

# MICHIGAN READS! 2015

## FINAL REPORT

December 1, 2015

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

The 2015 year continued outreach to the Head Start and Great Start programs and debuted an online book component through Scholastic Bookflix. The book was available as an interactive read along video in Bookflix and the Library worked with Bookflix to promote this to program participants and parents. The Library of Michigan also continued a program for certified child care providers with the staff of the Department of Education and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation.

For the 2016 program, the Library of Michigan selected *Do Unto Otters*, written and illustrated by Laurie Keller, as the featured book for the program. The book is selected from titles suggested by program participants in the evaluation survey from the previous program. During the month of August, the Library distributed over 5,500 reading kits with support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), Jackson National Life Insurance, and the Library of Michigan Foundation. The kits contained copies of *Do Unto Otters* and a resource guide with activities specific to the book and aligned with Michigan academic standards. The activities are further organized by age group and theme.

Other specially developed materials included a pull out section for parents and a section on online games and apps. Every Michigan public library location, Head Start program, public and private school building serving K- 2 classrooms, Great Start Readiness program, and Great Start to Quality resource centers received kits. These schools and libraries did emergent and family literacy programs with Michigan Reads! throughout September, October and November. Many participants continue to use the materials year round.

The program launch was on September 15<sup>th</sup> at the Beagle Elementary School in Grand Ledge with several presentations for students by author Laurie. Grand Ledge School Superintendent Brian Metcalf, State Superintendent Brian Whiston, and State Librarian Randy Riley introduced the author and the program.

### STATISTICS

#### Kit Distribution:

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| • Public and Private School Buildings Serving Grades K-2 | 2339 kits |
| • Head Start centers                                     | 566 kits  |
| • Great Start Readiness programs                         | 1252 kits |
| • Public libraries                                       | 662 kits  |
| • Child care resource centers                            | 600 kits  |

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- Replacements 113 kits
- Miscellaneous (author, agency copy) 8 kits

Total Distribution 5600 kits

## AUTHOR TOUR

Laurie Keller toured the state in September and October, visiting libraries and schools in the upper and lower peninsulas. We were able to include multiple sites in the Upper Peninsula with limited opportunity to have programming, which was well received by the participating areas. With the program schedule extending two months, the schools continued to have good participation, as they had time to get larger events arranged with the events happening well after the start of the school year. We were also able to help arrange additional visits for libraries and parent groups in the areas Laurie visited during the time of the tour.

The tour is arranged by offering libraries the chance to sign up for a visit in the spring through a survey put out on the listservs. Those libraries that can work with the author's dates and that provide a range of geographic areas and urban vs. rural are selected for the fall tour.

### Public Library and School Events:

- September 9th - Ionia Community Library and Boyce Elementary School
- September 10th - Mason County District Library and Franklin Elementary School
- September 11th - Chippewa River District Library and Ganiard Elementary School
- September 16th - Ypsilanti District Library and Perry Early Learning Center
- September 17th - Ferndale Area District Library and Roosevelt Primary School
- September 18th - Farmington Community Library and Kenbrook Elementary School
- September 19th - Caro Area District Library
- September 28th - Oscoda County Library and Mio Ausable School
- September 29th - Tahquamenon Area Library and school TBA
- September 30th - Munising School Public Library and William G. Mather Elementary School
- October 1st - Ishpeming Carnegie Public Library and Aspen Ridge Elementary School

**Attendance: 1,327 reported / 1,800 estimated total**

## PROMOTION

The Library of Michigan promoted the program to the public and to libraries and schools through a variety of venues and media, including:

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- Dedicated web site at [www.michigan.gov/michiganreads](http://www.michigan.gov/michiganreads).
- Press Releases from the Department of Education and author tour sites.
- Promotional messages to teachers, school libraries and public libraries through various professional announcement lists.
- Interview by Library of Michigan staff on WGVU, a public radio station in West Michigan, with large population coverage.
- Local library promotion of author tour visits through radio, newspaper and social media advertising.
- Promotional assistance for author events from the Library of Michigan Foundation through Kolt Communications.
- Michigan Department of Education newsletter articles and school personnel email blasts.
- Encouragement for libraries to host launch events with local media personalities.
- Program overview at state library workshops and library and educator conferences.

## MATERIALS

The continuing support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services funds in 2015 has made it possible for librarians and teachers across the state to continue to have quality, developmentally appropriate materials that are designed to engage children and develop basic literacy skills. The Library of Michigan solicits and reviews comments and suggestions from participant librarians and teachers to ensure the materials created are appropriate developmentally and programmatically. For example, in this program year, the activities section included the amount of preparatory time in response to teacher comments from the previous year. The curriculum crosswalk for the activities has proved helpful, as evidenced by an article on using the Michigan Reads program in *KnowledgeQuest: The Journal of the American Association of School Librarians* at <http://knowledgequest.aasl.org/manners-super3-chatterpix/>.

