

Creative Storytimes: How Garfield County Libraries are Supporting Parents in Early Literacy



The SPELL blueprint (s.lrs.org/blueprint) was created to assist library staff in their effort to support caregivers in practicing early literacy techniques with their children. In November 2014, eight libraries in Colorado were selected to implement the blueprint in their communities. Each library created a programming prototype that guided the library in collaborating with community partners, and providing outreach to low income and high need communities. One of the SPELL libraries was the Parachute branch of Garfield County Libraries, located in western Colorado. Read on to learn about its prototype.

Community Profile - Parachute, Colorado

Population: 1,172
Racial Makeup: 54% White, 41% Latino/a, 2% American Indian and Alaskan Native, and 2% two or more races
K-12 % Minority: 52%
Median Income: \$60,179
% Below Poverty Line: 13%

Partner

Raising a Reader: an organization that helps families develop, practice, and maintain home literacy routines.

Prototype

Library staff created early literacy kits ("Lit Launch Kits") in both English and Spanish which are available for check out. Kits contain books, manipulatives, games, and a handout demonstrating early literacy activities.

The library offered Ready Rosie, an app that provides video modeling of early learning skills.

The library invited a variety of early literacy experts and performers to monthly storytime events, including Raising a Reader staff, Love and Logic Institute staff, a pediatric occupational therapist, puppeteers, and Aspen Camp of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing staff.

Parent engagement and participation in storytime has increased, especially with performers; parents aren't able to disengage because their participation is needed!

- Children's Librarian

Great social & learning activity, all my kids look forward to & enjoy it.

-Parent

Project Resources

Funding: \$15,030 (80% federal grant, 20% Garfield County Libraries)

Purchases included:

- 578 children's and 29 parent books
- 140 manipulatives
- 344 promotional materials
- 116 informational materials
- County-wide access to Ready Rosie App

Activities

17 storytimes/events, including 11 with multiple artists/performers, 5 with Raising a Reader, and 1 with Love and Logic

72 Lit Launch kit checkouts over a 6-month period

16 Ready Rosie family users

168 caregivers participated

286 children participated

Outcomes

After participating in SPELL,

- more than 9 in 10 parent survey respondents are more knowledgeable about everyday activities to help their child(ren) be ready to learn to read in kindergarten, and
- more than 4 in 5 plan to spend more time reading with their child(ren).

More details about this prototype are available at spellproject.weebly.com/research.