

ILLINOIS PUBLIC LIBRARY WINTER 2011

Jesse White
Secretary of State
& State Librarian

One of the high points of FY10 was piloting the Illinois State Library's first-ever, web-based grant application. Forty-seven brave public librarians assisted the State Library in implementing the online version of the Penny Severns Summer Family Literacy grant application. Participants reported that the application and reporting were easy to complete and submit and that they appreciated the "going green" aspect of the endeavor.

Another significant change to the grant program in FY10 was that this was the first time grants were made strictly to public libraries. I am pleased to report that Penny Severns grants were awarded to 44 libraries that worked in close partnership with local adult literacy programs to provide summer literacy programming to families across the state. This issue of *Illinois Literacy* highlights some of those exciting activities.

With the FY11 Penny Severns grant process in the works, we look forward to seeing what libraries and literacy projects have in store for Illinois families this summer. Thank you for your continued cooperation in making this program a resounding success.

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2010 Penny Severns Summer Program highlights

The Illinois State Library Literacy Office awarded 44 Penny Severns Summer Family Literacy grants to libraries totaling nearly \$200,000 for summer 2010. The program promotes learning during the summer months when parents and children can learn together through a variety of educational activities. In FY10, projects served 1,769 adults and 4,040 children. Following are highlights.

Aurora Public Library

The target audience was immigrant and refugee families, with children ages 3-5 from Mexico, Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Families were introduced to the six early literacy skills of the Every Child Ready to Read Curriculum, sponsored by the Public Library Association and the Association for Library Services to Children. A calendar activity included singing the "Days of the Week." Families also received a set of alphabet letters for a Parent and Child Together (PACT) activity to practice spelling their names. At the beginning of the program a 4-year old boy did not want to participate, but he gradually became less shy as the program progressed. In fact, when the librarian asked the children to identify some portable street signs, he volunteered to describe some street signs he saw on the way to the library.

Cahokia Public Library District

Families enjoyed growing a community vegetable garden and plant-related science projects. Each adult planned and completed a cookbook

based on his or her ethnic background. At the end of the program, a community meal was prepared by the adults based on the recipes in the cookbooks and using some of the vegetables from their community garden. The children decorated place settings and cupcakes for everyone.

Chester Public Library

Young children enjoyed lap-sits and story times with jugglers, magicians, storytellers and puppeteers. Older children participated in reading challenges, themed programs and art classes. Families enjoyed time together on computers,

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Families participated in the F.I.N.D. Library Activities Involving Reading (FLAIR) summer program at the Schaumburg Public Library District. See page 3 for more on the program.

2010 Penny Severns highlights (continued from page 1)

movie days and game days. Adults participated in GED classes and one-to-one tutoring. A mother visiting the library was encouraged to bring her children to the summer activities. She brought all of her children to the activities and applied for a library card too! Her 8-year-old son became the top reader in his age group.

DeKalb Public Library

Families enjoyed speakers and activities focusing on all aspects of farming and a field trip to a local historical farm. One father said it was wonderful to see his children working at home on projects they got from the library. He said the books the family checked out got them interested in farming. They made additional trips to the library for more books about different types of farms, animals, crops and the production process.

DuQuoin Public Library

"Scare up a Scarecrow" was the theme of the program to celebrate the 110th anniversary of *The Wizard of Oz* classic. The story was presented to families by the Elsenpeter Marionettes. The families read the book together and made a scarecrow using instructions from the Internet. The local hospital donated t-shirts and the local hardware store donated gloves for the project. The children also received a coloring sheet of the Wizard of Oz plus instructions for making a scarecrow marionette.



A mom and daughter make a book together using photos taken by the daughter at the Elkhart Public Library District.



Illinois author and storyteller Jim May entertains children at the Peoria Public Library.

Elkhart Public Library District

A Parent and Child Book Club activity was hosted by the library. After reading *The One In The Middle Is The Green Kangaroo* by Judy Blume, families made books from photos taken by the children. They also participated in an interactive science activity utilizing science books and visited the Children's Discovery Museum in Normal. Adults took part in a monthly Book Club, which has become a permanent program at the library. Over the summer, the library was the sole source of entertainment for one family when the dad lost his job. One of his children has a reading disability that greatly improved with the help of the book club and his parents.



Families at the Elkhart library visited the Children's Discovery Museum in Normal.

FY11 Penny Severns Grant Application online

The State Library Literacy Office was pleased to once again offer the Penny Severns Summer Family Literacy Grant Program for FY11. The deadline for applications was February 1. As in FY10, public libraries were the only eligible applicants. Literacy programs were encouraged to contact their local public libraries and work in partnership with them to reach low-literate and limited English-proficient families through the Penny Severns grant program. Grant awards will be announced in the spring.

Family Literacy Program – Parenting Education

*L*ife affords no greater responsibility, no greater privilege, than the raising of the next generation. — C. Everet Koop, M.D.

Parenting is a very important component of Family Literacy programs. A solid parent-child relationship sets a firm foundation for all other programming offered in family literacy programs.

