

**L535: Library Services
for Children and Young Adults**
Spring, 2003
Sarah Wright, Instructor

**Planned Program 1:
Daycare Preschool Story Time**

Abbie Anderson

I. Context

I am a newly hired children's librarian in the Kitsap Regional Library (<http://www.krl.org>), a county library system in western Washington serving over 230,000 people with a total of nine branches and one bookmobile. While the library has an established range of programming within library walls for children from age three months through school-age, and has worked with local daycare centers and other groups to design services and build library attendance, staffing limitations have prevented taking programs to other venues.

I was hired in part because of my storytelling experience. After making inquiries at local daycare centers and receiving positive responses to the idea of bringing developmentally appropriate library programs to them, I have received permission from the Director of Young People's Services to develop a series of regular preschool story times in the daycare centers, combining fingerplays, storytelling, book-sharing, and crafts. Two to three days per week I will leave the library to visit a different daycare, with the goal of visiting each participating daycare center at least once per month.

It is all too easy for libraries to either forget about the difficulties some people face in coming to the library, or to relinquish the effort to improve the situation under the weight of maintaining current library services. A new librarian like myself is a good candidate for initiating a program like this one, when I have not yet had time to have my attentions absorbed in the library's routine, nor to be burned out by the effort it often takes to reach new populations. I am naïve enough to try something this ambitious, and still think I'm having fun.

II. Objectives/Rationale

This preschool outreach program offers benefits to the library and to local daycare centers, and through them to the children and community at large in Kitsap County.

A. Objectives benefiting the Library

1. Reach populations who otherwise may not have visited a branch library or participated in children's programs there, and encourage future visits.
2. Extend library's goals of supporting emergent literacy and lifelong reading.
3. Limited cost beyond the librarian's time: the daycare centers host the program and provide the craft materials (unless the librarian plans something unusual), and promotion is at least initially limited to the daycare itself (not a general community "broadcast").

4. Heighten awareness of the library's services for children and their families by attaching a face and a child's experience to the brochures and other publicity that caregivers may already have seen (or disregarded).
5. Reinforce relationships with daycare staff and programs to improve and expand the design of future library programming both in and out of the branches, and weight those relationships toward two-way collaboration. Daycare staff members know their children and families well (or should), and can provide important feedback to the library about its services.
6. Build community goodwill, as it is seen that the library has an effective and positive presence outside of its branches.

B. Objectives benefiting the Daycare Centers

1. Relieve daycare staff of designing and running activities for the period the librarian is present.
2. Relieve daycare staff of planning for and performing a trip to the library in order to participate in library programs (this time, anyway).
3. Build ties with librarians for other programs and projects—opening communications for future input and collaboration.
4. Add a face, name, and experience to library materials normally distributed to daycare centers.
5. Provide additional resources for clients of the center (a bonus the center can advertise).

C. Objectives benefiting children

1. Make the library fun even when you're not in it (or even if you've never been there).
2. Present the library as welcoming and engaging.
3. Fingerplays, songs, and stories foster relationships with language and narrative that support early reading.
4. Crafts develop motor skills and aesthetics while reinforcing the shared story and providing a "prop" to retell the story later.
5. Children who enjoy the program bring a good word home to their caregivers, encouraging future visits to the library (or at least the anticipation of future programs at the daycare).

III. Target Age Group

1. **Age:** 3-5 (preschool).
2. **Characteristics:** Preschoolers undergo enormous development in their linguistic, emotional and social skills, as well as developing physically.
 - Linguistic: vocabulary acquired at a rapid rate, but real focus is on applying grammar. They are also learning how to use language not only

