

## **LIBRARY SUMMER READING PROGRAMS BOLSTER KIDS' SKILLS**

**Free, Convenient, Fun Program Available to All**

***What to do with children of all ages during those long hot summer days? Summer Reading Programs! Kids stay busy and entertained and improve their skills. Regular contact with print materials—books, magazines, writing games—helps little kids get ready to read and big kids raise scores.***

Every summer the Colorado State Library sponsors a free, convenient, fun way to encourage children to read: **the Summer Reading Program.**

Thousands of kids visit their libraries to enroll in summer reading programs. While they might think they're amusing themselves, educators know informal reading in the summer maintains and even increases children's reading skills.

Stephen Krashen, author of *The Power of Reading* (Libraries Unlimited, 1993), concludes that **reading is the most powerful tool available for building vocabulary as well as the ability to read, write, spell, and comprehend.** In addition, voluntary reading (such as summer reading programs) has a major impact on children's literacy progress. For example, in 38 of 41 studies, students using voluntary reading did as well or better in comprehension tests than students given only traditional skill-based reading instruction.

**In the summer of 1999, an estimated 125,432 Colorado children enrolled in a summer reading program, and 67,622 completed the program.** Contact a local public library for information and encourage kids to enroll.

### **LIBRARIES:**

- Virtually every public library in the state produces a Summer Reading Program. Each has its own guidelines, but in general, children need to read a certain number of books or a minimum number of hours to qualify for prizes.
- Many welcome young children as well as students through the age of 12. Many also sponsor young adult programs, too.
- Most offer crafts, entertainment, and prizes along with books, magazines, videotapes, and recordings.
- Children should visit the library regularly, if possible.
- If planning a group visit, call the library staff for suggested days and times.

## SCHOOLS and CHILD CARE CENTERS:



**Contact the public libraries** in your geographic area, the ones that are logical partners with the students in your school. Get all the facts about their summer reading programs. Ask if the library has **handouts**--flyers, bookmarks, or stickers that give the basics about the SRP. Something for every child is best.



See if the library will provide a staff member or volunteer to make **presentations to classes, staff or parents** in your organization --an assembly or to separate rooms.



If the public library is unable to schedule visits, **organize an in-school round** for yourself, another staff member, or parent volunteer. Design your own flyer for each child with key points:

- Dates of the SRP; prizes, rewards, reinforcements.
- Qualifications, rules, restrictions (such as ages, number of books to read, etc).
- Location(s) and hours of library.



**Serve as the liaison** between the public library and your school. Arrange for each teacher to have information on the summer reading program. If your school has a parent-teacher-student newsletter, add an article or flyer to it advising parents of the benefits and ease of SRPs.

## INTERNET RESOURCES:

The Internet has many **FREE resources** for adults and children—games, stories, crafts, how-to lists. Explore these! If you don't have a computer, visit a local library and ask the staff to help you get on-line.

- ☞ PBS site with links to Teletubbies, Arthur, Between the Lions, etc.; FREE activities and advice <<http://pbskids.org/>>.
- ☞ Read\*Write\*Now (US Dept of Education), activities and printout sheets for kids birth through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, <<http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/readnow.html>>. Spanish, too! Or call 1-877-4ED-PUBS.
- ☞ READY\*SET\*READ Early Childhood Learning Kit for caregivers and parents, activity guides, in English and Spanish, <<http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/RSRkit.html>>
- ☞ Free brochure you can print off computer, "Reading Tips for Parents," from Colorado State Library, <<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/slreadtips.htm>>.
- ☞ Public Library Association's early childhood literacy initiative, advice for parents, librarians, others, <<http://www.pla.org/preschool.html>>.

The Colorado State Library prepares a comprehensive SRP packet with manual, bookmarks, posters and other items, each year. For information on Summer Reading Programs, contact  
Colorado State Library,

303.866.6908, [froehlich\\_p@cde.state.co.us](mailto:froehlich_p@cde.state.co.us)