

KIDS and DOGS = BETTER READING!



Presented by Mary Hall
Bedford Public Library

Students need reading help

- Hoosier students are lagging behind. Only 34 percent of Hoosier third graders scored “proficient” on a nationwide reading exam.
- Indiana’s third grade reading scores rank 23rd in a nation that ranks only 11th in the world.

(Source: *Annie E. Casey Foundation*)



Hunger slows reading progress

- 42% of Indiana children receive free/reduced lunch.
- Nearly one in four Indiana children is food insecure.



- Hoosiers living in poverty score lower on ISTEP tests.
- Low-income students are less likely to use the public library.
- (Sources: *IDOE* and *Feeding America*)

Reading Aloud Can Be Scary

- Reading is often less about intellectual limitation than about overcoming fears. “Fear can destroy intelligence.” William Ayers
- Children are more comfortable and inclined to forget about their own fears when reading to a dog.



Dogs Help...

- Reduce stress for reluctant readers
- Lower blood pressure
- Reduce cortisol
- Increase relaxation



Dogs listen to hesitant readers



- Dogs are less intimidating than peers
- Dogs are attentive listeners; they don't judge or criticize
- Dogs allow children to proceed at their own pace

Dogs can help....

- Draw attention outward
- Turn off anxiety, anger, and depression
- Create safety
- Create intimacy
- Increase positive expectations of both self and others



Results are Significant!

Dogs Improve:

- Reading Skills
- Self- Esteem
- Confidence
- Social Skills
- Attendance
- Personal Hygiene



Many benefits for your library

- Helps you reach out to non-library users
- Great publicity for your library
- Builds relationships with your community
- Helps you help vulnerable readers
- Dogs in the library are enjoyed by general public
- Helps your community see the library in a new way



What dogs are appropriate?



- Dogs need to be registered with a reputable therapy dog organization. This protects everyone.
- Therapy dog organizations require evaluations and medical checks.

R.E.A.D. = Reading Education Assistance Dogs

- The only nationwide program dedicated to kids reading to therapy dogs
- R.E.A.D. teams benefit from knowledge, support, training, and credibility.



Qualities of a R.E.A.D. Dog



- Registered, evaluated, and insured therapy dogs
- Dogs who people can't resist approaching
- R.E.A.D. dogs inspire trust and confidence
- They are calm, reliable, obedient, and well groomed
- **They Enjoy Children !**

What About Allergies?



- Animals are scrupulously clean and well-groomed before each session
- Products like Dander Remover and Body Deodorizer helps to lessen the likelihood of any allergic reaction.
- If a child suffers from severe allergies or asthma, the program would probably not be appropriate.

For more information:

Delta Society: www.deltasociety.org
R. E. A.D. (Reading Education Assistance)
www.therapyanimals.org
Library Dogs: www.librarydogs.com

Kay Stine, Huntington Public Library:
KStine@huntingtonpub.lib.in.us

Lisa Champelli, Monroe County Public Library:
lchampel@monroe.lib.in.us

Mary Hall, Bedford Public Library: mhall@bedlib.com



How does this work ?

- **Kay Stine**

Huntington Public Library
Paws-to-Read



- **Lisa Champelli**

Monroe County Public Library
Children's Services

ARF- Animal Reading Friends



READING WITH BRIDGET

Bedford Public Library



'Read to a Dog' as Outreach

- Grew out of my unique situation
- Library's Outreach Services already in place
- Strong relationship with the schools vital





How it works for us

- Selected third grade because of state emphasis on third grade reading success
- Teachers set up schedule and select students to read weekly
- Students choose what to read from library books that I bring- Accelerated Reader books provide added motivation (points)

Benefits to the school



- Track results with school reading tests; coordinate with staff
- Parents report “My son never liked to read to anyone, but he loves reading with Bridget”
- Long-term positive relationships with students/staff
- Teachers report improved behavior, self-esteem, and confidence. Students become proud instead of embarrassed, and feel special instead of slow.
- Therapy dog benefits to staff and teachers-morale
- Friend to all the students: “Bridget’s here!”

Benefits to our library

- Builds relationships throughout the community. “I’m so glad you are doing this!”
- We are visible and active at community events
- Attend weekly free summer meals and provides outreach to non-library users
- Builds community pride
- Provides therapy and morale boost for library staff and customers. “Bridget, you’re the best part of my day!”



Thank you for your time!



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Questions???

