Fire! Fire!

Sonoma County Library

Children

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Free

Byline

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The Fire! Fire! program is designed to pique young children's interest in firefighting, safety and suiting up for a fire. Invited firefighters read three books to the children and, after a safety demonstration, we head out to our loading dock where a fire vehicle is inspected and enjoyed.

Advanced Planning

I contacted the firefighters' administrative office six months in advance, trying to stay clear of the summer and autumn fire season. I found a compatible time when the Library Forum Room was free for the event and when the loading dock was free for the fire truck to park for about an hour late in the afternoon after delivery times.

It's always a challenge hoping for a fire-free time for the program. If there is no fire-free time available, the plan B always involves the librarian reading some exciting books, followed by the distribution of coloring sheets. Luckily this has never happened, though.

Marketing

The library prints its own posters, fliers and bookmarks. We are part of the events in a local magazine and we have everything posted on Facebook and on our own library website.

Budgeting

Aside from a gift for our presenters, this is a free event for the library. We usually give the firefighters a gift of candy. This year it was a $50 Starbucks card.

Day-of-event Activity

Seventy-five chairs were put out for the parents, and the event began at 4 p.m. The kids, who are encouraged to wear anything that a firefighter might wear (such as raincoats, hats and t-shirts), sat on a rug that was in front of the chairs. The firefighters had a table and chairs in the front and they took turns reading the books.

On the day of the event, the program was almost canceled because of an unexpected city-wide drill that many firefighters needed to take part in.

Program Execution

Roughly 200 parents and children came to the program. We received a great deal of feedback, but we did not seek it formally. The feedback was all positive, with many positive comments posted on Facebook.

The kids loved interacting with the team. Everyone received a badge, and all the children were able to climb through the firetruck and ring the bell. The children felt valued and important, lots of photos were taken with the truck, and the parents liked asking the firefighters questions.

All of the books I displayed were checked out, and the books on firefighting (both picture books and nonfiction) continue to go out all the time. Goals were achieved and the local newspaper featured a wonderful article 10 days later on the front page of the local news section on Sunday.

Parents want more programs like this that will empower their children and bring the community friends together.

Advice

Be sure and confirm a week or so before the program. Have a plan B in place in case the firefighters are unable to visit.

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

More Programs

Jul 24, 2015
Children (9 and under)+ | $
Image



Reading Friends Tutoring

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Sep 10, 2015
Children (9 and under)+ | $$$
Image



Sensory-Friendly Storytime

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Dec 28, 2016
Children (9 and under)+ | $
Image



Welcome to Kindergarten

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Tweens (10-12)