

**To:** Barbara Dimick, Director  
Central Branch, Madison Public Library  
201 W. Mifflin St.  
Madison WI 53703

**From:** Easter DiGangi, Youth Librarian  
South Madison branch, Madison Public Library  
2222 S. Park St.  
Madison, WI 53713

**Re:** Toddler Collection Development Proposal for Madison Public Library, South Madison branch

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As you know, the Friends group of the South Madison branch recently presented us with a \$3,000 check. The purpose of my letter is to respectfully submit a recommendation for how this generous donation will be spent.

The South Madison Branch is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of a two-story building on South Park Street owned by the Urban League of Greater Madison. Its' proximity to the Urban League, Economic Development Workforce Training, and Planned Parenthood allows for collaboration in providing residents educational materials. When the new building is completed, we will have over three times the space we had before (i.e. 12,000 square feet from 3,200). This will include a youth area and programming room, which will be a big improvement in terms the space available for these purposes compared to before. The need to develop welcoming spaces and relevant programming is crucial to the promotion and development of literacy. We will need furniture and programming materials to fully utilize these new spaces. Another important matter for consideration is the fact that our community is diverse one. The population is composed of 62% white, 17% African American, 15% Hispanic, 8% other, and 0.6% Indian. Since space has been an issue in the past, we have been unable to get as many diverse materials as we would have liked. Having the materials that patrons need is all the more important when you consider that we have experienced a 13% increase in visits from last year as well as a 7.4% increase in check out.

I propose that we use this donation for three specific purposes for toddlers. First, I propose to improve the collection. Second, I suggest some programming materials. Third, I propose developing

the youth space. Reaching this age demographic is very important for the development of early reading. Some of the skills that they need to develop include: print motivation, phonological awareness, narrative skills, letter knowledge, print awareness, and vocabulary. As you know, the more kids that we can get reading early, the more kids will be ready for learning. Having the materials and space better reflect the diversity in the community is a priority that is illustrated in the proposal described below and in the budget in the attached Excel spreadsheet.

First, to develop the collection for toddlers I propose the following books and AV materials listed on the attached Excel spreadsheet. All of the materials were found on Amazon.com. The book collection budget was \$355.47. Book types included were picture books (16 for a total \$241.79) and board books (12 for a total of \$113.68). These books types are very appropriate for toddlers. Indeed, toddlers can easily turn the pages of board books and are able to recognize familiar pictures illustrated in picture books. The books listed were chosen to increase the diversity reflected in our collection. Roughly half of the picture books included African American authors and/or characters while the other half included Hispanic American authors and/or characters. These books were found in *CCBC Choices* (2000-2009) and *A to Zoo: Subject Access to Children's Picture Books*. The Board books included in the list had authors and/or characters that were African American, Hispanic American, and multicultural. Each book was chosen because it was positively reviewed by at least one of the following sources: The Library Journal, The School Library Journal, Publisher's Weekly, or Booklist.

The AV collection budget was \$171.55. It included both DVD's (6 for a total of \$80.44) and CD's (6 for a total of \$91.11). Having audio visual materials is important because toddlers can obtain many early reading skills from seeing and hearing information. For example, hearing music can increase a child's vocabulary. Most of the CD's were multicultural in nature rather than any one ethnicity. This was because of the difficulty in finding African American and Hispanic American materials. The DVD's were a mixture of characters that were African American, Hispanic American, or multicultural. All of the AV materials chosen had at least one positive review from professional

sources.

Second, I propose programming materials such as furniture, books, and puppetry that are also listed on the attached Excel document. The following vendors were used: The Library Store, Inc, Demco, Inc., HighSmith, and Amazon.com. The cost for story time furniture was \$617.69. This included 6 stackable chairs, a toddler table/bench, and a big book holder & writing center with Flannel board front. The chairs and toddler table/bench would be very useful for craft times or for toddler seating during story times or other programming. While not in use, the chairs can be stacked, allowing for more room. The advantage of the toddler table/bench is that it can be used for multiple purposes. Having a big book holder & writing center with Flannel board front is helpful for storing Big Books for story times and for the Flannel board which can be used over and over again for story times or other programming.

The books obtained for story time were big books. Big books are very useful for story times because they make it easier for a group of kids to see the pictures in a book. Again, these illustrations are helpful to develop early reading because it builds print motivation and narrative skills among others. A total of \$166.28 was spent on 10 big books. We did not previously have any Big Books which is why I propose getting this many. Half of the materials includes authors and/or characters that are African American or multicultural. However, it also has books that have animals or Caucasian characters. Each of these books were chosen because it was positively reviewed by at least one of the following sources: The Library Journal, The School Library Journal, Publisher's Weekly, or Booklist.

Puppetry is very useful for story times for a number of reasons. Since they tend to be smaller than toddlers, it can children a sense of importance or self-confidence. Additionally, when kids talk and/or listen to puppets it helps kids with both language and listening skills. A total of \$169.37 is purposed for this part of the budget in the attached Excel sheet. This included an African-American Family Puppet Set, a Hispanic American Puppet Set, and a Puppet Rack. The puppet sets include four puppets: a mom, a dad, and two kids. This gives a total of 8 puppets that can work with any number of

story time themes.

Third, furniture for the Youth area was selected to make the new area welcoming. A total of \$1,237.63 was spent using The Library Store, Inc., Demco, Inc., and HighSmith. This included a “Hands Around the World” carpet, 6 stackable chairs, 1 set of dice soft seats (2 red, 1 blue), 1 toddler table/bench, and a Reading cube. The “Hands Around the World” carpet makes a welcoming environment for our diverse patrons because it shows a picture of the world and kids of various ethnicities are holding hands around it. The chairs are meant to be paired with the toddler table/bench. Again, the toddler table/bench can be used either for seating or as a table if we want to change the place up a bit. Either way, it is a hard surface that can be used for crafts, coloring, or other activities. The Dice seats are meant to be soft, comfy alternative for seating that can easily be moved anywhere in the youth section. Finally, the Reading cube is a nice private space for toddlers to sit and read. There is enough for at least two people to sit.

The total amount of purchases would total \$2,988.76 including shipping and handling costs. These purchases will be invaluable to develop early reading in toddlers at the new South Madison branch. We need to create a welcoming space in our expanded Youth section, to have a more diverse collection, and to develop exciting story time programming.

Easter DiGangi

Youth Services Library

South Madison Branch, Madison Public Library