



Welcome

Introduce self (ECLC and one of 7 national trainers for ALA's ECRR Initiative).

I am the organizer of this workshop, Children's Spaces: Family Places In speaking about early literacy environments with many people, I have learned so much from their expertise in a variety of fields. I thought that we all could benefit from the knowledge, the approaches, the perspectives each brings.

This pre-conference is purposely designed to draw a broad audience from different backgrounds and perspectives, and most hopefully to support communication and understanding among library staff who serve children, those who do facilities planning, library administrators, our architects, and interior designers and to learn together how to develop interactive environments that encourage children's language development.

Three objectives set forth as follows:

Objective 1:

You are able to articulate the importance of interactive, language-rich environments in developing early literacy, and the specific strategies for developing physical environments that promote early literacy.

Objective 2:

To experience making safe, comfortable, environments that foster curiosity and interaction out of spaces that were not.

Objective 3:

Develop more effective communication among library staff, including children's staff and planners and designers to best tap resources for ideas in making successful early literacy environments for children and their parents/caregivers

With this emphasis, you will NOT find us going into a lot of technical depth. That would be another workshop, or perhaps several workshops!

What you will find here is information not only on children and their development, but on how their development relates to and affects the learning environments we want to offer. In addition, you will be exposed to experiences from building a brand new library to "little space, little money".

No matter what situation you find yourself in, we hope you will open your mind to the possibilities. Not building a brand new facility? The underlying tenets still apply.

It is true that many of us are working with tight and shrinking budgets. It is also true that there is no price one can put on creativity.

So without further ado . . .

Folder—speakers list; 3 from business community, exhibitors?

More handouts on website

Agenda and introduce speakers

A quick look at the early literacy skills.



ECRR Initiative

Early literacy skills I will briefly enumerate are based on the ECRR Initiative and the research from the NICHD of the NIH

More info on website

Review for some, new for others

The definition we use for early literacy is this:

Early literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they can actually read or write. (see back of brochure)

NOT the teaching of reading; laying a strong foundation

Refers to children newborn to five years of age.

One of the things that this initiative brought front and center is that books do not just spring forth into the hands of four-year-olds as they prepare to enter school. Book knowledge, which we have long concentrated on, is part of a continuum of language development. Written language is based on oral language development.

Another aspect that came out of the ECRR initiative is that it is the adult who is with the child every day who is key in that child's early literacy development. With that in mind, we in the library now look for ways to support early literacy interactions between the adult caregivers (parents, grandparents, child care providers) and the children themselves. This approach expands our role with children, with families, and in the community.

Early literacy is one part of early learning. You will hear us talking about play and its importance. It is both the engagement that creates learning AND the way adults interact with their children that can help in expanding the child's world. We are talking about early literacy, and in playful ways! PLAY holds the basis for many skills, social, emotional, physical, and cognitive skills. The gift we can offer parents/caregivers is both an awareness and understanding of early literacy as well as strategies, ideas and activities that help them incorporate these skills into children's play.

Six Skills To Get Ready to Read

- Print Motivation
- Phonological Awareness
- Vocabulary
- Narrative Skills
- Print Awareness
- Letter Knowledge

EVERY CHILD READY TO READ @your library

Refer participants to Parent Guide to Early Literacy brochures

Say definitions

These skills manifest themselves in different ways according to the development of the child.

So, let's look at each skill.

For each skill I will go over

1. The explanation of the skill
2. Why it is important for later reading
3. Examples of how it looks at different stages
4. Role of the adult in developing the skill

Print Motivation:

Phonological Awareness:

Vocabulary:

Narrative Skills: expressive language

Print Awareness: print has meaning

Letter Knowledge:

From the ECRR information some key points evolved:

- In understanding more about how the brain works, we found out that higher levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin, a chemical, enhances the brain's ability to make connections between the brain cells. This is how learning takes place. Higher levels of serotonin occur when a child feels loved, cared for and responded to. Keep the learning environment a caring and responsive one.
- Keeping the interaction around the book positive is key
- HOW we read with children is as important as THAT we read with children (provide opportunities for children to interact around books)
- Young children learn language and learn more language through social interaction and in context—that is, person-to-person—than through a monitor (TV, computer)
- Parents and caregivers are the key people to develop early literacy skills because they are there to take advantage of many teachable moments throughout the day.
- WE need to make sure parents/caregivers know this information and use it with their children daily in a playful way.

