fourth-grade slump, when the research notes a drop-off in creativity, and the staff found using simple phrases, such as “Be creative!” to break through to those who felt that they were no longer creative, or, as Hadani and Jaegar suggest, to “help children notice when they are getting stuck in their thinking or in their creative production, and actively teach strategies that children can use in order to get unstuck” (21).

Conclusion

Fletcher presented at the 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting’s News You Can Use session “Curiosity Creates: Research and Best Practices in Creativity Programming for Children.” On the panel with her was Joan Pilkington-Smyth from the Attleboro Public Library (MA), whose project was “Everyone Explores @ Your Library: Encouraging Inclusive Creative Opportunities for Children of All Abilities.” In following up with Pilkington-Smyth on the sustainability of the Attleboro Public Library project, it should be noted that she was already working with the Avon library staff to incorporate an Open Art Studio for the next stage of her project.

One criterion in seeking out programs that can be labeled best practices was replication. To others interested in replicating the program, the Avon Free Public Library offers the following suggestions: identify community resources that will collaborate with you on creativity programming and challenge yourself to “unlearn the traditional directive approach of storytime and crafts.” Another barrier to replication is budget, but as St. Jean, children’s and teen services manager, stated so eloquently, “if you do crafts, you can do art.” The material costs are basically the same.

Keys to Success

- Project connected to the research, encouraging all components of creativity.
- Library was not afraid to reexamine their programming activities and space.
- The library is viewed as a safe place for creative self-expression.
- Sustainable and replicable at a variety of budget levels.

Other Curiosity Creates Recipient with a Focus on Process Art

Ontario City Library (CA) “Artopia”

Program Coordinator Lauren Candia allowed children to work with quality art mediums at their own pace and comfort level. Each session had three stations: illustration, printmaking, and collage. There was also a fourth activity with more challenging materials to work with that changed from session to session. A sample program might pair paint with anything but a brush. Combinations included paint and marbles, paint and yarn, and paint and a flyswatter. For large-scale process art, a sample project was water cannon painting. Paint was mixed with water and loaded into a squirt cannon. Outreach to children with disabilities was done in the schools with “Artopia on the Go.” The process-art activities were accessible to all levels of development, open-ended, and encouraged a bolder, no-fears approach to art. A brochure, “Artopia at Home,” was also created, which is available in both English and Spanish. For others looking

to replicate or reinterpret the program, Candia suggested that “it’s important to be open and generous and friendly so that children feel at ease to use the materials they are given and create without feeling judged.”

Further Reading

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Tullet, Hervé. 2015. *Art Workshops for Children*. New York: Phaidon Press.

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“I never knew what his crime was and it really didn’t matter: I knew I loved him dearly and he loved me with the same ferocity.”

Jacqueline Woodson, *Visiting Day*

CARNEGIE FREE LIBRARY OF BEAVER FALLS (PA)

“Building UP: Architecture”

Introduction

Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls (PA) used the funding from the Curiosity Creates grant to fund the program “Building UP: Architecture.” Jean Barsotti, director, and Christine Kroger, children’s librarian, administered the program with Kolbe Cole as the lead partner from TRAILBlazers. The program objectives included understanding building basics used by engineers and architects, identifying features of structures, explaining the different responsibilities of architects, and showing how engineers work collaboratively to create three-dimensional structures. “Building UP” is also intended to “build up the relationship” between underserved youth and the library. The library partnered with the TRAILBlazers afterschool program, part of TRAILS Ministry, with the goal of allowing at-risk kids to view the library as not only a safe space but also a place to support their creativity, curiosity, and imagination. TRAILS Ministry also focuses on supporting people who are incarcerated and their families. TRAILBlazers afterschool program serves public housing sites throughout Beaver County. The library previously worked with the Hayes Summer Camp arm of TRAILS Ministry, and that relationship was the foundation for this partnership in “Building UP: Architecture.”

Implementation

Partnering with TRAILS Ministry enabled the Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls to reach an underserved and at-risk population. TRAILBlazers’ staff already had a strong relationship serving the Beaver County community in their outreach to not only those incarcerated or coming out of prison or jail, but also to their families. TRAILBlazers had access to the target audience and also provided transportation to the library. TRAILBlazers serves five additional sites in the county that are unable to participate in the library after-school programming. Kroger created a mobile kit so that some of the programming can be replicated at those sites.

The program was designed with a plan of three modules of four weeks each:

- Module One—Architecture: In addition to creating their own skyscrapers out of recycled materials, participants learned about design, scale, and structure. A local architect came to visit.
- Module Two—Mechanics/3-D Printing: The library brought in the Franklin Institute as an additional partner. Their work included working with 3-D pens and printers and making catapults out of LEGO bricks combined with baskets created with the 3-D pens.

- **Module Three—Engineering:** This module included creating a room-scale roller coaster and a visit from a local civil engineer.

Each of the three modules was designed to build upon and complement the knowledge learned in the previous modules, as well as allowing students to work collaboratively to create original designs within a defined framework.

Results—Outputs and Outcomes

One of the main goals of this project was to build up relationships with the children who attend TRAILBlazers and the library and library staff. Cole stated, “Kids go where they feel comfortable. The library should be a place of comfort and learning for all kids.” The importance of creating a safe and comfortable environment is reiterated throughout the creativity research. The importance of relationships was also highlighted by Hadani and Jaegar, stating that “student’s perceptions of how teachers relate to them has significant impact on their experience in the classroom” (31). On a trip to the local elementary school, the librarians knew that this project was working in building rapport with the students. As they visited different classrooms, children involved in “Building UP: Architecture” not only recognized them but announced it with comments such as, “I know you . . . you’re from the library . . . I see you each Tuesday . . . I love going there.”

Typically, each week brought twenty-five to thirty-two children to the library. Although a majority of the group attended all sessions, there was fluctuation in the group makeup and size due to the nature of family situations. Despite this and factoring in the additional weeks that were added, the initial estimate of participants was 360, and the final participation count of 592 was an 84 percent increase.

In week one of module one, the term *skyscraper* was introduced. Initially only two children knew what a skyscraper was, and the program was recalibrated to meet the needs of the audience. Kroger measured outcomes by polling students at the beginning of each session. Her results were impressive: “In the very first session, only 7 percent (2 students) indicated prior knowledge of skyscrapers. During the last day’s interview, 82 percent (23 students) were able to discuss the fundamental concepts of skyscrapers and architecture.”

Module one ran for ten weeks instead of the planned four-week session. For week 5, Kroger engaged Geneva College students as volunteers, which allowed the library to be more creative with the projects and helped the kids to achieve greater success. Kroger measured the impact of adding the Geneva College student volunteers at the end of week 5 by having a group meeting with students. They talked about their previous frustrations and how proud they felt of what they were able to accomplish and how they appreciated the help in achieving their plans. This plan of action demonstrated Hadani and Jaegar’s flexibility component strategy: “Help children notice when they are getting stuck in their thinking or in their creative production” (21).

Kroger credited her director, Jean Barsotti, on the library’s outreach and partnerships. Kroger knew the needs of the community and which partners to turn to for assistance, because of the director’s philosophy to get out into the community and discover needs and recruit partners.

Typically TRAILBlazers would also provide a healthy snack to the children. With the Pennsylvania budget stalemate, TRAILS Ministries, who are typically paid by the state for the after-school program, had not been paid, so the library took over providing the healthy snack until funding was reinstated, ensuring food insecurity was addressed and helping with the financial crisis of their partner.

Conclusion

The library and their partners are firmly committed to the project. There is buy-in from all levels, with strong director support. The Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls is already budgeting and planning for this project to continue next school year. Barsotti wrote, “The vision of the Carnegie Free Library is ‘To Inspire and Empower Lifelong Learning and the Exchange of Knowledge.’ The library’s comprehensive plan for vision transformation is made up of five pillars each having their own mission statement. The Mission Statement of Programs and Services is ‘To assist all learners by providing relevant, dynamic, technology-appropriate programs and services delivered on site and through outreach by skilled staff that fosters personal and professional growth.’ Programs such as “Building UP: Architecture” are helping us define how we conduct programs to provide teachers and learners to come together to create new knowledge. This new knowledge supports innovation that leads to wisdom and achievement. The children in the “Building UP” program have certainly succeeded in meeting our Vision and Program and Services’ mission. Their creativity and ability to work together makes it exciting to have in the library. It’s how the after-school time should be . . . productive and noisy.”

There has been interest in this program from other Curiosity Creates recipients, which guarantees a high probability of replication or reinterpretation. Tips for other libraries include a student-to-staff/volunteer ratio of 5 to 1, and being prepared to have supplemental learning activities for age groups outside the planned age range; “for example, KEVA Planks were provided to the kindergarten and first-grade students, which enabled them to learn the concepts of building.”

Serving an underserved population requires a library to get to know their community and community partners. This observation from Kroger came when fielding questions about the grant from another library community. That library quickly decided that they didn’t have a similar underserved population. Kroger’s response was, “Are you sure?”

Keys to Success

- Outreach to underserved populations with a clear plan.
- Collaborated with partners with a shared vision and mission.
- Multiple partnerships provided support for a variety of aspects of the program.
- Surveyed participants through meetings to make sure program was meeting goals and needs.
- The library is viewed as a safe place for creative self-expression.
- Sustainable and replicable at a variety of budget levels.

Other Curiosity Creates Recipients with an Outreach to Special Populations

Attleboro Public Library (MA) “Everyone Explores @ Your Library: Encouraging Inclusive Creative Opportunities for Children of All Abilities.” (See page 11)

Eastern Shore Public Library (VA) “Making My World a Better Place”

Children learned about the variety of unique ecosystems of the Eastern Shore and imagined ways that they could become leaders in learning to care for their environment. The focus was on second-grade English-language learners (ELL); a majority of the participants were Haitian Creole or Hispanic. Collaboration with the Eastern Shore Literacy Council enabled entire families to participate in the Saturday programs. The program included a field trip to Chincoteague Island.

Jefferson County Public Library (CO) “LibLab: Create!”

Art-themed labs offered kids the chance to explore art forms they have never experienced. One “LibLab” program was titled “Create with KEVA.” This kit was used by the library outreach staff, who participated in the library training of KEVA Planks, which included how to use them in storytelling and construction, as well as how to use them as sensory device. The outreach staff used the “LibLab” “with great success at Megan’s Place, a respite facility for children with developmental disabilities and their families. They were also very popular at the Rocky Mountain School for the Deaf.”

Perry Public Library (OH) “Arts in the Library”

This multiple-program grant included monthly visual art and music classes for homeschooled children. The “Art Explorations” and “Music Exploration” classes for homeschooled children “garnered the most enthusiasm, as halfway through the year, we had to add another section of both classes to accommodate the number of children wishing to participate.” The State of Ohio requires art and music in homeschool curriculum, so the classes at Perry Public Library satisfied this requirement with no financial cost to the families. In addition, instruments used in “Music Exploration” classes were available for checkout.

Further Reading

Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC). 2015. *Library Service to Special Population Children and Their Caregivers: A Toolkit for Librarians and Library Workers*. Chicago: American Library Association. <http://www.ala.org/alsc/sites/ala.org.alsc/files/content/professional-tools/lsspcc-toolkit-2015.pdf>.

Resources

TRAILS Ministries website, <http://trailsministries.org/trailblazers>

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“Hugo remembered what his father had said about seeing his first movie as a child. He had said it was like seeing your dreams in the middle of the day.”

Brian Selznick, *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*

DERBY PUBLIC LIBRARY (KS)

“Tween Moviecraft: Creating Creators”

Introduction

The Derby Public Library (KS) project “Tween Moviecraft: Creating Creators” addressed the creativity “fourth-grade slump” head-on. This is an underserved population in regards to programming. They also targeted two elementary schools by visiting the fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms. Both schools are considered at-risk, with large economically disadvantaged and ELL populations. Registration was open to kids ages 8 to 14. Carri Fry, youth services coordinator, and Alyssa LaRue, youth services assistant, administered the Curiosity Creates grant. The plan was to give tweens the opportunity to create their own fully functioning film production crew, bringing Hollywood filmmaking to life. The program presented a comprehensive experience of the filmmaking process. “Tween Moviecraft: Creating Creators” allowed tweens to write, produce, direct, edit, and premiere an original short film using the latest camera and screenwriting technologies available. The tweens chose the film title *The Mud Monsters of Derby Creek*. The program encouraged all of the seven critical components of creativity, with collaboration, decision making, and communication and self-expression being highlighted.

