Hubbard Public Library's Permanent StoryWalk®

Hubbard Public Library

Children

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Tweens (10-12)

Hubbard Public Library's Permanent StoryWalk®

Dec 7, 2022

$5,000+

$$$
Byline
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Hubbard Public Libary's (HPL) new, permanent StoryWalk® enhances and builds upon other ongoing outdoor initiatives and resources to serve library patrons and all members of the Hubbard, Ohio community and beyond. Pages of books featured in this StoryWalk® can be changed so that different books can be featured year-round.

Other resources in HPL's Outdoor initiative, "Beyond Library Walls-Library Beyond Walls-Bringing HPL Outdoors," that make this initiative unique include outdoor musical instruments (Sunflower Petal Drums); a Sensory Path; an outdoor game board; a Pebble Harp; a Sensory Garden, complete with awning for shade and more.

Advanced Planning

Plans for HPL's initiative "Beyond Library Walls/Library Beyond Walls-Bringing the Library Outdoors" have developed and evolved over many years, including pandemic years. Influenced by the growing awareness of the need for outdoor programs in light of 'nature-deficit disorder' and other factors, the need for outdoor programs and resources is huge.

HPL and its Children's Room staff continuously assess, evaluate, innovate and evolve to meet changing community needs in order to serve patrons and community members and to expand library resources and services. Outdoor resources such as the permanent StoryWalk® and outdoor musical instruments have long been under consideration. These resources encourage and facilitate learning, in particular, hands-on learning, through nature. They also provide essential health and well-being benefits to all community members and support intergenerational learning and interactions.

The beautiful outdoor resources allow children to connect to nature through reading while providing equitable access to nature. The outdoor resources and programming are particularly timely and appropriate as people seek additional, innovative, accessible learning and life-long learning activities.

Marketing

The ribbon-cutting and grand opening of this new initiative and its resources (November 2022) was announced and promoted widely, utilizing print, digital, video and other media formats. Photos and videos are posted to HPL's Facebook page and HPL website; news releases appeared in local and community newspapers. Flyers were distributed at HPL's Friends Book Sale events throughout summer and fall 2022 including Market, Friends annual "Mobile Book Sales," Friends "Fall Book Sale"

special event in the library’s parking lot and more.

In addition, the Children’s Room continues to host special outdoor programs for children and families throughout the year. Special activities in the HPL Children’s Room associated with the grand opening of the StoryWalk® were offered at the ribbon-cutting event. Local television station personnel attended the opening and promoted the event via their media. In addition, the promotion of these new outdoor resources and programming has been and will continue to be accomplished via usual library publicity and announcement outlets.

Budgeting

Costs for this new initiative and resources included the costs of the resources themselves (i.e., the Permanent StoryWalk® posts and three Sunflower Petal Drums) and the costs of grounds preparation and installation.

All funds for these and other associated resources and costs for the library’s “Beyond Library Walls/Library Beyond Walls-Bringing the Library Outdoors” initiative (including the Sensory Garden Awning and the Outdoor Sensory Walk) were raised from grants, including the ALA's American Rescue Plan: Humanities Grants for Libraries; no funds from the library budget were used.

This initiative has been made possible by the American Rescue Plan Humanities grant and grants from area foundations including the Ohio Children’s Foundation; BUHL Regional Health Foundation; Foundation for Appalachian Ohio; Community Foundation of Western PA and Eastern OH and the Youngstown Foundation. All funds spent went to the essential resources and to the installation of these items. HPL was blessed by the ALA and to all the aforementioned Foundations for their support which made this new project and initiative possible and has provided a unique and accessible resource for the Hubbard community and beyond.

Day-of-event Activity

The resources available for programs are already in high demand and the need for this program/initiative will continue to grow.

The StoryWalk® book currently on display, “Santa Claus and the Three Bears” by Maria Modungo, will remain on display through December 2022, and then changed out to another book. Programming will continue throughout the year, and since it is outdoors, will be accessible to patrons and others even when the library is not open.

The Sunflower Petal Drums are actual musical instruments and can be played at any time.

At the Opening and Ribbon-Cutting event (November 23, 2022) many HPL patrons, families and others (including television) were present to celebrate this unique, accessible library and community resource. Attendance at this Opening Day Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was very impressive with more than 70 people in attendance.

Program Execution

It is already a tremendous success. The resources are a much-needed and welcome source for patrons and others who wish to supplement available learning opportunities for their children and families, connections with nature, learning and reading with nature and support the overall health and well-being of all users.

Informal feedback, including patron requests for specific items and positive comments from patrons and other participants, demonstrate the success of this venture. Our goal to provide a carefully curated collection of quality engaging, outdoors and educational hands-on learning materials to facilitate family participation and connections with nature, is being achieved.

Formal programs will be developed by library staff and, thus, data related to programming, i.e., numbers of programs, attendance and more will be collected. Additional data is collected and evaluated on an ongoing basis, as with all library holdings. It is also noteworthy to mention that these resources and this new “Beyond Library Walls/Library Walls-Bringing HPL Outdoors” is the only resource of this type in the community and surrounding area, and provides a unique, accessible, learning and nature experience to all who use it.

Advice

Our most important advice would be ‘now is the right and perfect time’! The time, effort and resources involved in developing and implementing this outdoor rescource are completely merited and worthy. Thus, do not wait, begin now.

You can start small. Plan for and have the numbers and types of items that you can offer, based on your library’s resources (financial, outdoor and grounds space, personnel and others). There are also other resource and ‘non-book’ issues to consider. These include maintenance of the outdoor resources; associated cleaning issues and other issues that may arise due to the outdoor location of items.

Also, and very importantly, as with any new programs or resources, it is important to collaborate with all departments within your library to ensure success. For HPL’s “StoryWalk®,” staff from all library departments were involved. The support of all library departments and associated staff are essential to the success of any new venture. As libraries, programs, services and resources continue to evolve to meet the growing and changing community needs and challenges, ‘non-book’ and outdoor collections, resources and services will certainly only expand!

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

Slideshow Images







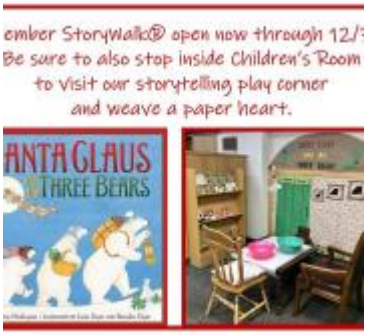




Image







More Programs

Jul 22, 2021
Children (9 and under)+ |
Image



Ideas for Creative StoryWalks

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Nov 13, 2019
+ |

Taking a Walk with the Library

Audiences: