

Interpreter Corps Final Training

Creating Library Connections:

Early Literacy Outreach to Immigrant & Low-Income Populations
Summary of Discussion Questions from four small groups

TRAININGS

We offered 2 other training for interpreters (how to do a story time, and using the library catalog). How many attended each?

We had 21 interpreters at the Story Time training (first training). Of that group, xx attended the Library Catalog training, and xx attended this final training.

Now that you've had a chance to interpret at the story times and tours: What was the most valuable in each?

Story Time

- Librarians demonstrating the techniques used in story time at the training
- Opportunities to practice elements of story time at the training
- The enthusiasm of the librarians leading the training was infectious and made interpreters excited to do story time
- Learning with a community of like-minded people with whom to share knowledge and ideas
- Home languages were not only respected, but their use was encouraged for these story times
- Training was both *structured* and *fun*: those two elements together made for a rewarding experience
- Sharing languages with each other was fun
- Learning the importance of stories
- Effect on lives
- Interest in reading
- How to interest children while reading
- Using broad gestures
- How to translate so children can understand and not miss point
- Lots of information on how to pick out books for correct ages
- Right book for right child

- Cultural differences and similarities between language groups in attendance.

Library Catalog

- Step-by-step training was helpful
- Going over library website links that were relevant to families involved in the grant was valuable: ESL/Literacy links; Kidspage; links for parents and caregivers

Survey and Final

- Opportunity to go over the survey with others in the language group (or similar language groups) helped to refine difficult and/or unusual vocabulary, phrasing, grammar, etc.
- Opportunity to practice giving the survey helped to refine technique
- Dates grid helped to organize when survey needs to be conducted

What would make each training even better?

Story Time

- Be provided with a list of the books that would be discussed and used before the training occurs
- If some members of Head Start/ECEAP families could attend training, we could practice doing story time in front of representatives of our real, future audiences
- Being able to translate items - such as books, songs, poems, fingerplays, etc. - and then having a mechanism to share them with the rest of the group (or at least those with the same or similar home language)

Library Catalog

- More time for second training
 - Can't learn all at once
 - Folders for papers
- Having more opportunities to practice during and after the training would help us to remember the information better
- Easy to find books in own language now
- Hard to find books in language
- Hard to find terms in language

STORY TIME EVENTS

What comments have you heard from families who attended the two events?

- Enjoyed it
- Appreciate being able to use computers/internet/copier
- It reminded the parents the importance of reading to their children
- Happy to be able to get library card at library during the tour
- Parents excited
- Had fun with children
- Good turnout
- Translating went well
- Tiny room, lots of people - not sure if parents got it all
- All languages at same time difficult
- Parents like receiving a free book and puppets
- Seeing children enjoy story times
- Positive. Learned new things. People signed up for cards for selves and kids
- Puppet - kids very excited; talked for weeks. Kids liked getting books in home language
- Parents excited to be able to read books in home language
- Dad: now I know how kids learn English - repetition!
- Families starting to come to story times more frequently at library
- Kids became more interested in speaking their home language at home (Somali comment)
- Librarians and parents commented on good interpretations!
- Parents shared knowledge of library and library materials with each other (This was seen/overheard as an experienced library parent shared knowledge with a parent new to the library)
- Parents were surprised at what the library had!
- Parents thought it was good and relaxing to have an interpreter (Spanish comment)
- After a story time event, illiterate parents checked out books and "read" to their kids using the pictures! (Somali)

What is your own feedback about the events?

- First event hard to do - too crowded (Highline ECEAP) - too many people - not best

- I liked diving into my childhood - warm feelings, returning back to childhood
- Oral storytelling tradition
- Really liked enthusiasm of librarian storytellers
- Kids liked seeing home language respected same as English
- Centers need to share information about cassette recorder, computer, library brochures and tapes; talk tools.
- I would like to know ahead of time if the librarian(s) leading the library tour will want a word-by-word interpretation or a free-flowing interpretation
- Make sure the elements of story time are broken up into small enough pieces to easily interpret
- I would like to have notes ahead of time about the things that will be shown on the library tours
- Librarians should make sure, ahead of time, that there are materials left on the shelves to show during the tour (as opposed to: "This is where the children's Somali collection would be if we had any books checked in.")

GENERAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH/CONTINUATION

How can the library better welcome and serve your community?

- Like the magazines, newspapers and videos - videos/movies are a very good attraction
- Use the schools as a way to connect/ parent meetings at schools
- Flyers home with school kids (the translated ones)
- People from other countries don't know what libraries have to offer (they are for "scholars" only)
- Learned about the library from a friend who had been in the USA longer

What can the library do to make it easier for your language group to use the library?

- Children's librarians send home translated brochures with kids (huge help)
- Brochures placed at places of worship for new immigrants to learn about the library

- Do not feel discouraged if new immigrants don't participate. It is culturally not something they are used to. Most are from rural areas with no libraries.
- For those afraid to come into library, have signs & info about materials in different languages
- Wish story cassettes were available in other languages
- You can type into certain computer programs in home language - make these available to library patrons

How can Head Start/ ECEAP better welcome and serve your community?

- Afraid to come into library so make it less intimidating by arranging tours with interpreters
- Take flyers into community; for example, on Saturday and Sunday people go to meetings, so find out about and attend these events to share information about programs; or could send flyers
- Don't understand about HS/ECEAP & don't know where to go for info, so - share info by sending flyers home with children at public schools for their younger/preschool age siblings
- Temple on Sunday is place for information-sharing and conversation; contact the Imam and ask about recruiting at religious temples, mosques, meetings, etc.
- On home visits or at parent meetings, encourage ESL families to tape record home stories; loan tape recorders or give blank cassettes

As a result of this training/project, do you view yourself and your role as an interpreter differently?

- "I see myself as an advocate. Many Somali women can't read or write". She tells them they can still "read" with kids by looking at pictures, figuring out the meaning even if they're unsure of the words
- Somali interpreters want to improve their community. They would like more events around reading at center and on weekends & in summer when Head Start is closed. There is little to do for many of the young people.
- Interpreters are frequently asked for help - for example, help to fill out applications, to ask for books, to help ESL residents in their meetings with public housing staff.

Do you have suggestions for other avenues for spreading information about libraries/literacy resources within your language community?

- Offering interpreted Story times & library tours helps
- At elementary school - reach families through their older kids
- Summer time - kids out of school - need more library activities
- Libraries need to get out this information about summer story time and Story Fest
- Could share info at Boys and Girls Club
- Mosques - contact Imam
- Share at food banks, 2nd hand stores, Value Village