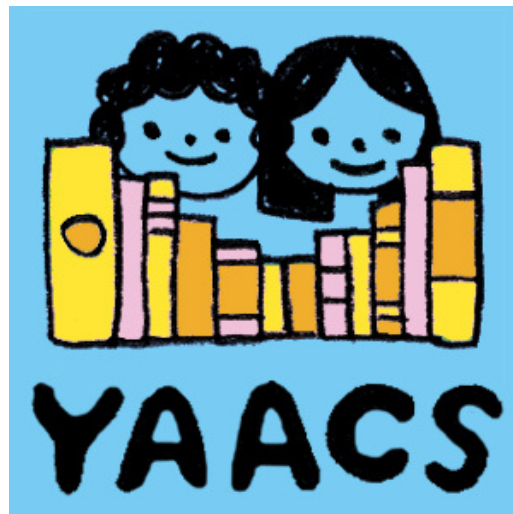


YAACING

SPRING 2024



NEWSLETTER FOR THE YOUNG ADULT AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES SECTION OF BCLA



YAACING is the newsletter of the Young Adults and Children's Services section of the British Columbia Library Association. We publish articles by library workers serving children and teens and students in library professional and paraprofessional programs. Topics range from program and event report-backs, to book reviews, storytime ideas, literacy tips and more! If you would like to submit something for consideration, please email: yaacing@gmail.com

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YAACING's editors would like to acknowledge that we work on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples including the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) and x̣ẉməθkʷəỵəm (Musqueam) Nations. This issue features pieces from what is currently known as Metro Vancouver which includes ancestral and unceded territory from many nations. If you would like to learn which territories you occupy, we recommend native-land.ca



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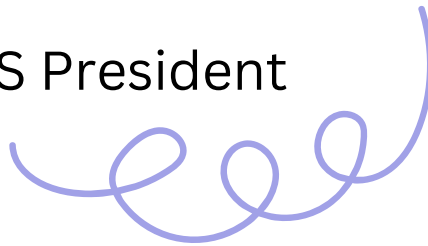
Something to share on social media?



yaacsweb@gmail.com

Letters

Letter from Emily Gow, YAACS President



Dear YAACING readers,

Thank you for continuing to show up and support YAACS. From attending meetings to reading YAACING to volunteering, we truly could not do it without you! Over the past year, we have been collection feedback from all of you and slowly making behind the scene changes. One of the things that we heard repeatedly is that you would like more opportunities to connect with and learn from your peers.

So with that in mind, I am thrilled to announce that YAACS will now be meeting monthly! From now on, YAACS will be meeting virtually on the last Wednesday of the month from 12:00pm – 1:00pm. Each meeting will be based around a different topic and there will be lots of space for sharing ideas and asking questions. We even have a few exciting guest speakers lined up! We hope that this new format will help to create a community of practice that reflects the broad range of library workers that support children, teens and families in B.C.

Thank you readers,

Emily Gow



Letters

Letter from Vernoica Blott, YAACING Editor

Hello everyone,

Thanks for taking a look at our latest issue! I want to start by thanking Emily and Sabrina for welcoming me to the YAACING team and thanks to Justin Bermudez, the new Art Director, for putting this wonderful issue together.

This spring, Lindsey from Jbrary dives into what's new with STEM toys and we have another great list of new and noteworthy books from Sadie. In addition to that, we have some helpful tips for preparing for Summer Reading Club from Stephanie Usher and the SRC team and a fun riddle from Red Cedar Books. This issue also includes a number of exciting features including a program run down for a stuffed animal sleepover from Nicola MacNeil, an article with tips and advice for new professionals from Rhiannon Wallace and a piece on empowering library volunteers during Summer Reading Club from Madeline Ewanyshyn.

We would also like to extend our congratulations to the YAACING award winner; congratulations Ginny Dunnill!

In our next issue we are hoping to hear all about the World of Curiosities that will be discovered during this year's Summer Reading Club. If you would like to contribute to YAACING please reach out to me at any time at yaacing@gmail.com with questions or ideas!

Happy reading!

Veronica Blott



News

The Young Adult and Children's Services Section Award Committee is pleased to introduce this year's YAACS Award winner: Ginny Dunnill!

The YAACS Award was established in 2012 and aims to recognize a commitment to outstanding patron service, collaboration and partnerships with community and supporting organizations, and innovative and creative work that promotes family literacy in all its forms. The YAACS Executive wishes to congratulate the winner of this year's award, Ginny Dunnill. Ginny has been a librarian with Richmond Public Library since 2019, having started as an auxiliary librarian while still in library school and finishing her MLIS in the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic. She is passionate about creating accessible, inclusive spaces for all community members, and is currently working on the launch of RPL's mobile library. Outside of librarianship, she enjoys teaching spin classes, spending time with her two cats, and honing the art of the perfect challah braid.



As a children’s librarian and part of the Community Services Team at RPL, the award committee felt that Ginny’s work in reaching out and connecting to marginalized youth, children, and related organizations was particularly deserving of recognition. Ginny’s nominator called her signature achievement her partnership with Aspire Richmond, which is the city’s largest non-profit that supports community members with disabilities. With Aspire, Ginny helped to create a developmentally-focused program called Grow with Babytime, which welcomes neuro-diverse and physically-diverse babies, as well as the Infant Development Playgroup. Ginny created RPL's Sensory Kits, which she discussed at her 2024 BCLA conference presentation titled “DiversAbility: How do we create programming that is inclusive for all patrons?”

In addition to her work with Aspire, Ginny has created many wonderful outreach programs in partnerships with local organizations:

- Tots & Tea is an early literacy and play program that provides food for families facing food insecurity;
- Engaging Artists in Community seeks to bring neuro-diverse and neuro-typical youth together to explore identity and self-expression through art;
- An after-school library program for the children of Thomas Kidd Elementary school, which self-identifies as a vulnerable school; and
- The library’s Community Art Wall, which exhibits art by marginalized children and displays by 2SLGBTQIA+ youth.

Somehow between all of this incredible work as well as her regular children’s librarian duties, Ginny has also dedicated her valuable time to being a previous member of the YAACS Award Selection Committee and publishing an article titled: “Every Child Deserves to Read: Supporting Young Readers with Disabilities”.

Congratulations, Ginny!

2024 YAACS Award Committee

Andria Huculak (Chair)

Vanessa Bedford Gill

Kate Differ

Mel Edgar

Katharine Shipley



News

Getting Ready for World of Curiosities: BC Summer Reading Club 2024 - Stephanie Usher

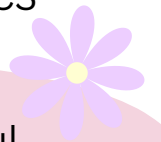
As public libraries across the province gear up to run their Summer Reading Clubs, we wanted to share a few helpful reminders and tips for running your programs this summer:

- The [BC SRC Staff Website](#) is your one-stop shop for [resources](#), including the wonderful Manual created by this year's Content Creators and edited by Kate Wood, our Co-Chairs (Larissa Clotildes, Victoria Ellis, and Gen Zichy), and Dr. Tess Prendergast and her UBC iSchool students. This invaluable resource includes programming ideas, activity sheets, booklists and more. Please share the Manual with any staff running SRC programs this summer. As with previous years, our [Public Website](#) will also have online activities for children, including quizzes, contents, and more.
- The [BCLA Online Forums](#), specifically the YAACS forum, is a great place to share ideas and to see if any other library systems have SRC materials to spare and share. Anyone can join the BCLA Online Forums, a BCLA membership is not required. For more information, please visit the [BCLA website](#).





