

## Focus: Thrive by Five, *part 5*

*This feature will focus on learning and reading development for different age groups, beginning with birth to five from January to June, 2012, and eventually going through age 19.*

To continue with the focus on Thrive by Five—research on learning and reading development for children ages birth through 5 and how libraries can best serve them and their parents—this article will take a look at how library staff can help inform parents about early literacy.

### **Parents, Libraries, and Early Literacy**

Children's parents/caregivers are their first and best teachers. They are in the best position to help their children develop early literacy skills. Some parents, however, don't know the best way to impart these skills, and this is where libraries can help.

Public libraries are uniquely positioned to inform parents/caregivers on early literacy, including the importance of instilling early literacy skills in their children and how to do so most effectively. Public libraries are free, safe, largely trusted community centers that serve residents of all ages.

Every Child Ready to Read, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (ECRR2), from the Public Library Association, offers research-based methods for library staff to teach parents about early literacy. Studies have proven these methods to be effective. ECRR2 can be used in and outside of the library to help reach library users and non-users with an early literacy message.

As outlined in the [first article](#) in this series, ECRR2 recommends 5 simple activities to parents to prepare their children to learn to read: talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing. These are activities that parents can do with their children easily, every day, starting at birth. ECRR2 combines these activities with information on brain development and the skills needed to learn to read in their toolkit for a program that library staff can deliver to parents.

### **In the Library**

One in-house option is to offer parent/caregiver-only workshops—without the kids. ECRR2 offers materials to prepare and deliver this workshop. The workshop covers the skills necessary to learn to read, the 5 activities and why they are important, and how to create an environment at home that encourages learning, with a lot of demonstrations along the way. It's also a great opportunity to talk about all that your library has to offer to young children as well as the whole family. The workshop can be for parents of 0–5 year olds or a more specific age range, like babies, toddlers, or preschoolers (or expecting parents!).

---

### Welcome to the 5th issue of YS News!

This newsletter will feature articles on learning development, summer reading updates, timely tidbits, children's and teen literature news, and an exchange of what's going on in CO libraries.

Would you like to see a topic covered in the newsletter? Want to share info about your programs? Or perhaps contribute an article? Let me know!

---

### Inside this issue:

Summer Reading 2012	2
Book Nook	3
Timely Tidbits	3–5
CO Libraries in Press	5

## Summer Reading 2012: News & Ideas

### Preventing Summer Reading Slide

This [website from RIF](#)—Reading is Fundamental—offers articles and activities for parents on keeping their kids reading over the summer, and why that's so important. It's a great link to provide to parents, and you may find some good activities for your library, too!

Check out the rest of RIF's website while you're there; it has loads of info and fun reading activities.

### IMLS on Summer Learning

Susan Hildreth, director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), discusses the importance of [summer reading and learning](#), including the great SRPs in libraries across the country.

### CSLP in the News

The Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) has made national news recently:

- [School Library Journal](#) on teen video contest
- [Novelist's April newsletter](#)

### CO Astronomy Contacts

There are astronomy groups statewide; check here for one in your area for a possible joint program or partnership this summer:

- [Denver Astronomical Society](#)
- [Southern CO Astronomical Society](#)
- [Northern CO Astronomical Society](#)
- [Western CO Astronomy Club](#)
- [CO Springs Astronomical Society](#)
- [Boulder Astronomy and Space Society](#)
- [University of CO Center for Astrophysics and Space Astronomy](#)
- [U of CO Boulder, Department of Astrophysical and Planetary Sciences](#)

And, though it's after summer, there is [CO Astronomy Day](#) on October 20 to carry on the SRP theme this fall!

### StarChild: A Learning Center for Young

Explore [StarChild](#), a website for kids from NASA; it offers lots of quick facts, quizzes, photos, a glossary, and more.

### Summer Learning Day 2012

This [national advocacy day](#), sponsored by the National Summer Learning Association, is a great opportunity to showcase your program and get the word out about the importance of summer learning. Join communities across the country in celebrating the importance of summer learning on June 21 or anytime this summer. Summer Learning



Day is supported by elected officials and policymakers, public agencies, nonprofit organizations, schools,

universities, museums, libraries and summer camps across the country. Design an event that demonstrates the value of your program and generates support for summer learning in your community. To help prepare for Summer Learning Day, check out the [archived webinar series](#).

