

# Storytime

## Caregiver Expectations

Collected from ALSC-L, Kids-Lib and online on 4/11/12

### General Handouts

#### Handout #1

We are so glad that you have chosen to spend time at the Library with your child, listening to stories. We want to make sure our story times are enjoyable for all, so here are some answers to questions you might have.

#### **1. Should I leave if my child gets noisy during story time?**

Children have different listening skills, depending on their stage of development and personality. But sometimes a noisy or active child causes so much disturbance others cannot hear or focus. So, if your child just doesn't want to listen today, you can leave the room briefly, and then rejoin us when your child is ready. Or perhaps you could try a different story time. Book Babies is 15 minutes (followed by 15 minutes of playtime), Toddler Storytime is 20 minutes, and All Ages Storytime is 30 minutes (20 minutes plus a craft).

#### **2. May I bring a snack for my child?**

A small snack, such as a bag of Cheerios, is no problem. However, please do not bring out a variety of foods. It takes the focus away from the stories, plus other children might attack you! Please clean up after your child. Snacks dropped on the floor should be thrown away before other children find them, or the crumbs are ground into the carpet.

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#### **3. Do I have to do all the songs and actions with the librarian?**

Be a positive role model! When you sing along, or do a finger rhyme, you are showing your child what we are doing is not only fun, but also important. So don't worry about being silly; we're masters at it!

#### **4. Is it OK to chat with my friend, or use my cell phone?**

Unfortunately, your chatting becomes a distraction for others. Please turn off your cell phone and have personal conversations after story time is over. Then you can hang out and visit wherever you are comfortable for as long as you want.

#### **5. Your schedule does not fit my schedule. May I bring my 5-year-old to a story time for babies?**

The programs are designed to fit the stage of development of the child, including listening, motor, and cognitive skill levels. So an older child might be bored at a story

time for toddlers, and a toddler might be overwhelmed by the complexity of the stories for preschoolers. Babies may be overwhelmed by the presence of busy preschoolers. We'll never turn anyone away, and we certainly understand that a parent could bring more than one child. But if you want a recommendation, check in with library staff and discuss which story time would be best.

## **6. Why all this information about early literacy?**

Experts believe that reading, singing, and rhyming are the best activities parents can do with their young child to get them ready to learn how to read. Librarians do those every week at story time! So we take this opportunity to give you tips on what you can do, as well as model for you some of the fun ways to bring books alive. We also periodically offer classes for parents to learn about Early Literacy and duplicate at home what librarians do in story time.

## **Handout #2**

### **It's Storytime!**

*X Library would like to welcome you and your children to our storytime programs. Research shows that parents who participate with their children in storytime activities help to foster a greater love of books and encourage their child's early literacy development.*

*Stories and activities for each program will be selected to match the developmental range of the children for which the program is intended.*

*To make storytime a happy, enjoyable experience, we ask your cooperation in the following ways:*

#### **1. Please discuss storytime with your child before you come.**

*Explain that there will be stories, fingerplays, singing and such. Young children are comfortable when they know what is expected of them. Please see that your child displays appropriate behavior during storytime.*

**2. Please be on time.** *Storytime starts promptly. Young children are easily distracted and late arrivals become the focus of interest.*

**3. We encourage parents to sit with their child** *beside them or in their laps and to participate during the program. This will make for a warm, sharing time.*

**4. You should not sit in the storytime area and chat** *with other adults once the program starts. By talking during the program you are demonstrating to your child that the program is not really important or worthy of his or her attention. Turn all cell phones and pagers to vibrate, and please, if you feel you must answer your cell phone, take it outside.*

**5. If your child is not happy or becomes restless, feel free to leave and come back when your child is calmer.**

**6. Please do not bring food into the library or storytime area. Food and drinks are not permitted in the library, except on special occasions and in designated areas.**

**7. If your child is playing with the trains, please make sure to return them to the desk before entering programs.**

*Our main goal is for everyone to have a good time. With your help we can develop and nurture your child's love of books and the library.*

**Happy Reading!**

## **Handout #3**

Welcome Everybody!