- The Online Reading Tracker will be updated and re-themed by late May. While most of our participants opt to participate via the print reading record (which we love because it means children are visiting their local library!), it is important to provide and recognize this alternative method for participation. We will be adding another feature this year to include a static list of reading and activity challenges. Libraries will be able to update these lists if you have your own challenges, otherwise the BC SRC challenge list will be what participants see. For more information about the Online Tracker, please visit the [BC SRC Staff website](#).
- Through last year's Participant Feedback Survey, we were able to gather unique insights from caregivers on their child's SRC experience and shared this data with libraries. We plan to continue with the survey this year and hope that more libraries can promote the survey in your communities. The survey will open on Tuesday, August 6th and close on Sunday, September 15, 2024. More details can be found on the [Participant Feedback Survey information page](#).
- We love to hear your stories, so please share them with us! Every year, BC libraries create such amazing experiences for their communities, and not only do we at BC SRC love hearing about it, but so does the wider library community. (We just learned that the staff at Whistler Public Library wore inflatable dinosaur suits last year to hang out medals!) So please send in and share your stories, whether through the Staff Survey, via e-mail, or with a wider audience on the YAACS forum.



We'd also love to share some big shout-outs to some wonderful people who made BC SRC 2024 possible! Before we begin, we wanted to send a big thank you to Jennie Castleton of Surrey Libraries, our outgoing Co-Chair! Jennie has been heading SRC at Surrey Libraries for years and was able to share her expertise and knowledge on a provincial level. We appreciate all of her help and insights with previous years' theme development, editing the annual Manuals, and conference support.

Furthermore, we want to send our gratitude and appreciation to the wonderful Content Creators and their library staff who helped create our Manual! Thank you to:

- Kate Adams and the following Richmond Public Library staff members - Hannah Ahn, Ginny Dunnill, Linda Loceff, Haidee O'Brien, Deepika Thaman, and Geneviève Valteau
- Corene Brown from the Port Moody Public Library.
- Erin Crowley and the following Fraser Valley Regional Library staff members - Jan McAusland, Liana Herman, Brandon Monahn, Mandy Nilson, and Deanna Walker
- Krista Harrison, Stephanie Baum, and the following Surrey Libraries staff members – Adam B., Tracie L., and James T.
- Kelly Savage and the following Vancouver Public Library staff members - Suzy Arbor, Francesca De Freitas, Ning Ding, Jam Doughty, April Ens, Jamie Fong, Sabrina Gurniak, Cari Ma, Nicola MacNeil, D'Arcy Stainton, Tiffany Tse, Sadie Tucker, and Jane Whittingham

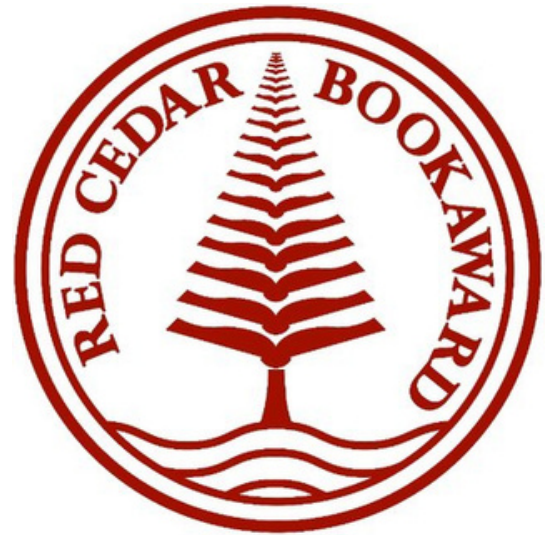


Lastly, a special thank you to Dr. Tess Prendergast and her UBC iSchool students who volunteered their time to be a part of the inclusion review. Thank you Marion Arnott, Ava Baartman, Veronica Blott, Laura Dickson, Kate Differ, Mira Harvey, and Madeline Parent.

We're wishing everyone all the best for this year's SRC and cannot wait to hear all the ways your communities explored the *World of Curiosities!*

Columns

Red Cedar Awards: The Mystery of Amy's Promise, Hana's Suitcase, and Me and Banksy - Marilyn MacPherson



What do *Amy's Promise*, *Hana's Suitcase*, and *Me and Banksy* have in common? Hmm, let us find the connection and unravel this mystery.

The first clue is that they are amazing stories created by Canadian authors, illustrators, and publishers.

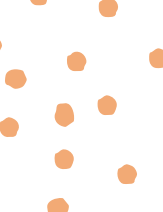
The second clue is that they are powerful stories connected by their ability to reflect lived experiences and lead readers into worlds not yet experienced.

Need another clue? OK!

They are also books that have given thousands of children, teachers, and families across this land known as British Columbia the opportunity to discover, connect, and be inspired by Canadian literature written for kids.

(Clue Person, you seem to be running out of clues! Oh wait, I get it - amazing stories for and about kids and the world around them that readers can become really excited by. An idea is forming. And there it goes. I need one more clue!)





Allright, one more clue. These stories have been thoroughly talked about, reviewed, and then voted for by students in grades 4-7 (ish). And (yes, this clue continues!) these books are part of a literacy program designed as a book award developed by Wayne and Diane Swanson who, in 1996, wanted to give kids the opportunity to encourage students in grades 4-7 to read more, create an awareness of Canadian books and authors and develop children's ability to judge published works.

(Clue Person, just one more teeny tiny clue?? Please??)

OK, one more. This will be an easy one as you will find the link and the answer to this mystery in this link: www.redcedaraward.ca.

(Clue Person, did you mean that these books are connected because they all won the Red Cedar Book Award? I knew that from the first clue!!)

But why did you ask for more clues???

(Because I wanted everyone to find out how awesome the Red Cedar Book Award is by giving readers a free, fun, and accessible literacy program and two thoughtful, diverse, and inclusive nominee lists for fiction and non-fiction readers. Hey Clue Person, I have a riddle for you – How do you shape and help the Red Cedar Award continue for the next 20 years? Hint – link!)



I can solve this!

Go to www.redcedaraward.ca or email president@redcedaraward.ca to learn about, volunteer for, and support the Award and future generations of Red Cedar Readers.

Columns

I'll Link to That:
STEM Toys and
Games - Lindsey
Krabbenhof, Jbrary



STEM might be one of the buzziest of buzz words in the library and wider field of education these days. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. There are many benefits STEM learning offers children and teens: fosters critical thinking skills, encourages creativity, supports innovation, prepares them for future careers. My favourite thing about STEM learning is that it builds resilience. To me, being able to try something new, make a mistake, and try again is the foundation that underlies all those other benefits. It's the mental fortitude to persist and think creatively. Many libraries support STEM through their circulating collections, offering STEM Kits families can take home to play and experiment with. Here are some of my favourite STEM toys and Games libraries can consider lending.

Ozobots

The Ozobot Evo teaches coding skills either screen-free with colour codes or with Ozobot Blockly. The [magnet kits](#) are my favourite because they allow pre-readers to join in on the fun. This little robot appeals to a wide range of ages and it doesn't hurt that it's absolutely adorable.

Snap Circuits

Learn about electronics and circuits in a hands-on and interactive way. They consist of various electronic components, such as switches, resistors, capacitors, LEDs, and motors, which snap together on a plastic grid using metal snaps. Around since the 1990s, these are a tried-and-true STEM toy. At my library we've been using the [Snap Circuits Light](#) kit, and my favourite thing is that each piece can be individually reordered as they inevitably break or go missing. If your patrons are really into circuitry also try the [Circuit Maze game](#).





Magnetic Tiles

I like both [Magna-Tiles](#) and [Picasso Tiles](#). If you can get a [race car](#) or [marble run set](#) it's extra fun and kids will play with these for HOURS. No batteries or charging required, but keep an eye out for broken pieces which may have sharp plastic edges.

[Straw Connectors](#)

Another great screen-free option! Kids can really let their creativity run wild building all sorts of contraptions. Straws can be cut to add more options for building. If the families at your library like making large structures then I also recommend [Dinosaur Foam Blocks](#).

Early Coding Robots

Coding robots aimed at kids ages 2 – 5 have really taken off. Want something pre-readers can use with ease? Try the oh-so-adorable [Cubetto](#). Want something that feels more like a game? Try the [Code-and-Go Robot Mouse](#). Want something that can turn into regular blocks if it breaks? Try [Cody Blocks](#). Want something the school-age kids will like too? Try [Artie 300 The Coding Robot](#).


Life Science Kits

Learning Resources is a great company to know about. Their human anatomy kits offer a 3D view to our insides. Check out the [heart model](#), [human body model](#), and [brain](#).

[Light Boards](#)

Also called Light Pads or Light Boxes, this piece of tech allows you to move from STEM to STEAM. I recommend including some tracing paper and writing utensils, or you can go the extra mile and pair it with a [calligraphy set](#). X-rays are also fun to inspect! If you are looking for more art ideas a [Spirograph kit](#) is a great choice.

[Spheros](#)



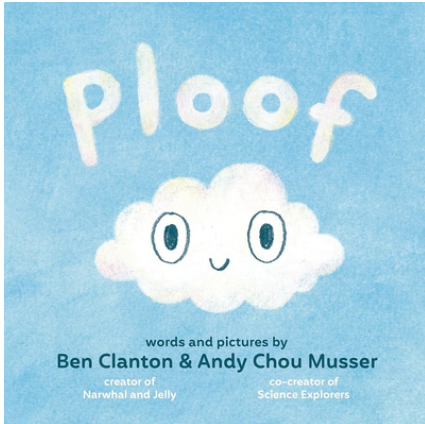
Sphero's “four remarkably cool coding robots” introduce kids and teens to computer science principles. There are tons of free, self-guided games and activities in the Sphero Edu app. At my library we host a Sphero Pride Parade every year where the kids decorate the Spheros and then we drive them around the library in celebration. I've heard great things about the [Sphero Specdrums](#) too!

What types of STEM toys and games do you lend at the library? I'd love to know! Feel free to email me at jbrary@gmail.com to share your best picks.

Columns

New and Noteworthy Books - Sadie Tucker

A few exciting books for littles, kids, and teens. A big thank you to Francesca de Freitas, Queen Esekhile, and Michael Brough who helped me to select and annotate these titles.



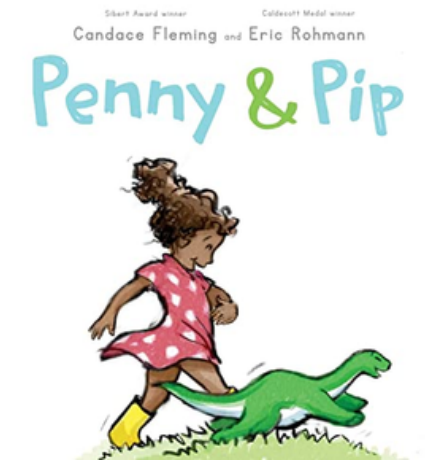
Picture Books – Babies & Preschoolers

Ploof

Clanton, Ben

2-5 years

Ploof, a friendly cloud who only needs a little encouragement to show off tricks. More social emotional content than similar books. Interactive elements include using words, like calling out hello, or encouraging the shy cloud, as well physical activities like blowing and making faces. a few pages of seek and find would only work with small groups.

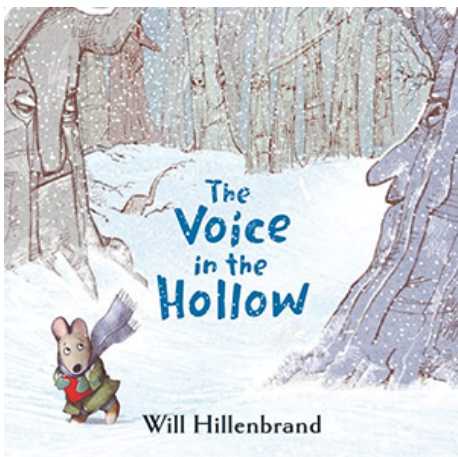


Penny & Pip

Fleming, Candace

3-7 years

When a dinosaur egg on display unexpectedly hatches, Penny befriends the baby dino and names him Pip. It's clear that the two are destined to be fast friends, but how will Penny sneak Pip out of the building? A gentle story with illustrations suitable for group read-alouds.



The Voice in the Hollow

Hillenbrand, Will

3-7 years

Hubert loves reading and visiting his local branch library. During a particularly bad snowstorm, he decides to take a shortcut home through the creepy woods. On the way, he meets a woman who smells like mothballs and she helps him traverse the tricky path. Featuring several wordless landscape spreads with subtle hints of creepy creatures, this is a refreshing take on the spooky picture book.



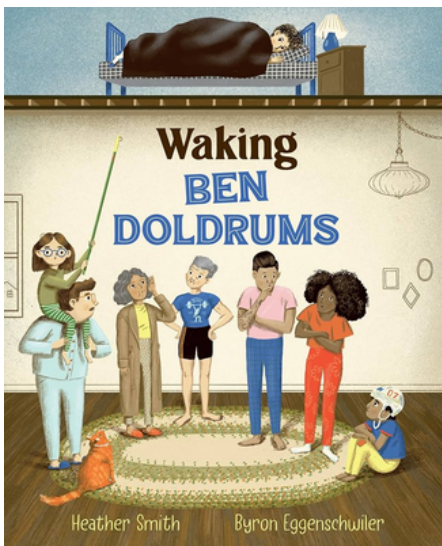
Picture Books – Big(ger) Kids

When the Stars Came Home 🍁

Luby, Brittany

5-8 years

Ojiig's family has moved to the city and he feels lost. He misses Mishomis and Kookum, he misses freshly caught fish, and he misses being able to see the stars. As he helps Mama with a quilting project, she tells him stories about his ancestors and he feels just a little bit better. The quilt's pattern is a secret, though. What will it be?

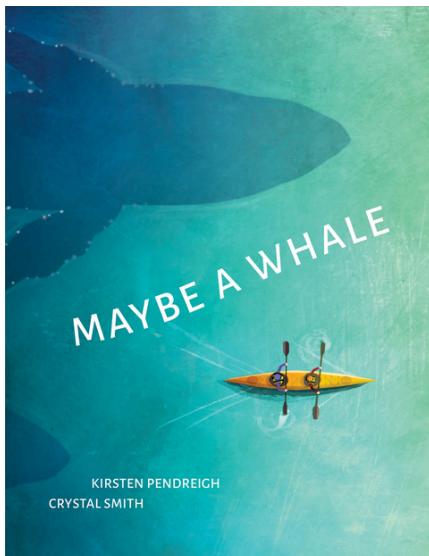


Waking Ben Doldrums 🍁

Smith, Heather

5-8 years

A girl lives in a close-knit apartment building with four units. When one of the residents, a young university student, becomes depressed, the neighbours try everything they can think of to cheer him up. In the end, just being there and providing a little support help Ben while he is in his depressive state. While CM magazine critiques the title for the neighbours' overly simplistic reaction to Ben's depression, the book demonstrates that sometimes mental illness has no easy solution and all that bystanders can do is be present. Worthy of discussion.