- to communicate needs or merely identify objects but to ask questions, convey feelings, and tell their own stories.
- **Social and Emotional:** Preschoolers interact more and more with other children, and begin to understand others' feelings and thoughts as separate from their own. Their growing interest in (and occasional confounding by) each other can make their behavior together harder to predict or control. They look to adults for approval and validation of their new abilities.
 - **Physical:** Preschoolers love to practice their growing physical abilities (sometimes pushing the envelope beyond the comfort of their caregivers), as they learn how to use their fingers more dexterously and accurately (e.g., from holding a crayon in their fists to holding a pencil between their fingers), and develop a finer sense of balance and control.
 - **Intellectual:** Preschoolers are entering the world of concepts such as cause-and-effect, color, size, and shape. They are ready to start learning about numbers and letters, and draw connections between visual symbols and words or concepts they already know. Their attention span has expanded to about ten minutes, but their new linguistic and observation abilities can make them distractible and fuel impulsivity.
 - **Imaginative:** Preschoolers enjoy stories where animals act like people, and stories that feature "silly" or contrary behavior or fantastic events. "Silly" words or movements are also highly entertaining, as children are learning the fun of playing with the boundaries of what they newly understand.
3. **Time:** Each program will last 30-45 minutes (with extra time allowed for completing crafts). Time of day will be set in morning (circa 10:00) or afternoon (circa 3:00) according to the daycare center's schedule and my duties in the library. The series will begin in the Spring, and continue for at least two months as a pilot project.
 4. **Setting:** Daycare centers.
 5. **Projected Attendance:** Captive audience of daycare enrollment. Size will vary with the daycare: as few as 5 or as many as 30.

IV. Staff/Personal Involvement

Initially, I will be the sole staff member performing the program. If the pilot does well other librarians may become involved, or may rotate daycare duties with me. Other library staff may become involved in the process through answering daycare phone calls and fielding my ideas.

I will plan one program per month, performing the same program at each center. Primary time commitment will be taken up in planning and refining the program; maintaining communications with the daycares; and traveling to and from the centers. To save planning time I may connect the daycare program to the theme of an upcoming or ongoing library event—thus promoting the in-house event through the daycare time.

Estimated time spent: 5-6 hours per month selecting and preparing materials (this may go down as I become more experienced); 2 hours per month communicating with daycare centers; approx. 6 hours per month performing programs; approx. 6 hours per month travel time (this may be conservative). Total estimated hours per month: 20.

Since this is a trial project, adjustments may be made in the schedule and staffing if the program takes off (or doesn't).

V. Estimated Costs per Month

- **Librarian** planning, performance, and travel time: \$340 per month (20 hours x \$17/hr.). Since I'm not paid to drive to work, and since this whole thing was my idea in the first place, I do not expect the library to budget for reimbursing gas or a driving allowance.
- **Materials:** Varies by program and daycare location, but minimal for inexpensive, unambitious crafts (I am *not* an arts-y or crafts-y person, and have the possible advantage of drawing on about the level of a six-year-old). For each session I will consult with the daycare staff about what materials they have available for the crafts I plan. In most cases the daycare will supply the craft materials as part of the partnership. Estimated costs per month: \$10.
- **Publicity:** The library already includes daycares in its budget for children's programming flyers reproduction. My activities may extend this slightly, as I may visit daycares the library hasn't reached, and will be there regularly enough to keep the supply up (and may create additional demand). I will also create a single page advertising the new daycare visits (see sample, enclosed). I will mail copies of this flyer to each center at least one week prior to the scheduled session, with a cover letter confirming the visit and briefly describing the planned program (so they have it on paper in addition to phone calls and/or emails). Total estimated costs per month: \$78, broken down as follows:
 - Photocopying: approx. \$20 (based on 10 centers per month with an average 15 flyers each at 10 cents per page, with wiggle room for making extra copies of regular library flyers)
 - Postage for mailing flyers: \$10 (including cost of envelopes)
 - Librarian time for publicity: \$51 (3 hours x \$17/hr., preparing the flyer and the letters; will be reduced after initial set-up as routine falls into place)
- **Grand Total Estimated Costs per Month: \$435** (rounded up; may be reduced over time as I become more efficient with the program)

VI. Publicity Plan

See Publicity under Costs, above. Publicity will be kept fairly low-key, since this is not a public event but is limited to each daycare center. Community

announcements will not be necessary. Both the library and the daycare may include word of the new program in their regular publicity materials.