This is a special library time just for you and your young children. Here are a few rules to keep in mind when your program is in session. Your cooperation will help everyone to enjoy and profit from these programs.

1. Parent participation is key to the success of this program. You are best equipped to help your child focus on our activities. Please join in and show your child how much fun it is!
2. Please put toys and food away. They distract your child and others.
3. You will probably have lots to share with the other adults. There is time for this after the storytime. We would like to do the activities first, while the children are fresh.
4. If your child is crying loudly or otherwise distracting the group or in another sense "losing it," please feel free to step away for a moment and regroup. If you are unsure or concerned about your child's behavior, let's talk!
5. Young children are still learning appropriate ways to interact with each other and often can react emotionally to physical advances from others. Please help your child respect the personal space of others and help him or her negotiate his or her own space.
6. Relax! It is not expected that your child will sit still and participate in each activity. Our goal is to have fun with rhymes, music and movement activities, songs books, and literacy rich activities.

Thanks for being here!

## Handout #4

Welcome to Storytime

Following these guidelines can help you and your child get the most out of the storytime experience.

**Talk** with your child before the storytime about what to expect. We have books, stories, puppets, songs and fingerplay activities. The themes for each week are listed, so you can help your child to anticipate the storytime experience.

**Arrive** on time. Sometimes coming late is unavoidable, but try to arrive a few minutes early to give yourself time to get settled before the storytime begins. If you arrive after storytime has begun, feel free to enter quietly.

**Model** the behaviors you want your child to use. Children will look to you to see what you do during activities, songs and stories. By doing the activities and by listening you reassure your child that it's okay for him/her, also.

**Attend** regularly. While we realize that it is sometimes impossible to come to every week of the Storytime season, coming to most of the weeks will allow your child to develop listening skills, confidence and to stretch their attention span.

**Enjoy** this special time for you and your child!

If you have questions, suggestions or concerns, please feel free to talk with me after storytime.

## Handout #5

### STORY TIME ABC'S

- A. Children have different listening skills, depending on their age, stage of development, and personality. If your child causes a distraction so that others cannot hear or focus, please remove them or take them to the back of the story time area.
- B. Please turn off your cell phones and refrain from personal conversations during story time.
- C. Please join in with your child as we sing and do finger rhymes.

- D. Our story times are designed to fit the listening, motor, and cognitive skills of the intended age group. An older child may be bored at a toddler story time, and a toddler may be overwhelmed by a preschool story time. We may ask older children to sit in the back.

## **Handout #6**

### **Storytime Expectations for Caregivers and Children**

#### **Choose the Right Storytime**

Storytimes are planned specifically for each age level. Your child will get the most from attending the storytime that is designed for his or her developmental level.

- Lapsit Lambs is for birth to prewalkers
- Mother Goose is for children 6–24 months
- Toddler Time is for children 24–36 months
- Preschool is for children 3–5 years (child may be unaccompanied but parent/caregiver participation is recommended)

#### **Come Early**

Attendance is limited to 25 children accompanied by caregivers. Please come early to avoid disappointment. Doors will close 5 minutes after storytime begins.

#### **Health and Safety First**

If the room is full, park strollers outside. Leave toys, puzzles, and snacks outside the story room. Constant coughing and runny noses mean it's time to stay home. Please visit the restroom before storytime starts.

#### **Join in**

Sing, clap, and play along, and help your child to do the same. Young children learn by doing, and you are your child's best role model. Maximum learning and fun depend on joining in.

#### **Model Good Listening**

Sit close to your child and be attentive to the presentation. Wait until storytime is over to chat with other parents. Turn off cell phones, please!

#### **Supervise Your Child**

Please do not allow your child to engage in potentially harmful or destructive behaviors. If your child is distracting others, please quietly redirect his or her attention. If your child becomes upset, please take him or her out of the story room. After a few minutes, you may rejoin the group, or come back another time.