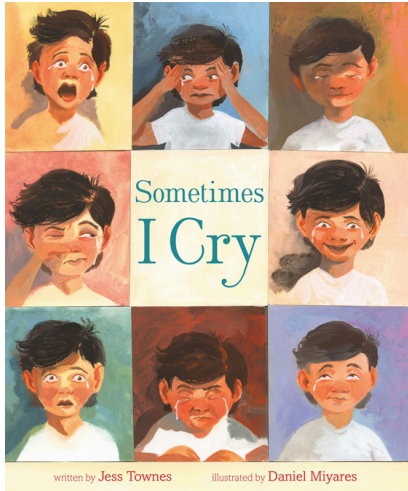
Maybe a Whale 🍁

Pendreigh, Kirsten

6-12 years

After a girl's grandfather passes away, she and her mother embark on a wilderness trip to visit the place where he first saw a whale. This is a gentle, slightly bittersweet story with plenty of depth.





Sometimes I Cry

Townes, Jess

4-9 years

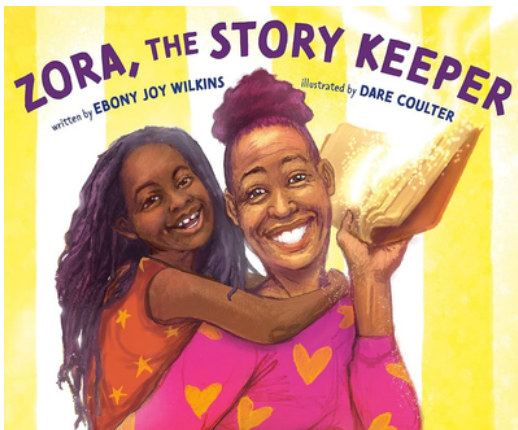
A young boy recounts the many reasons that he cries, from being hurt to feeling a surfeit of joy. Regardless of the reason, readers are reassured that crying is natural and healthy. The illustrations are suitable for group reading, presenting an opportunity to talk more deeply about the human experience.

Zora, the Story Keeper

Wilkins, Ebony

5-10 years

Zora stays with her Aunt Bea after school most days. Zora enjoys leafing through the family's history book that contains photos, dates, and stories recounting her relatives' lives. Her aunt is the family Story Keeper and a gifted storyteller that makes the contents of the book come alive. She says that Zora, too, is gifted and one day will take over her role in the family. The text touches the heart and the art is outstanding. Be warned: this one made half the workroom cry.



School Age Fiction – Intermediate

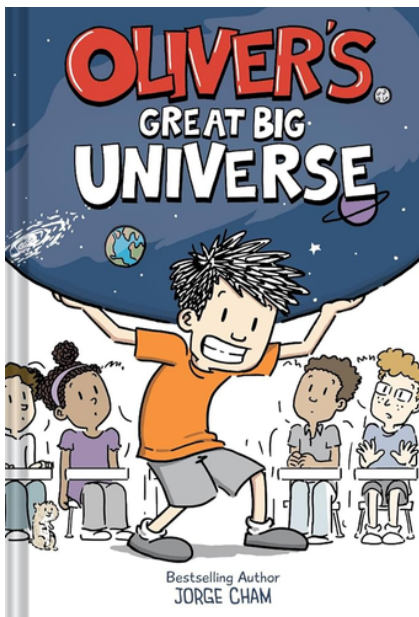
Oliver's Great Big Universe

Cham, Jorge

Illustrated fiction/Humorous fiction

8-11 years

11-year-old Oliver has just started middle school. A year earlier, he fell in love with space and is now determined to become an astrophysicist. Low on friends but big on personality, Oliver makes his hilarious way through middle school while sharing some truly astonishing science facts on the side. If you're looking for every instance of a fart joke in the book, check out the index at the back!





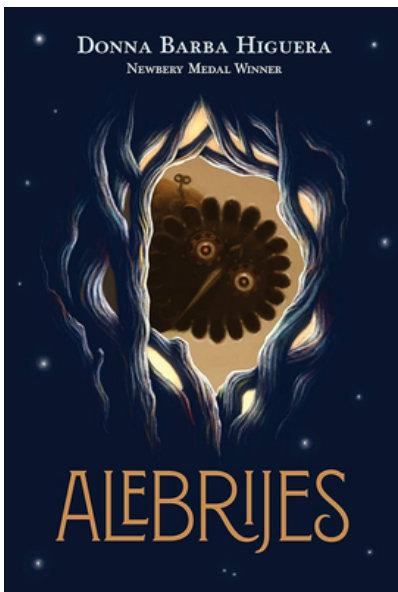
Things in the Basement

Hatke, Ben

Graphic novel/Fantasy

7-10 years

Milo has experienced plenty of change recently with the arrival of his twin baby siblings and the family moving into a new house. When Milo is sent to the basement to retrieve his sister's missing sock, he discovers a hidden world of creepy creatures, puzzles, allies, and sock-thieving rats.



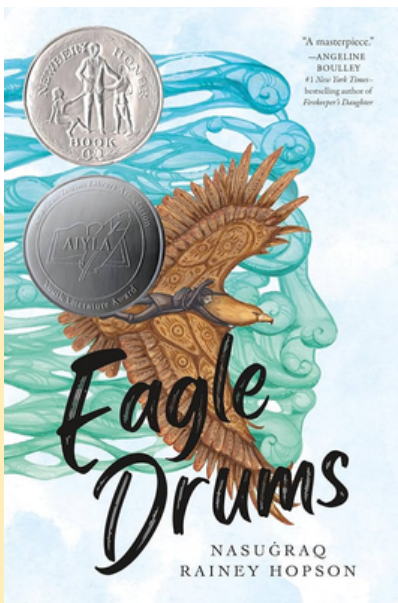
Alebrijes

Higuera, Donna Barba

Post-apocalyptic/Speculative

10-14 years

Leandro and his sister were so close to escaping the oppressive city of Pocatel. Then his sister is caught stealing a piece of fruit and Leandro takes the fall - which leads to his consciousness being transferred to a robotic hummingbird and being exiled to the wastes of the outside world.



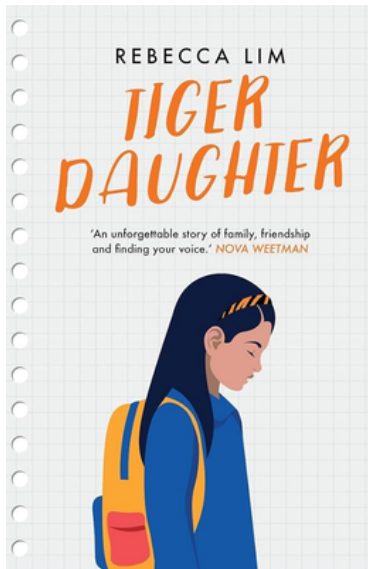
Eagle Drums

Hopson, Nasuğraq Rainey

Adventure//Fantasy

9-12 years

When Pina encounters Savik, a being who can take the shape of a human or an eagle, he is given a stark choice: Follow Savik or die. Following Savik leads to challenges and teachings that Pina could have never anticipated. Will he manage to make it home?

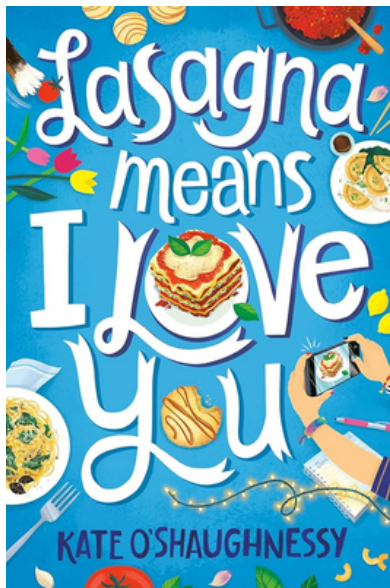
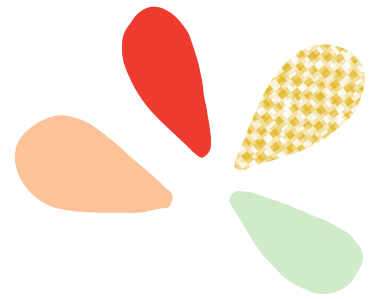


Tiger Daughter

Lim, Rebecca
Realistic

10+ years

Wen Zhou, a first-generation Chinese immigrant living in Australia, grapples with the weight of her parents' expectations and strict rules. Her life takes a transformative turn when she befriends Henry, another first-generation immigrant, and together they devise a plan to take an entrance exam at a prestigious school far from their oppressive home lives.



Lasagna Means I Love You

O'Shaughnessy, Kate
Epistolary fiction/Realistic fiction

9-12 years

11-year-old Mo has the rug pulled out from under her when she is thrust into foster care after her grandmother's death. Struggling to find her footing, she begins to collect other people's family recipes and shares them online. As Mo tries to adapt to her new life and is faced with even more change, she writes letters to her grandmother in an effort to make sense of it all.



Barely Floating

Rivera, Lilliam
Realistic/Contemporary

9-13 years

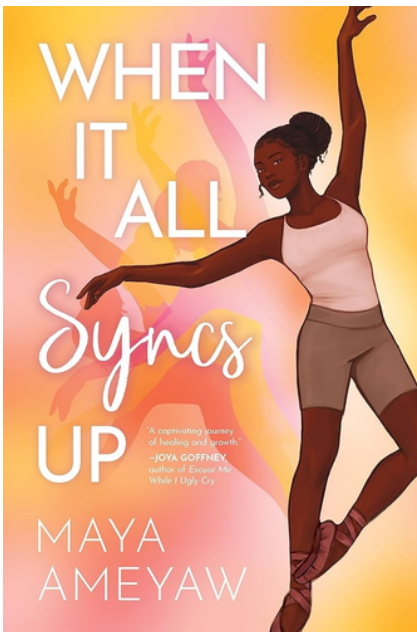
Nat, who is fat, has discovered her passion for synchronized swimming but her parents are worried about the sport's emphasis on looks. As she defies societal expectations and prejudice, Nat's determination and resilience shine. This empowering story delves into self-acceptance, the strength of community, and the ability to persevere through adversity.



Coyote Queen 🍁

Vitalis, Jessica
Magical realism
10-13 years

Ever since 12-year-old Fud and her mother moved in with Larry, the two have been living on edge, trying to avoid Larry's violent outbursts. Fud desperately wants out for herself and her mother, but the only chance she sees is winning an upcoming beauty pageant. As Fud prepares for the pageant, she also begins to develop a strange affinity with the local coyote pack. Inspired by the author's childhood experiences, this is an emotionally intense story that hikes well off the beaten track.



High School

When It All Syncs Up 🍁

Ameyaw, Maya
Contemporary/Realistic
14+ years

After being rejected for a ballet apprenticeship, 16-year-old Aisha impulsively decides to return to her hometown of Toronto. As she struggles with self-doubt and the racism-based barriers to becoming a successful ballerina, Aisha escapes into fantasy friendships with famous Black dancers.



The Scarlet Alchemist

Baker, Kylie Lee
Dark fantasy/Historical
14+ years

17-year-old Zilan dreams of becoming a royal alchemist and escaping the crushing poverty in which her family lives. When an opportunity arises to achieve her dreams, she risks everything, including her life, to make the cut. But her history of performing illegal resurrections follows her to the capital and ultimately embroils her in complicated political schemes. First in a duology.



Stuck with You 🍁

Burgoine, Nathan

Hi-lo/Romance/Contemporary

13+ years

Ben isn't the biggest fan of Caleb, a popular jock at their high school. When the two end up sitting next to each other during a train ride home to Ottawa, Ben realises that they have more in common than he realised. In fact, he might be developing a crush on him... As with most hi-los, reviews of this title are sparse but Kirkus calls it "an adorable romance".

Plan A

Caletti, Deb

Contemporary/Realistic

14+ years

17-year-old Ivy has big plans and they don't include becoming a young mother. When she discovers that she is pregnant, she plans to travel from her conservative Texas town to her grandmother's home on the East coast in order to get an abortion. Facing antipathy from her community, who has discovered her plans, Ivy's boyfriend plans an adventurous, touristy road trip across the country to cheer her up. Along the way, Ivy learns more about abortions and the diverse stories of people who get them.



No One Left But You 🍁

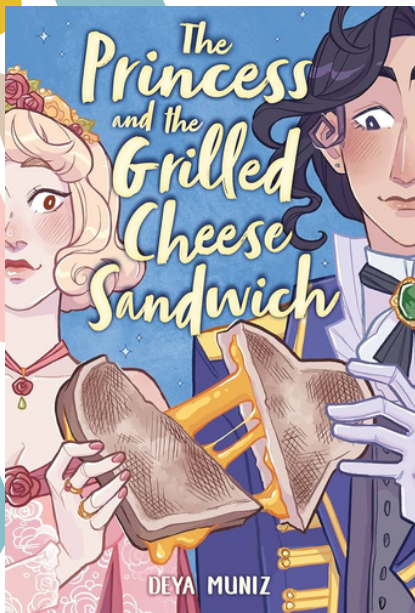
McAdam, Tash

Contemporary/Mystery

14+ years

17-year-old Max's decision to come out to his maybe-boyfriend ruined everything and now he is a social outcast. When Gloss arrives on the scene, Max is shocked to find a friend who embraces him for who he is and defends him from their antagonistic classmates. Then they go to a party, someone dies, and Gloss ends up in jail. As Max tries to figure out what happened, he is forced to unravel both a murder mystery and a potentially toxic friendship.





The Princess and the Grilled Cheese Sandwich

Muniz, Deya

Graphic novel/Romance/Humour

12+ years

In order to circumvent sexist inheritance laws, Lady Camembert has moved cities and reinvented herself as *Count* Camembert following the death of her father. Unfortunately, keeping a low profile is utterly dull. After unwisely attending a no-fur fundraising ball, Cam falls hopelessly in love with the crown princess. A sentiment that appears to be mutual. What will Princess Brie do when she melts away Cam's lies?



The Space Between Here & Now

Suk, Sarah

Speculative fiction

14+ years

17-year-old Aimee has Sensory Time Warp Syndrome, a condition that sends her back in time to memories associated with certain scents. Her normally close relationship with her father has become strained thanks to his belief that the syndrome can be overcome through strength of will. When Aimee is thrown back to when her mother left the family, she realises that the stories she has been told or only partially true.



Lunar New Year Love Story

Yang, Gene Luen

Graphic novel/Romance

12+ years

Valentina loved Valentine's Day until the fateful year when she was mocked by classmates and learned a family secret. Her childhood imaginary friend, Saint V has now become monstrous and demands that Valentina give up on love in order to avoid the family curse of inevitable heartbreak. When a mysterious lion dancer hands her a paper heart, Valentina decides to give love one last chance.



Features

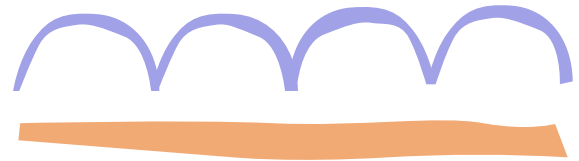
Creating Core Library Memories with Stuffed Animal Sleepover - Nicola MacNeil

Thirty-one stuffed animal friends descended upon my library during spring break to have an epic two-night sleepover at the library. Stuffed Animal Sleepover was not my idea, and people at my library have been doing it for years, but I learned a lot about organizing this staff heavy program. Though it is a program that requires quite a bit of organization and lead work I still want to encourage people to give this program a try.