As a whole, the materials were developed for teachers, librarians, caregivers and parents to use with *Do Unto Otters* to improve both the reading readiness and literacy skills of the children they work with and care for. The materials included:

- A copy of *Do Unto Otters*
- Poster
- Bookmarks for parents with family literacy tips
- Programming Guide developed especially for *Do Unto Otters* by a literacy specialist with emergent literacy information and resources, school and library programs, a parent guide section, additional age specific children's book lists and *Do Unto Otters*-based activities for each of the following age groups:
  - Infants (Birth through 12 months)
  - Toddlers (12 months through 36 months)
  - Preschoolers (3 years to 5 years)
  - School Age (5 years and older)

- Website ([www.michigan.gov/michiganreads/](http://www.michigan.gov/michiganreads/)) with:
  - Selected Literacy, Reading and Activity sites.
  - Additional activity guides for parents and teachers.
  - List of state and national early literacy organizations as additional resource centers.
  - Articles on child development and early literacy for educators, for caregivers and for parents.
  - Book lists on reading to children and of books to read to children.

## OUTCOMES

The Library surveys libraries, schools and early learning programs (Head Start, Great Start and child care providers) about the program and materials. During program design, we review suggestions and comments from the previous program year to improve materials and processes. We believe this is why we continue to have positive comments and high ratings for the materials. 85% of survey respondents felt the materials were good quality for 2015. The title selected this year had a large vocabulary and the story line was not as linear as previous titles, which made it more appropriate for the older children in the participant groups. The behavioral theme worked very well for all age groups and lesson planning for the beginning of the school year. We again see a desire to have program materials dedicated to one age group and will try to address that better in the coming program. Overall, the results showed that the program produced many rewarding outcomes:

### Outreach Outcomes:

- Kits reach nearly all children ages 3 to 4 who are eligible for either Great Start or Head Start programs and nearly all children in the state aged 5 to 7, regardless of income or geographic area.
- Children and parents both are exposed to the program purpose of encouraging basic early literacy skills and parent engagement through school programming and through public library programming, giving children multiple opportunities to learn literacy skills and to encourage literacy as a community activity.

### Survey Results (307 responses):

#### Statistics:

- We reach the majority of Michigan children in our program age range, including those from underserved rural and urban populations.
- Extrapolating from the survey responses, we estimate over 300,000 children participated in active programming activities.
- 87% of kit recipients felt the book selection was appropriate for the program goals.
- 85% thought the materials were very good or good.

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- 76% applied programming ideas from the resource guide.
- 71% said their programs were successful or very successful.
- 93% said the program materials helped teach literacy skills

### Comments from Participating Teachers & Librarians:

- I was told that a local substitute teacher was looking forward to sharing this with a class one day. It was a class she had visited before, and she felt the students struggled with basic manners. It turned out that the regular teacher had read them the story in the interim, and the class was much better behaved than on her first visit!
- Great book for even older special needs students.
- This book had a very clear curriculum tie in for our school. It worked well to support the classroom instruction as well as the library curriculum. Here is the a link to a blog written about the project: <http://knowledgequest.aasl.org/manners-super3-chatterpix/>
- Thank you so much for letting me use this program with my older students with cognitive impairments and my autistic students. This was wonderful!
- Please keep the books coming, the kids love them and many librarians use them as the focal point of important literacy lessons.

## FEEDBACK FOR FUTURE YEARS

- Readability and rhyming remain important elements for younger children. The program age range is difficult.
- The program timing is problematic for libraries and schools. In response, we are planning to move the program to March for March is Reading month.
- A handout sheet for parents and caregivers needs to be a separate document.
- Information on the program is disbursed widely, but is still not getting to everyone it should.

## CONCLUSION

Literacy is a foundational life skill that is built through repeated, quality engagement with children. The Michigan Reads program is a tool for librarians, teachers and parents to provide this necessary interaction for the children in their care. The program also allows us

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to introduce cultural, arts and academic topics in an interesting and fun program for children and families. A final comment from a participating teacher makes the program worthwhile for the Library of Michigan. “The students were so excited to meet and author and then draw along with her. They were so engaged and I believe that it boosted their self-esteem. The topic of the book was great for our beginning of the year culture building! Thanks so much for this program!” Please see images of Michigan Reads events and activities from across the state at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/michiganreads/>.