

EARLY LITERACY SURVEY BY THE OREGON STATE LIBRARY, JULY 2005

RESULTS SUMMARY

Basic early literacy training is an integral part of library services in Oregon according to an online survey conducted during July 2005 by the Oregon State Library. Though toddler and preschool programs are offered *at libraries*, most are not providing *outreach* programming at childcare facilities, providing *proactive* literacy training to parents/caregivers or *expanding* programs to include younger children.

When asked what would encourage libraries to begin or increase early literacy programming, the most frequently given answers took some form of the words “money” (especially reliable funding), “staff” (especially trained), or “space” (especially new space).

But the core need, according to the 92 responding library managers, is sufficient, consistent funding so that staff can be hired, trained, and retained and programs can be developed, promoted and expanded. Current staff, based on the survey, would benefit from literacy program training but too few library employees are now stretched just to maintain basic library functions such as shelving books and clerical work.

Several respondents looked to external resources such as local and state agency partners or literacy experts that could provide free local programs, training, materials and curricula. Improved communication with community stakeholders to raise awareness is also a common thread, but generally the communication would be used to raise the awareness of decision-makers to procure funding for expanded programming.

Room for expansion included early literacy programs for infants, delivery of library books to child care/education facilities and early literacy training services for childcare providers and parents. Almost all libraries believed that their staff would benefit from early literacy training.

As a point of comparison, summer reading programs were provided by all but 5% of the survey participants compared to 46% that didn't provide early literacy for infants, 41% that didn't visit child care facilities with programming, 66% that didn't deliver library books to child care facilities, 64% that didn't provide early literacy training to childcare providers, or 66% that didn't train parents – the young child's most important teacher – how to provide early literacy experiences.

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		Yes on a regular basis		Yes on an intermittent basis		No but we are planning to begin soon		No		Total	Skipped this question
		Count	% of T	Count	% of T	Count	% of T	Count	% of T		
1	Do you offer programs for infants & their parents/caregivers? For example: lapsit, storytime, music time, baby sign, etc.	38	41%	9	10%	5	5%	42	46%	92	0
2	Do you offer programs for toddlers & their parents/caregivers? For example: storytime, music time, etc.	68	75%	4	4%	2	2%	18	20%	91	1
3	Do you offer programs for preschoolers? For example: storytime, music time, etc.	86	93%	5	5%	0	0%	3	3%	92	0
4	Do you visit child care/early education facilities to provide storytimes?	33	36%	21	23%	2	2%	38	41%	92	0
5	Do you visit child care/early education facilities to deliver library books?	21	23%	9	10%	3	3%	61	66%	92	0

6	Do you provide early literacy training to child care/early education providers?	7	8%	24	26%	4	4%	58	64%	91	1
7	Do you provide early literacy training for parents?	6	7%	23	25%	4	4%	60	66%	91	1
	Average	37	40%	14	15%	3	3%	40	44%	92	

		For preschoolers		For school age children		For teens		None		Total	Skipped this question
		Count	% of T	Count	% of T	Count	% of T	Count	% of T		
8	Do you have a summer reading program? (check all that apply)	82	89%	89	97%	66	72%	5	5%	92	0

		Yes		No		Total	Skipped this question
		Count	% of T	Count	% of T		
9	Do you feel that you/your staff would benefit from training in providing early literacy programming?	86	93%	8	9%	92	0

**Question 10: What else would encourage you to begin or increase early literacy programming?
(Respondents – 65, Skipped this Question – 27)**

- Staffing. With four of us and a new lapsit program set to begin after summer reading, we just don't have enough staff to do any more.
- More staff, more time, less 'other jobs'
- We may start working on an annual literacy fair if we receive a federal grant for which we have applied. It would be great to push early literacy on a community-wide basis and bring it to everyone's awareness not just parents/providers. Lot's of community, local and state agency partners and educators. Literacy is not often a priority for schools training childcare providers.
- Grants specifically for that purpose.
- Staff time; money.
- Economic support for child care for the parents while they are in 'class'.
- We don't have the space in our current library facility. However, we are currently building a new library which will have plenty of space for this type of program. Also, we will need a grant to help fund the program. We have already identified an organization that will award us a grant to fund a literacy program for both children and adults. We definitely intend to start these programs with the completion of our new facility.
- More staff hours
- Educating governing boards, directors, elected officials and other local stakeholders as to the value of an early literacy role for public libraries in early child development in the context of children's and youth services.
- More staff time and a bigger personnel budget
- Training in providing literacy training to parents and childcare providers would help. When we have offered this at our library in the past, it has been provided by outside trainers through grants, and we would like to have our own staff qualified so we can do it more regularly.
- Storyteller position is only part time. Not enough hours to add any more duties.
- We only have 1 FTE in the children's area at Tualatin Public Library. So, if we had more staff, we could offer more early literacy programming.
- We have had some early literacy training but, like most libraries, we need more staff in order to implement all those great ideas!
- We simply need more staff.
- Mostly a staffing issue and the overwhelming number of daycares in Salem area. Working with daycare providers is our primary focus because we can't be at every facility.
- More money, resources and staff
- The answers of 'No' above do not reflect the informal education/training for parents, care providers and adults who work with children we do provide on an ongoing basis. The assumption was made that the questions above refer to the 'specifically established time' type of programs - not the 'as you can opportunities' (which actually are many). The specific early literacy services and programs had been provided by WCCLS to our library and due to their cutbacks we are not formally providing them at this time. With only part-time youth services staff - with part of that time being adult services reference, we have not had the staff to implement the quality early childhood programs and literacy programs vital to a community and the future that we want to offer. As time allows, a proposal is being formulated to reconfigure what is currently done to try to include more early childhood literacy education and

