

Family Place Libraries™

Building Foundations for Early Learning

What is a Family Place Library?

Based on a model of comprehensive family-centered services, a Family Place Library is a center for early childhood information, parent education, early literacy, socialization and family support. Expanding the traditional role of children's services, Family Place builds on the knowledge that good health, early learning, parental involvement and supportive communities play a critical role in young children's growth and development.

Family Place Libraries redesign the library environment to be welcoming and appropriate for children beginning at birth; connect parents with resources, programs and services offered at the library and other family service agencies; and reach out to non-traditional library users.

Key Features

- **The Parent-Child Workshop**-a five week program that involves toddlers and their parents and caregivers; features local professionals who serve as resources for parents; emphasizes the role of parents as the first teachers of their children; facilitates early intervention; and teaches strategies for healthy child development and early literacy
- **Collections** of books, toys, dvds, music and other materials for babies, toddlers, parents and family



- A specially designed, welcoming, developmentally appropriate space within the library for families with young children
- Collaborative work with community agencies that serve families and young children to connect parents to local resources
- Outreach to new and non-traditional library users, especially parents and young children
- Age-appropriate programming for very young children and their parents
- Librarians trained in family support, child development, parent education and best practices

With the above elements in place, Family Place Libraries become welcoming environments for the youngest children and their parents and caregivers. They provide the local network that families need to nurture their children's development during the critical first years of life and help ensure all children enter school ready and able to learn.

"Family Place has had such a tremendous impact on our community. What a special model you have created. Your work is transforming lives for the better across the country."
Librarian, Grand Prairie, TX

Model Replication

Family Place Libraries™ provides a developmental framework and comprehensive model for family centered library service. To date, the model has been replicated in over 500 libraries in 32 states.

Project Impact

Findings from independent evaluations*, as well as internal reports and surveys** reveal the following:

For Parents and Children

- Parents (including non and low English speaking families) report feeling less isolated and a sense of community belonging. **
- Parents are increasingly communicating with one another as a result of the Workshops.**
- Parents report being better informed of library and community resources.*
- Children with delays and special needs are being identified early and connected with early intervention services.**
- Parents and caregivers spend more time reading, playing, talking and singing with their children both in and out of the library.* **
- Parents feel more confident in their roles as first teacher.* **
- Parent-Child Workshop parents reported the library helped them be better parents. *
- Parents prize the informality and the relaxed atmosphere of the Parent-Child Workshop format and reported it encouraged curiosity and discovery learning.* **
- Parents value the development of their child's social, verbal and early literacy skills.* **



"Family Place represents the best of what a library can offer that is completely consistent with how a mental health practitioner would want to operate...It is best to offer these types of family focused programs within a community that are done with respect for each family and in a way that provides parents with what they need and desire at that point in time." Dr. Randy Ahn, Director of Program Dissemination, West Coast, Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) America.

For Libraries

- 90% of library administrators credit Family Place with having a positive impact on library staff, parents/caregivers, young children and the library as an institution. *
- 100% of libraries redesigned space and collections for very young children, parents, caregivers and family serving professionals. **
- 97% indicated the library has become a community destination for families with very young children. *
- 95% of librarians reported increased ability to identify and connect parents to community resources.*
- 95% of Family Place Libraries report partnering with community agencies serving families with young children.**
- Overall, librarians reported an increase in number of parents/caregivers using a wide array of library resources in addition to Family Place.*
- 98% of libraries reported an increase in attendance to all early childhood programs.**



Public libraries who have been able to implement Family Place through the California State Library grants have transformed their services to families with young children. In the process, they have been able to establish the library as a key player in the world of early childhood service providers. Dr. Virginia Walter, Ph.D. UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies

**IMLS National Leadership Evaluation 2016; **Family Place Libraries National Survey 2018*

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Overview and Impact Summary

Middle Country Public Library
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www.familyplacelibraries.org