



# YS NEWS



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Colorado State Library

## Focus: Tween Scene, *part 6*

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

This sixth and last article in the Tween Scene series—research on learning and reading development for children ages 10–12 and how libraries can best serve them and their parents—will discuss dropout prevention in the middle school years.

### **School Dropout Prevention in Middle School—and How Libraries Can Help**

The tween years are a pivotal time to keep middle school students engaged in school. Though not many students drop out as early as middle school, research shows that the experiences that students have in middle school have tremendous impact on whether they will close achievement gaps, graduate from high school, and be prepared for college. This is especially true of tweens in low-income families.

[Putting Middle Grades Students on the Graduation Path: A Policy and Practice Brief](#), from the National Middle School Association (June 2009), spells out the issue. Author

Robert Balfanz draws on over a decade of research and development work at Johns Hopkins University and experiences from 30 middle schools in this study, which addresses the warning signs of middle school students at risk of dropping out of school as well as prevention techniques.

Amongst the key findings from this study: “sixth graders who failed math or English/reading, or attended school less than 80% of the time, or received an unsatisfactory behavior grade in a core course had only a 10% to 20% chance of graduating on time. Less than 1 of every 4 students with at least one off-track indicator graduated within one extra year of on-time graduation.” (p. 4) And, the earlier students exhibit these risk factors, the less likely they are to graduate, with 6<sup>th</sup> grade being a key year.

Factors common in low-income families also play a significant role, as mentioned in the recent Frontline segment, [Middle School Moment](#), part of its Dropout Nation series. During the tween years, some students

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### Welcome to 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 happening 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!

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*My favorite librarian is one who gave me a conspiratorial wink when she caught me sneaking out of the children's room and into the adult stacks at the grand age of eight.*

*--Dave Donelson, author*

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Please see *Iween Scene* on page 7

## 2013 SRP: News & Ideas

### Evaluating SRPs

[This recent article](#) on *Public Libraries Online* reports findings of a literature review and original research that includes specific recommendations for evaluating and improving SRPs.

### How to Make SRPs More Effective

[This article](#) from the National Summer Learning Association outlines tips backed by solid research to create SRPs that are even more effective in preventing summer slide.



### How SRPs Can Help Children with Special Needs

The [National Center for Learning Disabilities](#) recently published the article "[How Library Summer Reading Programs Can Help Your Child With LD.](#)" It highlights tips for parents about how children with learning disabilities and other special needs can participate in SRPs, and the excellent resources and collections that public libraries offer that can engage children with learning disabilities in reading.

### SRP Kickoff at the Seattle Public Library

The Seattle Public Library launched the 2013 Summer Reading Program by setting a new world record for the longest book domino chain! Check out [the fun video](#).

### Summer Reading and Writing Activities from Start with a Book and ReadingRockets

[Start with a Book](#) offers parents, caregivers, summer program staff and librarians lots of engaging ideas for getting kids hooked on reading, exploring and learning all summer long — and beyond.

## One Book 4 CO



### Parent Feedback

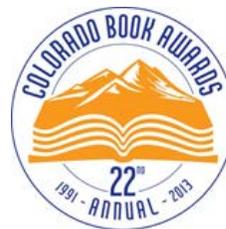
Thanks so much for encouraging parents to take the One Book 4 CO parent survey! Parents responded very positively to the program; here are just a few of their responses:

- My 4 year old likes the book but my 2 ½ year old is the one who asks to read it all the time and even sleeps with it sometimes.
- My daughter is pre-reading, so she is very encouraged that she can "read" parts of this book with me- I will read "hello cow," duck says, and she can "read" the animal noise from the next line. It is really great for her self-esteem!
- My daughter can't read all the words, but she is getting motivation from knowing other kids are all reading the same book. A kids' book club is pretty motivating for her.
- My daughter opened it right away and started making up her own story to go along with the pictures. It was the first time I had seen her do that.

## Book Nook

### 2013 Colorado Book Award Winners

Colorado Humanities announced the 2013



Colorado Book Award winners this month; these awards recognize the outstanding talent in Colorado for books published in 2012. Here are the winning children and teen titles:

- Children's Literature:  
*Time Out for Monsters!* by Jean Reidy,  
illustrated by Robert Neubecker
- Juvenile Literature:  
*Katerina's Wish* by Jeannie Mobley
- Young Adult Literature:  
*Kissing Shakespeare* by Pamela Mingle

### Best Books for Kids Age 9–14

NPR's Backseat Book Club is assembling the Ultimate Kids' Bookshelf—a collection of 100 books that every 9- to 14-year-old should read—and are seeking nominations for the list.

