



Library Month at Your Daycare

Fall 2015 Update

Prepared for:



THE ROTARY CLUB OF CALGARY



CALGARY
PUBLIC LIBRARY
FOUNDATION

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

Thanks to a \$75,000 grant provided by the Rotary Club of Calgary in June 2015, **Library Month at Your Daycare**, an innovative four-week early literacy outreach program targeted to preschool age children, day care staff and parents received a much needed injection of children's books and early literacy learning resources.

Library Month at Your Daycare is a new strategic initiative of the Calgary Public Library reaching thousands of children aged 2 to 5, their parents, and daycare staff at a minimum of 150 licensed daycares across the city in 2015. Thereafter, the program will aim to serve all licensed Calgary daycares annually. With a focus of instilling a love of learning in preschoolers and helping to educate daycare staff and parents about the five early literacy practices (talk, sing, read, write and play) the Calgary Public Library and the Rotary Club of Calgary are supporting the development of foundational literacy skills.

Early learning development and enrichment is vital to nurturing the potential of Calgary's children. This initiative delivers important early literacy messages and resources to parents, caregivers and daycare staff in communities across Calgary and it introduces the library as a vital educational resource to help support the development of early literacy skills.

Each week, a half-hour storytime for preschool children takes place with engaging picture books, songs, rhymes and fingerplays. The same repertoire of songs and rhymes is used every week over the 4 week series allowing the children and the daycare staff to learn them. In larger daycares, two or more storytimes per week may be delivered by Calgary Public Library. All children who don't have library cards are identified and a welcome letter and new card is sent home to parents at the first visit. Daycare staff are also encouraged to sign up for a library card.

Thanks to support from Rotary Club of Calgary, more early literacy resource materials can be left at the daycare for their staff and children to access and other resource materials are sent home each week for parents to access.

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

Beginning with a pilot in March 2015, Calgary Public Library has made 478 site visits at 92 daycares across the city. To date, over 11,000 children have participated in the ***Library Month at Your Daycare*** programs.

Calgary children aged 2-5 have been exposed to high-touch, high quality Library programs, collections of books and resources to inspire their development. Calgary daycare workers, caregivers and parents are being supported with early literacy best practice educational materials to nurture and help Calgary's children to succeed and thrive.

Calgary Public Library is on track to reach 150 daycares by December 31, 2015.

Rotary Club Calgary's investment has enabled the Library to purchase close to 4,000 children's picture books and board books to support the ***Library Month at Your Daycare*** program. As the library was previously utilizing the children's collections from various libraries, this impacted the number of children's books that were available to parents and children using Community Libraries. Through Rotary's investment, the Library is enriching the materials we provide through ***Library Month at Your Daycare*** which then extends the resources available to parents and children in library locations.

Early response to the program has been overwhelmingly positive. Here are some notable stories and comments from daycare staff describing the success and excitement around the program:

"Children loved to hear new songs and stories! It was one of their favorite activities of the day"

"Thanks very much for coming. The children really enjoyed everything, especially the actions. We learned a lot too and will use them ourselves."

"I asked the children to draw something they remembered from the visit and they all drew a picture – Don't Push the Button – they just loved this story. They were also singing the 'we're going to the moon' song. It was so much fun - Thank you!"

"The children LOVED it! They were extremely engaged in the stories and songs. The children enjoyed ALL of the songs, however, they are repeatedly asking to sing "Elephants have Wrinkles" over and over again. They are also very excited about reading the books from the library. They are especially excited to take them home!"

PROFILE, PROMOTION, SHARING

Library collections, selected and delivered to day care locations through the program, are packaged in bins that will be co-branded Rotary and Calgary Public Library recognizing and honouring the Rotary Club of Calgary's investment in children's literacy.

Rotary Club of Calgary's investment is providing critical funding to make this program possible. This program is allowing the Calgary Public Library and the Rotary Club of Calgary to be actively aligned with Calgary's licensed daycare community.

Significant research states that while talking and walking are innate; learning to read requires early instruction, information, and intervention by caregivers, including daycare staff. In line with that research, this city-wide, strategic initiative aims to further expand and enhance early literacy messaging and practice to licensed daycares, particularly targeting daycare staff.

Calgary children spend significant amounts of time in licensed daycares and there are 77,241 families in Calgary with children aged 0-4. As such, reaching out to Calgary's preschoolers through the city's network of daycares is strongly contributing to building a foundation of life-long learning, beginning with preschool children.



NEXT STEPS

With the additional funding for children's books and resources generously provided for by this grant, the *Library Month in Your Daycare* program will continue to grow with a goal of reaching 180 daycares by the end of 2016.

Calgary Public Library will continue to add books and program materials to the program which, in turn, adds to the resources available to all patrons across the library system. We anticipate adding approximately 1500 books to the collection by December 31, 2015 and an additional 2500 books in the first half of 2016.

The Calgary Public Library Foundation was able to leverage the \$75,000 grant from the Rotary Club of Calgary to create a matching fundraising campaign for *Library Month in Your Daycare*. With permission from The Rotary Club of Calgary the Foundation challenged library members and past donors to match the Rotary grant of \$75,000. The campaign was launched the last week of August and as of September 10th we have raised over \$46,000. Thanks to the Rotary Club of Calgary for encouraging community support through a matching grant.

As the program continues, Library staff will collect data regarding impact and outcomes with the intention of improving service to Calgary Daycares and improving early literacy learning methods. We look forward to providing the Rotary Club of Calgary with a detailed year-end report on the impact and outcomes of *Library Month in Your Daycare* in June 2016.

Thank you for being such a tremendous partner in supporting the development of foundational literacy skills. Rotary Club of Calgary's investment will affect the lives of Calgarians and the vitality of the city for generations.

