Homeschool Library Express

Ouachita Parish Public Library

Children

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Teens

Homeschool Library Express

Mar 5, 2020

$1-50

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Byline

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Homeschool Library Express (HSLE) is a program for homeschool families, designed to let these families know about all the benefits and services of Ouachita Parish Public Library.

HSLE meets Mondays from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Each month has themed activities as well as the program's two staple offerings: STEM/STEAM activities and monthly field trips into the community. This is the fourth year of presenting HSLE to

this audience, and the average weekly attendance is 45 to 50.

This year we decided to offer a Homeschool Resource Fair during one of our HSLE meetings. Agencies within the community were invited to talk about their areas of expertise, from dental hygiene, language and speech therapy to vision and early childhood development. After the success of our inaugural fair, the library will host this as a yearly event every August.

Advanced Planning

The goal of our Homeschool Library Express program is to educate and invite opportunities for partnerships within the community and between the library and its users — particularly the homeschool population. Homeschooling families use the library for basic curriculum and instructional needs but are often not privy to the many resources we have available in Ouachita Parish.

I began planning for the Homeschool Resource Fair in early July, first contacting vendors and agencies within our community that we've worked with before. All were eager to participate.

Marketing

We advertised the fair through the library's Facebook page and website. We posted on our local homeschool Facebook and website pages, alerting homeschool families of the event, and distributed fliers within our library system.

We also marketed the event through word of mouth; HSLE uses the GroupMe app to relay information to the group of weekly participants, so we posted about the resource fair there.

Budgeting

Library funds were used to purchase light breakfast items. To cut costs, you could require that participants RSVP to an event, to help avoid overspending on

refreshments. When purchasing refreshments, add 5 to your desired number of attendees, and buy in bulk to save even more.

Day-of-event Activity

Set-up was easy. All we needed were tables and chairs for the vendors/agencies and a refreshments table. Three librarians were responsible for set-up and didn’t encounter any challenges.

Program Execution

Along with learning about services for children within the community, each participating family also received a calendar of events for the 2019-2020 year with library resources to enhance their homeschool curricula. Friends of the Public Library attended the event to talk about their involvement within the library system. Families were very receptive of what Friends of the Library does, and several signed up to volunteer.

Participants were given an evaluation form where they could leave comments about the event. Evaluations were collected and reviewed by facilitating staff and the youth services coordinator.

Everything went as planned. Vendors were timely and staff was readily available to assist where needed. We had 60 total attendees, and we received positive feedback from our vendors and families. Many families were grateful for the opportunity to get the information, and vendors were impressed with the turnout.

This event increased our program attendance goals for this year by leaps and bounds. Our library system is proud to be able to host these families and looks forward to working with them in the future.

Advice

Start off small and give yourself plenty of planning time. Find an area where there is a deficiency in library services and work diligently to build it. Your community and colleagues are there to help you.

A wise mentor once said to me, “don’t despise small beginnings.” Although I received this advice 10 years ago, I remember — and live by — her words as though I heard them yesterday.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

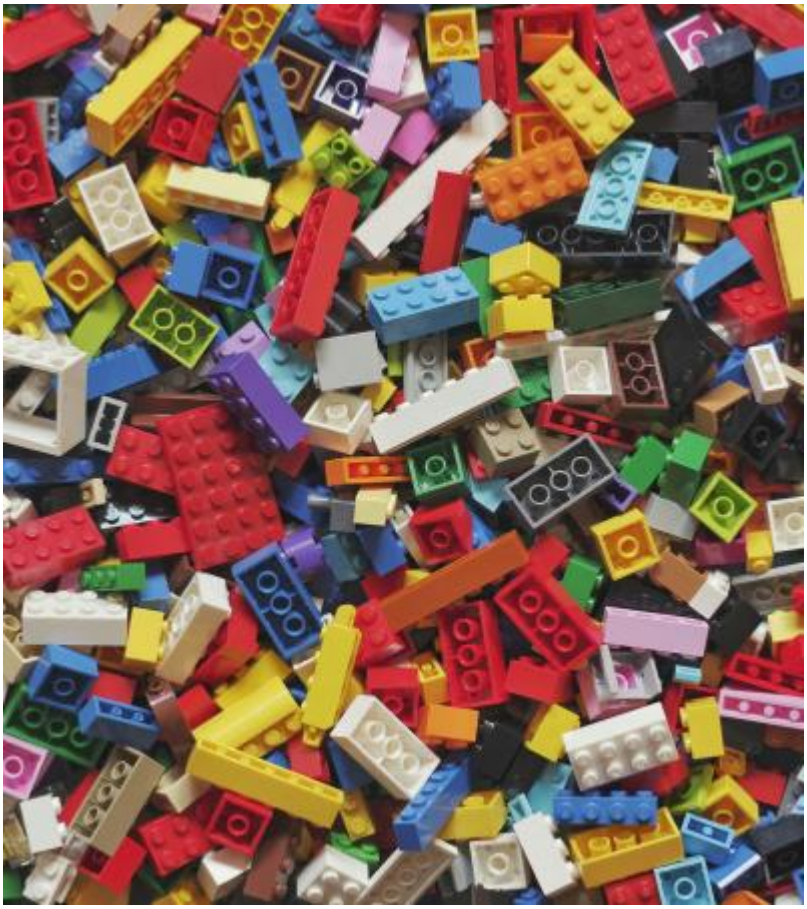
Supporting Materials

Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

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Apr 14, 2016
Children (9 and under)+ |
Image



Homeschoolers at the Library

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Mar 25, 2016
Children (9 and under)+ | □□
Image



Homeschool Resource Fair

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Adults (21 and up)
Apr 1, 2016
Children (9 and under)+ | $$$
Image



Homeschool Resource Center

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)