



SUMMER 2004

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*The mission of the
Onondaga County
Public Library is to make
a positive difference in
every life we touch by
putting the power of
ideas and information to
work for all.*

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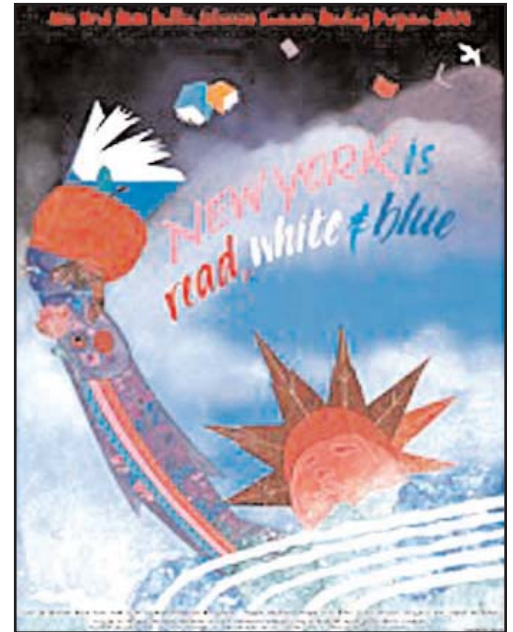
SUMMER READING LOSS

What Once Was Lost Can Now Be Found @ Your Library

Petit Branch children's librarian Jeanne Keller remembers her third-grade teacher reading *Charlotte's Web* aloud to the class. More than that, she remembers exactly *how* Mrs. Sterling read aloud. The young Jeanne would go home with her copy of *Charlotte's Web*, sit in front of her bedroom mirror, and practice reading just as the teacher had.

"I tried to imitate her, right down to the way she swallowed and took a breath," Keller recalls.

The simple act of reading aloud to children has manifold benefits for their lifelong reading achievement, as well as for their overall development (see "Why Read Aloud?" on page 5). Research backs this and other aspects of Onondaga County Public Library's 2004 summer reading program, "New York Is Read, White and Blue." The program was developed by the New York State Library and a committee of public libraries, based on research findings about summer reading loss,



the effects of summer reading on reading achievement, and the role of public libraries in promoting reading.

What is summer reading loss?

Summer reading loss refers to the amount of vocabulary and

- See **SUMMER READING LOSS**, page 2

SCHOOL ASSIGNMENTS @ YOUR LIBRARY

Have you ever had that reference question from a student that sent you scrounging around the library looking for sources?

One student recently had this class assignment that brought her to the DeWitt Community Library. She had to write four essays, which included these topics:

1. How did St. James become the "patron saint" of Spain? Describe the pilgrimages to his shrine during the Middle Ages and how he is honored today.

- See **SCHOOL ASSIGNMENTS**, page 6

FROM THE YOUTH SERVICES COORDINATOR

Don't tell the children, but summer reading is good for them!



The public library's summer reading program places its emphasis on the fun aspects of reading and libraries. But, as this issue of *OCPL News* relates, recent studies have confirmed what librarians have known intuitively for years: While summer reading is fun, it also has educational benefits.

If children and teens choose their own reading material, read it at their own pace, talk about it with staff, earn small rewards, and enjoy programs at their library, they will want to read more. Reading more will make them better readers and will help them succeed in school and beyond.

So help a child discover the joy of reading this summer @ your library.

Roz NaPier

Roz NaPier
Youth Services Coordinator
OCPL

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comprehension lost from the end of one school year to the beginning of the next. In 1996, Harris Cooper and colleagues analyzed 39 studies of the effects of summer vacation on standardized achievement test scores. The analysis showed that different skill areas fared differently, with the greatest losses appearing in math and reading.

At the end of summer, while middle-income children stayed even or gained slightly in reading achievement, lower-income children lost more than two months of reading achievement, and three months of total learning achievement (McGill-Franzen and Allington, 2001). Although poor and middle-income kids show similar rates of improvement during the school year, summer reading loss accumulates, especially in the elementary grades.

Reading achievement relies on access and opportunity. Studies show that lower-income kids may have fewer opportunities than affluent classmates to practice reading skills over the summer, because a limited budget often means fewer books in the home, fewer extracurricular learning experiences, and less access to bookstores

and libraries.

Disturbingly, almost none of the literature on summer reading loss outside of library-related sources name

The simple act of reading aloud to children has manifold benefits for their lifelong reading achievement, as well as for their overall development.

libraries as a free, accessible resource for learning and reading. In fact, a 2003 article by McGill-Franzen and Allington suggests just the opposite:

With schools and their libraries closed for the summer, public libraries might seem like a logical solution. However, those located in poor neighborhoods are often the first to close or restrict hours in a budget crunch. Even when public libraries are open, poor children may lack transportation. Research shows that public library use among poor children drops off when a library is more than six blocks from their home, compared with more than two miles for middle-class children.

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While middle-class kids might ride their bikes to the library, poorer kids may not be allowed on dangerous streets by themselves, the authors say. Lower-income parents, sometimes holding multiple jobs, may not have time to take kids to the library during open hours. Late fines may also discourage library use.

Whether or not these observations hold true for OCPL libraries, the scarce mention of libraries as a resource for disadvantaged families suggests that educators and community leaders are unaware of the public library's mission and services.

In New York, this oversight has been at least partly addressed by librarians teaming with teachers to create a suggested-reading list for summer, and by focusing summer reading publicity on the educational gains to be realized through voluntary summer reading and related "fun learning" activities.

The public library role in literacy gains

Within library literature, a growing body of evidence documents how public libraries can foster reading skills, particularly through summer reading programs. The Pennsylvania Library Association (Celano and Neuman, 2001) found that

- libraries' summer reading and preschool programs nurture literacy skills in younger children,
- children in summer reading programs gain literacy benefits from related non-reading programs, and
- these programs encourage kids to spend significant time with books.

The researchers also conducted studies with four groups of poor Philadelphia children with low reading scores who attended a summer reading program or a day camp for several weeks. At the end, those in the reading program read significantly better than those who attended day camp.

In addition, the researchers found that public libraries

- are an important resource for kids who otherwise lack access to books,
- effectively enrich kids' reading experiences through related, non-book programming, and
- encourage parents to get involved in kids' reading.

An evaluation of the Los Angeles County Public Library summer reading program (Evaluation and Training Institute for the Los Angeles County Public Library Foundation, 2001) showed that almost 100 percent of kids liked the program and going to the library. The summer program also resulted in about 10 percent increases in these areas known to affect reading achievement:

- parents reading to their kids more than 15 hours a week,
- kids reading by themselves 10 to 14 hours a week, and

- See **SUMMER READING LOSS**, page 4

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- see **References**, page 4

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Library's Statewide Summer
Reading Program,
www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/summer/research.htm. ♦



SUMMER READING LOSS - continued from page 3

- children reading more than 15 hours a week.

Finally, a classic study by Barbara Heyns, *Summer Learning and the Effects of Schooling* (1978), found that

- sixth- and seventh-graders in Atlanta public schools who read books over the summer consistently showed higher academic gains than those who didn't, and
- going to the public library in summer was more predictive of vocabulary increases than going to summer school.

Heyns observed, "More than any other public institution, including the schools, the public library contributed to the intellectual growth of children during the summer."

What can libraries do?

Reading just six books over summer vacation—approximately one book every two weeks—can be enough to maintain a child's reading level reached during the last school year, according to McGill-Franzen and Allington (2003).

Drawing from hundreds of correlational studies, the National Reading Panel reported that "the more children read, the better their fluency, vocabulary and comprehension."

"More than any other public institution, including the schools, the public library contributed to the intellectual growth of children during the summer."

Create motivation: Toward this goal, motivating young readers is important. Not surprisingly, lower-achieving readers read less than higher-achieving readers. Good experiences with reading lead to better progress, which leads to more interest in reading, while bad reading experiences result in lower skills and less interest. Compounding the problem, poor readers are often made to read books that are too hard, almost guaranteeing they will neither enjoy nor succeed at reading.

Helping to build positive experiences can take several tacks. One is to find a book on the child's actual reading level rather than by grade level. Letting kids choose books within their own interests can be another incentive toward reading voluntarily—an important factor in reading achievement.

"Free voluntary reading is one of the most powerful tools we have in language education," Stephen Krashen writes in *The Power of Reading*.

OCPL's summer reading program promotes voluntary reading for pleasure by having kids choose their own reading material. Afterward, they talk about the books one-on-one with library

staff, which supports comprehension. Inexpensive giveaways reward kids and motivate more reading.

Non-book activities also motivate kids to learn, said Peter Johnson, a 2000 America Reads summer intern reporting on summer learning programs run by youth agencies. Such activities can help reach lower-income kids who have the most to gain from public library programs:

Successful summer programs almost always have more components than just reading or tutoring, and in providing other fun opportunities for learning they mirror the diverse learning experiences that high-income kids have over the summer months.

OCPL libraries' special activities—puppet shows, art workshops, musical performances, readings, and appearances by local celebrities—draw children, even reluctant readers, into the summer reading program. Last year, for example, the Syracuse SkyChiefs mascot Scooch made the rounds of OCPL libraries. At Hazard Branch, children's librarian Karl Wasmuth read *Casey at the Bat* aloud to delighted children while Scooch acted it out. "I'm a ham, and Scooch is a ham," Wasmuth said, "so we had a ball."

Partner with community groups: In his America Reads report, Johnson shows that partnering with a variety of youth service organizations can be a way to reach more and needier families. Partnering can also expand the range of services offered. In 2002, DeWitt Community Library began bringing the summer program to children at Springfield Gardens, a housing project, when the kids were unable to get to the library. And last year, Syracuse University's student Literacy Corps made the Central Library's summer reading program part of its summer tutoring curriculum.

Make parents part of the team: To reach the neediest children, Johnson suggests making summer reading programs accessible and convenient for parents, as parents (or grandparents or other family members) are crucial. This can include a variety of measures, such as offering transportation, holding programs to fit a variety of work schedules, providing day-care, and bringing programs to outside locations. In addition, libraries can recruit parents to help with programs and events.

- See **SUMMER READING LOSS**, page 6

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Why Read Aloud?

Here are a few benefits derived from reading aloud to children of any age:

- It teaches children to associate reading with pleasure, which makes children want to read more, which leads to better reading.
- It increases vocabulary, improves grammar, and aids children's own reading and writing ability.
- It improves attention span.
- It provides good examples. The reader becomes a role model, and the stories show how exciting, entertaining, informative and world-expanding literature can be.

These are borrowed from Esme Raji Codell's *How to Get Your Child to Love Reading*, which in turn summarizes research compiled by Jim Trelease in *The Read-Aloud Handbook*. Both of these are excellent sources of information, inspiration, and ideas for parents, teachers and librarians. A third good resource is *Read to Me: Raising Kids Who Love to Read*, by Bernice E. Cullinan. All are available through the OCPL catalog.

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SUMMER READING LOSS

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Programs should also give parents reading resources and skills they can use with their children at home. A new resource available to OCPL libraries this summer is a parent's guide to summer reading resources, with Web sites and books to help parents understand summer reading loss and ways to prevent it.

All this and more

As these examples show, OCPL libraries already do much to promote reading achievement through summer reading programs. The summer reading programs also do much to motivate reluctant readers and disadvantaged children, partner with community groups, and involve parents, all shown to increase reading achievement. Perhaps all that's left is this: for librarians and library supporters to understand just how critical the stakes are in summer reading, and thus how important the library's role. And then to spread the word. ♦

--Katy Benson,
OCPL Branch Libraries

**Congratulations to former
OCPL Executive Director
Mary Frances Floeck
on her retirement and
25 years of service.**

SCHOOL ASSIGNMENTS - continued from page 1

2. Describe the "Fallas" in Valencia. When and how is this event celebrated? How did it get started? In what ways is it different from the way it used to be celebrated?

The student needed to have at least three different sources of information, which could include Internet sources. This was an eighth-grade assignment.

Does your library have enough resources to satisfy this project? Very likely, but wouldn't it have been nice to know about this assignment before the student or students showed up at your reference desk?

Student assignments arrive perennially with topics that seem to repeat endlessly. Recent topics at DeWitt Community Library have included aspects of the Renaissance or Elizabethan period, Revolutionary War topics, Native Americans, and the obligatory biography.

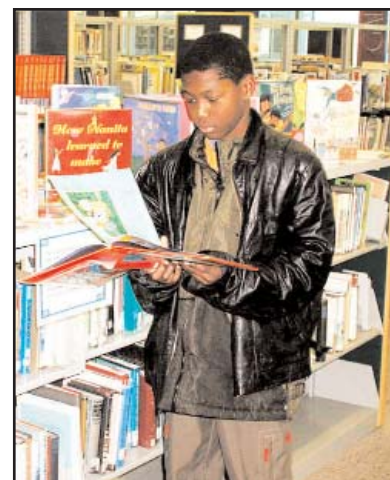
Over time, a library can develop its collection in these areas based on trends, but there's always that one new assignment that pops up unexpectedly that sends you scrambling for information. Examples at DeWitt were 9/11 and Jewish ghettos in Europe before World War II. Satisfying one or two students is doable, but four or five at once can be a challenge.

So how can libraries be proactive?

Since a teacher's syllabus is prepared in advance to satisfy the curriculum, why not work with your district's schools to get the assignments early? Getting notice in advance gives libraries the opportunity to have books ready for the students who will need them. Meet with school librarians and teachers to establish a rapport. They could then fax or E-mail upcoming assignments. Also, get a copy of the curriculum.

Students who can say they found what they needed will have had a positive experience that makes them feel good about libraries; this could later translate into future support. So go back to school and get tomorrow's assignment today! ♦

--Brian Abbott,
DeWitt Community Library



VIP PROFILES

Interviews with library advocates and community partners

Laura Hand

Laura Hand is the community relations director and Noon News anchorwoman for WSTM-NBC 3. She also produces and reports on the "3 in Touch" segment on air. Committed to reading and libraries, Hand coordinates the popular summer reading program called "Book Breaks," now in its 18th year. In this partnership between WSTM-NBC 3 and the Onondaga County Public Library, television personalities read to children in public libraries during July and August.

Q: Can you recall an experience with reading that you consider life changing?

A: When I was a teen we lived in Thailand, where *Anna & the King* (the book on which the film *The King and I* was based) was banned, but we got a copy to read. It made me realize how people can use literature to form opinions—and why freedom of the press is so important.

How does reading impact your career or job?

We have to read every day to get the news on air. And, we have to know a little bit about everything. You learn, even from fiction.

How does reading impact your personal life outside of work?

Escape! And, insight into people's personalities—novel people are 'real' even if they're fiction.

Do you have a special memory of a particular library or librarian?

I have a huge admiration for Barbara Hildenbrand, the children's librarian at Paine Branch. Watching her work with young children shows how a librarian can inspire young audiences. ♦

Michael Farnsworth

Michael Farnsworth is the editor of the Scotsman Press, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. The Scotsman Press Community Publications publishes 24 weekly papers reaching more than 288,000 homes in CNY and the Finger Lakes Region and a semiannual magazine called "Today's CNY Woman." It is also a full-service commercial printer for thousands of area businesses, schools, colleges, and organizations. Farnsworth forged a partnership between the Scotsman Press and the Onondaga County Public Library by creating "Off the Shelf" monthly columns for its com-

- See **VIP Profiles**, page 8

SUMMER READING

School may be out, but some assignments aren't over. Many area schools give their students required reading for the summer.

Elementary schools may only require a certain number of books to be read, letting students choose whatever they want to read. For example, Tecumseh Elementary students are required to read any 10 books. Many of the students also enroll in DeWitt Community Library's summer reading program and often end up reading more than the required 10.

Some students' choices, however, may be limited. Many high schools hand out a recommended or required reading list for students for summer reading. Many are classic canon books of English literature, but some schools have expanded their lists to include popular contemporary novels. Examples of newer titles are: *The Great Santini*, by Pat Conroy; *The Bean Trees*, by Barbara Kingsolver; and *Holes*, by Louis Sachar.