### Free Online Astronomy Resources

The Lunar and Planetary Institute has a wealth of educational, interactive online resources on astronomy and earth science, created by the experts. [Check 'em out here](#). There's also a series of free, online resources designed to engage children in space and planetary science in the library and informal learning environments called [Explore!](#)

### Non-Library SRPs

A host of companies and organizations offer free SRPs of various kinds that parents and kids may ask about. Check out this [list of programs](#) (and please let me know if you know of others!).

## Book Nook

### 2012 Independent Publisher Book Awards

The "IPPY" Awards, launched in 1996, are designed to increase recognition of titles published by independent authors and publishers. Established as the first awards program open exclusively to independents, over 2,500 "IPPYs" have been awarded to authors and publishers around the world. The Awards recognize outstanding books in many categories, including several categories for children and young adults. See this year's [list of winners](#).

### Are You What You Read?

A recent study suggests your thoughts and behavior come to match those of your favorite literary character when you're engaged in a work of fiction. [Read more](#) about the study.

### Interview with Tony DiTerlizzi

PLA recently interviewed author and illustrator Tony DiTerlizzi; [read it here](#).

## Timely Tidbits

### CO 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Reading Test Scores In

Third graders in CO demonstrated a slight increase in standardized reading test scores over the previous year. Reading proficiency increased 1% from 73% proficient and advanced in 2011 to 74% proficient and advanced in 2012. [Click here](#) to view the results.

### Reach Out and Read Study

A new study published in the *Journal of Community Medicine & Health Education* shows that children that receive early literacy exposure and free books at their health clinics

through Reach Out and Read benefits at-risk Latino children, including those whose parents do not speak English. The study showed that low-income Latino children from households where English is not the primary language that participated in the Reach Out and Read program had average or above average literacy skills by the end of kindergarten, and good home literacy environments. [Read more here](#).

### Why Kids Can't Search

*Wired Magazine* [ran this article](#) on how students use search engines, and why. From the article: "Librarians are our national leaders in this fight; they're the main ones trying to teach search skills to kids today."

### June Celebrations

Get ready for June! It is:

- [Audiobook Month](#)
- Gay and Lesbian Pride Month
- Black Music Month
- Great Outdoors Month
- National Safety Month

### R-Squared Conference Scholarships

This fall, Telluride is host to the national [R-Squared \(Risk & Reward\) Conference](#). The conference will focus on innovation in libraries; you'll learn to take smart risks to move libraries forward. Scholarships are available; [click here for info](#). Deadline to apply is June 3.



### Preconference Opportunity this Fall

Our library colleagues and friends in Nebraska invite CO library staff to Run, Run to Reading Aloud!, a preconference to the Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA) Conference. The

## *Timely Tidbits cont.*

preconference features children's authors Jim Aylesworth and Lisa Campbell Ernst, as well as a panel of Nebraska authors. The [preconference](#) is Oct. 17 in La Vista, NE (followed by the MPLA Conference in La Vista on Oct. 18-19).

### **Science BootCamp for Educators**

The US Air Force Academy is offering a bootcamp for educators to learn more about earth and space science from the experts this July. Separate sessions are available for educators working with elementary, middle, and high school age students. Great for teachers in your area, and for you! [Click here](#) for more info and an application.

### **Teaching with Primary Sources in the West**

The Library of Congress offers a [monthly e-newsletter](#) on primary sources for educators specifically in the west. Though geared for school, there are many resources in each issue that can be used creatively in a public library to enhance programming.

### **Head Start and Public Libraries**

Earlier this month the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the Administration for Children and Families/Office of Head Start signed an agreement recognizing the importance of public libraries as centers of learning and encouraging more collaboration between Head Start programs and community libraries. While many CO libraries already work closely with organizations like this in your community, this agreement may help foster communication and connections in areas where these relationships don't exist. [Learn more](#) from IMLS director Susan Hildreth.

## Upcoming Grant Opportunities

### **Best Buy Community Grants Program**

Deadline: July 01, 2012

Through the [Community Grants program](#), Best Buy teams across the United States select non-profit organizations that give teens access to opportunities through technology to help them excel in school and develop twenty-first century skills. This year, the Best Buy Children's Foundation will give \$2.8 million in Community Grants. Grant amounts will average \$4,000-\$6,000 and will not exceed \$10,000.