Implementation

Each participant received a three-ring binder for the script and journal. On the binder cover was the student’s crew title. On the back of the binder was the film schedule, outlining the dates of the twelve sessions. The room was set up with crews broken down into groups mirroring those of a real film shoot: makeup artists, actors, special FX, camera, lighting, sound, and production design. The director, first assistant director, and director of photography gathered to work on scheduling. LaRue explained how the filming of the script would work. Each small group had a teen leader, most of which had previous experience in the “Teen Moviecraft” program at the library. In addition to the teen volunteers, there was one adult volunteer who assisted the tweens with film equipment. Fifteen minutes prior to the end of the session, LaRue had each crew report on what they had accomplished and what they needed to accomplish for the next week.

This program is true to the profession by including craft services. The addition of craft services allows Derby to address food insecurity by providing food at the beginning of the program, which ensures all the children have been fed. The project is hands on with a high level of technical training and the goal of creating creators. The grant-funded equipment would not be typically available to this age group.

Prior to the start of the program, the library developed promotional and print materials and scheduled school visits. Staff distributed promotional materials to schools and assisting organizations. The twelve-week schedule is reproduced below:

- Session One—The Basics: Participants will watch short films, play team-building and icebreaker games, take a pretest, and determine the name of their production team.
- Session Two—The Brainstorm: The specifics of the story: character, setting, and plot will be explored, and tweens will learn how to write a log line.
- Session Three—Writing the Screenplay: Tweens will share their story log lines and the script.
- Session Four—Preproduction: Preproduction begins with casting roles and determining costumes, makeup, props, and film locations.
- Session Five—Rehearsals: Actors rehearse their lines, production designers determine setting and arrangement of furniture, makeup artist conducts screen test, and all technical training occurs, including camera, lighting, green screen, and editing software.
- Session Six—Film Day One
- Session Seven—Film Day Two
- Session Eight—Film Day Three/Postproduction: Meet with editors and director for editing meeting to begin postproduction.
- Session Nine—Film Day Four/Postproduction
- Session Ten—Film Day Five/Postproduction
- Session Eleven—Film Day Six/Postproduction: Behind-the-scenes interviews conducted by unit publicist and videographer and cleanup begins.
- Session Twelve—The Wrap: Celebrate the completion of their Tween Moviecraft film, featuring focus groups, a post-test, and games. The Red Carpet Premiere: A premiere event for participants, families, and the community, giving the kids the benefit of seeing the reactions to their creative production.

Results—Outputs and Outcomes

The program was fully subscribed, and the waiting list was equal to the number of participants (36). The program reached capacity an hour after registration began, and given the amount of interest, they felt that they could have run three groups for the program. The program coordinators rated their success as 9 out of 10, “because we could not provide the program to all of the tweens that were interested at the time.”

A focus group was conducted with the participants to measure the project’s success: tweens expressed “the importance of teamwork,” and one stated, “I was worried that no one would like me, but when I talked to people, I made lots of friends.” An additional diagnostic tool, The Challenge, was given as a pretest in session one. The same ten questions were asked again in the final session, with the average score moving from 4.3 to 6.5; all participants’ scores either maintained or increased.

In my observation of the program, filmmaking lends itself nicely as a means to encourage the seven critical components of creativity. The small-group crews appeared highly motivated based on their interest in working towards that week’s goal and showed high levels of collaborative thinking, decision making, and communication skills. Using the film crew model, LaRue was able to encourage decision-making skills both divergent and convergent, and the small crew and larger production crew allowed for learning collaboration, which supports Hadani and Jaegar’s statement that “working together towards a shared goal fosters perspective-taking and provides opportunities for children to synthesize alternative viewpoints, formulate explanations to others, and expand their thinking in new ways” (42).

Lessons Learned

The coordinators were expecting more kids at the higher range of the age scale, but had a larger percentage towards the lower end of the scale. This was a challenge for the screenwriting, but pairing the students with the teen facilitators and doing group brainstorming turned these challenges into opportunities.

Asked in the final evaluation about challenges, the following came up: “We did have struggles surrounding a few of our teen volunteers. Early in the program, tweens approached us with negative feedback about how the teen volunteers were assisting them. They felt that they weren’t given the opportunities to do the work themselves because the teens were taking over. They also felt that these teens were unapproachable. The facilitator of the program decided to ask these particular teen volunteers to step down from their positions. While it was a difficult decision, it was best for all parties and allowed for the program to run more smoothly.”

Conclusion

This project requires strong preplanning and organization, as the effects show. To replicate or reinterpret “Tween Moviecraft: Creating Creators,” using local colleges or high schools can be a great resource for volunteers, unless you have a staff member with a film background or experience. Preplanning is key. Notebooks for each participant with their role and crew assignments not only gave the project a professional feel but also worked to keep the group focused. LaRue began and ended each session with a review.

Much of the budget was spent on equipment. The equipment budget should not be considered a barrier to doing this project, as libraries can borrow equipment and slowly grow their film supplies. In the case of the West Hartford Public Library (CT), they partnered with the community access television station. Storage of the equipment will increase the lifespan of the equipment, and Derby uses rolling tubs and repurposed sturdy storage bags.

When asked why they applied for this grant, the target age group and creativity were highlighted, and, also, “we were intrigued by the ALSC partnership with The Walt Disney Company, considering our expression of curiosity through film and storytelling.”

Keys to Success

- Empowered staff to create programs in their areas of strength.
- Marketed the program through school visits targeting elementary schools that serve the outreach target population.
- Participant ownership of the program.
- Volunteers, both teen and adult, acting as mentors and facilitators provided expertise.
- The library is viewed as a safe place for creative self-expression.
- Meaningful connection with the research, especially the components of collaboration, decision making, and communication and self-expression.
- Sustainable with grant purchasing items that can support a variety of programs.
- Replicable at a variety of budget levels.

Resources

Cameras and equipment purchased:

- Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera
- Rokinon 50mmT1.5AS UMC Cine DS Lens
- Rode NTG2 Shotgun Microphone
- Auray ABP-59B Aluminum Telescoping Boom Pole
- GoPro HERO4 Silver
- Feiyu TechG4 3-Axis Handheld Gimbal for GoPro

Participants analyzed short films. These were selected to expose kids to films that increase tolerance and empathy, allowing them to experience the power of media and film to impact, improve, and inspire the community through the sharing of diverse stories about diverse people. The films analyzed were *The Most Beautiful Thing* (2012), *Elefante* (2011), and *Inside* (2002).

Other Curiosity Creates Recipients with a Filmmaking Focus

Defiance Public Library (OH) “Agents of B.O.O.K.S. (Brainy Operatives Obtaining Knowledge Substantially)”

Administered by Cara Bolley, the film portion of this program focused on skills such as special effects, directing, acting, sound editing, filmmaking, and cinematography. The final event was a red carpet premier of their short film, *Cat and Turtle Rule the World*.

Edith B. Ford Memorial Library (NY) “Kid Film Lab”

Administered by Shannon O’Connor, this program created short films and stop-motion animation. The community room was transformed to meet the needs of the program; some days it was a green screen studio, and others a sound recording studio. Lab 3 stop-motion videos are posted online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5OBDLeJSFw> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkQo1gdBywQ>.

Gloucester County Library System–Mullica Hill Branch (NJ) “DesignStudio@GCLS”

Stephanie Smith, program coordinator, collaborated with multiple Girl Scout troops to reach their target of getting young women involved in technology; 70 percent of program attendees were girls. This grant project was an ongoing space for creating 3-D animation, stop-motion animation, video editing, and music mixing. Software available at the “DesignStudio@GCLS” included Dragonframe 3, Anime Studio Debut 11, Sketchboard Pro 7, and iMovie. Smith reported that “four Girl Scout troops got their badges for music mixing, animation, and entertainment technology. A DesignStudio@GCLS Anime How to Guide (<http://www.gcls.org/sites/default/files/imceuploads/Anime%20Pamphlet.pdf>) and DesignStudio@GCLS Dragonframe How to Guide (<http://www.gcls.org/sites/default/files/imceuploads/Dragonframe%20How%20to%20Guide.pdf>) are available online.

West Hartford Public Library (CT) “In Be-Tween Trailer Team”

Carol Waxman, program coordinator, said, “In this digital age, computers, smartphones, gadgets, and devices are part of every day. How do we foster creativity, curiosity, and compassion in a time when young people are glued to their screens? We inspire them to be the media. We provide materials, tools, and technology. We empower students to use the technology to create, collaborate, problem solve, build confidence, and express their message.”

References

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LaRue, Alyssa. Interview with author. Derby, KS. February 20, 2016.

“They have no idea how extraordinarily useful, helpful, and funful—a word I recently invented—a library can be. This is their chance to discover that a library is more than a collection of dusty old books. It is a place to learn, explore, and grow!”

Chris Grabenstein, *Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library*

GLACIER COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY (MT)

“Explore It”

Introduction

The Glacier County Public Library (MT) used its Curiosity Creates grant funding to totally change the look of the children’s area. Their project title, “Explore It,” fully encapsulates their goal of transforming the children’s area into an imaginative space that allows for open-ended discovery. This includes building an “Explore It” wall and a Mobile Mag Wall and adding a magnetic board and a LEGO and DUPLO board area for the younger kids’ area. A light table was also added. The grant was administered by Jamie Greco, library director, and assisted by Bess Hjartarson, assistant librarian. Located in Cut Bank, Montana, where residents deal with harsh climate conditions nine months of the year, the library serves a rural population of approximately 14,000. The service area includes the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. The goal of the project was to make the library a creativity destination where children could explore the seven components of creativity in an unstructured learning environment.

Implementation

To completely transform the children’s area to create an atmosphere similar to a “mini” children’s museum, a huge amount of prep work had to be coordinated. Extensive weeding was conducted so that six large shelves could be removed from the adult section and two shelving units from the children’s area. Preceding the weeding project, Hjartarson and Greco both read *The Weeding Handbook: A Shelf-by-Shelf Guide* by Rebecca Vnuk (ALA Editions, 2015), which they found very helpful. They also encouraged the entire staff to read it to enable them to become more comfortable and knowledgeable about the weeding process. The areas that were most extensively weeded were the juvenile and adult nonfiction. This book breaks down nonfiction shelf by shelf, providing useful guidelines to follow for each section. It was used along with their collection development policy. These were areas that had not been weeded for some time, and many of the books were outdated and in poor condition. Reports were run to check how many times the book had circulated. Consideration was given to whether or not the book was still relevant to the needs and interests of patrons. “Replacement copies were purchased for popular items,” Greco stated, “that had become grimy and torn, leading to a very fresh and up-to-date collection. Books are now easier to browse, and staff have a clear picture of what our collection holds and areas that still need new materials. This was a challenge for all of us, as weeding is a difficult job, but with keeping in mind principles from this book and focusing on the goal of gaining more usable space, we were able to stay focused and worked together toward our common goal of a more attractive and usable space for

our younger patrons.” A side benefit was that the weeded books were donated to the local Hutterite community, the Blackfeet Seville and Cut Bank Head Start programs, and the Blackfeet Indian Nurturing Center. A large number of picture books that were still in very good condition were placed at the Browning Branch Library to refresh their children’s book collection.

The library is in walking distance to the Cut Bank K–3 elementary school. To promote the new space, Hjartarson welcomed each elementary grade to the new space at the library. The library also used local media, radio and newspaper coverage, a celebration, and fliers to promote the space along with their summer reading program.

Glacier County Public Library also created physical literacy kits to be checked out as part of the goal to encourage the creativity component of action and movement. The kits were also a way to encourage the components of collaboration, communication and self-expression, and flexibility outside of the parameters of the library. The physical literacy kits were inspired by a presentation by the Lethbridge Public Library of Alberta, Canada. Each kit contained an activity item, an inventory list, instructions for how to use the item, extension activities that meet the needs of a broad range of ages and abilities, and, when available, an activity CD to use along with the item. Examples of items that were used in these kits include a basketball, a football, bean bag sets, a Nerf Bash ball, and a soccer ball. The Lethbridge Public Library not only inspired the Glacier County Public Library but also served as a mentor. Hjartarson was able to visit the Lethbridge Library for an on-site tour of the physical literacy kit program at their two branches and their bookmobile, and then the Lethbridge librarians attended the “Explore It” open house at Glacier County Public Library.