Try contacting schools in your district to obtain these lists. Or, if you've established a rapport with school librarians and teachers, see if they'd be willing to fax or e-mail a copy. Knowing titles in advance can help you determine how many copies to purchase for your library.

Remember, students are future supporters of the library. Don't forget to encourage those students to participate in your summer reading program! ♦

--Brian Abbott,
DeWitt Community Library

GETTING BOYS INTO READING AND USING THE LIBRARY

In February 2004, John Kuhn, Onondaga County Public Library's head of automation, attended the Public Library Association (PLA) annual conference in Seattle, Washington. As a librarian and father of two boys himself, Kuhn was interested in author Michael Sullivan's presentation on "Connecting Boys with Books: What Libraries Can Do." Sullivan's book by the same name is available in OCPL's professional collection and on the American Library Association's Web site at www.ala.org.



Michael Sullivan has been both children's librarian and library director. In addition to writing several articles for *Public Libraries*, including "Giving Them What They Want in Small Public Libraries" (May/June 2000), he is a traveling storyteller, is former

VIP Profiles - continued from page 7

munity of readers. The columns highlight events and services offered by public libraries in the OCPL system.

Q: *What is your favorite children's book? Or, your child's favorite book?*

A: *The Velveteen Rabbit*, by Margery Williams.

What character in a book would you choose to be?

I would be the Velveteen Rabbit, because one need not pretend to be something he or she is not, just to be loved.

What is the value of reading to children?

Quality time between parent and child, away from the television and computer! A child can learn the value of reading early, which will carry on into his or her teen and adult years. Also, it can help foster better study habits in school. ♦

MICHAEL FOLSOM

Michael Folsom is director of community relations and group sales for the Syracuse Crunch. In his sixth season with the Crunch, Folsom oversees the Crunch's community involvement throughout the year, which includes the popular "Crunch Into Reading" program during the summer and all off-ice events during the season. Folsom reads aloud to children in public libraries during the summer and fall. He is accompanied by Al, the team's mascot and world's only ice gorilla, and at times, by a Crunch player. He also acts as the team liaison between area youth hockey organizations and Central New York charities.

Q: *What is your favorite children's book?*

A: *Sam the Zamboni Man* by James Stevenson.

What character in a book would you choose to be?

If I were a character in a book, I would choose to be *Curious George* because he and I are always looking for new and exciting things. I am also referred to as the monkey of the bunch, for being off the wall at times.

What is the first book you remember reading?

Fudge, by Charlotte Towner Graeber, while in third grade. ♦

NANCY FASOLDT

Nancy Fasoldt is the editor of *STARS*, the weekly Sunday magazine in *The Post-Standard*. *The Post-Standard*, whose roots date back

to 1829, is the largest news gathering organization in CNY, providing more than 400,000 readers with news, information and entertainment.

An avid book lover and library advocate, Fasoldt helped create a weekly column informing readers about books and other resources available in libraries in the Onondaga County Public Library system. In addition to publishing the "At the library" column in *STARS*, Nancy facilitates *The Post-Standard's* donation of hundreds of new books to the Central Library collection.

What is the last book you read?

The Keepers of the House, a 1965 Pulitzer Prize-winning fiction by Shirley Ann Grau. Powerful character studies. Great anthology. I was born and raised in the South. This book helped explain a lot of things to me.

What character in a book would you choose to be?

Albus Dumbledore, headmaster of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Although I'd be giving up my youth (he's 150-plus years old), I'd love to possess his wisdom and knowledge as well as his magical powers. Most importantly, I'd love to have all of those children in my care. Nothing is as important as God and His children.

Do you have a family tradition that centers on reading?

My husband, Allen, and I have lots of great kids in our lives (relatives and neighborhood kids we love as our own). We decided a few years ago that at various gift-giving times, we'd give them books. We try to make sure the books apply to where each kid is in his or her life. It demands we keep current with them. ♦

--Margaret Duckett, OCPL



GETTING BOYS INTO READING

- continued from page 8

president of the New Hampshire Library Association, and was the 1998 New Hampshire Librarian of the Year.

