

*Partnering Children with
Dogs to Read --*

Literacy Magic!

You Want to Do What?

“How can reading to a dog help?”

“Dogs in the library, what a mess!”

“Dogs are not that well behaved to be in the library”

“People have allergies”

Dissenters and Responses

Dogs are messy

- All therapy dogs must be groomed before visits.
- Handlers are required to bring a blanket or rug for dogs to sit on or the library may provide this.

Dissenters and Responses

Allergies in the library

- Yes, some are allergic to dogs. Depending on the dog breed, some are less likely to cause allergies.
- Inform parents of dog reading days so that they can avoid visiting the library on these days.

Dissenters and Responses

Bad Behavior

- Therapy dogs are tested to ensure that the dog's temperament
- Dogs who are certified, carry an insurance policy

Why Dogs?

- Dogs provide an uncritical audience, boosting children's reading confidence.
- Children feel safe and reassured cuddled up with a dog. This makes a great environment for reading.

Why Dogs?

- Kids love being with dogs. When they read to a dog, that positive emotion becomes associated with reading.
- Knowing a dog friend is waiting for them provides an incentive to make regular visits to the library.

Benefits to Reading

- Make reading fun and kids will learn to read.
- Positive effect on children with attention difficulties, disruptive behavior, and a lack of interest in reading.

Why Dogs

When asked who they talk to when they get upset, children respond . . .

A Pet!

Benefits of Therapy Dogs

In Hospitals:

Patients who refuse to speak, will talk to dogs

Patients who do not move, will reach for dogs

Physical Benefits

Chemistry Changes:

- Increased levels of endorphins, the body's natural painkillers, while levels of cortisol, a stress and arousal hormone, dropped.

Physical Changes

- Lower Blood Pressure
- Lower Heart Rate
- Lower Anxiety

Getting Started

- Interest in Participating in Therapy Dog Program
- Tips for Staff
- Orientation for Volunteers

Things to Consider

- Ensure that all dogs participating are certified Therapy Dogs. The organization that they belong to provides an insurance policy.
- Planning the best time for the program. Afternoons, after school is best, unless you are promoting to Homeschoolers.

It's All In the Name

- Read to Your Breed
- PAWS to Read
- Pawsitive Reading with Therapy Dogs
- Tail Waggin' Tutors
- Read to Rover

Where to Find Dogs

These are some, but not all organizations that certify dogs

- www.deltasociety.org – Delta Society
- www.therapydogs.com – Therapy Dogs, Inc
- www.loveonaleash.org – Love on a Leash
- www.tdi-dog.org – Therapy Dogs International

To Sign Up or Not Sign Up

- Some libraries prefer an informal drop in method, while other prefer to have sign-ups.
- Sign ups can be done in advance of the day or children can pick up a ticket with their reading time on the day of the program.

To Sign Up or Not to Sign Up

- **Pros**

- Helps limit the number of kids trying to read to the dog at one time
- Give the kids ownership of a time and they are more likely to return, especially with a reminder call.

To Sign up or not to sign up

- Cons

- Some will cancel or not show up which leaves the dog with no one to read.
- A little more work with keeping up the sign up and reminder call.

Incentives Keep 'em Coming

- Kids get a free book for every 10 books that they read.

OR

- Kids get a free book for every 10 visits.

Location, Location, Location

- Well lit area
- Private Area
- Comfortable

Promotion

- To help maintain high attendance, promotion is key.
- Work with your area schools.

La Mesa Library

Read To Your Breed

- Kids sign up in advance to read to the dog for 15 minutes
- Staff call the kids to remind them about their reading time.
- Kids get a free book for every 10 books they read.

Reminder Card

Text Box

Read to Your Breed at the
San Diego County
Library—La Mesa Branch
619 469.2151




_____ Zachary _____ is scheduled
to read to _____ Sunny _____

Wed, Oct 28th at 4:00 pm

Frequent Reader Card

*Read to Your Breed @ The San Diego
County Library — La Mesa Branch*

Frequent Reader Card

When you have completed reading ten books,
you will receive a book of your choice to keep.

Name Zachary



Lakeside PAWS to Read

- Children are encouraged to sign up, but we also accept drop ins
- Kids get a free book for every five books they read

Frequent Reader Card

P WS To Read

Read 5 books to one of our therapy dogs and earn a free book to keep!

Readers Name: Marisela

- I read one book to _____ Date _____
- I read one book to _____ Date _____
- I read one book to _____ Date _____
- I read one book to _____ Date _____
- I read one book to _____ Date _____

Improve your reading skills by reading to a friendly dog,
every Friday at 3:30, at Lakeside Library.

Call the library to sign up and get more information. 619-443-1811
Lakeside Library 9839 Vine St, Lakeside CA 92040



Reverse side of card

P WS To Read

Read 5 books to one of our therapy dogs and earn a free book to keep!

Young readers can improve their reading skills by reading to a friendly dog, every Friday at 3:30, at Lakeside Library. Call the library to sign up and get more information. 619-443-1811



Lakeside Library 9839 Vine St, Lakeside CA
92040

Final Thoughts

“I think we’re just at the tip of the iceberg in terms of what we know about the human-animal bond and its potential health benefits. This area is primed for a lot of research that still needs to be done.”

-from *NIH News in Health* (February 2009)

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