## Handout #7

### Parent/Caregiver Information for Storytime @

Welcome to Storytime at S Library! Storytime is a wonderful way to help set your child on the road to reading and a lifelong love of books.

### Storytime Registration and Age Expectations

Registration is recommended but not required for both Preschool and Small Fry Storytimes. Registration helps give a general idea of how many people are interested in attending. Space is always available in both Preschool and Small Fry Storytimes.

Small Fry Lapsit Storytime is geared for ages 0 to 3 years old. Preschool Storytime is geared for ages 2.5 to 5 years old. All ages are welcome at either Storytime, but the program will be geared to the appropriate age level.

For Small Fry, everyone sits on the floor, with children sitting in their caregiver's laps. For Preschool Storytime, caregivers may sit on the floor with their children or in the back on chairs. Children may sit with their caregivers or on their own on the storytime carpet.

### Storytime Guidelines

To make storytime a positive experience for your family as well as others, please consider the following:

- **Discuss appropriate library behavior** with your child before coming to a program, particularly if your child is fairly new to the library.
- **Arrive a few minutes early.** Children need time to greet friends, adjust to a different environment, and to relax. Late arrivals are a distraction to both children already in attendance and the storyteller.
- **Do not leave your child unattended in storytime.** Bathroom emergencies, behavior issues, and other crisis are not at all unusual for young children. Please stay close and be prepared to take charge if the need arises.
- **Be considerate of others** by taking your child out of storytime if he/she is unhappy or disruptive. Feel free to return when your child is ready to listen.
- **Leave toys and snacks at home or in the car** so they do not distract other children.
- **Remember that your child is watching you, too!** Be a positive role model for your child by listening to the stories and actively participating.
- Storytime is a wonderful time for socializing — not only for children but for adults, too! **Please visit with other parents before or after, not during storytime.** Even seemingly quiet, personal conversations are distracting to others who are in storytime.
- **Do not be discouraged if your child doesn't behave like a perfect angel during storytime.** It is normal and quite expected that young children are full of energy. It is helpful to have a very young or restless child sit on their caregiver's lap during storytime, graduating to the "big carpet" when they are ready. If your

child's energy level does not match storytime for the day, please feel free to leave and come back another day.

## **Baby Programs**

### **Handout #8**

Welcome to Book Babies, designed just for you and your 0-12 month old. We're so glad you're here! These are a few guidelines that will help ensure all who attend will enjoy and benefit from this program:

**Adult participation is essential to the success of the program.** Please follow along with all of the songs and rhymes we do. Even when your baby doesn't appear to be listening, she loves to hear the sound of your voice!

**It is not expected that your baby will sit and participate in each activity.** However, if your child becomes unhappy or quite disruptive, please feel free to leave and come back when your child is calmer.

**You probably have a lot to share with other parents.** Stay and Play time has been set aside after the program for visiting with one another.

**Relax and have fun!** Our goal is to enjoy rhymes, songs, books and other language building play.

## **Fun for Ones**

### **Handout #9**

#### **Sing along!**

When you participate in the songs, rhymes, and action games, you are encouraging your little one's engagement.

#### **It's okay to take a break.**

It is not expected that every one-year-old will sit and participate in every activity. However, if your child becomes very disruptive or unhappy, feel free to leave and come back when your child is ready.

#### **Play time is for chatting.**

Please save your visiting & conversation with other parents until after the program.

#### **Have fun!**

Thank you for coming! Bringing your little one to story time is an excellent way to support your child's language development and early literacy skills.

## Toddler Programs

### Handout #10

Please do not talk with other adults once storytime begins. It is hard for children to pay attention if adults are talking during storytime.

Please remove your child from the Activity Room if he or she becomes restless or begins to cry. Behavior such as talking, playing or wandering around the room is distracting during the program.

Please turn off all cell phones. If you must use your cell phone, we ask that you do so outside the Activity Space.

