



“The child who sits in a reader's lap is more privileged than a child who is given fancy computer games, state-of-the-art sports equipment, or designer clothes.”

- Rosemary Wells, children's author and illustrator

If you were raised by readers, you learned the coziness of sitting on a parent's lap for a story. You were comforted by the repetition of beloved tales. You learned how letters make words, how words look and sound, and how to turn the pages of the book.

If you weren't raised by readers, those things are not intuitive, but they can be learned. And that is the point of *Raising a Reader*, a national program coordinated locally by Rochester Public Library (RPL) staff at twelve sites throughout the City, supported in part by the City of Rochester and through grants and donations secured by the **Friends & Foundation of RPL**.

“We try to make it as easy for families as we can,” said Amy McLean, RPL's *Raising a Reader* co-coordinator. Library Staff and AmeriCorps members visit each site weekly with colorful bags of books for each participating family. Staff select the books unique to each site, taking race, ethnicity, and language into consideration. Once a month, staff meet with families for a social event that includes a literacy tip, demonstration of the tip, and family activity. Each site also recognizes a 'Parent of the Month' for his or her commitment to the program.

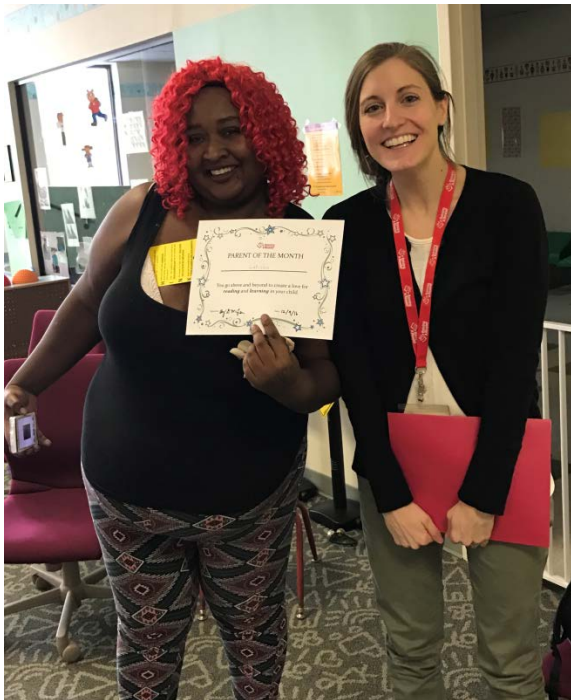
A recent monthly social event held at Central Library consisted of a scavenger hunt in the Children's Division, introducing families to book packs, VIP culture passes, launch pads, and other resources available through the Library system. Another monthly social event held at Pathways To Success, a teen parent center, included a free family photo shoot, which increased attendance fourfold and even brought some fathers out for the shoot and to hear the literacy tip. This clever event idea is being considered as a national model.

As a *Raising a Reader* affiliate, RPL has connections to national resources, and a recent professional development grant secured by Friends & Foundation of RPL allowed Library staff to tap into those resources here in Rochester and at the *Raising A Reader* National Institute in Baltimore. In October 2016, Derrell Washington, Manager of Program Advancement, came to Central Library from the Institute for a day of training for RPL librarians, literacy aides and managers, RPL Toy Library clerks, Safe to Be Smart staff, and AmeriCorps members. He shared his previous experiences as an educator in the Baltimore City Public School System to teach best practices of working with families in poverty and trauma.

“Derrell Washington’s training really excited the staff,” said Tonia Burton, Library Children’s Services Consultant and *Raising a Reader* co-coordinator. “Staff now have a better idea about *Raising a Reader* and can connect more childcare providers and families to the service.”

Amy McLean, Tonia Burton and Shamika Fusco, Phillis Wheatley Community Library children’s librarian, recently attended an annual training at the *Raising a Reader* National Institute. Amy attended training specifically for *Raising a Reader* coordinators, while Tonia and Shamika heard keynote speaker Ellen Galinsky discuss the ‘Mind in the Making’ program, supported by the Bezos Family Foundation. It is an effort to share the science of children’s learning with the public, families and professionals who work with children and families. Galinsky discussed the product Vroom and how libraries could benefit. The rest of the day provided a wealth of activities and ideas to engage families, how to adapt books for children with special needs, and networking.

Thanks to the City of Rochester and Friends & Foundation of RPL donors to the *Raising a Reader* program: George & Mary Bauer, the Max A. Adler Charitable Foundation, Rochester’s Child and the Rochester Northwest Rotary Club. Donations from these generous supporters – and people like you – make programs like this possible as we help families raise a generation of readers.



Pathways to Success ‘Parent of the Month’ Latisha Thomas (left) with co-coordinator Amy McLean. “I went home last month and practiced what we talked about,” Latisha said. She also returned to the library the next day for Tail Waggin’ Tutors after learning about it at the family event.



Practicing the literacy tip at the Central Library social event

Library Scavenger Hunt



Check off items as you see them:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Baby board books | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-Check Out |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parent computers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Picture Book |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kids' DVDs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Bathrooms |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A book in another language | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Place for Book Returns |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A holiday book | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kids' Magazines |

At what Library branch is the **toy library** located? Joseph (hint: see pamphlets)

What is a **launch pad**? Kidtable (hint: see aisle 18)

What is one museum or place you can visit for a discount with a **VIP Pass**?
George Esist House (hint: see pamphlets)

What will be on the 2nd floor when the construction is finished?
Teen Center (hint: older than child, not quite an adult)

Write down the name of a "book pack": George Esist (hint: they are bright orange boxes in the back corner)

How old does a child have to be to get a library card? (hint: see help desk)
3

What is one **November** event in the Children's Center at Central?
Rgos (hint: see calendar or board near fish tank)

What is one thing you learned by doing this scavenger hunt?
Where Kids Things
at in child center
Books on board

What one family learned about Rochester Public Library resources at the monthly social Scavenger Hunt

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