Once the program is off the ground (but still new), I plan to contact local newspapers to see if they want to do a “human interest” story on the daycare visits (free publicity: the best kind).

VII. Program Procedures

Sample Program Script: Wiggle, Shake: Snakes!

N.B.: Script written as if this were my first visit to the daycare. Script is meant as a scaffold and will not be repeated verbatim.

A. Introduction

I will call the daycare before I leave I leave the library, to be sure we’re still “on” (since things can and do come up in the world of children). I will have visited the daycare prior to the first session to get the lay of the land and consult with daycare staff about how to use their space and what their children are used to. Daycare staff will introduce me to the children before I begin.

“Hello! I am the lucky librarian who gets to visit you today and sing some songs with you and share some stories. How many of you have been to the library? *[If I recognize any of them, I’ll say so.]* The library is where we keep lots of good books and do more fun things than I can count, and it’s a place for absolutely everybody under the sun. And right now I need to—touch the sun! Who wants to stretch with me? *[stretch arms toward ceiling]* And now—let’s do a rhyme that’ll be the same every time. *[I will use this rhyme for the opening of each visit, until we feel like changing it.]*

Action Rhyme: Hands on Shoulders (see Appendix for text)

B. Body of Program

Transition: “Oh, that was good. Sometimes I just need to wiggle—just wiggle all over *[do so]*. Sometimes I wiggle real slow *[do so...]*, just like a ... ssssssnake!”

1. Picture book (*Hide and Snake*, by Keith Baker) “Some people think snakes are scary, but I think they can be beautiful. Have any of you ever seen a snake? *[Keep snake stories to a minimum]* I have a book here that’s all about seeing a snake. It’s called Hide and Snake. Let’s read it together and see if we can spot that sneaky snake where he’s hiding in every picture.” *[Practice dialogic reading as we find the snake together on each page and talk briefly about the other “snaky” things in the colorful illustrations. The snake can be tough to spot even for grownups, especially at a distance, so be careful to focus on his/her distinctive rainbow stripes in the initial picture.]*

2. Storytelling (*Baby Rattlesnake*) “That snake was pretty tricky, wasn’t he? I have a story about a snake who thought he could be even trickier than that. It’s a story that Indians called the Pawnee people like to tell their children. It’s the story of Baby Rattlesnake.

“Now, grown-up rattlesnakes have a rattle on the end of their tails, and when they get mad or scared they shake that rattle real loud to tell whoever’s bothering them to go away. But *Baby Rattlesnake*, he was soooooo little—that he

hadn't grown a rattle yet. And Baby Rattlesnake, he *wanted* a rattle, more than anything. So he went to his mother [etc. See Appendix for outline of story.].

"So do you think Baby Rattlesnake learned something about how *not* to use a rattle? You can go home today and tell everybody all about how Baby Rattlesnake wanted a rattle soooooo much—and when his family finally gave in and gave it to him, he just thought it would be funny to scare people! It didn't turn out so funny for him when people didn't like being scared, did it? How do you think he felt when that proud chief's daughter broke his rattle? [brief discussion] But his family loved him and they were glad he learned something about how to be a rattlesnake."

3. Fingerplay/Song (Rattlesnake, Rattlesnake) "I'm going to teach you a song that's all about rattlesnakes and why they rattle. I think you know the tune already. I'll sing it for you once, and then we can do it together." [See Appendix for text.]

4. Craft (Envelope rattlesnake) "That was great—you guys are so good at this! Now let's go to the craft table, and we're going to make our own rattlesnakes to take home. I hope that you guys can come visit me in the library some time. Don't forget to tell your family what you thought of the crazy librarian today!"

Instructions: Put a dozen or so lentils or unpopped popcorn kernels into a #10 envelope. Seal the envelope, and shake the "shakers" into one corner. Fold the envelope in half lengthwise, and then fold up the corner triangle-wise with the shakers inside, so that the point of the triangle stands up over the "back" of the snake". Staple the triangle "rattle" down against the snake body (grownups handle the stapler for the younger children), and draw a snake face, snake stripes and rattle rings on your rattlesnake.

