Storytime Evolution: Training Storytime Staff

Presented by
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Why are we giving you this information?
Who Are We?

Jefferson County Public Library

- 10 branches
- 124 story times per week
- Babies, Toddlers, Preschool, Family, Spanish, Discovery Play and Let’s Dance
- 95 story time staff
- Outreach staff and volunteers provide additional storytimes at preschools
Who Are We?

Denver Public Library

- 26 branches
- 72 storytimes per week
- Varied hours at each branch
- All-Ages, Babies, Toddlers, Preschoolers, Bilingual, Spanish and Intergenerational
- 65 staff presenting on a weekly basis
- Many others trained as subs and Read Aloud classroom readers
Day 1 focuses on the “why” of story time:
- Brain development in young children
- ECRR
- Literacy tip
- Story time competencies

Day 2 focuses on “how” to develop & present a story time:
- Observe a story time
- Framework for creating a story time

Self-assessment and coaching
Spanish story time training
Denver Public Library

- Storytime Part 1 - ECRR and Grownup Tips
- Storytime Part 2 - Structures and Objectives
- Observe others storytimes
- Introduction to Early Learning
- Optional online learning
Problems We Are Solving

Jefferson County Public Library

More of the “why” behind story time:

● Brain development in young children
● The six skills of ECRR and how they inform the five practices
● The importance of modeling literacy skills for caregivers; and the literacy tip
● Literacy-based story time competencies
● The book *Supercharged Storytime* inspired us to add self-assessment and coaching
Problems We Are Solving

- Creating consistency
- Creating a culture of early learning
- Encouraging hiring practices for early learning
- Empower providers through observation

Denver Public Library
Jefferson County Public Library

- Subject librarians at each location (Kids & Families, Teens, Adults) - they are the subject experts on site
- Generalists
- Not everyone does story time
Hiring for Storytime

Denver Public Library

- It’s a toss-up!
- Central has children’s librarians and no one else
Future Plans

Jefferson County Public Library

- Self-assessment and observation forms
- Identify areas for additional training
Future Plans

Denver Public Library

- Focus more on the self-evaluation
- Provide additional and ongoing training
Arapahoe Libraries

- New Storytime Specialists
  - 6-10 hours of storytime instruction including early literacy concepts, how to plan storytime, assessing and using materials, registration and logistics
  - 10-15 storytime observations

- Ongoing training
  - Monthly team meetings/discussions
  - Quarterly observations and 1-1 feedback with supervisor
  - Forms for self-directed assessment
Questions???
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Arapahoe Libraries
Who Are We?

Arapahoe Libraries

- 8 branches
- ~75 storytimes a week
- Baby, Toddler, Family, Spanish, and Bilingual Spanish-English
- 14 Storytime Specialists (*sick day and vacation subs assisted by 1 supervisor, 1 department lead, and several Child and Family Services librarians*)
- Bookmobile, Russian, and a few branch storytimes provided by other district staff
Problems We Are Solving

Arapahoe Libraries

- SS Team
  - maximize planning efficiency
  - increase training opportunities
  - support consistency of patron experience
- Revising Storytime Assessment Strategy
  - realign storytime goals with district mission
  - streamline observation forms
  - standardize supervisor feedback process
Arapahoe Libraries

- Storytime Specialist Team is housed in Child and Family Library Services along with the CFLS Librarians and a department lead, all serving children 0-5 years and their families
- Storytime Specialists are paraprofessionals
- Mix of 20-, 30-, and 40-hour positions
- Backgrounds are split between library children’s services and early childhood education
- Look for early childhood experience, child development knowledge, and commitment to helping whole families
Future Plans

Arapahoe Libraries

- Finalize an effective storytime observations and feedback cycle
- Gain practice using new assessment form to set individual goals for storytime practice
- Use storytime materials selection criteria/best practices to update 80-90 in-house Storytime Resource Packs
- Develop a peer observation process
- Use refreshed storytime competencies document to audit, develop, and guide onboarding and monthly team trainings