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Willmar Public Library receives grant from Minnesota Children's Museum

Minnesota's Children's Museum *Smart Play Spot* Early Literacy Environment is coming to Willmar! Willmar Public Library is very proud to be 1 of 6 sites selected to be a permanent Smart Play Spot Literacy Environments. That means the library will have a 400-500 square foot section of the children's section converted into an interactive, early literacy environment that will be three dimensional, hands-on, multi-sensory learning for children ages 0-5 years. Environments will engage children in dramatic play, storytelling, playing with letters and sounds vocabulary development and high quality literature, also designed to promote a love of reading and build pre-reading skills. Engaging adults in children's early literacy development is also of primary importance in the environments with the goal of making early literacy development and the pre-reading skills more understandable and accessible for a broad audience.

Together the Willmar Early Childhood Initiative and Willmar Public Library wrote and submitted the grant, which requires a \$25,000 local start up cash match. Our partners, the Southwest Initiative Foundation and United Way of West Central Minnesota, along with the Library are working on securing \$25,000 community match now. In addition to the community match, we are looking to secure funds for yearly maintenance and repair and are looking to the community for that additional support. If you or your organization would be interested in helping to support this community wide project please contact Jodi at 231-8490.



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Willmar Early Childhood Initiative Vision

The Willmar Early Childhood Initiative is committed to increase school readiness and improve the literacy skills of children in Willmar through partnerships that encourage a community environment that supports the growth and development of young children.

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Willmar Early Childhood Initiative.
Summer 2012

Growing a Garden

What better place to 'grow' special family memories than in a garden? Gardening with your kids or grandkids at home or at a community garden not only provides the tangible benefits of exercise and fresh food, it also fosters communication, builds strong relationships, and offers an opportunity to work towards a common goal. Excerpt taken from Chapter 2 of the Parent Primer at www.kidsgardening.org

Most adults who garden began this hobby as children. And more than one old-timer has sworn off gardening because he hated it as a kid. Here's the secret to the difference.

If you want your child to love gardening, the best things you can do, in order of importance, are the following.

1. Show them how much you love gardening just by reveling in your own garden every day.
2. Surround them with great gardens. That doesn't mean a show place. It may mean a messy, riotously colored cottage garden; decorative little getaway; or profuse potsful. (Remember that everything is bigger through kids' eyes.)
3. Give them good gardening experiences. These will be great memories in years to come.

Kids have so much competing for their attention: television, computers, sports, and a bazillion "planned" activities from library hours to birthday parties, from sleepovers to dances -- at as young an age as five. So gardening has to stand on its own. Rooting cuttings in water doesn't cut it. But what does?

Experts disagree on whether to include gardening among children's required chores or take advantage of their interest on planting and harvest days and do the work yourself the other 120 days.

I'm somewhere in the middle. I'd never say, "an hour of weeding and you can go swimming." But

I'd enlist kids of all ages to weed as much as their capabilities and attention span will allow. Then I'd finish the job alone. Some kids love being the super hero who wrestles burdock's three-foot taproot out of the ground and onto the heap.

The balance is to teach respect and enjoyment of the family gardens and make sure there's a garden a kid can call his or her own. Here dirt and water are the stuff of magic, and surprises lurk between rows. Anyone can succeed under the sun. "I did it myself" is a powerful thing.

Recognize that kids' gardening priorities are different, well, practically opposite of adults'.

- Let kids choose what to plant. Offer guidance and make sure there are some sure-success plants among their picks. But if they want beets, roses, and petunias, why not?
- Relax your standards. Crooked rows or weeds as pets are fine.
- Transplanting is fun, even if your child plays with plants the way they move action figures or Barbies about. But remind them that plants' roots need some time to grow in one place.
- Leave room for good old-fashioned digging. Holes are a highly popular landscape feature. Look for worms. Add water, and frogs appear.
- Model the message that some insects are beneficial, and even destructive bugs are highly interesting.
- Do behind-the-scenes maintenance of kids' gardens, keeping them edged and weeded. Don't expect kids to do all the watering and pest patrol.
- You decide: when it comes to impending doom (no pumpkins appeared on vines; the daisy is uprooted and sunning on the deck) do you add a pumpkin from the farm stand? Replace the daisy? Some parents use loss as a lesson; others smooth things over for success. Remember: one of the best things you ever grow may be a gardener.



Willmar Stingers and the Early Childhood Initiatives present ...

Books -n- Baseball



What: A free baseball event for children kindergarten age 5 and under and parents. Tickets available at the Willmar Public Library for families in the Willmar Public School district.

When: Saturday, June 23, 2012—2:30-5:15

Where: Bill Taunton Stadium at Baker Field—1401 22nd St. SW

- ◆ Food and beverages available for purchase at the concession stand.
- ◆ Reading will begin promptly at 2:30.
- ◆ Children will be allowed to run the bases after the game.



If you have questions, please call or e-mail Jodi at: 231-8492, ext. 7250 or wambekej@willmar.k12.mn.us

Fun in the Sun

Avoiding sunburn during childhood is very important in reducing the risk of skin cancer later in life.

- ◆ Keep infants in the shade and protected with lightweight clothing and brimmed hats that shade the neck.
- ◆ For older children apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF should be at least 15 and protect against UVA and UVB rays. Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours, or after swimming or sweating.
- ◆ The best line of defense against the sun is covering up. Wear a hat with a brim and sunglasses that block ultraviolet rays. Stay in the shade whenever possible and limit sun exposure during the peak intensity hours (10am-4pm)

Remember—limit sun exposure, wear protective clothing and use sunscreen!