[Daycare staff will take over as we do the craft. I will stay to see the children finish their rattlesnakes, but there will be no formal conclusion. If the situation allows, a brief chat with staff will provide feedback and confirm plans for the next session. I will follow up with a phone call or email about how the session went from their point of view, and schedule the next visit.]

C. Resources and Handouts: #10 envelopes and lentils or popcorn (supplied by librarian if not on hand at daycare); stapler; colored markers or crayons. See sample "rattlesnake", enclosed.

If the program takes off and I get feedback about caregiver interest (which I will ask about), I will prepare brief lists of the stories used and related library materials—but at least initially, I don't want to be too pushy about giving the kids stuff to take home. My main purpose here is to extend the reach of library activities to daycare kids, raise the library profile, and generate goodwill for the library system. I'm less likely to make a good impression if I start out by foisting "homework" on parents through their children. If the kids like and remember our session, they will spread the word by going home and talking about it.

At least at first, I will not take extra "sample" books with me, since I can't check them out to the children directly ("Look! See these great books! But you

can't have 'em!"). Also, since the program ends with a craft, there will be little attention left for additional books.

Again, the format will evolve according to response and feedback, and may eventually be more strongly linked to in-library events. The more successful the daycare visits are, the more overtly I will work to connect the daycare visit with a library habit.

D. Specific Time Schedule

- Schedule visit with daycare.
- One week before visit: mail flyers with cover letter.
- Day of visit: call daycare before leaving library.
- Arrive at daycare 10 min. prior to scheduled start of program. Depending on traffic patterns and location in county, allow 20-60 min. driving time.
- Program: 30-45 minutes. Feedback from staff if possible before leaving; otherwise, phone or email later.
- Return to library branch as scheduled (20-60 min. driving time).

VIII. Bibliography

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Appendix 1: Texts

1. Active Rhyme: “Hands on Shoulders”

Hands on shoulders, hands on knees,
Hands behind you, if you please;
Touch your shoulders, now your nose,
Now your head, and now your toes;
Hands up high now in the air,
Down at your sides, then touch your hair;
Hands up high just as before,
Now clap your hands—one, two, three, four.

2. Storytelling: “Baby Rattlesnake”

Adapted from Margaret Read MacDonald’s version, which was adapted from Lynn Moroney’s picture book (which was a retelling of a tale from the repertoire of famous Chickasaw teller Te Ata). MacDonald references Frances Densmore, early 20th-century folklore collector, as a source, and says that Moroney speculated that Te Ata learned the story from a Pawnee teller she might have met on Chautauqua tours.

I looked up Densmore, and discovered a bloodier version of the story (the Baby Rattlesnake is killed when the chief’s daughter stomps his head into the ground)—and the significant information that the song was originally sung throughout on a repeated melody. Densmore did not provide the original text (just a summary in English), but she did provide the melody. I set words to the tune and it became the “Too Little” song that all the grownups sing to Baby Rattlesnake.

Summary: Baby Rattlesnake was so little that he had not yet grown a rattle. And he wanted one very badly. He went to his mother and begged her for a rattle, complaining how everyone had a rattle but him—but his mother just sang to him: “You’re too little for a rattle, Baby Rattlesnake. You’ll only get in trouble, O Little One. No, you can’t have it—don’t ask me!” Now, Baby Rattlesnake had heard this song before. Sometimes he thought it was the only song anybody ever sang to him. He didn’t like that song one bit. But he knew his mother always meant what he said. He didn’t give up, though, because there was someone else he could ask.

Baby Rattlesnake went to his father, and then his beloved grandmother, but they both sang the “You’re Too Little” song [for preschoolers’ attention spans, I do not keep repeating the song, but summarize the action]. So he got up his courage and went to ask his grandfather. His grandfather was an important

man, and everybody listened to him. If Grandfather decided he could have a rattle, he could have a rattle.