Following are a few tips for creating a successful parenting education component. Parenting education workshops should:

- Have specific outcomes and clear goals. Examples of clear goals are having a conversation with their child's teacher, calling their child's absence into the school, taking their child to the library on their own, establishing a bedtime routine or learning techniques to better control temper tantrums.
- Involve parents in designing the program and selecting topics; build on parents' existing strengths. This will make the program meaningful to the parents, give them ownership of the program and boost their self-confidence.
- Develop a support system for parents within the group and within the community. The parents in the group can become their own support network. Be sure to offer workshops on local support services and resources (food pantries, shelters, health clinics) that will help eliminate some of the stressors and barriers to success.
- Make sure that staff members are empathetic and professional. Facilitators who have good rapport with the families will improve attendance and progress.
- Meet on a regular and continuing schedule. Parenting education should be offered weekly or bi-weekly to create cohesiveness and to address parenting challenges as they occur.

Child Welfare League of America at

www.cwla.org/positiveparenting/ is a gold mine of parenting information and ideas.

Parenting Books:

- *1-2-3 Magic*, by Thomas Phelan
- *Parenting with Love and Logic*, by Foster Cline and Jim Fay
- *Common Sense Parenting*, by Ray Burk, PhD, Ron Herron and Bridget Barnes



The Family Literacy Program at Bethel Wesley Learning Center held an event at the Moline Fire Department. This activity allowed families to get acquainted with the firefighters and for firefighters to explain to families what to do in case of a fire and what to expect when firefighters arrive on the scene.

2010 Penny Severns highlights (continued from page 2)

Peoria Public Library

"Summer on the Illinois Prairie" was the theme for the program, which included reading instruction, crafts, games and music along with weekly visits to the Lincoln Branch Library. Families received books for their home libraries and visited the Forest Park Nature Center and Wheels O'Time Museum. Families also enjoyed the Peoria Zoomobile that came to the library as well as a performance by Illinois author and storyteller Jim May. An 8-year-old girl wanted to read "Something Beautiful About Alice" and asked her grandmother for a library card to check it out. She read the book and wrote that she learned words such as beautiful, love and happiness and applied them to herself.

Schaumburg Township District Library

Twice as many families as expected participated in the first night of the FLAIR program (see photo on page 1). In the weeks following, families participated in an interactive music program, were introduced to the English Language Learner (ELL) computer programs, played board games or puzzles, and enjoyed a toe-tapping story hour. Working with the local school district, the library received suggested reading lists for each grade level and organized the books in a special display for parents and children.



Teaching math and numeracy

Adult learners often have anxiety about learning math. However, math anxiety can be overcome by using creative, interactive and meaningful strategies. These resources work to take the angst out of math instruction for adult learners.

Virtual Manipulatives (<http://illuminations.nctm.org/ActivitySearch.aspx>) offers 105 online activities and 600 lesson plans based on these interactive tools, which are broken down into grade levels and topics.

Changing the Way We Teach (www.nald.ca/library/learning/mathman/mathman.pdf), a book by Kate Nonesuch, describes how to bring real-life math problems into the classroom, and illustrates how to get learners involved through hands-on approaches and group work.

Media Library of Teaching Skills (MLOTS) (<http://mlots.org/Elana/Elana.html>) recently posted two videos and accompanying documentation focusing on numeracy. For pre-GED students, "Numeracy: Positive and Negative Numbers" provides practice problems with negative numbers using an interactive number line on a floor. For GED preparation students, "Numeracy: Jeopardy Game for Numeracy Reinforcement" allows students to practice and reinforce math strategies in teams.

Making Math Manageable (<http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/TLN/courses>) is a free online course offered by Verizon Thinkfinity that provides learning strategies to ease students' fears, boost math confidence and build on math successes.

Literacy Information and Communication System offers an ongoing professional development opportunity through the LINC'S Discussion Lists (http://lincs.ed.gov/lincs/discussions/subscribe_all.html). Pose questions about effective strategies, exchange creative ideas and network with other adult education math professionals all over the world.

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ON THE HORIZON

February 23-26 – Learning Disabilities Association Annual International Conference, Jacksonville, FL, www.lदानatl.org/conference/index.asp

March 16-19 – Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Annual Convention, New Orleans, www.tesol.org

April 3-5 – Annual National Conference on Family Literacy, Louisville, KY, www.familit.org

April 9 – On the Road to Literacy, Chicago, www.lvillinois.org

April 10-16 – National Volunteer Week; download the "National Volunteer Week Resource Guide" at www.handson-network.org (click National Events and Programs)

April 10-16 – National Library Week, www.ala.org (click Conferences and Events)

April 13-16 – National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Annual Meeting, Indianapolis, IN, <http://nctm.org>

April 17-21 – Commission on Adult Basic Education Conference, San Francisco, CA, www.coabe.org

May 8-11 – International Reading Association's Annual Convention, Orlando, FL, www.iraconvention.org

May 11 – Spotlight on Achievement and Service Awards, State Library, Springfield, www.cyberdriveillinois.com (click Programs, Literacy, Adult Volunteer Literacy Program), 800-665-5576, ext. 3. **Deadline for nominations is March 1.**

More literacy event information is available at <http://literacy.kent.edu/illinois/calend.htm>.

WWW



www.aplusmath.com/

Flashcards, game room, homework helper and worksheets available free for learning addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, decimals, fractions and algebra.

lincs.ed.gov/lincs/resourcecollections/RC_skills.html

The Basic Skills Resource Collection focuses on reading; writing; mathematics and numeracy; and health literacy resources that can improve instruction in basic skills.