### Handout #11

Welcome to x Library's Toddler Time program, developed in recognition of the abilities and needs of your 24-36 month old. We're so glad you're here! Here are a few guidelines that will help ensure all who attend will enjoy and benefit from this program:

**Adult participation is key to the success of the program.** You are the one best able to direct your child's attention, and your participation will encourage your little one's involvement with all of the rhymes and movements we do. Time to stay and play has been set aside after the program for visiting with one another.

**Toddlers by nature need to move – perfect attentiveness is not required.** Some children will enjoy participating, while others will choose to observe. This is to be expected. However, if your child is just not having a Toddler Time day, please leave the group and return when your child is ready. Your child's comfort level will increase each week as they become familiar with the routine.

**Please arrive on time.** Our goal is to enjoy rhymes, songs, books and other language-building play. Prompt arrival allows your child time to settle and feel comfortable during their visit with us.

### Handout #12

Toddler Story Time is a special time shared by a child and his/her parent, grandparent, or caregiver. Your child will begin to learn to sit and listen to a story. He/she will begin to practice being a part of a group and taking turns. Language skills will be enriched.



Concepts and ideas will be introduced and reinforced. Toddler Story Time includes stories, songs and finger plays, flannel board activities, a snack and an art activity.

**Important information:**

- 1) Please arrive on time. It is often uncomfortable for a child to transition into the group once it has started. It is also very distracting to the group.
- 2) Story Time sessions are not interchangeable. Your child may only attend the session for which he/she is registered.
- 3) Older siblings are welcome to sit in on the session. However, the art project is reserved only for the toddlers registered for this group. Talk to (storytime presenter) if you have specific needs.

**Before Story Time:**

- \* Let your child know what Story Time is about and that he/she will be sitting and listening to the stories as a part of the group.
- \* Remind your child of the “Library Etiquette” rules. These are posted in the Children’s Room.

**While Story Time is in session:**

- \* Adults sit with their children in Toddler Story Time.
- \* In order to maximize the benefits of Story Time for your child, please participate. Join in singing the songs, doing the finger plays and movements, and encourage your child to do the same. Have fun!
- \* If your child is having a difficult time on a particular day, try removing him/her from the group to help refocus. Walk around the room, and come back when he/she is ready. We all have our good days and difficult days. It’s ok to allow a toddler some leeway, keeping in mind the impact a situation has on the group.
- \* During the art activity, children should have the freedom to create. Assist and guide as needed, but please allow your child the pleasure and experience of learning how to use the materials.

**Following Story Time:**

- \* Allow time to browse and check out books with your child. Please carry your Library card.
- \* Puzzles, LEGOs, blocks, and stuffed animals are available for play in the library.

## **Preschool Programs**

### **Handout #13**

Story Time is a special time for children to experience many new things. They will begin to learn to sit quietly and listen. They will practice being a part of a group, taking turns, sharing ideas, and socializing with peers. They will learn to follow directions and will be introduced to a variety of new concepts. This is all wonderful “practice” for preschool

and kindergarten. Preschool Story Time includes stories, songs and finger plays, flannel board activities, a snack and an art activity.

**Important information:**

- 1) Please arrive on time. It is often uncomfortable for a child to transition into the group once it has started. It is also very distracting to the group.
- 2) Story Time sessions are not interchangeable. Your child may only attend the session for which he/she is registered.
- 3) Younger siblings are not invited to sit in the group at Preschool Story Time. This is a special time for your preschooler. Talk to (storytime presenter) if you have specific needs.

**Before Story Time:**

- \* Let your child know what Story Time is about and that he/she will be sitting and listening to the stories as a part of the group.
- \* Let your child know that once story time begins, he/she should stay with the group.
- \* Remind your child of the “Library Etiquette” rules. These are posted in the Children’s Room.