Begining & Registration:

It takes a lot of trust for a child to hand over their most valued possession, so there is pressure to make the experience a good one. With the help of my colleagues we set up a registration table in the foyer of our branch. I made a simple registration form with all the pertinent information needed to keep all the stuffies organized- and this is very necessary once the tags come off and the photoshoot begins. Make sure you write a great description of the stuffed animal including any defining features- you will thank me once you get your 5th cat named Kitty. We let children pick out a pipe cleaner 'necklace' for the stuffy and attached the tag with care and then assured the children that their stuffies were going to have a great time. Treat the stuffy as if it is alive for this whole interaction.

Make sure that registration time is clearly stated so that the stuffies don't miss out on any of the group activities. Part of the reason I do a two-night sleepover is in case there are late drop-offs, and the other reason is to allow you time to put everything together with room for hiccups.




After registration, we immediately got to work taking individual photos of each stuffed animal. You do not need to do this step, but making laminated bookmarks for the children of their stuffed animals is maybe my favourite part, and I have saved you one step in creating a ready to go [template on Canva](#) to use. If you don't have a laminator you could print on cardstock. The bookmark template has three windows, and while we did three individual photos of each stuffy you could put a couple of group shots and just a single photo of the individual stuffy to save time.


Prior to the sleepover I had a brainstorm with my colleagues about what kind of mischief the stuffies were going to get up to, and I drafted a letter that goes home with every child about what happened at the sleepover. I would encourage you to take this opportunity to highlight new programs, materials etc. at your library. In my letter I highlighted some new STEM toys that we got at the branch for children to play with in the library. Use the letter in the template as a rough guide to get you started on planning your own stuffy shenanigans.




My coworkers and I then moved on to the group photo shoot. Get creative with finding cheeky things for the stuffed animals to do. A favourite from this year was my coworker's idea to have the stuffed animals photocopying each other. Other favourites include the stuffed animals registering each other for library cards, playing board games, making a mess in the children's area, and of course a bedtime story; it is the library after all.

A decorative border at the top of the page featuring a green triangle with a red nose and smile, a red shape with a pink nose and smile, a pink camera with yellow starbursts, and a large orange shape with a pink nose and smile.

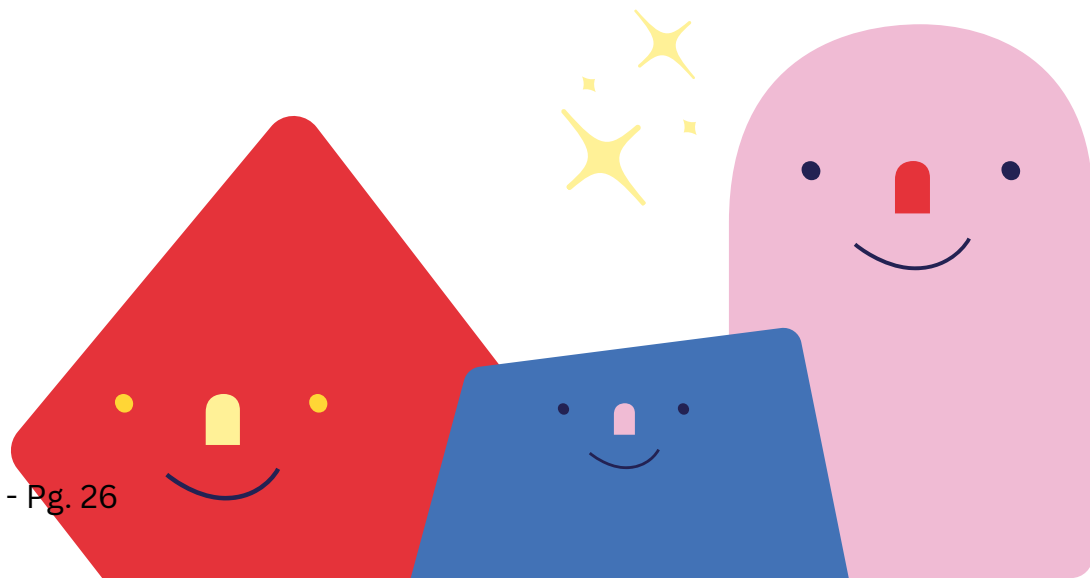
Upload your photos to your PC and then start plugging them into [the Canva template](#). For the three pictures on the front of the letter, include two full group shots, and then try to find a picture that features their stuffy. I also put the name of the stuffy in the little post-it note next to the three photo windows.

A decorative border on the left side of the page featuring a dark blue shape with a pink nose and smile, and a yellow shape with a red nose and smile.

I did run into a major printing issue due to the volume of stuffies I had and the amount of photos in the Canva document. My file size once I downloaded the print quality PDF was hundreds of megabytes and quite frankly the printer could not handle it. I had success by printing the 62 pages in a couple batches and by saving the standard PDF version instead of the print quality version. If you have fewer stuffies, just saving the standard PDF version should do the trick.

A decorative border on the right side of the page featuring a blue shape with a pink nose and smile, and a yellow shape with a red nose and smile.

The final step is retagging all the stuffed animals (this is where your great descriptions of the stuffy will come in handy), and putting their letter and bookmark together. Pickup happened gradually throughout the day and that was nice because you could spend a bit of time chatting with families about how much fun you had.





Besides being a program that is much loved by patrons of the library, this program can also be a really fun team building activity. I want to take this opportunity to shout out my amazing coworkers who helped make this happen- from taking photos, to designing backdrops, to registration, to handling stuffies with so much care, everyone had a hand in making this program successful. Maybe you don't have a team to support you in this program, but if you do, I highly recommend getting your team involved.

Stuffed animal sleepover is a program that becomes a core library memory for children. I have done it for two years in a row and children who brought their stuffies a year ago still have the bookmarks we gave them. This is a prime opportunity for the library to build trust and rapport with library families. My goal is always for children to know that if they can trust the library with their beloved stuffies then they can trust that we are approachable and kind. So what is seemingly all fun and games becomes the catalyst for a shy kid to approach the information desk to ask where the books about dolphins are.



Canva Links:

[Template for Stuffed Animal Sleepover Letter/Group Photo](#)

[Template for Stuffed Animal Bookmarks](#)

Nicola MacNeil is a Children's & Teen Services Librarian at the Vancouver Public Library, as well as a talented collage artist. Follow her on Instagram @NicolaMacNeilArt



Features

50 First (Start) Dates: Notes from a temporary contract worker in public libraries - Rhiannon Wallace

As a new librarian and former co-op student, I have worked a mix of different types of jobs, including temporary contract positions. This probably sounds familiar to many library workers! Working a temporary contract comes with its own challenges and opportunities. Here are some of the lessons I've learned so far:

Be ready to adapt to new workplaces and work styles:

What your position looks like depends on the size of the library, the type and length of contract, and other factors. Sometimes you work in a department of people dedicated to the same work. Sometimes children's and youth services are done by one or two people who dedicate part of their time to that work, while also doing other tasks.

There's also a difference between filling in for a permanent staff member and being an extra person on the job for a short period (for example, working in a grant-funded position). Your work may differ depending on whether or not someone will be in the same role to continue it when you're gone. The length of the contract also makes a difference. In a shorter contract, you may not have time to develop deep relationships with community partners and patrons. In a longer contract, you may develop these types of relationships and will need to transition them to other staff when you leave.

No matter how your new workplace is structured, you will use things that you've learned in other environments -- sometimes in unexpected ways. For instance, the communication skills I developed working in a library in a smaller community have helped me to adapt to a larger library system that has much more formal communication structures, but that also emphasizes community-led librarianship. I am learning to be confident in the skills and experience I have to offer, while also having the humility needed to adapt to new environments.

