

Early Literacy Storytime



Information School
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Developing accessible programming for the Lake City Court community



Ariana Meyrich-Blomquist, Alexa Townsend, Laura Ward

Lake City Court

28,000 residents living in Seattle Housing Authority communities



1/3 of all SHA residents are children

56% of residents are non-white, many of whom are non-native English speakers.



The Information Need

Language. Race. Culture. Socioeconomic status. These factors often result in children from low-income families entering school unprepared to thrive. Early learning research demonstrates that storytime positively impacts readiness to read and succeed in school.

Seattle Housing Authority knows that "strong education initiatives are essential to transcending poverty." Older children at Lake City Court attend YMCA tutoring on Monday and Wednesday evenings; during this time, younger children and siblings lacked access to an enriching activity. To fill this gap, we implemented Early Literacy Storytime.



Early Literacy Storytime goals: to aid the Lake City Court children's healthy development, foster a love of reading, and demonstrate to the community the value of families learning together to build literacy skills.

We targeted younger children and focused on vocabulary development, story comprehension and listening skills, setting them up for success in their future education opportunities.



Storytime was held in the community computer lab. Set-up involved moving furniture and preparing the space to comfortably sit in a circle.



Programming began at 5:30, with children and families trickling in throughout the program. Many participants stayed for one hour while others attended just storytime or just craft time.



We welcomed children of all ages. Each storytime included young toddlers, preschoolers, grade school children, and their parents.



Each storytime concluded with a craft and social time - a favorite with all participants.



Impact

Over the course of eight storytimes spread over two months, we worked with an average of **13 participants a week, telling 21 stories, singing 32 songs**, and leaving one binder with our storytime plans so they can be replicated by parents or volunteers.

"Whatever she does here, she takes upstairs." - Saniet, parent of 2-year old Ephrata. Saniet has never attended storytime before, but she decided to bring her daughter to our Early Literacy Storytime while she is on maternity leave.

Next Steps

"Storytimes matter!"
- UW Research VIEWS2 Project



It was our honor to introduce storytimes at Lake City Court. Our team compiled a list of the songs and books we shared for the community.

We hope that parents and other caregivers will find this a useful resource of age-appropriate books and fun songs to sing and move to, continuing to build literacy skills at home.