Results—Outputs and Outcomes

The response of the community has been tremendous. The nearest children’s museum is 110 miles from the library. Older patrons have commented that they wish their long-distance grandchildren could visit the library. A member of the Friends of the Library brought treats to the opening celebration and said it reminded her of when she went to the Boston Children’s Museum with her grandchildren.

There were six physical literacy kits ready for checkout by the day of the “Explore It” open house, and within a week, they were all checked out. More kits will continue to be added as staff time and library budget permit. Younger patrons especially have commented on the fact that they were so excited that they could come to the library and checkout something to play with at home. Just as valuable, an ongoing relationship between the Lethbridge and Glacier County Public Libraries has developed and hopefully will continue to benefit both facilities in the future.

Lessons Learned

A side benefit of the project was that the prep work refreshed the collection. The donated books created goodwill with underserved populations. It was also an opportunity to involve the trustees and staff on the project and its connection with the research. Greco stated in the final evaluation, “To accomplish our project, I had to communicate and educate our trustees. Sharing our vision and the research behind it helped them be supportive.” Buy-in from all levels, who knew the end goal, created a supportive environment, which was important due to the amount of effort involved.

The space has been well received by the targeted age group of 6 to 12, but the library has decided that additional work will need to be done to reach the age group of 12 to 14. One thought is to purchase seating especially designed to appeal to that age group. Since the installation in March, both April and

May have seen increased statistics in patron visits to the library, with one parent stating, “This is now the place that we have to come every day.”

Originally the “Explore It” wall/bench was to have a light table incorporated into the bench. After consultation with the architect and contractor, the light table portion became a separate unit. This was due to safety concerns. The library staff was open to changes and noted, even with all the prep work, you cannot think of everything. This is a great example of bringing in experts, listening to feedback, revising, and moving forward with a better product. Just as the research suggests as a strategy to promote motivation in children, librarians must also work creatively in order to make a project successful. As Hadani and Jaegar state, librarians must “consistently shake up the status quo of a project or program, asking for suggestions to improve” (38). One of the strengths of the Glacier program was their ability to creatively work through obstacles, consulting experts and then going back and re-envisioning their plan to work at a practical level but without sacrificing their original goal.

The Glacier County Public Library took careful notes and photographed and documented the entire program for the Curiosity Creates grant. This is important because it allows the library to easily fix issues, as they can trace back to when a problem occurred and not eliminate previous work that has proven successful. It also helps to provide a step-by-step implementation program that can be replicated or reinterpreted by other libraries.

Conclusion

The Glacier County Public Library, a first-time grant recipient, was attracted to the title of the Curiosity Creates grant. They had creative ideas of what they wanted to implement but no budget. Glacier sought not to offer a single program but to change the environment and concept of what a children’s library should look like. The research connected with the direction they envisioned for the children’s space. As stated by Hadani and Jaegar, “Creativity is not a fixed quantity, but rather a renewable resource that can be improved and nurtured by optimizing the environment that allows an individual’s creative potential to blossom” (5). The buy-in from the board, support and encouragement, and the positive attitude of the staff transformed not only the space but made a positive impact on the library and the community with far-reaching goodwill. One partner on the project, local business NaturEner, was “impressed, saying they didn’t know libraries did this sort of thing, and even though they had fond childhood memories of their libraries, they wished that their library had been like this.”

Greco and Hjartarson urged other librarians to “think outside the box, consider all of your patrons, and don’t limit yourselves. Weed what isn’t being used to make room for transformation.” Other tips for replication included the following basic guidelines: “Introduce new creative play accessories slowly, a few at a time. Establish guidelines for play and cleanup and provide signage to communicate that.”

Keys to Success

- Partnership/mentorship between the libraries serves as a model, especially for rural libraries.
- Hands-on creativity connecting to all seven creativity components.
- The library is viewed as a safe place for creative self-expression.
- Strong community engagement.
- Communication and education created supportive buy-in from all stakeholders.
- Sustainable and replicable at a variety of budget levels.

Other Curiosity Creates Recipients with a Focus on Creative Space

Morton-James Public Library (NE) “Library Lockdown!”

The library transformed an underutilized storage room into a zombie-infested escape room. “Library Lockdown!” tasked a group of children with the creation of their own devious room, full of puzzles and mysteries. Aside from creating the puzzles, kids had to create a narrative around the puzzles and design the props. The program’s video “Lab of Dr. Morton McBrains” is posted online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXfheZybw_4.

Blount County Public Library (TN) “STEAMkids”

From their final evaluation of the grant program: “I think the biggest ‘wow’ factor of the grant is the fact that it has had a significant impact on our physical space, despite the fact that this equipment was purchased for a program. In essence, by having supplies out all the time, we have made our children’s department into a mini makerspace of sorts, which fosters exploration, creation, and learning. With these tools, we have set a precedent of what to expect when you come to the library, for families and for staff.”

Pueblo City-County Library District (CO) “Generation: Creation”

Though the library did not change their space for the program, in response to the impact of the grant, they stated, “We realized the need for older, school-age programming space. We rebranded our storytime room to be more inclusive and versatile (we used this room for all but two projects). And as a result of this program, we are in the planning stages of changing the layout of our youth department.”

Further Reading

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References

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Hjartarson, Bess. Telephone interview with the author. May 19, 2016.

“He taught me to speak from the heart and to believe in myself. But most of all he taught me that all of us are masterpieces if given the chance and encouragement—to be one.”

Patricia Polacco, *Mr. Wayne’s Masterpiece*

NORTH PLAINFIELD MEMORIAL LIBRARY (NJ)

“Talk It Up!”

Introduction

“Talk It Up!” is the Curiosity Creates project of North Plainfield Memorial Library (NJ), administrated by Amy Behr. The goal of the project was to reach children in grades 3 to 6 before they develop a fear of public speaking, by building their confidence and allowing their creativity to flourish. It was also extremely important for the library to reach out and welcome non-English-language speakers into the program. In the application, the program was described as follows: “There are a lot of great thinkers, a smaller group of good writers, but the smallest subset are good oral communicators. Through this grant, we will encourage children and teens to step outside of their comfort zone and speak publicly. “Talk It Up!” will provide children with a skill set and allow them to believe in themselves, building up their confidence and thus cultivating creativity in the future.”

Implementation

To support the seven critical components of creativity in children, North Plainfield Memorial Library put together a menu of events from February through May 2016. Included in the grant itinerary were the following stand-alone events: “Circus Tales with Storyteller Julie Pasqual”; “The Fourth-Grade Invention Convention” (of special note as it targets the age highlighted in the research as the “fourth-grade slump”); “Live Museum and Curriculum Fair”; “Meet the Artist! North Plainfield Student Art Show”; and guest speakers Miss New Jersey Lindsey Giannini and Congressman Leonard Lance (NJ-07). Multiple-session programming included “Creation Station”; “Debate Club” and “Talk It Up!— Debate”; “ESL Conversation Group”; “Jr. First LEGO League (Jr. FLL) Team”; “New Jersey Orators”; and “Toastmasters International—Youth Leadership Program.”

Behr, program coordinator, stated in the final evaluation: “While the component that resonated most throughout “Talk It Up! was communication and self-expression, due to the fact that at the core of every program was the theme of public speaking, most of the programming encompassed more than one of the components. For example, Jr. FLL involved imagination and originality to brainstorm ideas and construct a model pertaining to this year’s “Waste Wise” theme. It also involved collaboration and decision making to come to a decision about the model. Finally, it incorporated communication and self-expression because each team spoke publicly to the crowd, explaining their process, their team, and their model.”

North Plainfield’s Hispanic population has grown substantially, now representing 44 percent of the service population demographics. All handouts for this project were created in English and Spanish, and

the youth services librarian is fluent in Spanish. The ESL Conversation Group was a partnership with The Jointure, a community education partner. The Jointure actively recruited participants and provided a facilitator for the conversation table. Also of note was that the New Jersey Orators focused on African American and Hispanic American poets for the pieces presented at the showcase at the end of the four-week program.

“Talk It Up!” brought in additional partnerships, which included Toastmasters International, New Jersey Orators, and the North Plainfield High School Debate Team. The project has allowed the library to create stronger relations with the school district. Guest speaker Lindsey Giannini met with the GEMS school club (Girls, Engineering, Math, Science) about the importance of public speaking, while guest speaker Leonard Lance met with the Somerset Intermediate School Student Council. At this event, Congressman Lance focused on the importance of public service. The student council board led the questions for this one-hour event with an attendance of more than 100 students. The Live Museum and Curriculum Fair was another event where the library partnered with the schools. At this event, North Plainfield Middle School classrooms were transformed into historical recreations, and students became historical figures.

Results—Outputs and Outcomes

The total expected attendance for this program was 100. That total was surpassed in one event, with the total participation listed at 830. There has been great enthusiasm for the programs, with people traveling from neighboring areas to attend.

All the partnerships were strong in this project, and the relationships built have all the indications of lasting beyond the grant period. Eloise Samuels, founder of the New Jersey Orators, said, “My NJO coaches found Amy Behr, the youth services librarian, easy to work with and extremely supportive.” In both the New Jersey Orators and Toastmaster programs, there was strong support from both the parents and children to continue the “Talk It Up!” program. The final New Jersey Orator’s program included the participant’s parents and extended families, which allowed the students to demonstrate their poise and confidence. Samuels wrote, “We also had a budding star that evening. William, who was our MC for the program, got more confident and animated as the program went along and as he introduced each presenter.” Parent Rocio Ramirez wrote, “The most important lesson the kids learned through the program was to believe in themselves and have confidence.”

The positive effect of the grant activities and relationships built was documented in a letter from Lennox H. Small, principal of the North Plainfield Middle School, to Behr: “On March 22, 2016, the inaugural North Plainfield Middle School “Live Museum and Curriculum Fair” was launched. What began as a series of ideas and conversations manifested into an intellectual exchange of talents among staff, students, and members of the community. This event exemplified the epitome of the effective collaboration between the North Plainfield Middle School and the North Plainfield Public Library.”

The program coordinator and youth services librarian, Behr, looks forward to continuing “Talk It Up!” beyond the grant period as kids, parents, and caregivers are already pushing for the programs to continue this summer.

Lessons Learned

The largest challenge was the initial schedule setup. The library only has one programming room, and it is heavily used. The time window of the grant added pressure for marketing and promoting. In the final evaluation, Behr stated, “If I could do things differently, I would want the grant period to last longer to provide more time to brainstorm and create programs before marketing them to the public.”

The only programs with lower than expected attendance was the New Jersey Orators program for ages 11 to 13 and the ESL Conversation Group. The New Jersey Orators program for ages 11 to 13 did not have the same success as the Orators program for ages 7 to 10. A possible reason was that there was also a Toastmaster's program for a similar age group that had strong participation, and that program was a more social, "club-like" atmosphere. The ESL Conversation Group, facilitated by The Jointure, has sparked interest for an adult conversation table, so even though the turnout for this program was lower than hoped, there were still positive benefits. Behr will continue to evaluate how to better market the program and seek out additional avenues to promote the program.

Conclusion

Although this grant supported all facets of the CCC's critical components for creativity, this project best embodies the component of communication and self-expression: communicate ideas and true self with confidence. "Talk It Up!" programming is a natural fit in encouraging CCC research strategies for promoting communication and self-expression: "Cultivate children's unique voices through encouragement of risk-taking, encourage children to communicate about real-world issues, and provide opportunities to practice modifying communication style and medium in order to effectively reach a new kind of audience. . . . Give children a meaningful opportunity to showcase their creative work to a broader audience" (32).

The grant allowed North Plainfield to enhance many of the activities, but the coordinator felt that the project could be easily replicated and much of this project is completely "doable" for little to no cost. Behr, grant administer, stated in her final evaluation, "The wonderful part of public speaking is that it is free of charge!" Two of the programs were run at minimal cost; the Debate Club, run by the high-schoolers and the Toastmasters, provided the leaders at no cost. The only cost associated was the workbook, which was minimal. Partnerships were key.

Keys to Success

- Collaborated with partners with a shared vision and mission.
- Outreach to underserved populations with a clear plan and partnerships.
- Strong marketing of the program that included program-specific graphics, with all promotional materials produced in English and Spanish.
- Meaningful connection with the research, especially the creativity component of communication and self-expression.
- Sustainable and replicable at a variety of budget levels.