Talk to more experienced library workers

Your colleagues have a wealth of knowledge about the work that you're doing! They can also offer insight on your career goals. For early-career library workers, it can be frustrating to be always thinking about applications and interviews but not yet familiar with the unspoken expectations of the application process. Talk to colleagues, join your alumni Facebook page, or take an acquaintance out for coffee. Ask a manager if they would be willing to chat about the role before you apply. Say 'yes' to an interview debrief after you don't get a job: it may be hard to hear why you didn't get chosen, but it will help you next time. Also, get to know your union stewards! They can help you navigate each new work environment.

Take care of yourself (and others)



While temporary contracts offer opportunities, precarious work can also be stressful. Even though I am in a more privileged position than many, I have felt some of the uncertainty that comes with jumping from one job to the next. On top of the stress of trying to secure steady work, it can be awkward to feel like you're always having to compete with colleagues and friends because everyone is applying for the same jobs. Support each other however you can!

Personally, I've found that pacing myself is important. While working a full-time contract, I think twice about taking weekend auxiliary shifts at another job unless I have to. I try to have activities in my life that have nothing to do with libraries or with building my resume. If my experience doesn't apply to you, hopefully you can find someone who understands what you're going through and who will support you. Maybe you can also be that person for someone else!



Be ok letting go of your vision

Just as you will finish work that someone else has started, you will also be starting work that someone else will finish. I try to develop documentation that will be easy to pass on once I'm no longer on the team. But you also have to be prepared to give up control! No matter how meticulously you communicate ideas or develop programs and services, you don't know if and how they will be continued when you're gone. Trust that someone will continue your good work, even if they do it a bit differently than you would.

Be open to new types of work

Working temporary contracts in different libraries has been helpful for learning what types of work I enjoy the most, and what I want my future career to look like. For some of my colleagues, acting in supervisory or managerial roles has given them a chance to see if this type of leadership is a good fit for them. Don't count yourself out of a contract you might be interested in! Even if you wouldn't be the top candidate for the permanent version of the role, you may be considered for the short-term contract. Then you'll have even more to talk about during your next job application.


Each of my temporary contract positions has given me valuable experience. These types of jobs can be intimidating, but they can be a good way to try new things or continue work you already enjoy, and gain experience either way. I am always grateful for other library workers who share their perspectives and insights, and I hope mine are helpful as well! Let's keep talking and learning from each other.



Features

Cultivating Social and Emotional Well-being in Summer Reading Clubs: Empowering Library Support Staff and Volunteers - Madeline Ewanyshyn

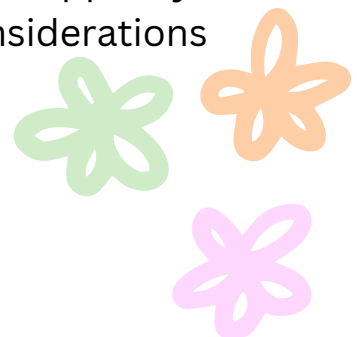
Madeline Ewanyshyn, UBC MLIS student. This article was created for LIBR 527.



Summer Reading Clubs (SRCs) have long been a cornerstone of public libraries' children's programming. Created to combat "summer slide"- the regression in skills and knowledge that students often experience during their summer break, these programs have the potential to evolve into something more. Notably, the Denver Public Library has redefined its program as a Summer Learning Program, that "...focuses on building relationships and facilitating social and emotional learning in addition to addressing summer learning loss." [1]



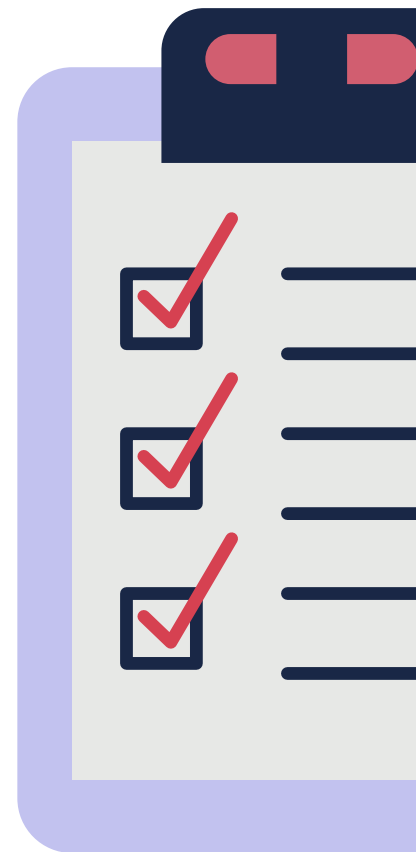
Whether your SRC program directly addresses Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) or not, there is something to be said about the importance of a social and emotional context to children's education that goes beyond the walls of their schools. Library philosophy, grounded in a sense of social responsibility, equips children's and youth librarians with a vital framework to contribute to these educational objectives. Therefore, as you hire temporary, student, teen, and volunteer workers to support you during SRC season, it is imperative to incorporate these considerations into their training.



CASEL Crash Course

Picture SEL as the guiding force navigating children through the world of emotional intelligence. Backed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), SEL encompasses five interconnected competencies:

- **Self-Awareness:** Facilitating children in recognizing and comprehending their emotions
- **Self-Management:** Equipping them with tools to regulate their emotions and behaviors
- **Social Awareness:** Fostering empathy by comprehending others' perspectives
- **Relationship Skills:** Cultivating positive interactions and connections
- **Responsible Decision-Making:** Empowering children to make thoughtful and considerate choices



By embracing these frameworks, library workers can not only enrich SRC experiences but also contribute to nurturing well-rounded children.

Supporting SRC Staff

Many public libraries will hire temporary workers (whether students, teenagers, volunteers, or paraprofessionals) to fill a gap in staff, and to facilitate and sometimes plan the SRC programming. They perform essential tasks, and yet often temporary workers can feel disconnected from their coworkers, or the overall culture, standards, and policies of their library, particularly if they are new to library work and have no library education.[2] How do we bring them up to speed and make them feel valued and included, just as we want our SRC participants to feel?

Here are some suggestions of methods for assessing training needs and ways to support your SRC staff:

- **Reflection Sessions:** Conduct individual or group reflection sessions where temporary staff can express their expectations, concerns, and areas they feel less confident about.
- **Interest Surveys:** Create surveys to identify their interests, strengths, and preferred learning styles.
- **Team-Building Activities:** Organize team-building activities to foster connections among temporary and permanent staff, promoting a sense of community.
- **Anonymous Feedback:** Allow staff to provide anonymous feedback to encourage honest communication about their experiences and challenges.
- **Goal-Setting Discussions:** Engage in goal-setting discussions to understand their personal and professional objectives during their time with the library.
- **Collaborative Planning:** Encourage collaborative planning sessions to involve temporary staff in decision-making processes related to SRC activities.
- **Feedback Loops:** Establish regular feedback loops to continuously adapt training programs based on the evolving needs and challenges faced by temporary staff.

Let's Get Training!