[Contribute your favorite titles online.](#)

## Timely Tidbits

### Report emphasizes role libraries, museums play in early learning

Museums and libraries play key roles in fostering early literacy and development and should be used more intentionally in the education of children, according to a report released this month by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The report, [Growing Young Minds: How Museums and Libraries Create Lifelong Learners](#), documents dozens of examples and 10 key ways libraries and museums are supporting young children. It provides a clear call to policymakers, schools, funders, and parents to make full use of these vital, existing community resources.

Watch a [free webinar](#) about the report on July 9, noon–1 pm MST, presented by Susan Hildreth, director of IMLS, and Lee Rainie, director of the Pew Research Center Internet & American Life Project.

### Rally4Babies

LEARNING HAPPENS  
FROM THE START  
RALLY4BABIES.ORG



Join colleagues around the country on July 8th from 12:00–1:00 to watch the live online [Rally4Babies event](#), featuring U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius and U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, and popular children's musician Laurie Berkner. Consider hosting a brown bag watch event in your community and promoting this virtual event via social media.

### Early Warning Confirmed: A Research Update on Third Grade Reading

Three years ago, [a report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation](#) on third-grade reading raised awareness of the importance of helping children from low-income families read well by this critical milestone. Recently, the Foundation released "[Early Warning Confirmed: A Research Update on Third-Grade Reading](#)," which further underscores the urgency of ensuring that children develop proficient reading skills by the end of third grade, especially those living in poverty or in impoverished communities.

### Digital Learning and Young Children

Two recent articles explore the effects of exposure to digital media on young children. "[Toddlers and Tablets: Way of the Future?](#)," from ABC News, takes info from several recent studies on the subject into account, along with trends in digital media manufacturing aimed at young children. "[Virtual Learning for Little Ones Raises Developmental Questions](#)," from *Education Week*, focuses on the effects of using digital media in the early elementary grades.

### Increasing Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Education

The White House released state-by-state fact sheets, outlining what states could expect to receive in federal funding to expand these early learning initiatives in their states. Check out [Colorado's fact sheet](#), which includes info on funding for expanding preschool enrollment, high-quality infant and childcare, and parent/family support.

### Sesame Street Teams up with National Parks

"Sesame Street" wants kids to take a break from parking it indoors, and head out to a park instead. A new project has recruited Muppet monsters Elmo and Murray to visit national parks in six short videos that encourage children ages 3–5 to experience the great outdoors, wherever it might be, and to apply scientific skills of inquiry to learn about these natural settings. The "[Sesame Street Explores National Parks](#)" project aims to promote science learning by kids through their experiences in national parks as well as local parks and their own backyards.

### Read, Build, Play! @ Home toolkit

[This toolkit for parents](#) from LEGO DUPLO and ALSC is designed to show how to combine reading, building and play to help children develop their early literacy skills.

### Common Sense Media Resources

[Common Sense Media](#) is dedicated to improving the lives of kids and families by providing the trustworthy information, education, and independent voice they need to thrive in a world of media and technology. They offer a wealth of resources for educators and parents, including research, media recommendations, digital citizenship resources, and much more.

### What Kids Are Reading

For the fifth year, Renaissance Learning™ studied the reading habits of students across the nation to find out what kids are reading. Check out the [infographic](#) and [full report](#) from this year's study.

### Rocky Mountain PBS Fiction Writing Contest

Save the dates! The Rocky Mountain PBS [StoryMakers fiction writing contest](#) will run from August 19–October 11. 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are eligible; participants must submit a 700–1,000 word original story. The contest is free and 3 winners and 5 runners-up get some amazing prizes. They'd love to get some great submissions from young library patrons!



### Evaluating Quality in Digital Reading Products

Apps, digital games, and other technology products that promise to build early literacy skills through mobile devices and other platforms are everywhere these days. But are those products any good? Check out [this article](#) in *Education Week* to learn more.

### In the Digital Age, What Becomes of the Library?

[This article](#) explores the future of public libraries. Using info from recent Pew research studies and interviews with library staff and patrons, the article provides positive opportunities for libraries moving forward.

### Music and Young Children

These [10 easy tips for parents](#) promote singing to babies, and underscore one of the 5 activities in Every Child Ready to Read 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. The National Association for the Education of Young Children also offers [collections of children's songs](#) along with interviews with children's musicians.

### Providing New and Innovative Children's Services Helps to Keep Libraries Relevant

[This post](#) in *Public Libraries Online* focuses on Storyville, an interactive early literacy learning center at the Baltimore County Public Library in Maryland.

