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## 2016 SUMMER PROGRAMS

### CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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The Children's Services Department had another great summer of programming! We made major changes with our Summer Reading Club this year. We also offered new kinds of programs throughout the summer as well as providing the community with their favorites.

This summer's Reading Program theme was **"On Your Mark, Get Set...Read!** It was a theme that promoted sports as well as staying physically active. Instead of having 2 separate summer Reading Clubs like we did in the past, we decided to revamp things and fuse both into one Reading Club for all (birth to entering 5th grade). All registrants still read at home, came in once a week for stickers for each book read, and received prizes for each week they showed. All registrants this summer, from birth to grade 5, were given the opportunity to write reports and/or draw pictures to submit. They also had the option of doing one-to-one book discussions with volunteers about the books they submitted reports for. In previous years we had only the older children, entering 2nd through 5th, submit a report/picture and participate in book discussions with volunteers.

This year, for the first time, we set up an on line registration tool that our patrons used to register their children and gave them the option to participate on line in the Reading Club as well. The name of the online registration tool was called Wandoo Reader created by Evanced. All parents were required to fill out the basic on line registration form through the Wandoo Reader link at our Library's website. This year we had 184 online registrants which was a little higher than last year's numbers. Once the Reading Club began on June 28th, books read at home could then be logged online at Wandoo Reader. Pictures drawn by the children could be uploaded at Wandoo Reader and children could also type their reports and submit them for our retrieval. We felt it was too soon to fully switch to online Reading Club participation and still made paper reading logs and report /picture forms available for participants to write out their book titles and reports on. Either way, all children came back to the library once a week for the 4 weeks of the Club. With a system that had both types of participants signing in together & then being assigned a volunteer to report with, both forms of the Club (online and on paper) took part side-by-side in an orderly and successful manner. According to statistics retrieved from Wandoo Reader, 95 children fully participated online and 89 still used the paper reading logs and report/picture forms.

An additional fun and interesting Wandoo feature was that the child could create and build their own online avatar. The more books a child logged online, the more points he/she received in their Wandoo account. Those points "bought" them parts and items to help build and change the avatar they created. Another new fun incentive directly tied into the Reading Club was the use of our PLINKO board. Each week that a child came to the Library and submitted a report and/or picture (online or on paper), they received 1 ticket. That ticket gave them 1 turn at the PLINKO board to win a special prize.

In conclusion, we felt that although a couple of features were clunky with the online system, it seemed easy for patrons to use when registering and fun for the children to use when they participated. Based on my limited experience with it during the summer, I found it easy at Reading Club Check In to retrieve registrant information (books logged) and see whether or not they received prizes/awards. Patron comments included opinions that parents and children enjoyed use of the online interface. There were also parents that stayed with the original option of participating because they wanted their children to continue writing out books listed and reports instead of just typing.

We kicked off our summer this year with The National Circus Project in late June. The audience was entertained, amazed & they even participated. In addition to our Summer Reading Club we had our ever popular Summer Picture Book Storytime that took place on Wednesdays. Older children participated in a Sports Cupcake & Game Program where they got to decorate cupcakes and play sports themed games. The older children also had a Sports Plaque craft. The younger ones, along with parents, had fun with JumpBunch Kids! They had fun learning non competitive soccer skills. We also had the popular Babies' Boogie & Toddlers' Tango program back for the younger set. We also brought back 2 popular incentive programs. We had our "Question of the Day" where we posted a sports themed question and the children gave the correct answer of the question for a prize from our treasure chest. We also had the children check our bookshelves for various laminated pictures of sports balls. If they found a picture and brought it to us, they received an additional prize from our treasure chest. Our Final Show for all our participants was Grins & Grins. The performer, Ray Grins, did some magic, juggling and comedy for the audience.

In early August we also had our popular Library on the Lawn Program where the little ones could play with bubbles, hoola hoops, jump rope, paints and other fun things in the summer sun. In August we also conducted a Perler Bead craft., a Walk-In Board Game Day, A Walk-In Arts & Crafts, and a Walk-In Build & Play program.

Each and every year, we have relied on the availability and help from Middle School and High School student volunteers. If not for those volunteers, we would not be able to run the Summer Reading Club as smoothly as we do. They are also very helpful when it comes to the story times and crafts/activities that we have available through out the summer. This past summer we had 56 volunteers help us out and we greatly appreciate all they've done for us.

During the month of August the Children's Staff made a visit to Little Hagedorn School and conducted several story times for students with special needs. We also made a visit to Plainedge Middle School and conducted a program for elementary and middle school children for the district's Special Needs Summer Program. We hope to continue with monthly visits to Little Hagedorn School and we look forward to visiting Plainedge Middle School for their Special Needs Summer Program next year.

All in all, it was a very successful, busy and enjoyable summer here in Children's Services. In late September, Senator Kemp Hannon's Office will be here hosting an Operation SAFE Child program where ID cards can be made for each child whose family participates. It was very popular last time it was held here and we are looking forward to having it here again. We are already moving on to planning and/or conducting exciting programs like our Storytimes, PlayGroups, Walk-In-Programs, Crafts/Activities, Parenting Programs and fun Food Classes for the upcoming fall & winter seasons. Soon our Fall Festival will be here & we hope to bring in hundreds of people in for that event as we generally do each year!