programming. Informally we do take every opportunity possible to include emphasizing the vital importance of early literacy when talking to adults (anywhere) about children and to encourage literacy skills in the programming we do provide. I don't necessarily think more encouragement is needed. The assistance from WCCLS was invaluable. What is needed is that kind of help in providing the programs and trainings. More time and/or more staff to enable program preparation purchase of program materials and funds to do so, and program presentation time as well as time for preparing publicity in-house and general press release publicity are what this particular library needs. A handbook on the basic groundwork for developing all the programs for adults and for children successfully would also cut down on preparation time - as opposed to going solely on instinct and the folders of materials gathered on paper and electronically. Observations via video of successful programs might also be helpful. Due to time constraints a workshop situation would not be a first choice - more paper and notes and time instead of actually working on the program.

- Staffing locally commensurate with the community's need for early lit. Training would enable us to offer more services. But outreach here, beyond ever fewer school visits, has died, though its flame never more than flickered. I'll be interested in your survey results to see how many libraries can still afford to visit daycares, deposit and deliver books, and do training out in the community. Frankly, my first priority here, if I were emperor, would be to add two to four pages to our staff to release me, and everybody else, from all the shelving and clerical busywork we do. For some reason, for my entire career except the hallowed Suggs era, management has never wanted to add low paid, entry level, not-even-paraprofessionals to do the busywork. I pride myself in being the highest paid shelver (not less than 10 hours weekly) in Oregon.
- We currently encourage parents to bring their infants & toddlers to the preschool story hours since that is all that we offer. I have often thought about offering some sort of separate infant or toddler programming, but there is a need for staff training and specific programming ideas in order to do this. I would also like to begin offering literacy training to childcare/early education providers and also to parents however there is also a need here for staff training to do this. Our First Steps outreach program offers mentoring and a newsletter for parents & caregivers with information about early literacy and child development, but I would also like to offer a one-day training for caregivers & parents two or three times a year. I think I could come up with funding for these types of programs, but I would have to set them up to be low cost. I have staff, but no one with training or experience with these types of programs. So, training offered somewhere close to our area would be wonderful! Travel costs - mileage, food, lodging can make even an inexpensive workshop too expensive to attend. Marsha Richmond
Director Oregon Trail Library District
- I hope you are not getting 2 surveys from me. Sue
- Materials to give to the parents that would reinforce and expand what they (parents) learn at programs. Having access to names of early literacy experts who would come and present a program for parents.
- Additional resources... we are awaiting results from two grants which will be used for this purpose.
- Adequate reliable funding would increase and enhance our early literacy programs.
- We would need to increase staff and more space. We don't have a separate room or area and any kind of program is a major disruption.
- Additional staffing!
- It would be necessary at this point to incorporate early literacy learning in our family storytime. We do not have separate age-level storytimes. But it would be fun to add to our current storytime according to the age level of our group.
- We are interested in early literacy programming, but we need to wait for our new building in spring 2006

- We serve a rural area. Our Preschool program is really a family program for children not yet in school. We have trouble isolating one age group but are very successful when we include the parents and any children not yet in school. We have a high percentage of fathers participating. We doubt if specific 'early literacy programming' would make changes.
- A training of course. Additional staff. A one-man act can only provide so much programming. However, connections with 'free' professionals that can use our facility and do the training is also a possibility.
- Funding, funding, funding!
- Adequate budget for staff, staff training, and library materials
- A central location where we can access all the current resources both on line and circulating materials. Also I would love to see several trainers available in our area who could schedule presentations about early literacy.
- Time and space. Time to train and space to store the materials needed.
- Increased staffing, especially at our branches.
- Letters to City Administrator and City Council members expressing the importance of literacy programming and outreach to the community - We don't do it because we can't convince the 'powers that be' that we need additional staff to provide this service. Pam
- More children in our community. Langlois and the surrounding area is slowly turning into a retirement community.
- Having a simple curriculum kit that could be used to prepare a series of classes for parents/caregivers without spending a lot of extra staff time for training, etc. We are very small, understaffed, and under funded, so cost and staff time are primary concerns.
- Training workshops Opportunities to apply for grant money for early literacy training and programming Opportunity to visit other libraries providing this service to patrons
- As we prepare to open our new and much larger public library, I look forward to the opportunity to offer expanded programming. My plans for new library programs include focusing on individual programs for various age groups. Any grants available to assist with performers, crafts and advertising would of course be the cat's meow! Thanks, Amy Hamilton
- With one staff member and limited volunteers we really can't take on more activities.
- Funding is our biggest obstacle- being a small rural library, we simply can't staff, train, and provide these types of services from our operating funds. They are available in our county however, through other libraries and organizations.
- More staff and fewer budget cuts. We're stuck with our current programming level due to levy failures and the general No More Taxes attitude of our voters. There's been no increase in FTE in a decade, while our demand has certainly increased.
- We need funding! We have had to cut back staff and library hours of operations. At this time, we need more funds to expand early literacy programming. We have cut almost all our extra programs except for weekly storytime and the summer reading program.
- Additional staffing/training
- We would have to have more staff and materials
- Training, staff and time.
- Hire a staff person as a children's librarian.