Sullivan contends that pre-adolescent male "tweens" are nearly invisible in libraries. To attract boys to library programs and foster their interest in books and reading over a lifetime, libraries must work to overcome cultural and developmental challenges, stereotyping, and lack of role models for this particular audience.

Kuhn took the following notes at Sullivan's presentation. Sullivan's caveat is that the generalizations he attributes to boys are "on the average," and he reminded his audience that there are always individual variables.

- Boys are different from girls, and such characteristics must be considered when developing programs and providing services.
- Boys are generally behind girls in vocabulary and reading skills. Sullivan argues that boys should start school at age six and girls at five. Boys are about a year behind their chronological age for the books marked for that age. When a boy chooses a book to read on his own, he is apt to choose one rated for a younger reader (e.g. *Captain Underpants*). If a more "age appropriate" book is suggested, he is apt to lose interest.

- See **GETTING BOYS** page 10

GETTING BOYS - continued from page 9

- Boys enjoy nonfiction books, mythology, books in video games, easy-reading adventures, humor books—especially "gross out" books.
- Boys care more about quantity than quality. They would rather read many short books like the *Goosebumps* books than a long one.
- Boys enjoy listening to stories. There is a shortage of male storytellers to serve as role models.
- Boys enjoy television—a version of story time. Often, these 30-minute programs contain action, violence, and profanity; they can neglect the consequences of the story. If boys have a solid base of hearing stories that are read and discussed by a male, they are better able to appreciate the real-life consequences of a story.

- Boys enjoy crafts that involve physical movement.
- Boys feel they need to be tough. They do not speak up often, and need to be drawn out.
- Boys learn when they are moving and thinking simultaneously. They like sound, color, and motion.

Given the above, the following suggestions will attract boys to reading and to using the library.

- Let boys choose their own books.
- Provide numerous graphic novels, comics, and easy-reading books. Provide books on mythology, which is different than fantasy. Provide action and adventure books that show consequences of behavior.
- If prizes are given by number of books read,

equalize the contest by weighing the books read. Boys tend to read many short books. Total weight will encourage them to read more.

- Invite men to read to children. Men from the community are pleased to read during an evening story time or during the day.
- Create active crafts where boys can be competitive, physical, or noisy. Give boys more choices than are typically offered in a library program.
- Get boys into the library by offering a chess club, game night, online reading opportunities, etc. Web sites of interest include: www.geocities.com/talestoldtall and www.guysread.com ♦

--John Kuhn, Central Library

--John Wirth, contributing writer, Central Library

THANK YOU TO OCPL'S SPONSORS OF THE SUMMER READING PROGRAM

The following organizations were OCPL systemwide sponsors of the 2003 summer reading program for children and teens. As 2004 sponsors are ongoing, OCPL will acknowledge them next year. If you would like to be a summer reading sponsor, please contact your library.

Applebee's
Bruegger's Bagels
David Lankes
Museum of Science and Technology
(M.O.S.T.)
New York State Fair
Onondaga County Health Department,
Traffic Safety Program

Paper Conversions, Inc. (PCI)
Rotary International
Salty Dogs
Syracuse Crunch
Syracuse SkyChiefs
Syracuse University Athletics
WSTM-NBC 3

The following libraries wish to thank their 2003 Summer Reading Program sponsors:

Baldwinsville Public Library

Labbate's Central New York
Karate School
P & C
Genevieve Pieniazek
Numerous teen volunteers

DeWitt Community Library

A-La-Mode Ice Cream
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Community Library
Taco Bell

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Anaren, Inc.
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CNY Karate
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Towpath Quilters
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Fairmount Community Library

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Fairmount Fire Dept.
Fairmount Glen Miniature Golf
Melissa Garnsey
Greg Tearney's Karate School
Judy and Jack Halpin
Alice Kieffer
Kirby's Grill
Little Caesars
Marilyn Marcy
Phyllis Nowak
Old Country Buffet
Onondaga County
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Mary Jane Osier
Price Chopper
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P & C
La Verne Powell
Pat Rogers
Maureen Shockey
Walmart
Wegmans