Early Literacy and Later Reading

Early Literacy Component	Reading Instruction
Phonological Awareness Letter Knowledge Print Awareness	Alphabets
Vocabulary Phonological Awareness Letter Knowledge Narrative Skills	Fluency
Vocabulary Narrative skills	Comprehension

Print Motivation throughout!

The elements of reading that are developed in school-age readers are in the second column.

Definitions (if needed):

Alphabets: concept that speech can be changed into print, print can be turned into speech and letters represent sounds in language.

Assumption that each speech sound (phoneme) has its own distinct graphic representation.

Whole process of using written letters in an alphabet to represent meaningful spoken words. Includes both phonemic awareness and word analysis (know how individual letters and combinations of letters are used to represent sounds of spoken English).

Fluency: ability to read with speed and ease

Comprehension: Understanding a text that is read; process of constructing meaning from a text.

Here we see the early literacy skills that support each of the school-age reading components.

Further info on your bibliography in folder

Questions? Comments

The first part of the program today is on

The Role of the Physical Environment in Fostering Early Literacy

Nina Ebbighausen and Marcelyn Sletten

We have the perspective here of an architect, one who “gets it,” and a library staff member for Minn. Central Library heavily involved in the whole process



There is a component of early literacy environments that we have not addressed here. That is the training of library staff and volunteers. It is people who make the environment interactive. The area can invite play and engage the child—experiment with gears on a wall. Child's curiosity and mind are working hard!

It is the adult who can help expand the experiences of the child. The library staff can be the catalyst for adult/child interactions. We certainly do not want to become sledgehammers.

However, with knowledge about early literacy, staff can model behaviors and engage in conversations acknowledging the important role adults play and helping them make the connections between play activities and later reading.

To wrap up:

What in the world is

curious

creative

fertile

influenced

influential

The mind of a child

The minds of children are best developed in caring environments with people and things that support their emotional, social, physical, and cognitive growth.

In terms of our young children, we now look to the public library not only for book knowledge but for language development because we are acutely aware that book knowledge and reading are part of a continuum that begins with oral language.

In addition, we recognize the critical role OF the child's parents and caregivers in their children's early learning. As a result our role in the public library shifts to seek ways to share with their adults what we know about child development, children's play, and language development in playful and engaging ways.

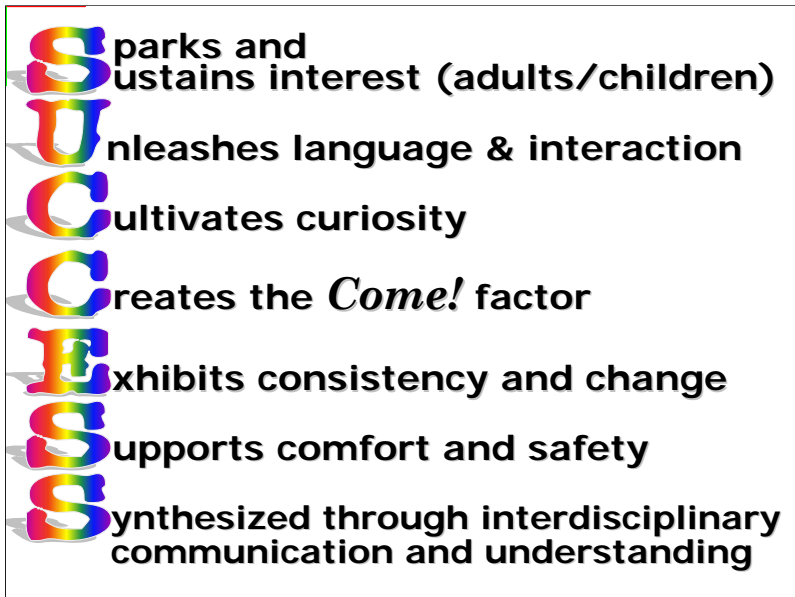
From front line to administration, from library staff to facilities staff and consultants;

From little money and little space to renovations and new buildings

Think what you will do, can do, with today's information

How can we work together? Think understanding, think process

When the whole process is engaged, no matter what the scale, the underlying tenets hold



Read slide

The limbic system of the brain likes consistency, repetition and predictability
The cerebral cortex, at the front of the brain craves novelty and change
How so we satisfy both?

We hope you recognize these tools for success as the path to your own success with making your public library an advocate, a catalyst and a magnet for children, families and partners in your communities.