Further Reading

The Jointure website, <http://www.jointure.org>

North Plainfield Memorial Library (NJ) "Talk It Up!" program web page, <http://someset.lib.nj.us/talkitup.html>

References

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“I’ll never know how they could afford it, but that bike became my best friend. It gave me freedom. I could go anywhere I wanted.”

Stan Lee, *Amazing Fantastic Incredible Stan Lee: A Marvelous Memoir*

READING PUBLIC LIBRARY (PA)

“Roll, Right, Read!”

Introduction

“Roll, Right, Read!” is the Curiosity Creates project of the Reading Public Library (PA), administered by Bronwen Gamble, acting director. The grant project highlights the creativity components of collaboration, motivation, and action and movement. It also addresses transportation challenges, especially in getting kids to the library, and the global challenge of providing green solutions. The target audience of this project was children ages 9 to 14 who currently use the Reading libraries as a safe haven. Inspired by local bike culture (including the recent Reading 120 international professional bike race), children and instructors discussed and considered the many possible implications of riding a bicycle, including how a bicycle might impact their own future and the future of the environment. The program is hands-on learning, which included teaching a variety of skills, such as how to patch a flat tire and other aspects of bike maintenance and assembly. Graduates of the program will be eligible to continue in an intermediate class, “Earn a Bike,” facilitated by the Reading Bike Hub.

Implementation

Three sections of eight class modules were conducted at the Main, Southeast, and Northeast branches. The program included learning bike maintenance, assembly, and emergency repairs. Think of a bike taken apart and the mechanics it takes to put the bike together and put it in motion, add the learning opportunities of physics, engineering, vocabulary, and a sense of accomplishment, and you get a small sense of what happened at the Reading Public Library. The final program, a bike rodeo at the Main Library parking lot with stunt bike rider Chris Poulos, and a bike trip to the Reading Bike Hub’s bike pump track united participants from all three library branches.

The key partnership in this program is the Reading Bike Hub. The Reading Bike Hub works to enhance the bike culture in Reading. They rehab donated bikes, completely rebuilding them and offering them at a low cost to the public. The Curiosity Creates grant expanded upon an initial collaboration of the Reading Library and the Reading Bike Hub. The Reading Bike Hub and the library partnered for two special-edition rides, which included stops at local library branches where library staff gave tours and explained library services. This partnership worked as both organizations share the mission to address the challenge of engaging local youth, especially during high-risk after-school hours.

Results—Outputs and Outcomes

In the application, the project included language that a bike was to be given away at the end of each session, but that language didn't give a clear picture of what was truly happening. It is best illustrated in the story of Kevin, one of the first participants. He had just received his very own bike—a total surprise to him. Another boy asked him admiringly, “How did you get this?” Kevin replied, “Hard work!” The children who received bikes were not given bikes as prizes but earned a bike through taking on the challenge of learning new skills, from bike maintenance and repair to safety and riding. In the final evaluation, Gamble stated that the “wow” moment of the grant is watching the participants after the project has ended: “Three boys who earned bikes now participate in weekly slow rides around Reading.”

If a student graduates from “Roll, Right, Read!” and did not receive a bike through the library, they could continue their education in the intermediate-level “Earn a Bike” classes hosted by the Reading Bike Hub. It truly promoted the creativity component of motivation and aligned with Hadani and Jaegar’s research statement, “Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play an important role in the creative process, and it is important to recognize the effort and hard work that are involved in the process that result in a positive outcome” (37).

This program exceeded participation goals, brought in new families to the library, and eight new library cards were opened by participants and family members. A total of seventeen children earned bicycles, twenty-seven earned bicycle helmets, and thirty earned a bicycle repair book. The Reading Public Library, along with the three other Pennsylvania libraries who were Curiosity Creates grant recipients, will be collaborating to present their programs at the 2016 Pennsylvania Library Association Annual Conference.



Participants working on a tire

Lessons Learned

This program highlights how much kids like to work with their hands and that those kinesthetic opportunities are limited. Kinesthetic learning is a research-supported strategy to encourage the component of action and movement, and that component of creativity was one that resonated the most with the Reading Public Library. The program “Roll, Right, Read!” encouraged lifelong physical activity and skills that go beyond the period of the grant.

Also of note is the assumption that kids have a certain base of knowledge and vocabulary. Instructors realized they needed to be flexible and explain things they thought as “common knowledge.” A model practice to build into any creativity programming.

Although the library used fliers, social media, and the websites of both organizations, one-on-one promotion to children and their families had the greatest impact. When asked how they would promote the project differently in the future, it was reported, “Take a bike to outreach programs as a visual impact statement. Because of the hands-on nature of the sessions, a large audience was not the goal. But getting kids to visualize a program is difficult without something BIG to grab attention.”

Conclusion

The components of action and movement and motivation were the least selected components in the application process. Hadani and Jaegar state, “Teach children that movement and activity breaks can foster incubation and aha moments by emphasizing that regular exercise and physical activity increase health, reduce stress, and better equip the brain to engage in higher-order thinking” (49). The Reading Public Library embraced the component and demonstrated how to integrate it into a high-interest library program using a community partner with expertise, a shared community vision, and a mutually beneficial relationship. One of the strengths of this partnership was the inherent need that each group had for the other. The Reading Bike Hub needed a community space like the library for education, and the library needed experts to help build their bike program. These groups did not just collaborate, but instead melded their ideas into one succinct program with one mission. Gamble, program coordinator, cited in her final report, “Reading Bike Hub repair staff now feel they belong in our library branches.”



Participants with a finished bike

The Reading Library’s “Roll, Right, Read!” program has not just been an educational one-time outreach program; instead, it has put the library at the center of bike culture in the area. They’ve made themselves a crossroads for bike-related activities and learning. The program has empowered children to motivate themselves and allows them a form of personal, self-empowering green transportation. Participants are coming back to the library, this time on their bikes; “I love seeing kids’ bikes parked in the library bike racks in the afternoon,” says Gamble.

Keys to Success

- Collaborated with a partner with a shared vision and mission for the community.
- Outreach to underserved populations.
- Hands-on creativity (large-scale tinkering) with high intrinsic motivation.
- Sustainable at a variety of budget levels.
- Strong community engagement.
- Project will pay long-term dividends in regard to library relationships, transportation, environment, and opportunities.

Other Curiosity Creates Recipients with a Real-World Problem-Solving Focus

Portneuf District Library (ID) “Take It, Play It Kits”

The project encouraged the component action and movement, but also looked to address lack of physical activity and obesity, a real-world problem in their community. The kits contained the necessities for indoor or outdoor activities, including bocce ball, disc golf, jump rope, basketball, and badminton. Through a partnership with a local bike shop, East Fork Bikes, training was given to staff on bike maintenance, bike racks were donated to the library, and bikes were purchased for checkout. Reinforcing

the CCC research, a laminated sheet was included in each kit. It explained why physical activity is so necessary for health and *creativity*, along with several ideas on ways to be active and enjoy it!

San Jose Public Library (CA) “IDEAS in Motion”

The project was an opportunity for young inventors, designers, engineers, and architects (ages 9 to 14) to create and collaborate on new ideas that address real-world needs. Encouraging all seven creativity components, the workshop on constructing emergency shelters, a real-life skill, generated the most enthusiasm. Groups of three to four children each used “bamboo sticks, a garbage bag, duct tape, and string to quickly design and assemble an emergency shelter.”

Resources

Reading Bike Hub website, <http://www.readingbikehub.org>.

References

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Motze, Dani. E-mail correspondence with the author. December 23, 2015.

“You didn’t tell anybody where to stand, or how. You didn’t shoo away the boys who perched on the curb at the bottom of your picture frame.”

Roxane Orgill, *Jazz Day: The Making of a Famous Photograph*

WEST GEORGIA REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM (GA)

“Picture This: Kids Create”

Introduction

“Picture This: Kids Create” is the Curiosity Creates project of West Georgia Regional Library System (WGRL) (GA), administered by Mack Freeman. WGRL serves a five-county area west of Atlanta. The program was carried out in ten branches with the target audience being tweens ages 10 to 14. The goals were to target the “fourth-grade slump,” and bridging the digital divide. The three-part children’s photography class allowed children to explore the basics of digital photography. Children learned how to use a digital camera, how to take pictures, and how to create their own finished product through digital editing and mixed-media art. The library’s goal was to unleash each child’s inner curiosity and creativity, especially in those who feel like art isn’t for them because they aren’t good at drawing. Photography offers a new medium to spur expression, exploration, imagination, and originality.

Implementation

The library provided the cameras and supplies for all participants. Many of the children in this service area lack access to technology and resources for expression of creativity. Parents were welcome to attend, with the following caveat: “This program is about allowing children to explore their creativity, so it’s OK for the children to make mistakes or not get it right the first time.” An easy-to-follow lesson plan was created for the program, typically covering four to five objectives, with a time line for the program, tactics for the objectives, vocabulary definitions, and a conclusion recapping the goals of the lesson plan.

- Lesson One—Intro to Cameras: This lesson covered the objectives of understanding the parts of the camera and their basic functions, basic photography vocabulary, adjusting for correct lighting settings, and basic point-and-shoot tactics with the camera. Time was allowed in the program for a twenty-minute free shoot and a twenty-minute scavenger hunt. The scavenger hunt included prompts that directed participants to take a picture of something you can hear, something you can smell, and something that is red.
- Lesson Two—What Are the Different Types of Photography?: This session covered the objectives of portraits, landscapes, and still lifes; understanding lenses, filters, and their functions; and the “rule of thirds.” Time was allotted for a scavenger hunt and a free shoot.
- Lesson Three—Mixed-Media Methods for Photographs: This lesson covered the objectives of various forms of mixed-media, what mixed-media does to photographs, and how to experiment with mixed-media methods on photographs. An introduction to simple photo manipulation using

photo-editing software was covered. At the end of the class, each student chose a favorite photo for display. Each branch library hosted a month-long art show where the photos were titled and framed. This gave families, friends, and participants an opportunity to view their photographic creativity.

Results—Outputs and Outcomes

The opening registration of “Picture This” had an explosion of sign-ups with 120 children registered on the first day. The total participation of the program was 429, which was well above the expected 300 participants. Each program was limited to thirty participants for each of the ten branches. The measure of the program’s success is evident in the high turnout and high demand, but also in the small details, like participants’ comments, such as, “Can I get another copy (of my photograph) so I can remember that I can do this?” All were proud of their final product, and for some this opportunity really clicked and a passion was found.

The sustainability of a program is a high indicator of a successful outcome. WGRL plans to continue the program as a module of a makerspace program. The demand created has also encouraged the hiring of a thirty-hour-a-week employee who will oversee the photography and maker modules.

Parent feedback included, “It’s so good that they get to figure it out on their own. I feel like I’m always hovering over them, and this gives them a chance to be in charge.” All participants came away with the basics of photography, from how to use a camera to producing an original mixed-media photographic work. Mixed-media editing on photographs was the “big hit.”

The average age of the participants was 9 to 12, the sweet spot of “the fourth-grade slump” demographic. This program also brought in a large homeschool population, and the feedback is that this experience has generated conversation about attending more library programs in the future.

Lessons Learned

Seeing the response to this program, it was noted there is “thirst and need” for creativity programs for tweens, and it “resonated deeply” with the staff. The program also attracted strong interest from adults and teens that were not part of the scope of the grant. This will be an additional opportunity for WGRL to expand this content to older age groups, but they do not want lose sight of the needs noted in the grant-targeted age group.

As WGRL covers multiple counties in Georgia, developing and creating a single program that can be mobile is key. Freeman states, “The most-time consuming aspect of any program is the creation part, so once created, be sure to use it as often as possible with new audiences!”

One of the CCC research strategies in promoting flexibility is to “help children notice when they are getting stuck in their thinking or in their creative production” (21). It is worth noting that this situation was found in almost all of the Curiosity Creates grant programs. WGRL noticed that in the second session free shoot of portraits, the kids brought their own preconceived notions of what was correct, typically people smiling straight on. The program was adjusted going forward to help shake them out of those notions, allowing them the structure to be more creative. Having multiple sessions of the same program allowed the program coordinator to be flexible to the creative needs of the children and give the program itself time to mature.