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LaVallee's East Coast Karate
Sno Top

Liverpool Public Library

CNY Karate
Friends of the Liverpool
Public Library

Manlius Library

Burger King
LaVallee's East Coast Karate
Sno Top
Ruth Turner
Caryn B. Weiner

Maxwell Memorial Library

Old Country Buffet
Fairmount Glen
Miniature Golf
Fresno's
Hofmann's Hot Haus
McDonald's
Taco Bell

**Northern Onondaga
Public Library @ Brewerton,
Cicero, and North Syracuse**

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at Brewerton
Friends of NOPL at Cicero
Friends of NOPL
at North Syracuse
Little Caesars
Taco Bell
Wegmans

Onondaga Free Library

AAA Travel
Fairmount Glen
Miniature Golf
Kelly's Bar and Restaurant
Lori's Hair Studio
Syracuse Stage
Wegmans

Solvay Public Library

Peter's Polar Parlor
Solvay Bank
Solvay-Geddes Rotary
Vanelli's Gifts

Betts Branch

Arctic Island Ice Cream
Friends of the
Central Library (FOCL)

Hazard Branch

Burger King
Commercial Art Supply
Empire State Container
FOCL
P & C
W. E. Daw Co.
Wegmans

Paine Branch

FOCL
Lions Club
Wegmans
Wilson Farms

Petit Branch

A-La-Mode Ice Cream
& Sandwich Shop
Wescott Neighborhood
Association

**White Branch and the
Northeast Community
Center Library**

FOCL



Helping Your Children BECOME READERS



When you open a book with your children, you are opening the world for them.

You are making them think and wonder, and want to know more. You are helping them to do well in school. Best of all, you are enjoying time together as a family.

Here are ways to interest your little ones in books and help them learn skills that will lead to reading.



1 Talk with your children as you play, shop, or work around the house. Listen to what they say. Ask questions. When you talk to your children, you are helping them learn to use words.

2 Read to your children. Try to read to them at the same time every day. Bedtime or before a nap is a good time. Let them choose the story.

3 Let your children see you read. That is the best way to show them that you think reading is important and that you enjoy it, too.

4 Ask older children to read to younger ones. The older children will be proud of their skills. The younger children will want to read like their older brothers, sisters, or friends.

5 Go to the library together. Ask the librarian for help in finding books your children will enjoy. If you don't have a library card, ask for one. With a card, your family can borrow books.

6 Give your children books about their special interests. Do they like animals, sports, or magic? Surprise them with books or magazines about their favorite interests or activities.

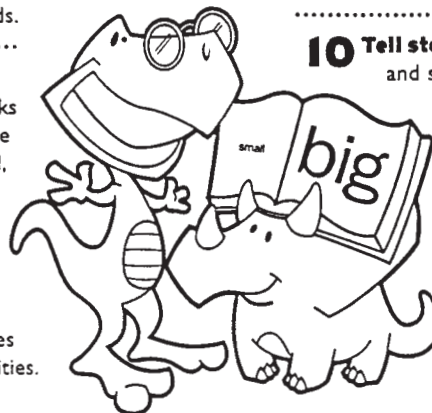
7 Keep books, magazines, and newspapers around your home so you and your children will always have something to read. Read aloud other things you see during the day. Read street signs, milk cartons, cereal boxes, and signs in store windows.

8 Plan outings for your children. Children learn from what they see and do. Take them to a park or a parade, or just out for a walk. Church and community groups also plan trips that your family might want to go on.



9 Say rhymes and poetry, or sing songs. Rhymes and songs are easy for kids to remember, so they can say them and sing them along with the rest of the family. Rhymes also help them learn letter sounds.

10 Tell stories about your family and stories you enjoyed when you were a child. Ask grandparents and other family members to tell stories, too. Write down some of these stories and the ones your children tell. Save them to read aloud at another time.



If you are interested in more ideas and advice about encouraging children to read, visit RIF's website at www.rif.org.



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