#### News from YALSA:

- Invite members of Congress to your library to see first-hand the great ways libraries create opportunities for teens to keep learning over the summer. Or, schedule a meeting with the VIPs at their local office. YALSA's Legislation Committee has created tips and resources to help libraries participate in "[District Days](#)."
- 20 libraries will be selected to receive a set of the 2013 Teen's Top Ten titles. Visit [www.ala.org/teenread](http://www.ala.org/teenread) for details and to access the application. Apply by Sept. 1.
- Share your ideas, tips and resources around makerspaces and DIY-type programs via YALSA's [newest wiki page](#) and check out the [Summer of Making and Connecting](#).
- Join YALSA and teen library staff from across the country to discuss Teen Read Week via Twitter Chats. Participate in one or more sessions using the hashtag #TRW:
  - July 2, 10-11 am MST
  - Aug. 6, 10-11 am MST
  - Sept. 3, 10-11 am MST
- Voting opens for the [Teens' Top Ten](#), Aug. 15 - Sept. 15.

### Every Library and Museum in America, Mapped

There are more public libraries (about 17,000) in America than McDonald's (about 14,000). The same is true of Starbucks (about 11,000 coffee shops nationally)! [Check out a new map](#) showing public library coverage nationwide.

## STEM Corner

This new feature will highlight STEM resources and ideas.

### Online STEM Resource

[Howtosmile.org](http://Howtosmile.org) has a wide-range of learning activities, tools, and services designed for educators of school-aged children in non-classroom settings like libraries, museums, and afterschool or outdoor education programs. This online collection of math and science activities include lesson plans, field trips, how-to videos, and online games. An award-winning educational website!

### Three Articles from Programming Librarian

- [Creating Affordable Public Library Programming for Young Scientists](#)
- [Boldly Going into the World of STEM @ Your Library, or ... You Can Be a STEM Rock Star!](#)
- [You Don't Have to Be a Rocket Scientist to Bring NASA into Your Children's and Youth Programs](#)

### STEM-Y Colleagues

Looking to begin or expand upon STEM programming in your library? Meet up with fellow STEM programming librarians through the [STAR\\_Net Online Community](#) funded by the National Science Foundation.

### Water Science for Preschoolers

[This post](#) on the ASLC blog outlines a fun preschool activity about water science.

## Upcoming Grant Opportunities

### [LEGO Children's Fund](#)

**Deadline:** applications accepted throughout the year, but deadline for the next grant cycle is Oct. 15

This foundation gives grants on a quarterly schedule for projects related to early childhood education and development that is directly related to creativity; and technology and communication projects that advance learning opportunities.

### [Build a Bear Workshop Literacy and Education Grants](#)

**Deadline:** Oct. 31

The foundation's main goal is to provide books for children from underserved populations for schools, shelters, social service agencies, libraries and other organizations that encourage literacy and reading. It also supports programs that encourage literacy and reading through the use of technology.

[La Junta/Woodruff Memorial Library](#)  
[Summit County Library](#)

### **From the Ashes: The Waldo Canyon Fire exhibit**

The day after the Waldo Canyon Fire tore through the Mountain Shadows neighborhood, the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum and the Pikes Peak Library District began collecting stories, photographs and artifacts from families and businesses affected by the fire. Now, one year later, they're on [display in an exhibit](#) at the museum, created as a gathering place to preserve the fire's impact on the community.

### **STEMgirls Camp Featured Librarians**

Area librarians presented at a new [STEM-oriented camp](#) in Louisville this month designed to encourage young girls to get interested in STEM fields, as part of the larger STEMgirls program.

### **Online computer classes at Loveland Public Library**

The Loveland Public Library is now offering online learning modules so that patrons can enjoy learning about computer skills at their own pace as often as they wish. These modules include the option to download practice material to make the learning more interactive, and access to the same handouts participants receive when they attend a live class. To access the online learning modules visit: <http://tinyurl.com/lovelandlearning>.

### **Giant Chess Board at Fort Morgan Public Library & Museum**

The Fort Morgan Public Library & Museum sports a [giant chess board](#) at its patio park. The chess set is something that library cardholders can check out, just like a book, and then set it up to play games on the painted concrete out front.

### **Seed Libraries**

The Basalt Public Library is featured in this article, "[Borrow Seeds. Grow Plants.](#)" in *Public Libraries*

## CO Libraries in the Press

### **Summer Fun at Colorado Libraries**

Media around the state are featuring the amazing programs that Colorado libraries are offering this summer!

[Mancos Public Library](#)

[Aurora Public Library](#)

[Lamar Public Library](#)

[Berthoud Community Library District](#)

[Sterling Public Library](#)

[Loveland Public Library](#)

[Pikes Peak Library District](#)

[Montrose Regional Library District](#)

[Cortez Public Library](#)

[Fort Morgan Public Library](#)

*Online* about the trend of seed libraries in public libraries.

### Other Unexpected Items Public Libraries Circulate

Check out this [list of items](#) that many people don't expect to be able to check out from a public library, with the Lake County Public Library featured (and Denver Public Library in the comments)! What unexpected items do your libraries circulate?