Conclusion

The curriculum lesson plans created by WGRL can be easily adapted for other libraries. Program Coordinator Freeman, on replicating the program, stated, “both parents and children love the concept. Materials last a long time and only an initial investment is needed. Maintenance costs are low.” WGRL suggested libraries with limited funds might consider teaching photography basics for cell phones or any technology with a camera in it, which would be a BYOD (bring your own device) program. The cameras in this program were shared among not only the branches but also within the classes.

The motivation creativity component of the research, especially in regards to intrinsic motivation, was one of the largest takeaways from the project. Staff noted that “moving away from trinkets to what you do is the whole point” is being embraced beyond the grant project. This aligned with the CCC research strategy to promote motivation: “Teach children how to identify and celebrate when something was done for the sake of doing because of internal motivation rather than external rewards” (38). The final event of the program is the Kid’s Photo Extravaganza, and in keeping with the research on motivation and encouraging intrinsic value over a prize, this is not a juried contest but an opportunity to share their creative expression. The participants were “proud of their work and wanted to continue, and that was the whole point.”

Keys to Success

- Strong marketing of the program that includes program-specific graphics.
- Meaningful connection with the research, especially the components of flexibility, motivation, and communication and self-expression.
- Sustainable with grant purchasing items that can support a variety of programs.
- Replicable at a variety of budget levels.

Resources

Camera recommended: Fujifilm FinePix XP80 Waterproof Digital Camera with 2.7-inch LCD
“They are nearly indestructible, so you won’t mind if a six-year-old bangs it on the ground.”

Further Reading

Honovich, Nancy, and Annie Griffiths. 2015. *National Geographic Kids Guide to Photography: Tips & Tricks on How to Be a Great Photographer from the Pros & Your Pals at My Shot*. Washington: National Geographic.

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Conclusion

Outputs and Outcomes

ALSC challenged the 79 grant awardees to implement viable creative programming, or design or adapt their space, to address the needs of children 6 to 14, with a plan for outreach and to foster and promote the seven critical components of creativity, using the research-prescribed strategies. Several questions on the final application were specifically posed to gather data on the success of the program. The most straightforward of these questions included the total number of programs and participants, what aspects of the program would continue beyond the grant period, and which of the seven critical components resonated the most with their program. Questions that required more in-depth analysis were those where the grantees were asked to self-assess the program and measured outcomes, while rating the success of meeting the target audience. The final evaluation data collected concluded that 76 (92 percent) of these libraries connected with the research when implementing these programs. Seventy-four (94 percent) are sustaining their programming, in part or in whole, with continuing funding coming from library budgets, Friends' groups, and new grant sources. There were 1,502 sessions providing programming to 39,151 children. The value of using libraries for high-quality learning spaces for creativity is clearly demonstrated by dividing the total grant dollars of \$800,000 by the number of children served at an average cost of \$20 per participant. Without factoring in the high level of sustaining programs and those programs that focused on redesign of space, it could be calculated that this cost average will be even lower.

In the grant application, applicants were asked to “select all of the critical components of creativity that you plan to implement in your program(s).” An average of 5.49 components were selected, with imagination and originality ranked first (chosen by 73 recipients [92 percent]), with the difference between the highest-ranked component and the lowest-ranked component, action and movement (chosen by 47 recipients [59 percent]), being 26, or 33 percent.

Imagination & Originality	Flexibility	Decision Making	Communication & Self-Expression	Motivation	Collaboration	Action & Movement
73	60	58	71	57	67	47
92%	76%	73%	90%	72%	85%	59%

In the final evaluation a question was purposely asked in a slightly different way from the initial grant application: “Which of the seven critical components of creativity resonated most in your program? Provide an example.” This required two things: for the grantee to reflect back on the research and to self-evaluate their program’s connection to the research. They accomplished this by providing an example demonstrating that they understood both the components and the research-supported strategies. While some recipients still listed all seven critical components, the average selected was reduced to two. By asking for an example, three responses indicated a disconnect with either what the question was asking or a lack of understanding the research and critical components of creativity. As with the application, the final evaluation ranked imagination and originality first, this time selected by 65 percent of the respondents.

Imagination & Originality	Flexibility	Decision Making	Communication & Self-Expression	Motivation	Collaboration	Action & Movement
51	16	14	27	9	27	12
65%	20%	18%	34%	11%	34%	15%

The component of imagination and originality aligned with what many recipients expressed in their applications; specifically, that it validated what they were already doing. It was the strongest component in both the application and the evaluation. That assumption was borne out by the statistics. By the nature of library service, the same could be said about the critical component of communication and self-expression, ranked second in the both the application and tied for second in the final evaluation. What was interesting was that in the final evaluation, though ranked second, communication and self-expression was chosen by only 34 percent of respondents along with the component of collaboration.

The critical components of flexibility, decision making, action and movement, and motivation offer opportunities for professional development and collaboration with CCC. Those that connected with two components of action and movement and motivation created programs to inspire, from hip-hop at Sevier County Public Library System (TN) and yoga at Bayard Taylor Memorial Library (PA), to physical literacy kits at Glacier County Public Library (MT) and Portneuf District Library (ID). At Portneuf, one could check out a bike; at Reading Public Library (PA), children could earn a bike; at Avon Free Public Library (CT), family dances provided means to, as stated by Hadani and Jaegar, “boost creative potential through physical activity” (8). Those few that claimed the component of motivation did so with deep conviction of the power of intrinsic motivation. It would be interesting to follow up with these recipients with whom motivation resonated on how this impacted future programming, especially summer reading. This could be an opportunity to bring these stakeholders to the table in the national summer reading and learning discussion. It was also important to review those grants that did not connect to the research—a total of three programs. Two of the projects are sustaining at least part of their program, while one other project was a one-time program. One of the sustaining projects made great strides with their community partner and would probably welcome additional resources and support on creativity from ALSC.

The final evaluation gathered data on age ranges, target audience, and reason(s) given for why the library applied for the grant. In almost all cases, there was a high level of interest in reaching the age group of the grant, and specific interest in reaching tweens and addressing the research described as the fourth-grade slump. The goal of addressing the fourth-grade slump can be seen in the age range of participants served:

Age	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
%	73%	80%	85%	94%	100%	100%	99%	85%	62%

Libraries were also asked to self-evaluate their success in meeting the needs of their target audience. Only three libraries stated some level of dissatisfaction with reaching the target audience (see chart below, #1, 2 and 7). An additional question asked if the recipient had communication with “other grantees, ALSC, or the Center for Childhood Creativity.” One recipient comment (#7 in chart below) in this section thoughtfully reflects on their limited success: “I did not communicate with these groups as much as I could have. I feel that I may have had more success in implementing our program if I had asked for assistance.”

The collection of data and methods of measuring results varied widely among the participants, much of which was based on attendance statistics and anecdotal information. Marco Marroquin, program coordinator of the Live Oak County Library (TX) “Reading Groups” is worth noting, as he gave several

assessments to monitor the success of that program, from attendance and paper and online surveys to oral feedback. The survey mechanism was simple, asking how satisfied patrons were with the event, how likely they were to recommend the library, and for a rating of the book discussed at that particular session. The survey also allowed room for comments. In addition, circulation statistics of books purchased with the grant were collected. Marroquin noted, “Our online catalog included the phrase ‘ALSC and Disney Grant’ in the MARC record of each book so our system could easily pull up those records and see their usage.” They also captured data on new card-holder registrations and had an average of at least five new cards per event. Each event was photographed and documented on Facebook, including tagging and crediting ALSC. Measurement of long-term participant outcomes was not assessed or part of the evaluation process.

The overall Curiosity Creates data shows a high rate of viable creativity programs. Based on the final evaluations, eleven projects raised flags for the evaluator; the below chart uses numbers to identify those projects. Most of the flagged projects gave additional supporting data that lead the evaluator to believe they would be successful in full or partial form in the future.

Closer scrutiny of the five nonsustaining programs leads to a deeper investigation of the budget expenses, especially in regard to funding for staffing and presenters and if that affected sustainability. Several applicants stated that they were appreciative that the grant allowed for staff funding. Fifty-seven libraries (72 percent of the total libraries) used some portion of the grant for funding for staff (9 percent of the total funds) or presenters (15 percent of total funds). This was approximately \$140,000, or 24 percent of the total expended grant funds. Of the five nonsustaining grants, two programs used funds for staffing, two used funds for presenters, and one used funding for both, with total funds spent at \$25,000. Two of these libraries had the largest presenter fees of all the recipients. Two of the libraries had the second- and third-highest staffing expenditures. Additional factors come into play as one of the libraries is not moving forward because the program coordinator is leaving and there was a stated lack of buy-in from other members of the library administration. One program coordinator stated that the program was nonsustaining, but delving deeper, it seems that portions of the project will be replicated as their Friends group was interested in funding the program at other branches. Another is not repeating the same project but is collaborating with their partner to create a future project. Taking all factors into account, subjective analysis shows two programs that did not fulfill the mission of the grant. One program noted previously as not connecting with the research also was nonsustaining, and the other program had the program coordinator leaving. This calculates to a failure rate of 2.5 percent. Reviewing this data, there does not seem to be a strong correlation between staff and presenter costs in a grant-funded budget and a project that is unsustainable, except at the highest percentages. Grant evaluators may want to consider those applications with staff or presenters costing 80 percent or more of the total budget to be at a higher risk of decreased viability.

An interesting twist in this discussion is the West Georgia Regional Library (GA) program “Picture This,” which was so successful that they have now hired staff to continue the program. Avon Free Public Library (CT) is considering a change in titles to reflect the impact of the research: “Mary Fletcher’s title at the library is children’s library specialist. However, we hope to change it to library creativity specialist.”

Promotion of the grant recipients programming was of interest to ALSC in two separate areas. The first is how libraries promoted the program in their own communities, targeting the audience specified in their application. The second was how they shared and promoted creativity programming within the library profession. ALSC also made efforts to promote the project and the outcomes through the following programming and new media outlets: 2016 ALA Midwinter Meeting’s News You Can Use Session “Curiosity Creates: Research and Best Practices in Creativity Programming for Children,” the ALSC blog, ALSC twitter chat, the Networking Uncommons event on Curiosity Creates at 2016 ALA Annual Conference, and a proposed *Children and Libraries* winter 2016 issue featuring a selection of the recipients’ narratives on their programs.

In asking recipients how they promoted their programs to their community and to the profession, the following data was collected. Eighty-nine percent used print media, and 87 percent used new media in their promotional efforts. From Pueblo City Public Library (CO) comes the reminder that promotion goes beyond print and new media: “We used social media and paper promotion (posters at schools and youth organizations as well as our monthly newsletter). To be honest the greatest success came by word of mouth. They promoted for us among themselves, and our staff was wonderful. We talked one-on-one with every kid that walked through our doors.” Douglas County Public Library (GA) demonstrates the amount of vigorous promotion created for their successful program “Creativity Club—Explore Art @ Your Library”: “We had fliers and message boards for each program. We had a magnet with a calendar of the events printed and given to participants. We developed a logo specifically for the Creativity Club to go on all materials. We featured the program on the front page of our library website and on social media. We also promoted the program through the county’s Douglas Happenings Facebook page and an interview with a local cable station. We hung six-foot banners in the lobby promoting the club and had four staff T-shirts to help promote it as well.”

The percentage of libraries who are either writing an article for a professional journal or presenting at a state or national library conference is impressive at 43 percent. Recipients in the states of California, Georgia, Illinois, and Pennsylvania are presenting as a panel in their respective states. On a more informal basis, anecdotal information received in the final evaluations demonstrated a sharing of programming ideas among recipients of the same state, as in the case of Maryland and Tennessee. Some recipients asked to be connected with libraries with similar projects, as in the case of Spokane Public Library: South Hill Branch (WA) and Perry Public Library (OH) regarding musical instruments. Several of the recipients met informally at ALA Midwinter Meeting, and the sharing of information in that setting received positive responses and may be a practice to continue.