**While Story Time is in session:**

- \* You may sit with your child. It’s also fine if you want to “fade into the background” as your child becomes more comfortable at story time. However, we’d like you to stay in the room.
- \* Please talk softly if you are in the background and chatting with other adults. Background noise can get loud and is very distracting to Story Time participants.
- \* During the art activity, children should have the freedom to create. Encourage and guide as needed, but please allow your child the pleasure and experience of doing it himself/herself.

**Following Story Time:**

- \* Allow time to browse and check out books with your child. Please carry your library card.
- \* Puzzles, LEGOs, blocks, and stuffed animals are available for play in the library.

**Handout #14**

Our program has been structured to conform to the “Every Child Ready to Read” project of the American Library Association. This project outlines six pre-reading skills your child can start learning from birth, specifically: Narrative Skill, Print Motivation, Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness, Letter Knowledge, and Print Awareness.

This program is designed to encourage your child’s interest and enjoyment of books; nurture their self-expression in print, narrative, and physical form; and increase your child’s recognition and use of appropriate vocabulary for such items such as colors,

numbers, and directions. We present our program through storytelling, interactive Finger Plays, group songs/rhymes, and mini plays. In addition, each story time contains a small craft project that either compliments or directly plays into the subject of that story hour.

Please arrive 10 minutes prior to story-time to allow time for your child to acclimate to the new setting, locate his/her nametag and seat, and transition from your care to the new group. Late arrivals can be quite disruptive to the flow of storytime.

Children attending the story-time are at a wide range of development...generally speaking they are eager to express their independence in both interests and desire to participate or not in formal activities. If you feel your child needs help in accepting the new story group and encouraging his/her participation, we recommend the following:

- Arrive 15 minutes early to story-time...allowing your child to meet and become familiar with new “classmates” as they arrive, chat and interact with children they already recognize, and allow your child to adequate time to adjust to the new settings.
- Remain visible in the story-time area (there are window benches and parent’s table available), but don’t encourage lap-sitting or leg-clinging at this time.
- If your child is overly withdrawn once the class begins, calmly join in the circle...sometimes it only takes one session before a child prefers that you join the other parents.
- Our welcome and goodbye songs are the same for each class in the session, so you at-home repetition of these short songs give your child a pride in learning and an additional feeling of being part of the group.

Our short craft project will allow your child to develop skills using scissors, glue sticks, liquid glue, and coloring implements. In addition these projects reinforce letter and name recognition and concepts of following direction (in a given order) to complete a take-home item. As a parent of guardian, please feel free to assist all of us during the craft project times. Your help is handing out project materials, assisting individuals in accurately following step directions, and especially in the first couple of classes, identifying and assisting children who are less familiar with the function of scissors. A couple of additional comments concerning the craft portion of the program are:

- As previously stated, your child is at a sensitive point in development- some parents have found that “swapping children” during the craft project is very helpful- some children express less emotion and more interest and “can do” attitude when working with a non-familiar helper.

- Please remember craft projects are your child's refrigerator art...not yours.
- Oh- what to wear? Keep in mind that your child will be participating in craft projects... dress them accordingly.

I am dedicated to encouraging children to become confident and enthusiastic individuals who find comfort and pleasure through reading, storytelling, group activities and self-expression of ideas and concepts. If you have any suggestions or recommendation for this program, please don't hesitate to contact me at the

Handout #1 Deschutes Public Library (OR)  
Handout #2 Longwood Public Library (NY)  
Handout #3 Woodburn Public Library (OR)  
Handout #4 Madison Public Library (WI)  
Handout #5 Milwaukie Ledding Library (OR)  
Handout #6 Henrico Library (VA) – retrieved online  
Handout #7 Sun Prairie Public Library (WI) – retrieved online  
Handout #8 Tigard Public Library (OR)  
Handout #9 Tigard Public Library (OR)  
Handout #10 ????  
Handout #11 Tigard Public Library (OR)  
Handout #12 Millbrook Free Library (NY)  
Handout #13 Millbrook Free Library (NY)  
Handout #14 Preble County Library District Eaton Branch (OH)