Kid Librarian

Radford Public Library

Children

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Tweens (10-12)

Kid Librarian

Dec 21, 2023

$1-50

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Byline

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The Kid Librarian program asks kids ages 8-12 to design a book display of fiction and/or nonfiction chapter books in the library’s children’s section. Kid Librarians are asked to come up with a theme for the display and can ask a librarian for help finding books or use the catalog for assistance.

Advanced Planning

I began this program because I wanted older children to feel a sense of ownership in the library and children's section. I started by creating marketing to explain the premise of the program and created half-sheet "job applications" for the position that includes name, parent/guardian contact information and age. The applications go into a ballot box that I pull from to choose the next librarian.

This program can be put together and advertised quickly, but I waited a week after posting and advertising it to pull my first name. Once a name is pulled, I arrange a time for the Kid Librarian and parent/guardian to come to the library to make the display so I can be available to help find books as needed. I make a display poster for the Librarian and take a picture for social media to post with parent/guardian permission.

Marketing

We used multiple platforms to advertise our Kid Librarian program including posting on Facebook, flyers on bulletin boards, in our monthly calendar of events and speaking with families about it face-to-face. Facebook and in-person interactions are usually our best marketing tools.

I put out a ballot box to collect applications and had an almost full box of hopeful Kid Librarians by the end of the first week! I occasionally have children who want to participate but are a little younger/older than the age range. I explain to them and their parent/guardian that it's okay as long as the child can make a themed book display that includes middle-grade books and not picture books or YA titles.

I also continue to promote the event by posting photos of Kid Librarians with their completed displays. The community loves it and it helps to keep spreading the word!

Budgeting

The only cost associated is paper and ink for printing the "job applications", marketing flyers and the display sign.

Day-of-event Activity

Only one staff member is needed when the Kid Librarian and their parent/guardian show up to make the display. I help the child as little or as much as they need me, including both finding books and displaying them. Make sure the designated shelf or bookcase is clear from the previous display.

I also have a template that I use to make the Kid Librarian’s display sign when they have finished putting their books together.

Program Execution

I ask if the child has a display theme in mind and if they don’t, I give them suggestions. Many kids like to create displays of their favorite books that they want others to read, but some past displays have been themed around: rocks, the history of the earth, graphic novels, dinosaurs, funny books, books about food allergies, women in STEM, strong female characters and many more.

Children are welcome to pull books for their display from the fiction chapter books or non-fiction chapter book sections. I usually ask the child to find at least 10 books, but our display shelf can fit much more than that.

There has been an increased interest on social media and excitement from children who see displays and want to participate. The program has been very popular for prospective Kid Librarians, their families and the community as a whole. While there’s not an official evaluation, you can count the number of books on the display at the beginning and see how many have been taken by the time you bring in your next Kid Librarian. You could also measure post interactions on social media and judge how many name entries are in your ballot box.

Advice

Have fun with it! Children are happy to have the opportunity to show off their displays. I used to refer to the program as “Kid Librarian for a Week”, but a weekly change-over became hard to keep up with. If you fall behind, don’t worry.

I also like to tell hopeful Kid Librarians that their name will be chosen, but I just can’t tell them when, since my box of names is so full. This helps them feel less like it’s something they need to “win” to be chosen for and just something they can enjoy.

You will need a designated shelf or bookcase for the Kid Librarian display.

This is an easily replicable program. The Sweetwater County Library System in Wyoming has also been sharing their Kid Librarian displays on social media.

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

Supporting Materials

Document
kid_librarian_application.pdf
Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images



Image







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Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Tweens (10-12)
Teens (13-16)
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Exploring Big Ideas

Audiences:

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Community Displays

Audiences:

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