In regards to the promotion of the Curiosity Creates grant, the final evaluation queried if it brought any “new eyes” to the library, especially regarding creativity programming. Here the responses were spread out among categories, but “parents” was the largest response, reported by 35 percent of the recipients. Many of the library programs had a final public event, premiere, or gallery to include parents, while others offered brochures, and still another group encouraged parents to watch the program to model how to encourage or participate alongside their children. The parents saw the impact for the children, but they also saw the library as an opportunity for themselves. Typically, the evaluator does not hear from the parents, so when an e-mail was received from a North Plainfield (NJ) parent, it was an illustration of how people who may have used the library as a “drop-off” are now actively engaging with the library for their children and themselves: “My daughter Camila (8 years old) participated in the “Talk It Up!” program at North Plainfield Library, which was a great introductory experience for her. As parents, we are very interested in joining the public speaking and oratory program that you mentioned to us, which takes place at Plainfield High School during the fall.” Hannah Holby, program coordinator at the Free Library of Philadelphia’s Kensington Branch Library (PA), shared this observation of how their Curiosity Creates grant program, “Kensington Cooks!”, changed parents’ perspectives: “One mother has been coming to the library with her daughters for the past two years that I have worked in the space. She generally only came at the end of the program to tell her children it was time to leave. She often rushed them and rarely said much to staff. She started showing more interest in the programs when “Kensington Cooks!” got started. When we screen printed, she stayed with her daughters and spent an hour using the fabric markers to draw elaborate names on her children’s aprons, as well as making one for her husband. Although she said she doesn’t like to cook, she was able to feel comfortable expressing her own creativity because the program felt open to family involvement.” Along with seeing the library with “new eyes,” the creativity aspect of programming made the libraries approachable for many parents, and this was reiterated throughout the final evaluations. Claudia Haines, program coordinator of the Homer Public Library (AK) “Maker Club,” summed it up best, saying, “the long-term relationships built with families, not just the kids, really made this grant project powerful.”

“Staff, trustees, and Friends” were lower as individual categories of the “new eyes” question, but when combined, they were mentioned by 40 percent of the grant recipients. One trend among the best practices was the buy-in from stakeholders. From a practical standpoint, having library fiscal decision makers and funders such as trustees and Friends is often key to the sustainability of any program. Sharing and demonstrating creativity programs to these stakeholders so that they can have awareness and “new eyes” can be done as simply as sharing a video, as in the case of the Springfield City Library (MA) program “Rock the Stacks!” Ann Hrobsky wrote, “Ted McCoy made a presentation to the Springfield City Library Commissioners about the grant. They were enthralled with the music and video that he shared and were surprised that the library would pursue loud, lively music programming in the library. They were also impressed with the outcomes children can experience by participating in the Rock the Stacks! events. Nobody expects a library to pulse with drumbeats. Everyone in the library picked up their heads and took notice as bucket drumming sessions commenced.” The importance of the Disney name being attached to the grant was also noted by several recipients; as stated by the Show Low Public Library (AZ) “Creative Club,” “any connection to Disney has great cachet too!”

The best-practices examples showcased emerging trends in successful programs. Partnerships where there was a shared vision and a mutually beneficial exchange of talent and resources were key in the success of the program, and those partnerships are continuing beyond the grant period. Partnerships involved a variety of groups and were not limited to other community-based nonprofits. Programs using local talent, including businesses and higher-education institutions, were successful models of collaboration. On June 16, 2016, The Arc of Bristol County awarded the Attleboro Public Library (MA) their Community Excellence Award. Hand in hand with community partnerships was the idea of libraries being a “flex player” for the community, determining and meeting the needs of their community versus the approach of telling the community what they were willing to offer.

It would be remiss not to mention that most important component of the best-practice examples: the human component. All successes had strong buy-in from stakeholders, program coordinators, directors, staff, trustees, and Friends; for some, all parties were engaged from the beginning, while others needed training, coaching, and education to become full partners in embracing the program and the creativity research. While a majority of the programs were coordinated by children’s librarians or youth services personnel, two projects were run by library trustees. Training went beyond the children’s area, and staff talent was explored and embraced. The projects did not belong to one single person but to the library, the community, the parents, and, most important, the kids.

Finally, it would be interesting to revisit the grant recipients at a later date. Monitoring libraries, especially those listed as best-practice examples, by reviewing the long-term effects of the creativity research on library programming and attitudes towards creativity. Avon Free Public Library (CT) cleaned out their craft closet to make room for process art and plan never to return to assembly line crafts. By monitoring those that took risks, created safe environments, used professional equipment and expertise, and respected the child as an artist, creator, speaker, and scientist embraced higher-level thinking and deep connections with the research that could provide additional valuable data for both ALSC and CCC.

It would be remiss not to discuss the power of yet. Hadani and Jaegar discuss the strategy of promoting “a growth mindset by praising process, teaching children that brains grow, and by clever use of the phrase ‘yet,’ as in “you have not learned to use the saw . . . yet” (32). Some grant recipients projects are not there yet, but as Jessica Speer from the Highland Park Public Library (IL) states about “Library Scouts,” “I definitely feel like this is a pilot—we’re having to redesign parts of the program on the fly, but we’re gearing up to expand to around a dozen Trails over the summer, so I’m really grateful for the experience! We’ve had a lot of lessons learned as we go, and I’m looking forward to seeing how the program expands over the summer and beyond!”

Short Descriptions based on Curiosity Creates Grant Application Descriptions

Alexandria Library–Beatley Central Library (VA) “STEAMtivity”

<https://www.alexandria.lib.va.us>

A series of twenty-one low- and high-tech programs that encouraged children to be creative, explore their own interests and ideas, collaborate, and have fun while learning in the STEAM areas. Children had the opportunity to create original works of art, video, music, and photography, as well as imaging creative solutions to problems by using common materials in new and different ways.

Apalachicola Municipal Library (FL) “Curious Is Cool @ My Library”

<http://www.cityofapalachicola.com/library.cfm>

Six mini workshops held on Saturday afternoons with local artists and other skilled community members and educators. Workshops include Stringed Instruments, Bird Watching, and Knot Tying.

Attleboro Public Library (MA) “Everyone Explores @ Your Library: Encouraging Inclusive Creative Opportunities for Children of All Abilities”

<http://attleborolibrary.org>

The project is to transform the children’s room and create a hands-on, sensory, active learning space built for imagination and creativity. The library will use the grant funding to develop programs, train staff, provide an interactive play station, and make the children’s room a welcoming experience for a diverse community.

Avon Free Public Library (CT) “The Creative Edge”

<http://www.avonctlibrary.info>

“The Creative Edge” program featured open-ended art experiences where creativity and individual expression were encouraged, rather than a mere step-by-step craft. Programming included an Open Art Studio for all ages; creative art for grades 1 to 6; teen art focusing on discarded books; story art based on book illustrations; and the yoga-based “Stories in Motion,” where children creatively interpret stories while learning mindful movement. This program was profiled at the 2016 Connecticut Library Association and 2016 Rhode Island Library Association conferences, and will be featured in the winter 2016 issue of *Children and Libraries*.

Baldwin Public Library (NY) “TEAM (Twens Engage in the Arts & Movement)”

<http://www.baldwinpl.org>

A series of six workshops plus a reception for children ages 9 to 10. The heart of the workshops focused on finding one’s unique voice through art and poetry. Children worked with various mediums, such as silk

painting, torn paper, and clay. A collaborative book of the children's poetry and artwork was printed and made into an e-book.

Baltimore County Public Library (MD) "Mobile Makerspace"

<http://www.bcpl.info>

Funding was used for two portable carts, each of which included a 3-D printer, a Chromebook, a tool set that includes a soldering iron, and various consumables, including LED lights, batteries, copper wire, Play-Doh, and other crafting materials. These secure, lockable carts also included premade kits, such as Snap Circuits, littleBits, and LEGO. Carts are now available for use among 19 branch libraries.

Bayard Taylor Memorial Library (PA) "Art and Movement around the World"

<http://www.kennettpubliclibrary.org>

A six-week program celebrating diversity through art, dance, exercise, and other creative outlets that got young creators moving and thinking. This class focused on a different culture every week, highlighting its history through an art project and paired motion activity.

Blount County Public Library (TN) "STEAMkids"

<http://www.blountlibrary.org>

Every week a different adventure, from science experiments to art projects and everything in between, for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. When discussing scientists and other innovators in connection to that week's activity, library staff provided diverse examples that represent marginalized groups. The goal was to make STEAM education and, later on, STEAM careers more accessible to kids who might otherwise never have considered them. The supplies purchased from this grant created a mini makerspace environment in the children's area.

Broward County Library (FL) "Save Future Florida!"

<http://www.broward.org/library>

The goal was for Broward youth to find creative solutions to solving rapid climate change in Florida, the state ranked number one by scientists for impact by climate change. Children imagined themselves in a future Florida in the year 2100, submerged in water, placing them in an imaginary world of the future that might someday be very real.

Calvert Library (MD) "Curiosity Works"

<http://calvert.lib.md.us>

In partnership with PaxSpace, the library offered a four-part series of creativity workshops. The library created a Curiosity Collection that included KEVA Planks, Raspberry Pi, LEGO Mindstorms, SparkFun Inventor's Kit, Arduinos, graph paper, duct tape, and a 3-D printer. The program web is available at <http://calvert.lib.md.us/kids/CuriosityWorks.html>.



KEVA Planks structure at "Curiosity Works,"
Calvert Library (MD)

Carnegie Free Library of Beaver Falls (PA) “Building UP: Architecture”

<http://www.beaverlibraries.org/beaverfalls.asp>

The program was designed for students ages 6 to 14 to develop knowledge of engineering and architectural basics. “Building UP” is also intended to “build up the relationship” between underserved youth and the library. The library ran three four-week sessions throughout the school year. The library has partnered with TRAILS Ministries, an organization that supports children of incarcerated parents. This program will be profiled at the “Curiosity Creates—Pennsylvania Winners of the ALSC/Disney Curiosity Creates Awards Present Their Programs” presentation at the 2016 Pennsylvania Library Association Conference.

Carroll County Public Library (MD) “Library TECHsploration”

<https://library.carr.org>

Program included a monthly display of Library TECHsploration CRATEs (Create/Reinvent/Apply/Teach/Explore) or self-guided kits of fun technology materials in each branch. This participant-led approach encouraged parents and caregivers to actively engage with children to experience technology as a tool for learning, innovation, and play. Special pop-up labs, led by FutureMakers of Maryland, gave families additional opportunities to spark curiosity through metal soldering and “light painting.”

Carter County Public Library (KY) “Folk Art for Young Folk”

<http://www.cartercountypubliclibrary.info>

A sampling of regional folk art including rag basket weaving, loom weaving, needlework, doll making, quilting, jewelry making, and others.

Cheboygan Area Public Library (MI) “Dream Boat Clay Series”

<http://cheboyganlibrary.org>

The grant celebrated the waterways of Cheboygan by creating personal dream boats or pirate ships using various hand-building techniques with clay. The completed boats were displayed with written statements about the kind of lives participants’ would lead on their boats. The library offered three workshops. The workshops were intergenerational with adults and children working together.

Defiance Public Library (OH) “Agents of B.O.O.K.S. (Brainy Operatives Obtaining Knowledge Substantially)”

<http://www.defiancelibrary.org>

This club allowed students ages 8 to 11 to discover their talents in the broad field of fine arts by fostering confidence and creativity. They learned skills such as code breaking, sewing, drawing, writing, teamwork, special effects, directing, acting, sound editing, filmmaking, cinematography, and library research. The final event was a red-carpet premier of their film, *Cat and Turtle Rule the World*. This program will be profiled in the winter 2016 issue of *Children and Libraries*.

Derby Public Library (KS) “Tween Moviecraft: Creating Creators”

<http://www.derbylibrary.com>

By bringing Hollywood filmmaking to life, tweens had the opportunity to create their own fully functioning film production crew, including craft services. The program presented a comprehensive experience of the filmmaking process, allowing tweens to write, produce, direct, edit, and premiere an original short film using the latest camera and screenwriting technologies available. This program will be profiled in the winter 2016 issue of *Children and Libraries*.

Douglas County Public Library (GA) “Creativity Club—Explore Art @ Your Library!”

<http://www.wgrl.net>

By founding a “Creativity Club,” children were encouraged to attend thirteen art programs exploring sewing, marbling, painting, looming, cooking, mosaics, beading, LEGO building, and tie-dye focused on children ages 8 to 14. Finished creations are both displayed in the library and available for children to take home. This program will be profiled at the 2016 Georgia COMO Library Conference.

Dunham Public Library (NY) “Minecraft Camp”

<http://www.whitesborolibrary.org>

A one-week “Minecraft Camp” for ages 10 to 14. Minecraft is a program that has endless possibilities for imagination. After a brief introduction to the game, participants were asked to imagine something they would like to build, sketch it on paper, and then actually build it in the game. This program focused on coding. A second camp was offered for ages 7 to 10 due to demand.