Grandfather didn't sing to him, but he did refuse the request, saying that Baby Rattlesnake was too little to know how to use a rattle properly: by the time he grew one on his own, he'd be old enough to use it. But Baby Rattlesnake still didn't give up. He pestered everyone he saw, whining all day and night about how much he wanted a rattle—until finally they called a council, and everybody decided that, while he really was too little for a rattle, maybe he'd learn something if they gave him one (and at least they'd have some peace).

Baby Rattlesnake was so excited when he got his new rattle, he made a new song: "Oh now I have my rattle, won't you look at me! I'll do such great things with it, just wait and see! I love my rattle—I love it!" He decided that the big snakes used their rattles to scare people, so he ought to see who he could scare. He hid in the rocks and waited while first his Auntie Rabbit came by, and then his Uncle Turtle. He jumped out with his rattle and scared them so badly they jumped up in the air and ran away, and Baby Rattlesnake was having a wonderful time. Then the chief's proud daughter came down the path, and when Baby Rattlesnake jumped out at her she just lifted up her foot and stomped down on his rattle, breaking it against the ground.

Baby Rattlesnake went crying back to his family over his lost rattle and hurt tail. They shook their heads and comforted him, saying he really was too young for a rattle. Grandfather asked him, "So did you learn something, Baby Rattlesnake? Now don't ask for a rattle again. Not until you are old enough to know how to behave!" And Baby Rattlesnake did not.

3. Fingerplay: "Rattlesnake, Rattlesnake"

I made up this Rattlesnake song when I could not find good snake rhymes in the collections I scoured. Set to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star".

Rattlesnake, Rattlesnake,
 Why do you rattle? [*hands up, in "why" gesture*]
 Do you wish I'd go away, [*"walk" fingers away*]
 Or do you want to battle? [*"jump" into battle stance, raising fists*]

"Look out, I'm here!" [*shake one fist like a rattle*]
 You say just right.
 And if I stay
 You just might bite! [*"bite" with fingers together, snapping shut*]

Rattlesnake, Rattlesnake,
 I think I know: [*tap head twice, on "think" and "know"*]
 If you rattle,
 I think I'll go! [*"walk" fingers away*]

Appendix 2: Sample Cover Letter and Flyer

Staff Contact

Happy Hypothetical Daycare Center

Address

Bremerton, WA

Dear Staff,

I'm looking forward to my story time at Happy Hypothetical next Tuesday (3/15) at 3:30, and I hope you are, too. I plan to get there about ten minutes early. I'll give you a call before I leave the library, to let you know I'm on my way and to make sure we're still good to go.

As we discussed before, I've enclosed some flyers to let your clients know about the program. My contact information is on the flyer if any of the parents have any questions. And of course they're welcome to come see me in person! Let me know if you need any more copies of the Library brochures.

This session will be all about snakes. I'll be sharing the picture book *Hide and Snake* by Keith Baker, and telling a Pawnee Indian story called "Baby Rattlesnake", with a rhyme to start out with and a song to close. Then we'll make the "envelope rattlesnakes" I talked with you about over the phone. I'll bring the lentils to make the rattle sound—thank you for supplying the #10 envelopes, markers, and stapler! I'll be doing the craft, too, and can help assist the kids with the one bit of stapling.

Here are the instructions for the Envelope Rattlesnake: Put a dozen or so lentils into a #10 envelope. Seal the envelope, and shake the lentils into one corner. Fold the envelope in half lengthwise, and then fold up the corner triangle-wise with the lentils inside, so that the point of the triangle stands up over the "back" of the snake". Staple the triangle "rattle" down against the snake body, and draw a snake face, snake stripes and rattle rings on your rattlesnake.

Just give me a call or send me an email if you have any questions or if there is anything else I should know. Thank you once again for working with me on this project. I hope that you and the kids will enjoy it as much as I will!

Best regards,

Abbie Anderson

Kitsap Regional Library

phone

email