Here are some ideas for training that use SEL frameworks to benefit both staff and patrons. The training your library can provide will depend on staffing, resources, time, etc. This is a list of ideas you can use to build a training session or program that works best for your library

SEL Overview

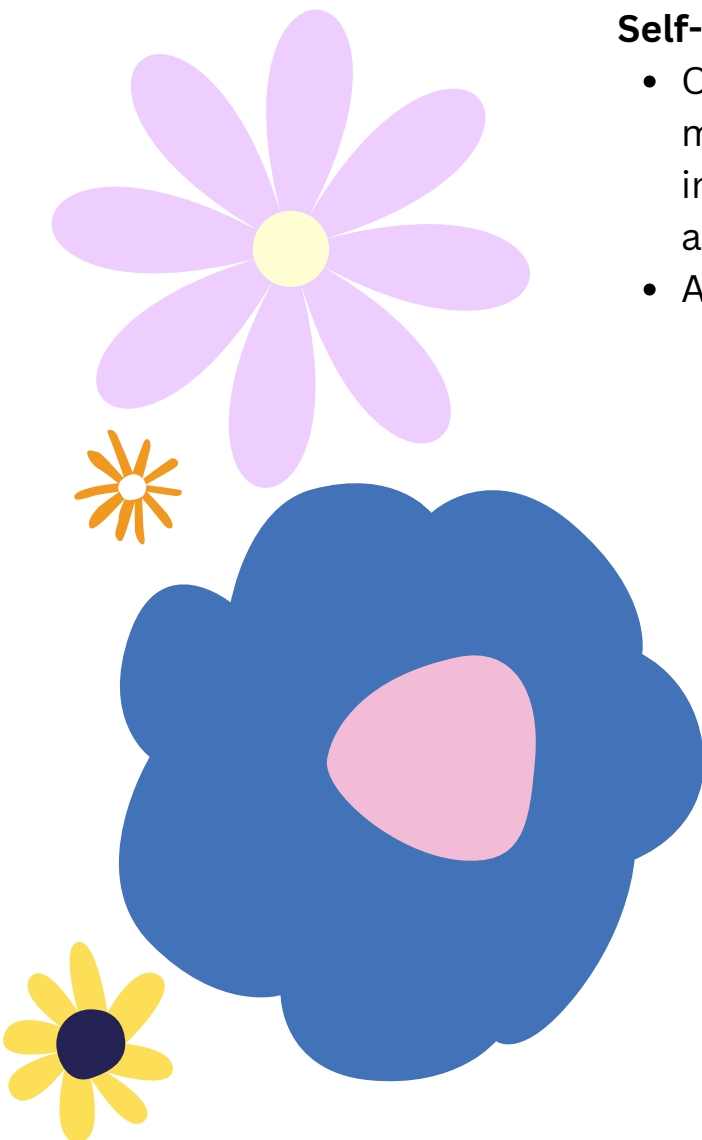
- Objective: Introduce staff to the five SEL competencies and discuss practical applications in programming.
- Activity:
 - Walkthrough sample programs, discuss moments where each competency is naturally applied, and areas that have room for improvement and/or opportunities to include SEL principles.

Self-Awareness

- Objective: Equip staff to recognize and respond to children's emotions during programs, and how to include teaching moments about emotional awareness into programming- such as in themed materials for storytimes.
- Activities:
 - Role-playing scenarios where staff practice recognizing and addressing children's emotions
 - Practice storytime activities which encourage children to recognize and comprehend their own emotions.
 - Teach staff to identify signs of trauma in children and implement trauma-informed practices to create a safe and supportive space.

Self-Management

- Objective: Demonstrate strategies for maintaining a positive program environment, including mindfulness, conflict resolution, and communication.
- Activities:
 - Interactive session on redirecting disruptive behaviors with positive reinforcement.
 - Lead an example of a mindfulness activity that can help children to be present and calm and regulate emotions.
 - Workshop on using open-ended questions and active listening to resolve conflicts.
 - Discuss diverse needs for all children, including sensory needs for neurodivergent children or anyone feeling overwhelmed, and brainstorm how to adapt activities to be inclusive of these needs.





Social Awareness

- Objective: Illustrate how programs can foster social awareness and empathy among children, as well as the importance of representation and how to be inclusive of diverse audiences.
- Activities:
 - Design a program that introduces children to diverse perspectives and experiences.
 - Workshop on selecting diverse literature.
 - Collaborative activities to create inclusive program materials.
 - Explain the “mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors” metaphor
 - Practical exercises on using inclusive language in program communication.

Relationship Skills

- Objective: Guide staff in building positive connections with children and their families during programs and teach children about communication, collaboration, and different kinds of families and relationships.
- Activities:
 - Team-building exercises emphasizing effective communication and cooperation.
 - Interactive sessions with scenarios, discussions, and role-playing to teach staff to recognize and address implicit biases when dealing with the public.
 - Role-playing exercises to train staff to actively engage with community members to identify and address specific needs, creating an inclusive environment.
 - Stress the importance of a family-centered approach, involving parents and caregivers in programs, and workshop family engagement strategies.
 - Workshop on selecting materials and creating activities that teach about and engage in subjects of relationships and communication.

Responsible Decision-Making



- Objective: Teach staff how to make responsible decisions in working with children, and how to incorporate decision-making opportunities into programs.
- Activities:
 - Discuss how to integrate storytelling as a tool to illustrate decision-making and critical thinking, and craft and workshop stories as an example.
 - Identify common ethical challenges in children's programming and role-play various scenarios, prompting staff to make responsible decisions and discuss the outcomes.
 - Introduce reflective journaling practices to analyze decisions in past programs and propose improvements for future sessions.




How Did We Do?

Here are some ideas to consider when evaluating training and implementing outcomes into future sessions:

Backwards Design Approach:

You can use a “Backwards Design” approach which was developed by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. To do this, you must start with your desired outcomes (in this case, what you want to see from your trained staff), determine how you will recognize its achievement, and finally, design activities to support that outcome. By applying this method, you ensure that your evaluation is aligned with the overarching goals of the training program.





Outcome-Centric Evaluation:

Your evaluation metrics should be crafted to measure the tangible outcomes of the training, emphasizing the practical application of knowledge and skills gained during the program. You don't want to only see higher SRC participation rates, but a profound and lasting impact on the community's well-being as a product of your staff's training



Other Resources For Developing Your SEL Training:

- <https://www.mindinthemaking.org/>
- <https://heartmindonline.org/>
- <https://www.empathylab.uk/ey-explorers-toolkit-2022>
- <https://www.orangepubliclibrary.org/books-and-more/special-collections-kids-and-teens/self-kits> (or SEL kits from your local library)



[1] Katie Fox, Erin Rooney McLean, and Hillary Estner, "Measuring SEL Competencies in a Summer Learning Program," *School Library Journal*, (2020).

<https://www.slj.com/story/Measuring-SEL-in-Summer-Programming-at-Denver-Public-Library-schools-social-emotional-learning>

[2] Emily Ford, "Struggling to Juggle: Part-Time Temporary Work in Libraries," *In The Library With The Lead Pipe*, February 9, 2011.

<https://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2011/struggling-to-juggle-part-time-temporary-work-in-libraries/>



Join us virtually for YAACS meetings!

We will be hosting meetings on
the last Wednesday of every
month from 12:00-1:00pm.

Our next meeting will be on
May 29th from 12:00-1:00pm
Link will be shared on the YAACS
forum, and everyone is welcome!

The topic will be: *All things summer
reading club*



Call for Submissions

YAACING is always looking for submissions of interest to children's and teen specialists in BC libraries. We accept articles, program descriptions and ideas, conference reports, reviews, felt stories, and more. If you would like to write a regular column, send us a brief pitch. Submissions should be no more than 1500 words, and sent in an editable format (not PDF). Please include a byline with your job title and workplace; for students, please include a byline with your school/program.

We want to hear from you! What do you want to read in YAACING? Do you read every issue cover to cover or jump around to what's most interesting? Do you click on the links? If there are any recent contributions that have been especially helpful to you in your work we'd love to hear about it! Email us any time at yaacing@gmail.com

For our Summer 2024 issue we hope to have submissions in by June 30th. Focus for the issue will be on programs and events that incorporate SRC's *World of Curiosities*, as well as more general summer programming. Thanks for reading, everyone!