Eastern Shore Public Library (VA) “Making My World a Better Place”

<http://espl.org>

Children learned about the variety of unique ecosystems of the Eastern Shore and imagined ways that they can become leaders in learning to care for their environment. The focus was on second-grade English-language learners. The program included a field trip to Chincoteague Island.

Edith B. Ford Memorial Library (NY) “Kid Film Lab”

<http://ovidlibrary.org>

Children were given the tools to create with film what they see in their minds’ eyes. Projects will be open-ended, in which youth will be invited to explore filmmaking equipment and discover the potential of film. Our series of workshops will provide technical instruction and navigation to use film equipment. The library partnered with Ithaca College. This program will be profiled in the winter 2016 issue of *Children and Libraries*.

Fairfield Public Library (CT) “Star Wars Reads Day: A Creative Exploration”

<http://fairfieldpubliclibrary.org>

A six-hour one-day Star Wars–focused event on December 12 appealed to all members of the community. There is a wide range of activities from creating light sabers and terrestrial terrariums to programming

and controlling droids, a “Skywalker Story Contest,” and “Yoda Yoga.” This program was profiled on the *ALSCblog* on March 12, 2016 (<http://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2016/03/star-wars-reads-day-a-creative-exploration>).

Free Library of Philadelphia's Kensington Branch Library (PA) "Kensington's Cooks!"

<http://libwww.freelibrary.org/branches/branch.cfm?loc=KEN>

A monthly cooking show, which is posted on the Internet, gave participants a space to create characters, sets, props, costumes, and theme music and share it with their immediate community and the world at large. Through the cooking program, children prepared and consumed new healthy foods from different cultures.

In addition to an online video about the program (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfEotZYxYc8>), this program was featured on *Maker Jawn*, a North Philadelphia Free Libraries website, on June 1, 2016 (<http://makerjawn.org/blog/2016/06/01/ken-cooks-finale>). This program will also be profiled at the “Curiosity Creates—Pennsylvania Winners of the ALSC/Disney Curiosity Creates Awards Present Their Programs” presentation at the 2016 Pennsylvania Library Association Conference.

Free Library of Philadelphia's Lillian Marrero Branch Library (PA) "Independent Voices: A DIY Storytelling Workshop"

<https://libwww.freelibrary.org/branches/branch.cfm?loc=LEH>

Programming focused on various modes of storytelling, from comics to bookmaking and performance. Each session, students developed their narrative skills through collaborative and individual work. Students created original material in their own voice and used their imagination to engage in storytelling in various formats, including books, zines, comics, and blogging. Included a workshop on how to tell a Vine “story” in six seconds, compressing the narrative into a conflict and a solution. This program will be profiled at the “Curiosity Creates—Pennsylvania Winners of the ALSC/Disney Curiosity Creates Awards Present Their Programs” presentation at the 2016 Pennsylvania Library Association Conference, and was featured in a blog post on *Maker Jawn*, a North Philadelphia Libraries website (<http://makerjawn.org/blog/2016/03/02/maker-celebrations>).

Glacier County Public Library (MT) “Explore It” Wall/Bench

<http://glaciercountylibrary.pbworks.com>

The grant allowed the library to totally change the look of the children's area. This included building an "Explore It" wall and a Mobile Mag wall, adding a magnetic board and a LEGO and DUPLO board area for the younger kids' area, and adding a light table. The goal was to create the atmosphere of a mini children's museum.

Glen Ellyn Public Library (IL) “STEAM Teams”

<http://gepl.org>

The program was a series of five STEAM-related programs, with each focusing on one letter of the acronym. The activities presented open-ended problems that children had to think about creatively to come up with an original solution. Children that participated in these programs played with paint, shapes, robotics, and circuitry. By providing transportation, any interested children had access to the program.

This program will be presented at the “Curiouser and Curiouser: Discovering Creativity in Youth at the Library” presentation at the 2016 Illinois Library Association Conference.

Gloucester County Library System: Mullica Hill Branch (NJ) "DesignStudio@GCLS"

<http://www.gcls.org/locations/mullica-hill-branch>

This project focused on music mixing and graphic design and animation for children ages 9 to 12. The music-mixing program taught children how to create, mix, and record songs using Sony ACID Music Studio software and Apple GarageBand. The animation program introduced children to stop-motion animation using iKIT and iMovie software.

Hialeah Public Libraries (FL) “Earth Keepers/Movers”

<http://www.hialeahfl.gov/library>

This new program, for children ages 6 to 14, supported the STEM curriculum, introducing science, and earth science in particular, into existing ongoing library programs. The idea was to get kids involved and spark their curiosity through programs such as “Geology Rocks!,” “Watch Your Seeds Grow,” “The Little Bookworms’ Gardening Hour,” and the “Pagemasters Science Adventures.” STEM kits on earth sciences were purchased and implemented into the programs.

Highland Park Public Library (IL) “Library Scouts”

<http://www.hplibrary.org>

“Library Scouts” provided a structure for children to learn new skills, complete creative projects, engage in community service, and enrich their library experience. The project used both new and existing library programs, including 3-D printing and book-binding workshops and a crafting club. This program appears in an article on the ALA Public Programs Office website (<http://programminglibrarian.org/articles/7-adventurous-program-ideas-complement-summer-reading>), and will be presented at the “Curiouser and Curiouser: Discovering Creativity in Youth at the Library” presentation at the 2016 Illinois Library Association Conference.

Homer Public Library (AK) “The Maker Club”

<http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/library>

The Maker Club was a free, project-based after-school program that brings kids and teens together with community mentors to make, create, and build open-ended projects with new skills, tools, and friendships. Programs include “Hour of Code using Sphero Balls,” one-mug meals, sewing, and photography.

Inglewood Public Library (CA) “Creativity Connects”

<http://www.cityofinglewood.org/depts/library>

By collaborating with the Ron Finley Project, a community organization, the library provided access to knowledgeable and professional individuals to assist the library in presenting an array of activities involving gardening, murals, weaving, and mosaics. The library hosted a series of hands-on sessions exploring creativity through Creations Stations. The library had three stations per program where children could imagine and create.

Jefferson County Library (CO) “LibLab: Create!”

<http://www.jeffcolibrary.org>

Art-themed labs offered kids the chance to explore art forms they have never experienced. In “LibLabs,” kids created items they are proud of with their imagination and originality. Some “LibLab” titles included “Create with KEVA,” “Create and Fly!,” and “Create with Paint.” The Try It at Home sheet handed out at the programs was a great way for parents to get in on the learning by continuing it at home.

Kenai Community Library (AK) “All DOLled Up”

<http://www.kenailibrary.org>

The program consisted of monthly programs split into three forty-five-minute segments where groups rotate between a sewing station, a craft station, and a free-play station. This program includes six American Girl Doll kits available for patrons to checkout. The kits consisted of one American Girl Doll, the accompanying book for the character, and a journal for the patron to record her ongoing adventures.



“All DOLled Up” at Kenai Community Library (AK)

Lee County Library (MS) “Growing into Cosplay”

http://www.li.lib.ms.us/client/en_US/lils

The program was comprised of many workshops and events designed to provide participants with an introduction to cosplay and the books and culture that inspired it. The various stand-alone events represent activities one would encounter at a comic convention.

Live Oak County Library (TX) “Reading Groups”

<https://liveoak.biblionix.com/atoz/catalog>

This grant was a great opportunity for the community’s 6- to 14-year-olds to read books and engage with other students in an informal setting where their opinions could be heard and they can enjoy reading with no expectations of a test. This was also an opportunity for these young patrons to receive a book, maybe the first book they can call their own, for free. The hope was that instead of seeing strangers or differences, our reading groups would see their fellow members as friends and neighbors.

Livingston Public Library (NJ) “Toolkits for Emerging Inventors and Artists”

<http://livingston.bccls.org>

The program allowed preteens to explore creativity in the areas of robotics, fiber arts, engineering, and paper crafts. The program consisted of multiple sets of circulation tools and materials, supported by complementary programming and a library-monitored blog.

Lone Cone Library District d/b/a Norwood Public Library (CO) “After-School Adventures”

<http://norwood.colibraries.org>

Children who attended all after-school programs exhibited self-confidence and increased knowledge when discussing concepts of electricity, magnetism, basic chemistry processes, weather events, iPad coding and programming, basic and advanced money concepts, cultural practices, ethnic food, and world geography.

Louisville Free Public Library (KY) “Skate My Way”

<http://www.lfpl.org>

Participants worked with the Kentucky Museum of Art and Crafts to teach children and teens ages 6 to 14 to paint their dream skateboard. An art-board form was provided for each participant to transform using their imagination and originality. In the skateboard build sessions, youth were able to create fantastical skateboard designs.

Maude P. Ragsdale Public Library (GA) “Write Brite”

<http://www.wgrl.net>

This program offered children ages 6 to 14 a chance to publish their own book. A series of programs introduced children to the basics of creative writing, editing, illustration, layout, design, and publishing. The library immersed them in the process of all the ways that they can creatively tell their own stories. Through an in-house printing press, the library and community could tangibly embody the mission of projects like a “We Need Diverse Books” campaign by putting production tools into the hands of the diverse aspects of the community. This program will be presented at the 2016 Georgia COMO Library Conference.

McCracken County Public Library (KY) “Wonder Time”

<https://www.mclib.net>

“Wonder Time” was a program that encouraged curiosity and self-expression. Children discovered that learning is fun. Each month, children had the opportunity to “wonder” about something, from yoga and mindful breathing to exploring items from the mineral museum. “Wonder Time” was geared toward (but not limited to) children ages 6 to 14. The programming was set up on the floor (not in a room) so kids could walk by and see if “Wonder Time” was something that interested them.

Milton Free Public Library (NH) “Build It”

<http://www.miltonfreepubliclibrary.org>

The grant was used to create a “maker” play space on the second floor of the library. The room was stocked with a large-scale building kit called a Rigagmajig. STEM creative play kits, costumes, and musical instruments were also available. It purposely spurred creative, interactive, self-directed play among groups of children with minimal interference from adults.

<http://www.monroevillelibrary.org>

Morgan County Public Library (WV) “3-D Maker Club”

Ocean County Library (NJ) “MAKE ME: Portable Maker Kits Designed to Help Children/Teens Get Creative, Make Mistakes, and Learn Resilience in a County Still Severely Impacted by Superstorm Sandy”

<http://theoceancountylibrary.org>

“MAKE ME” kits were portable maker kits designed to ignite imagination and creativity by focusing on how mistakes are to be celebrated as part of the creative process. The kits contained equipment for projects, books on famous mistake makers, such as inventors, artists, musicians, and chefs, and fun facts about how sometimes failure can lead to success. The six portable kits were used at all twenty-one Ocean County Library locations.

Ontario City Library—Friends of Ontario City Library (CA) “Artopia”

<http://www.ontarioca.gov/library>

A process-driven art program that allowed children to work with quality art mediums at their own pace and comfort level. Each session, children were presented with three stations: illustration, printmaking, and collage. There was also a fourth activity with more challenging materials to work with that changed from session to session. Large-scale art projects take advantage of the outdoor patio. This program will be profiled at the “Curiosity Creates!: Inspiring the Next Generation of Movers & Shakers” programs at 2016 California Library Association Conference.



“Artopia” at Ontario City Library (CA)

Orange County Library System (FL) “Fairy Tale STEM”

<http://www.ocls.info>

A series of six programs, each based on a familiar fairy tale, in which children design engineering solutions to resolve the conflict in the story. For example, in “Jack Needs a Parachute,” children are tasked with designing the best parachute to help Jack escape from the giant without having to climb down the beanstalk. This program was featured in a *School Library Journal* web article, “Fairy Tale Programming Is Alive and Well,” by Lisa G. Kropp (<http://www.slj.com/2016/02/programs/fairy-tale-programming-is-alive-and-well>).

Perry Public Library (OH) “Arts in the Library”

<http://www.perrypubliclibrary.org>

The program brought artists, actors, musicians, and musical instruments to the children and families of the community. The grant funded a series of monthly visual art and music classes for homeschooled children in grades 1 to 8, a weekly after-school art club, an intergenerational monthly art class for families, a musical theater workshop, and the purchase of musical instruments for children to borrow.