## Tween Scene *cont.*

begin to work in the family business, leading to less time to do homework and socialize with friends. Parents that don't speak English well may begin to pull their children out of middle school at times to help translate for the family. Tweens may be tasked with staying at home to help care for ill or injured family members or for younger siblings. And children from all backgrounds become more vulnerable to gangs, criminal activity, drugs and substance abuse during the tween years.

Balfanz draws on his research to make recommendations to schools, parents and communities. Libraries can use some of the suggestions to help combat the issue of middle schoolers at risk of dropping out.

### What Libraries Can Do

In Colorado, the [2011-2012 school dropout rate](#) was 2.9% (a "dropout" is defined as anyone that stops attending school before graduating except those too ill to participate in a school

program, who have earned a GED, and who are enrolled in a GED prep program). Meanwhile, the state's [2011-2012 on-time graduation rate](#) (those students that complete high school within 4 years) was 75.4%. How can public libraries help to reduce the number of dropouts and increase the number of students that graduate from high school on time?

- Learn more. The [CO Department of Education's Dropout Prevention and Student Engagement](#) department and the [National Dropout Prevention Center](#) have a variety of online and print resources on dropout prevention.

- Raise awareness in your community. Talk with parents and tweens about the issue and have resources available for them, such as those from the [National Dropout Prevention Center](#). Host a showing of Frontline's [Middle School Moments](#), followed by a discussion of the issues (there's a free discussion guide to use). Encourage parents to become actively involved in their child's middle school; let them know how to do so, and [why it's so important](#) to their child's success.



- Support middle schools in combating the problem. Talk with the librarians, teachers, and administrators in middle schools in your area to decide how your library can partner with them to support middle school students at risk of dropping out. After school and summer programs, family literacy programs, tutoring and homework resources, computer access, ESL programs,

strong tween collections, intergenerational and family programs, and fun tween events at your library all contribute to help the issue. Your library and local schools may have additional solutions as well.

- Actively engage tweens in reading for pleasure. Research from Stephen Krashen and many others has shown that children that read often for pleasure have higher reading skills than those that don't. As Balfanz found that a failing reading grade in middle school is an indicator of students at risk of dropping out of school, libraries can play a big role in prevention by engaging tweens in reading by having a strong tween collection that includes many reading levels and high-interest titles and formats; providing engaging readers advisory like booktalks and peer recommendations; encouraging tweens to select their own reading materials; offering a social aspect to reading, like book clubs; seeking tween input on collection development; and keeping reading fun.
- Provide engaging programs that will allow tweens to recognize their own strengths. Balfanz points out that students that don't do well academically do have skills in certain areas, and educational experiences that provide avenues for short-term success can help them recognize their strengths and link them to more traditional academic skills. Libraries can offer programs on creative writing, debate, drama, chess, robotics, etc., to help at-risk students.



- Provide activities that offer opportunities for camaraderie and adventure. Balfanz states that "Some students cut class or act out for the sheer thrill, or because they want to belong to the group of students who earn social recognition from their peers for such behaviors. Students need positive alternatives that allow them to work collectively on activities that are meaningful to them." (p. 9) With the input of tweens, libraries can offer high-interest activities that allows fun, meaningful group efforts to engage tweens constructively.
- Offer [service learning programs for tweens](#). Boredom and apathy are common reasons students drop out of school. Service learning projects connect students to the real world and encourage personal and social development, as well as teach a sense of responsibility. Middle school students in particular benefit from service-learning activities as students have the opportunity to work as a team, build their self-esteem, see their worth in the world, and collaborate with positive adult role models.
- Offer volunteer opportunities for tweens. Balfanz recommends teaching and modeling organizational and time-management skills to middle school students, which library volunteer tasks can do.

Sources:

Balfanz, R. (June 2009). *Putting Middle Grades Students on the Graduation Path: A Policy and Practice Brief*. Retrieved from [http://www.amle.org/portals/0/pdf/research/Research\\_from\\_the\\_Field/Policy\\_Brief\\_Balfanz.pdf](http://www.amle.org/portals/0/pdf/research/Research_from_the_Field/Policy_Brief_Balfanz.pdf)

Middle School Moment, from Frontline's Dropout Nation. (July 2012). Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/education/dropout-nation/middle-school-moment/>.

Service-Learning, from National Dropout Prevention Center. Retrieved from <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/service-learning>.

Dropout Prevention & Student Engagement, from Colorado Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.cde.state.co.us/DropoutPrevention>.

#### Additional tween resources

- [The Tween Scene: A year of library programming for ages 10-14](#)
- [Introduction to Tween Services](#)
- [Got Tweens? Serving Younger Teens and Tweens](#)
- [Tweens in the Library: Getting Them Involved in Summer Reading Programming](#)
- [The Pre-Teen Years](#)
- [40 Developmental Assets® for Middle Childhood](#)