### **Build-A-Bear Literacy and Education Grants**

Deadline: August 31, 2012

The Build-A-Bear Workshop Bear Hugs Foundation offers [Literacy and Education Grants](#) which provide support for children in literacy and education programs such as summer reading programs, early childhood education programs, and literacy programs for children with special needs. Grants are a one-time contribution, and range from \$1,000 to \$5,000. They accept grant requests from March-August and will review them on a rolling basis.

### **Lisa Libraries Foundation**

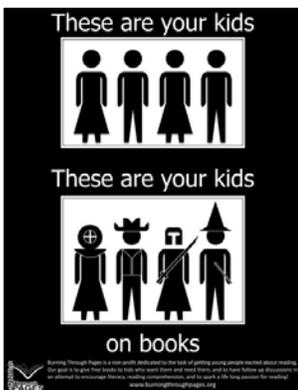
Deadline: rolling

The [Lisa Libraries Foundation](#) supplements under-filled bookshelves and provides books to children who may never have owned a book before. The foundation donates new children's books to organizations that work with kids in poor and under-served areas. To apply, send a letter about your organization, number of children served, age range of children served, and a breakdown of how the books will be used.

### Thinkfinity Resources

On its [Thinkfinity website](#), the Verizon Foundation offers many free online resources for parents, children, and educators (both in school and outside of school), including games, activities, online interactive projects, an educator discussion area, and much more.

### These Are Your Kids on Books Poster



The Denver, Colorado nonprofit literacy group Burning Through Pages “These Are Your Kids on Books” poster has gone viral. The black and white poster encourages parents to share books with their kids. The poster was designed by Mike Anderick. [Read more here.](#)

### The State of Preschool

This [annual report](#), by the National Institute for Early Education Research, profiles state-funded prekindergarten programs in the US. This latest report covers the 2010–2011 school year.

Highlights from the national findings include:

- More than 1.3 million children attended state-funded pre-K, more than 1.1 million (28%) at age 4.
- 32% of 4-year-olds and 8% of 3-year-olds are served by state pre-K.
- State funding per child for pre-K declined in 26 of 39 states with programs.

[Colorado’s report](#) provides history on the state’s preschool program, as well as a look at how well it’s doing to meet national benchmarks.

## CO Libraries in the Press

### Children’s Book Week in Summit County

Jane Van Baren at the Summit County Library captured the essence and spirit of Children’s Book Week, as well as tips for parents and caregivers on reading to children, in [her contribution](#) to her local newspaper.

### Pikes Peak Library District to open new branch

The library district [announced details](#) about its plans to open a new branch, to include a creative computer complex where technology meets the needs of the area’s writers, film makers and engineers. The new branch will free up space in other branches to create a homework center, teen center, and home school center.

### Will Hillenbrand Visits Estes Park

The Estes Valley Library recently teamed up with Estes Park Elementary School and its Parent Teacher Organization to bring children’s author and illustrator [Will Hillenbrand to town](#).

### Food Donations Forgive Library Fines

Park County Public Library branches are [accepting food donations](#) for local children this May and June; in exchange, the library is erasing library fines for contributors.

### Summer Reading Fun in Sterling

Sterling Public Library outlines its great [SRP programs](#) for its community, including a teddy bear sleepover, biography series of those that dared to dream big (and achieved those dreams), events for adults, and more.

*You may have tangible wealth untold. / Caskets of jewels and  
coffers of gold. / Richer than I you can never be – / I had a mother  
who read to me.*

— Strickland Gillilan

## *Thrive by Five* continued

Another option (although of course libraries can offer both) is a parent/caregiver + children storytime. In this type of program, library staff members provide a storytime for children and



incorporate early literacy tips for the parents during the program. It's also an excellent time to model best practices to parents. ECRR2 offers a

general program as well as 3 more specific programs: Fun with Words, Letters, and Math and Science for Parents and Children.

Parent/child programs just for babies are a great way to focus on that age, and a strong way to model techniques to parents. If age-specific classes aren't possible at your library, mention in your promotional materials that babies are welcome at your storytimes.

### **Outreach**

To reach parents who don't use the library, there are ways to make contact with them in your community; here are just a few:

- Partner with organizations like Reach Out and Read CO clinics, preschools, daycares, Head Starts, WIC and other social services, Early Childhood Councils, Bright Beginnings, homeschooling organizations, and others that work with parents of young children. Start out by suggesting to cross-promote your services, then discuss ways to further work together. ECRR2 offers a "Community Partners" presentation in its toolkit to present to potential partners.
- Participate in local events like health fairs, holiday festivals, and county fairs, with early literacy materials at your booth.
- Present early literacy sessions at teen parent/pregnant teen programs.

- Hold a community baby shower for expecting parents (see p. 6 of [April's YS News](#)).
- Hold parent/child storytimes at locations throughout your community, like apartment complexes, WIC and other social services, transportation centers, even shopping centers. Offer bilingual storytimes whenever possible (using whichever second language is most common in your community).

### **One Book 4 CO**

This project provided an excellent way to



inform parents about the importance of early literacy skills, and even give a free book to read to their 4 year old at home. Thanks to

everyone for participating in this successful program! (The evaluation is coming soon.)

### **More Information for Parents**

Here are a few important points to emphasize to parents:

- Encourage parents to speak and read to their children in the language they know best. This helps kids learn language more effectively.
- Stress the importance of starting the 5 early literacy activities just after a baby is born. Starting that early has been proven most effective in preparing children to be ready to read.
- Talk with parents about creating a home environment that encourages learning. Encourage parents to have plenty of books for their children that are easily accessible and to create a special place in the house for kids and parents to read together. Fun manipulative toys help with coordination, strength, and brain development—all skills

needed for reading and writing. Having fun children's CDs in the house and car makes it easy to sing with children frequently. It's fun to make homemade musical instruments with kids and play them at home. Writing stations with a supply of crayons, colored pencils and different paper make writing and coloring fun; examples of your own writing gives kids models to see. Play stations in the home stocked with props, puppets, costumes, etc, encourage kids to play imaginatively.



- Strongly encourage parents to talk frequently to their children—at the store, while driving, playing outside, while making and eating meals, etc; the more, the better!
- Also encourage parents to read every day to their children. Bedtime is a classic, but anytime during the day will work!
- Kids love repetition—and they actually need it to learn. One good rule of thumb for parents is to read one new book, one old book, and one favorite book every day.
- Explain to parents that reading *with* their kids as a conversation, instead of *to* them, is the most effective method for language and literacy development. Called [dialogic reading](#), this method of reading encourages kids to speak and offers parents a way to expand on their responses.

#### Free Early Literacy Resources for Parents

There are many high quality resources, both online and in print, to inform parents about early literacy, that you can obtain or access for *free*; here are some possibilities:

#### **StoryBlocks**

[StoryBlocks](#) is a collection of 30–60 second videos designed to model to parents, caregivers, and library staff some songs,

rhymes, and fingerplays appropriate for early childhood. Each video includes early literacy tips to increase caregivers' understanding of child development and pre-literacy needs. It's a great resource to promote to parents.

#### **CO State Library Brochures**

The State Library offers a [Kindergarten Readiness brochure](#) for parents of children 4–5, and a [Reading Tips for Parents brochure](#) for parents of children 0–6. You can print them out or request quantities to give to parents, free to you! Both are available in English and Spanish.

#### **OB4CO Materials**

Continue to use the materials created for One Book 4 CO throughout the year. Continue giving the [Early Literacy Matters](#) handout, created by Douglas County Libraries, to parents. The OB4CO website for the public is still available and has great [tips and activities for parents](#) of children 0–1, 1–3, 3–5 and 6–8, courtesy of Melissa Depper, Arapahoe Library District, and Mary Kuehner, Jefferson Co. Public Library, both on the CLEL Steering Committee.

#### **Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL)**

Funded by the US Department of Education, CELL provides research and research-based activities for parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators. CELL's series of [General Practice Guides Especially for Parents](#) and [CELL Videos](#) have many similarities with ECRR's 5 practices.

#### **Zero to Three**

Zero to Three: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families provides [articles, handouts, and booklets](#) for parents online on literacy and language in children birth to three, as well as helpful [FAQs](#). These resources also are similar to ECRR's 5 practices.