Music classes at Perry Public Library (OH)

Pio Pico Koreatown Library (CA) “Science Chariot”

<http://www.lapl.org/branches/pio-pico-koreatown>

The program was created to expose children to a wide range of fun scientific activities. Kids had the opportunity to pretend to be scientists. This effect was achieved by kids wearing lab coats, protective goggles, and latex gloves while engaging in actual experiments. Activities included creating lava lamps, soap making, lemon clocks, slime in a bag, balloon cars, kaleidoscopes, fizz inflators, brush bots, and tornadoes in a bottle, among other scientific programs.

Piscataway Public Library (NJ) “YELL: Young Explorers Library League”

<http://www.piscatawaylibrary.org>

Participants engineered and built projects based on a theme, problem, or open-ended question presented at the beginning of the session. These are lendable kits developed and themed to each design challenge but flexible enough to be used for other purposes as well.

Portneuf District Library (ID) “Take It, Play It Kits”

<http://portneuflibrary.org>

Our “Take It, Play It Kits” were available to the community to checkout in order to encourage and inspire movement, health, and well-being. Each kit contained the necessities of a fun and exciting indoor or outdoor activity, such as bocce ball, disc golf, jump rope, basketball, badminton, and much more. Bikes were purchased for checkout. In addition to the activity components, there were informational books on how to play the activity, as well as a laminated sheet explaining why physical activity is so necessary for health and creativity, along with several ideas on ways to be active and enjoy it! These kits were key in inspiring a love for activity within our community and gave community members the chance to find a way to be physically active and healthy.

President Millard Fillmore Library (UT) “ATLAS: At the Library After School”

<http://www.fillmorelibrary.org>

“ATLAS: At the Library After School” was a program forming to fuse creativity and cultural experiences for children ages 6 to 12. Programs included leather crafting, learning the basic principles of petroglyphs, creating simple quilts, and building with giant Lincoln Logs to create a life-size cabin, similar to what early settlers of Utah would have built.

Pueblo City-County Library District (CO) “Generation: Creation”

<http://www.pueblolibrary.org>

A series of projects encouraged artistic creativity and sustain an environment of creativity at our library and in our community. The six projects were “The Storytelling Project,” “The Dance Project,” “The Cupcake Project,” “The Movie Project,” “The Art Project,” and “The Poetry Project.” These six projects connected local experts with school-age children. Staff worked with professional storytellers, artists, and dancers. Many of the items purchased with grant funds were permanent additions (digital cameras, printers, and a green screen). The goal was to introduce kids to creative outlets in the projects and give them the tools to keep exploring after the grant was completed.

<http://readingpubliclibrary.org>

Salem County Bookmobile Library (NJ) “Curiosity Creates a Better World”

San Diego Public Library (CA) “Discovery Corner”

San José Public Library (CA) “IDEAs (Inventors, Designers, Engineers, and Architects) in Motion”

San Lorenzo Library (CA) “San Lorenzo Library Portable Makerspace”

Curiosity Creates: Innovative Library Programming for Children

Seminole Community Library at St. Petersburg College (FL) “Maker Boot Camp”

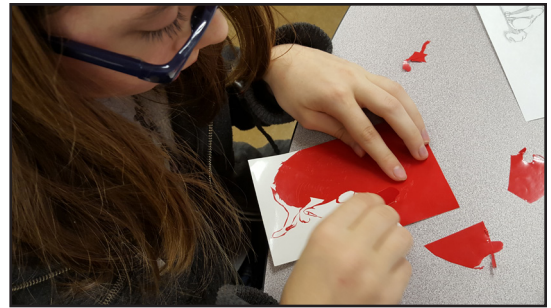
<http://www.spcollege.edu/scl>

An expanded “Maker Boot Camp” initiative for third- through sixth-grade students and homeschoolers. The workshops covered robotics, 3-D design and printing, circuitry, video game design, videography, virtual reality, and more. A *Maker Boot Camp* documentary is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kO3_NRWHZ9E&feature=youtu.be.

Sevier County Public Library System (TN) “Curious Creators Explore @ Your Library”

<http://www.sevierlibrary.org>

The program consisted of a hip-hop class series, a drama class series, and an art class series. The art programs included scrapbooking, greeting card design, sewing, ceramics, and jewelry. The drama classes included set and costume design, along with acting together for a final performance for the public.



Art program at Sevier County Public Library System (TN)

Show Low Public Library (AZ) “Creative Club”

<http://www.showlowaz.gov/library>

The library specifically encouraged girls to participate in order to stimulate interest in science and to contribute to closing the gender gap in the technology and engineering sectors in America. The library used the funds to provide after-school programming and bought new learning activities, such as GoldieBlox and Roominate.

Singletary Memorial Library (TX) “Kids Being Kids”

<http://rusktx.org/pages/singletary-library>

The program consisted of different monthly focuses and challenges including art, cooking, gardening, and the final project the children planned and designed, “Little Free Libraries” that were placed in various locations around the community and managed by the Friends of the Library throughout the year.

Skokie Public Library (IL) “Inventing Place through Drawing & Painting: A Teaching-Artist Residency with Melanie P. Brown”

<https://skokieliibrary.info>

The program offered the library an opportunity to retain a teaching-artist for a four-week residency in order to engage children in the full process of visual art, from inspiration and idea conception through execution and a final piece. Children grades 4 to 8 were involved in creating artworks reflecting their personal idea of place. There were five scheduled programs, twelve drop-in programs, and a culminating event to which participants in all the programs were invited for a collaborative project. This program will be profiled at the “Curiouser and Curiouser: Discovering Creativity in Youth at the Library” program at the 2016 Illinois Library Association Conference.

Smyrna Public Library (GA) “Curiosity Creates”

<http://www.smyrnacity.com/your-government/departments/smyrna-public-library>

Focused on tweens, the program hosted a series of art workshops taught by local artist Kathi Wall Fly. Each workshop highlighted a different artistic method and medium. Additionally, the library offered “Curiosity Creates Open Lab,” a weekly open lab to work independently utilizing skills attained during the workshop. All materials were provided for both the workshop and lab. This program will be profiled at the 2016 Georgia COMO Library Conference.



“Curiosity Creates” at Smyrna Public Library (GA)

Spokane Public Library: South Hill Branch (WA) “Fantastical Fairy Tales”

<http://www.spokanelibrary.org>

The kids read original fairy tales and rewrote them into plays using their imaginations in three different ways. They incorporated music and dance into one of their plays and played instruments that the library provided.

Springfield City Library (MA) “Rock the Stacks!”

<http://www.springfieldlibrary.org/library>

This programming series provided three community-based after-school music arts programs for young people ages 6 to 14. There were three different six-week programs: bucket drumming, hip-hop, and Latin rhythms for recorder. Participants learned an instrument and found new ways of self-expression, while promoting whole brain engagement, self-discipline, stronger math and language arts skills, and more.

Springfield Public Library (OR) “TinkerTech Creativity Kits”

<http://www.wheremindsgrow.org>

The components of each “TinkerTech” kit were chosen to provide children with creative, open-ended project possibilities. With tools such as Magna-Tiles, 3-D pens, littleBits, Cubelets, Sphero robotic balls, and Makey Makey boards, they create colorful structures, draw their own 3-D objects, engineer simple machines, build interactive robots, program their own interactive games, and more. Kits contain instructions for a few basic projects to introduce components and jump-start ideas.

St. Mary’s County Library (MD) “Jamuary!”

<http://www.stmalib.org>

The program consisted of music programs with ukuleles. “Please to Meet Uke” workshops taught children and teens the basics of playing a ukulele. Song-writing workshops taught the basics of writing a song. The culminating event



“Please to Meet Uke” workshop at St. Mary’s County Library (MD)

was two “Family Jam and Open Mic” programs. The goal was for children and teens to know that making music isn’t hard or scary. A portion of the instruments and materials purchased will circulate to spread the joy of creativity into the future.

Stair District Library (MI) “Sculptamania!”

<http://www.stairlib.org>

“Sculptamania!” was a seven-part library–school district collaboration to promote and celebrate abstract 3-D art in public places. It included an open house kick-off event at the library, featuring families playing with creative construction materials, such as Magna-Tiles, Magformers, Connectagons, and Keva Planks purchased with grant funds, as well as simple materials such as empty cardboard boxes; classroom instruction on abstract art; field trips for students to view outdoor sculptures in nearby cities; students creating abstract sculptures at school; an art exhibit, including an artist reception, showcasing the students’ sculptures at the library; class visits to the library for students to view the art exhibit and play with the toys and the end product: one student’s sculpture made into a full-size permanent installation by a commissioned artist, which will be displayed in our downtown.



A Magformers creation at “Sculptamania” at Stair District Library (MI)

Swanton Public Library (VT) “Creative Minds”

<http://www.swantonlibrary.org>

A two-pronged program consisting of interactive workshops paired with rotating Imagination Stations, at which visitors can explore and experiment independently. Workshops included reader’s theater, stop-motion, little box city, and cardboard pinball machines.

Toledo Lucas County Public Library (OH) “Make U: Mobile Art Lab”

<http://web2.toledolibrary.org>

This program exposed children to artistic skills in various media, allowing them to create art independently. Mobile Art Labs provided supplies, instruction, and lesson plans, but the focus was on the process of creating rather than the product created. There were three Mobile Art Labs, each with a different discipline: 2-D art, 3-D art, and digital photography. Training videos accompanied the kits.

Tom Green County Library System (TX) “I Am! & I Can!”

<http://www.tgclibrary.com>

“I Am! & I Can!” was a twenty-one-week program that consisted of seven modules with three sessions each. Each module covered all seven areas of creativity, with one component of creativity as a main focus. The concept of “I Am! & I Can!” is based on providing a positive, encouraging, and supportive environment where children are safe to express their creative ideas in a variety of different ways, some of which include acting, drawing, painting, story making, building, and game making. An extension of this program was done for tweens on alternate months in the library’s teen room.

Warren P. Sewell Memorial Library of Bremen (GA) “Yes, You Are Creative!”

<http://www.wgrl.net>

A biweekly creativity program exposing children to photography, painting, drawing, writing, dance, crafts, cooking, and a variety of other means of expressing their originality. The goal of this set of programs is to expose children to literally dozens of different ways that they can be creative, so that over the course of the year, they will find a few things that make them think, “Yes, I am creative!”

West Georgia Regional Library System (GA) “Picture This: Kids Create”

<http://www.wgrl.net>

This was a three-part children’s photography class where children explored the basics of digital photography. Children learned how to use a digital camera, how to take pictures, and how to create their own finished product through digital editing and mixed-media art. The library’s goal was to unleash each child’s inner curiosity and creativity, especially in those who felt like art isn’t for them because they aren’t good at drawing. This program will be profiled at the 2016 Georgia COMO Library Conference.

West Hartford Public Library (CT) “In Be-Tween Trailer Team”

<http://www.westhartfordlibrary.org>

Students ages 9 to 12 worked together using their imagination and ideas to generate a new look at books by creating a series of movie trailers and graphic posters that advocate reading, the new In Be-Tween Room, and bringing books to life for their peers. Students imagined new possibilities for the presentation of an existing book. This project was a partnership between the library and the local cable access television station. This program will be profiled in the winter 2016 issue of *Children and Libraries*.



“In Be-Tween Trailer Team” at West Hartford Public Library (CT)

Widener Neighborhood Library (PA) “Future Fashion”

<https://libwww.freelibrary.org/branches/branch.cfm?loc=wid>

Participants designed and created a futuristic fashion line and presented it to the community through a fashion show event and multimedia projects including a video and a magazine. The futuristic orientation of the project allowed participants to explore original ideas instead of trying to reproduce the kind of clothing we seen in our everyday lives. This program was featured on *Maker Jawn*, a North Philadelphia Libraries website, on April 29, 2016 (<http://makerjawn.org/blog/2016/04/29/widener-fashion-show-may-6>), and will be featured in the “Curiosity Creates—Pennsylvania Winners of the ALSC/Disney Curiosity Creates Awards Present Their Programs” presentation at the 2016 Pennsylvania Library Association Conference.

Woodbury Public Library (NJ) “Storytelling Festival”

<http://www.woodburylibrary.org>

A celebration of the joy of creating, writing, and performing stories for ourselves and others. Seven monthly programs help elementary- and middle-school students explore the art of creative writing and oral storytelling traditions. Participants learned to tell tall tales, silly tales, family tales, pet tales, sad tales, and inspiring tales.



Association for Library Service to Children

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Creating a Better Future for Children Through Libraries



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