

## Community Collaboration

*Collaboration and pooling resources with community businesses, organizations and individuals is a key strategy in designing many successful programs. Collaborative programs and projects can save money, help avoid duplication, establish long-term community connections, tap into ready-made audiences, and draw on talent to create high quality programs. For example, a community service group may have a mutual goal to support school readiness and is willing to sponsor the cost of storytime materials.*

Adapted from American Library Association & Carroll County (MD) Public Library Program Guidelines

### Tips for Healthy Community Collaboration

- build on existing relationships
- learn about each other's services and share resources
- join existing coalitions and networks
- meet with leaders individually and in small groups in informal settings
- invite partners to your internal meetings from time to time
- hold joint trainings and cross-train each other's staff
- market each other's services
- use written agreements as appropriate to help minimize miscommunication and create positive expectations
- be proactive in group problem-solving that allows all partners to benefit
- write collaborative grants and initiate new programs and services in partnership, even if only reaching a wider audience
- be open and expect change
- help each other succeed

Adapted from Sari Feldman and Barbara Jordan, "Together is Better: The Role of Libraries as Natural Community Partners," *Zero to Three* 21, no. 3 (2001): 30 – 37.

For more information, please contact Dorothy Stoltz, Carroll County (MD) Public Library, [dstoltz@carr.org](mailto:dstoltz@carr.org)

## *Growing Your Community Collaboration*

My idea is:

The needs of the audience are:

What services are already in place?

What services will need to be created?

What partnerships already exist that can support this idea?

I'll contact the following current partners to explore this idea:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Who else should be at the table – from the library? - from the community? What will their roles/responsibilities be?

How will the collaboration meet the needs of the audience being served? Describe the benefits.

How will the collaboration benefit potential partners?

I'll contact the following potential partners to explore this idea:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are the steps/activities that are needed to get the collaboration established and services delivered? Create a timeline (action plan).

What will you need to spend money on? What sources of funding can be explored?

What will success look like?

How will the collaboration measure success? What tools/expertise will you need to measure success?

Adapted from Maryland's Division of Library Development & Services & Carroll County (MD) Public Library

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## **One Strategy for Using ALSC/PLA *Every Child Ready to Read @ your library***

Carroll County (MD) Public Library – A Different Series of Four Activities – Presented each Fall and Spring – Sponsored in part by the Early Learning Challenge Partnership and Every Child Ready To Read.

Sample - Fall 2014 Series – Westminster Branch Library

### *1. Every Child Ready to Read @ your library: Read & Write – 10/4, Saturday 10 am - noon*

Did you know that children who start kindergarten with good pre-reading skills have an advantage? Writing – really scribbling – goes hand-in-hand with learning to read. Discover tips on helping your child get ready for school. The workshop will be in English & Spanish. Children's activities will be offered; please give the age of your child(ren) if they will be attending.

### *2. Sing & Write – 10/9, Thursday 3:30 pm*

Did you know that songs are a natural way for your child to learn language? Did you know that making marks, scribbling, and drawing are easy activities that help your child get ready to read? Come join us as we combine these activities to create a lively experience for children, birth through age five, and their grownups.

### *3. Library Café: Play & Write – 11/13, Thursday 6 pm*

Please join us for a conversation about how to encourage your child to scribble and draw to develop pre-writing skills. Make up a story to go with the drawing and sign your child's name to their art piece. Come build on what you already know about play to help your children get ready for school. The program will be in English and Spanish. Please tell us how your library can help you and your children. Share ideas with other parents and caregivers. Have fun. Children's activities will be offered; please give the age of your child(ren) if they will be attending. A hearty snack will be served.

### *4. Family Yoga – 11/20, Thursday 6 pm*

This program is specifically designed as a child-with-caregiver class to offer a unique bonding opportunity to both participants. The program was designed by a child development specialist and yoga instructor to ensure that all poses are developmentally appropriate. Parents and other adult caregivers with children are encouraged to come, relax, and have fun! A hearty snack will be served.

Space for 20 families at each program. To sign-up please email \_\_\_\_\_ or call \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Maryland's Early Literacy Public Library Model**

### **Four Guiding Principles established in 1998**

- Parents are their child's first & continuing teacher
- Libraries are powerful resources for families
- Libraries do their best work in collaboration with parents, agencies, & public officials
- Information given to parents must be based on valid, reliable research

### **Maryland Library Café Components**

- ✓ Create a warm inviting atmosphere with food. This strategy is a great way to develop trust and a sense of acceptance!
- ✓ Offer children's activities
- ✓ Facilitate discussion using intentional conversation starters centered around one or two of the ECRR practices – talk, sing, read, write, and play

RESULT: Through the relationships built by the Library Cafes, librarians can establish or enhance their relationship with their partners and their customers.

### **Library Café Program**

#### **Conversation Starters**

One Set of Questions per Program

What gets you excited about learning?

How can you convey that excitement to your children?

Think back to when you were a child. How did you play? What did you enjoy doing for play activities? How can you convey that enjoyment to your children?

After librarians give examples of how to use books and toys together – ask

What did you learn?

What do you do at home with your children using books or toys that you'd like to share with your group?

*Final question at each session: What more can the library do for you and your family?*

### **Do you have a favorite early childhood collaboration to share?**

Dorothy Stoltz is researching this topic for a new book project with ALA Editions. The book team includes, Dorothy Stoltz, Sue Mitchell, Cen Campbell, Dr. Rolf Grafwallner, Kathleen Reif, and Stephanie Shauck.

To share your collaboration/partnership for possible inclusion in the book, contact Dorothy Stoltz [dstoltz@carr.org](mailto:dstoltz@carr.org)