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Serving Over 11,635 Homes in Quarryville and Surrounding Areas

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Quarryville Library

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a five-weeks-on, two-weeks-off cycle. For an hour once a week, parents and caregivers of young children meet at the library to play with their children and talk individually with experts. They learn about child development,

parenting, and infant brain development, among other things. The adults also network with other parents and receive assurance that they are not alone.

"It's the opposite of traditional parenting programs," Hartman said. "We tell

experts that it's not lecturing; it's crawling around on the floor (with children and) interacting with parents."

Family Place is an important piece of the family-services puzzle at Quarryville Library. It is designed to meet the needs of parents

Quarryville Library Receives National Family Place Recognition

By Dayna M. Reidenouer

Quarryville Library was recognized as a Family Place library after almost two years of training and service to parents and their young children. On Aug. 12, two representatives from Middle County Public Library in New York state, where the Family Place project started, visited the library to present its staff with a Family Place banner.

According to a press release from the Library System of Lancaster County, the Family Place initiative is a network of children's librarians across the nation who believe that literacy begins at birth and that libraries can be community centers where parents can access resources while playing and learning with their children. The concept originated at Middle County in 1979 and was branded as Family Place in 1996. Since then, over 250 Family Places have been established across the United States. Pennsylvania has the most.

At the presentation, Lisa Kropp, regional Family Place coordinator from Middle County, praised Quarryville Library director Frances Vita and youth services coordinator Nicole Hartman for their dedication to the program. "Fran and Nikki are wonderful staff to have running this," Kropp said. "You can tell they're devoted."

To start a Family Place at the



Quarryville Library, 357 Buck Road, was recognized as a Family Place library on Aug. 12. Lisa Kropp (standing, center), regional Family Place coordinator, and Nancy Handy (standing, right), assistant coordinator, presented the banner to Renee Christiansen (standing, left), Library System of Lancaster County youth services manager; Frances Vita (kneeling, center), Quarryville Library director; and Nicole Hartman, (kneeling, second from right), Quarryville Library youth services director.

library, Vita, who was the youth services coordinator at that time, attended a four-day training at Middle County, where she gained tools, techniques, and resources for

adapting the program for Quarryville Library. When she returned, Vita ordered interactive and teaching toys appropriate for children from birth to age 3 and

contacted child and parenting services experts from around the area.

Since then, the library has offered Family Place workshops on

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with young children by connecting them with support networks and professionals in the community. For people who are transplants to the area, the library acts as a place for families to turn for direction.

"Family Place has opened

up our doors to an underserved population in our community," Vita said. "Now young children and adults are coming together here to develop their skills in literacy, development, parenting and even strengthening their relationships with one another. This program has helped Quarryville Library to expand its resources, programs, connect with people in the community, and to build partnerships with professionals. The best part of it is that we are giving young children the opportunity to become lifelong learners and to succeed."

Library System of Lancaster County youth services manager Renee Christiansen praised Vita, Hartman, and their staff for implementing Family Place. "The outcome has exceeded expectations," she said.

"Parents and adult caregivers with their young children have purposefully come to the library to share joyful times together, made friends with other families with young children, and at the same time met community resource people who shared some thoughts or tips on child nutrition, speech and language development, and more. What spells success too is that the families come back over and over again and ask about other library programs and take books home."

For more information, readers may stop by

Quarryville Library between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays; call 786-1336; or visit www.quarryvillelibrary.org.