- More staff hours to devote to this matter. Some realistic advice about how to find parents and caregivers and then convince them to participate in such programs.
- Just an outline of successful programming. We tried lapsits and pajama storytimes but didn't get the turnout.
- If I could get this topic connected to my Teacher Ed professors, then I would be excited. There is an 'early childhood' concentration, so there is a connection that could be made, but so far, it has not. Good luck in your quest, Mo
- More time for planning, more money to spend on materials, someone besides me to present the programming, etc...
- More staff. We could use a full-time outreach youth librarian.
- More money and more staff
- More Training Stable Funding
- More time and money!
- Our problems would concern insufficient time, staffing, and funds.
- Additional staffing--we lost our children's specialist due to budget shortfalls [that's 1/4 of our total staff gone].
- The college offers an early childhood education program that does cover question no. 7. We also have a Lives in Transition program that addresses the needs of single parents with small children as they move through the education process. As a community college we do have a strong emphasis on adult literacy programs -- and as a library we actively support these programs and work with the staff to supply a collection of materials and services. Hope this is what you were looking for. Randy Collver, Clatsop Community College
- More bilingual training and multicultural. More story telling training, regular visits to other storytimes for inspiration
- Training, time and money
- If this was supposed to be for public libraries only, please ignore my responses. When we build a permanent campus and then affiliate more strongly with the County Library and develop our early childhood ed program, we will most likely develop these programs. That is too far out to count yet... Mary
- Unfortunately we do not have the time nor funding to provide this valuable service to our community. Our priorities have been the pre-school & school age children. We are trying to expand our services to include more teen programming. Sheri
- Just to clarify my answer to #10: At MCL we've been fortunate to have excellent training provided already, but we're always up for more ideas, so I couldn't answer that with a 'no'! Thanks for everything you're doing!!!
- Solid training for all youth services staff in our department. Some of the principles we know already but there can never be too much training when you are sharing/teaching parents and other caregivers.

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List of Respondents

St. Helens Public
Gladstone
Corvallis-Benton County Public Library
Hood River County Library
Redmond Library
Ledding Library of Milwaukie
Lake Oswego Public Library
Driftwood Public Library
Curry Public Library District
Siuslaw Public
Canby Public Library
Coquille Public Library
Umatilla County Special Library District
Harrisburg Public Library
Mildred Whipple Library
Estacada Public Library
Beaverton City Library
Sherman Co. Public/School Library
Washington County Cooperative Library Services
Crook County
Tualatin Public Library
Tigard Public Library
Garden Home Community Library
Jefferson County Library
Salem
Willamina Public Library
Forest Grove City Library
Albany Public Library
Oregon Trail Library District-Boardman, Heppner
and Irrigon
Linn Library League
Wilsonville Public Library
Hermiston Public Library
Wallowa County Library
Umatilla Public Library
Independence Public Library
Cottage Grove Public Library
Josephine County Library, Grants Pass
Sherwood Public Library
Sandy Public Library
Athena Public Library
Corvallis-Benton County Public Library
Jackson County Library
McMinnville Public Library
Midland Branch, Multnomah
Newport Public Library
Douglas County Library System
Weston Public Library
Stayton Public Library
Langlois Public Library
Pilot Rock Public Library
West Slope Community Library
Newberg Public Library
Estacada Public Library
Pendleton Public Library
Lincoln County Library District - for Siletz Public
Library
La Grande PL
Baker County Public Library
Dora Public Library
Hillsboro Public Library
Molalla Public Library
Clatskanie Library District
Dallas Public Library
Scappoose Public Library
Astoria Public Library
Lyons
North Plains Public Library
Port Orford Public Library
Baker County Public Library
Kellenberger Library at Northwest Christian College
North Bend Public Library
Multnomah County
Woodburn Public Library
Lebanon Public Library
St. Helens Public Library
Union Carnegie Public Library
Coos Bay Public Library
Toledo Public Library
Myrtle Creek Branch Library
Clatsop Community College
Hood River County Library
Flora M. Laird Memorial Library
Siletz Public Library
West Linn Public Library
KCC
Tualatin Public Library
Klamath County Library Service District
Lebanon Public Library
Canby Public Library
MCL (North Portland)
Eugene Public Library
Hillsboro Public Library
Silver Falls Library District