RECIPE

Trail Mix

- 1 cup peanuts
- 1 cup mixed nuts
- 1 cup dried fruit
- 1 cup m&m's or mini chocolate chips



Let kids practice measuring by adding one cup of each ingredient. You can substitute whatever you'd like. Stir to blend and serve in mini cups.



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Book Nook

Hands Are Not for Hitting

By Martine Agassi

Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.

Hands Are Not for Hitting is a story about alternative actions and activities that children and adults can do with their hands instead of hitting. It teaches correct use of hands in an encouraging way through the use of simple language and descriptive illustrations that makes learning fun. The story helps children understand why they may feel like hitting and offers many ways one can deal with feelings by replacing the use of hitting with alternative skills. Suggested alternatives to hitting are: use of feeling words, ways of letting your feeling out in a non-violent manner, problem-solving, trying to understand how others might feel when you hit, and how to use one's hands appropriately. At the end of the story there are many supplemental ideas for parents and teachers to support the reading of this story and to reinforce children's understanding of using hands in an appropriate manner. This book is available in a simpler board book version for children who are developmentally younger (ages 2-8).

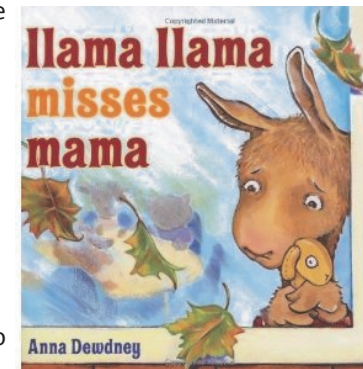


Llama Llama Misses Mama

By Anna Dewdney

Viking

Llama Llama Misses Mama is a book about little Llama on his first day of school. At the beginning of the day, Llama is sad and misses his mamma. Why did she have to leave? Will she come back? By the end of the day Llama has made new friends and has learned how much fun school can be! This story is great for teaching about the schedule of the school day, and for discussing what to do when we miss someone. The rhyming text makes this book fun to read aloud. This is a perfect story to read at the beginning of the school year when some children might be feeling just like little Llama! (Ages 3-5)



Calling All Dreamers!

Willmar Public Library Summer Reading Program

Readers of all ages will explore the night this summer as the Willmar Public Library presents "Dream Big - READ!" during their summer reading program. Activities may include programs on stargazing and moon lore, dreams and wishes, space exploration, nocturnal animals an evening pajama story time, and more. The 2012 Summer Reading Program is open to young people, preschool through young adult, with prize drawings, story hours, a reading club, and more.

Events happening at the Library this summer:

June 12 - 6:30-7:15: Author, Patrick Mader will be at the library and talk about heartwarming stories of the heartland. His books will be available for purchase and he will autograph them. The Kandiyohi County Dairy Princesses will serve ice cream afterwards.

June 13— 6:30: Special Father's Day Story Hour with guest reader Justin Banken.

June 21—9:00-10:00 and 10:30-11:30: Willmar Fest Ambassadors will present "A Tale as Old as Time - Beauty and the Beast".

Storyhours will be Wednesdays June 27 - July 25 at 10:00 - 10:45, excluding July 4.

July 9 – August 6. 4-H on Wheels program, "Space Explorers"

July 24 from 6:30 – 7:00 Pajama Baby Lap Sit.

August 21 at 6:30 - 7:45 Wonder Weavers

Registration for "Dream Big - READ!" begins June 4 through August 17. For more information, call the library at 235-3162 or visit our website, www.willmarpubliclibrary.org. All programs are free of charge.

During the summer months:

- ◆ Read
 - ◆ Read a chapter book to your school-age children by reading aloud one or two chapters every day.
 - ◆ Encourage your children to spend time reading and looking at books.
 - ◆ Talk with your children about what they are reading.
- The public library summer reading program is a fun way to include reading and related activities into summer family time. It helps children maintain and improve reading skills. See you at the library this summer!

Enjoy the Great Outdoors

Summer belongs to kids. It's a time marked by freedom from school studies in exchange for a little relaxation. Though kids might be able to relax on their school work, summer isn't the time to relax on healthy nutrition and physical activity.

With more free time on their hands, kids have no excuse for skimping on their hour of needed physical activity each day. It's also the perfect time to learn more about living healthy without having to worry about mastering other subjects.

There's no better time than the summer to enjoy the great outdoors. And getting outdoors can easily lead into fun physical activity. Take hikes through nature trails to discover local wildlife, swim in pools or nearby lakes, bike to new neighborhoods or have slip and slide sprinkler parties to get moving. Getting outdoors can not only get kids the exercise they need to stay healthy but also introduce them to whole new environments.



To curb sedentary activity limit the amount kids spend watching television, playing online and playing video games. It can be hard to contain the urge during summer but this could create very bad habits that carry on into the school year. Take the temptation out of the house if possible to make it easier.

Make sure the physical activities are still fun so they don't feel like a chore. This can be easily done by having the child come up with their own weekly exercise schedule that you help them with. It doesn't have to be stringent or involved either. The best thing about the exercise schedule is getting the child involved and interested and blocking out the time. Also incorporating family physical activity will help keep kids active at home during the summer.

So don't let the summer go to waste and further add to the health problems of American youth by sitting in front of a T.V. all day. Summer is the time to get outside and get kids in action! There's plenty of ways to enjoy a fun summer while also living healthy.