

# Reimagining School Readiness: Practical Implications from Research



Center for  
Childhood Creativity  
at the Bay Area Discovery Museum



*California*  
**STATE LIBRARY**  
FOUNDED 1850  
PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE, SHAPING OUR FUTURE

This project was supported in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.



# Agenda

- What is the Toolkit?
- Partnerships & Relationships
- Key Findings
- Promising Practices for Library Staff
- Working with Babies (0-18 months)
- Working with Toddlers (18-36 months)
- Working with Preschoolers (3-5 years)
- Working with Kindergarten Through Third Graders (5-8 years)
- Program Planning & Reflection
- Example Activities





# Toolkit Overview

This toolkit was designed in collaboration with 6 pilot libraries throughout CA and aims to:

- Provide research-based strategies to support school readiness programming
- Enhance your work with children (ages 0–8 yrs.) and their families
- Provide variety so you can pick and choose the resources that are right for your community



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



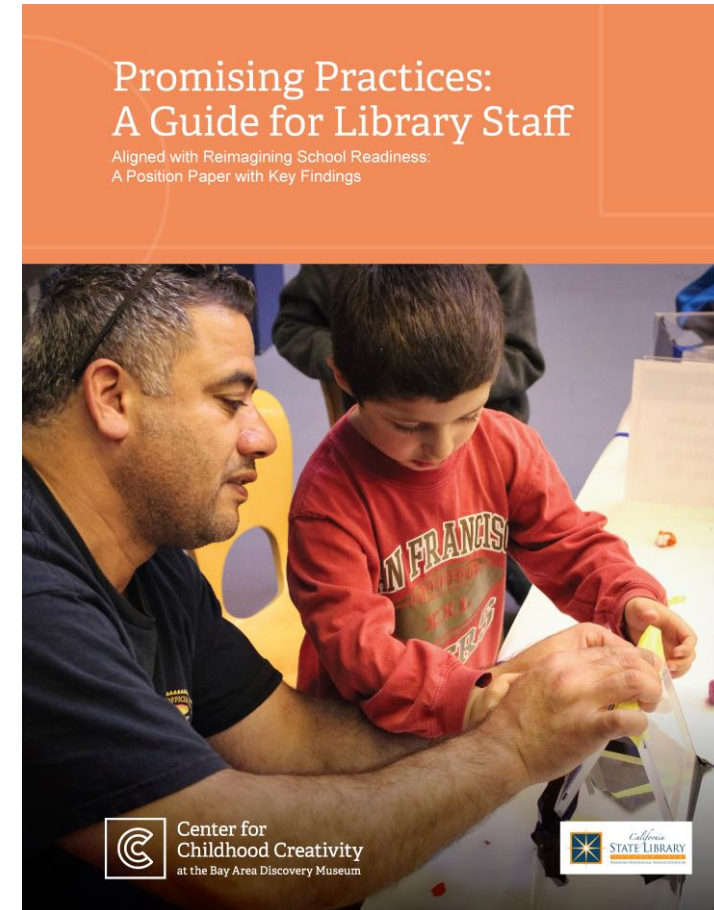
# Resources

## Position Paper



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity

## Promising Practices Guide



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity



# Partnerships and Relationships

What or who are the resources in your community? How do you already connect or partner with them? How could you deepen those partnerships?

Consider:




- Local school districts
- Child care centers
- Museums
- Public television or radio stations
- Community centers
- Food banks



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity

Skills	Key findings
 <p>Talk &amp; Play</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Quality adult-child interactions shape children's thinking skills. The conversations we have, the questions we ask, and the experiences we provide matter. Simple shifts in our approach and language boost children's learning and cognitive development.</li> <li>5 Children with stronger social skills do better in school, in the workplace, and in life. Child-directed play is key to the development of social skills and need to be prioritized in early education.</li> </ol>
 <p>Science &amp; Math</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 Science learning is critical for the development of higher-order thinking but is missing from most early school experiences.</li> <li>3 Demonstrating strong math skills at an early age is a strong indicator of developing conceptual thinking skills and predicts long-term success in school, not just in later math learning but also in later reading proficiency.</li> </ol>
 <p>Body &amp; Brain</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 Planning, self-awareness, and self-control – what psychologists refer to as <i>executive functions</i> – predict positive school and life outcomes. Studies show that children develop executive functions through experience.</li> <li>6 Higher-order thinking, retention of information, and creativity flourish when children experience minimized stress and when their basic needs are met. While persistent stress can impede brain development, caring relationships with adults as well as programs that teach emotion regulation provide protection from risk.</li> </ol>



## Talk & Play

- 1 Quality adult-child interactions shape children's thinking skills. The conversations we have, the questions we ask, and the experiences we provide matter. Simple shifts in our approach and language boost children's learning and cognitive development.
- 5 Children with stronger social skills do better in school, in the workplace, and in life. Child-directed play is key to the development of social skills and need to be prioritized in early education.





## Science & Math

- 2 Science learning is critical for the development of higher-order thinking but is missing from most early school experiences.
- 3 Demonstrating strong math skills at an early age is a strong indicator of developing conceptual thinking skills and predicts long-term success in school, not just in later math learning but also in later reading proficiency.

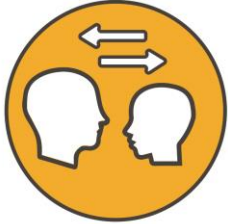




Body &  
Brain

- 4 Planning, self-awareness, and self-control – what psychologists refer to as *executive functions* – predict positive school and life outcomes. Studies show that children develop executive functions through experience.
- 6 Higher-order thinking, retention of information, and creativity flourish when children experience minimized stress and when their basic needs are met. While persistent stress can impede brain development, caring relationships with adults as well as programs that teach emotion regulation provide protection from risk.

# Promising Practices for Library Staff



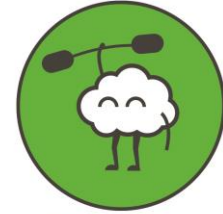
Talk & Play

- Use complex words
- Encourage collaborative play
- Ask open-ended questions



Science &  
Math

- Love mistakes and failure
- Use fingers to count
- Make predictions



Body &  
Brain

- Let children choose
- Breathe, stretch and move
- Welcome all

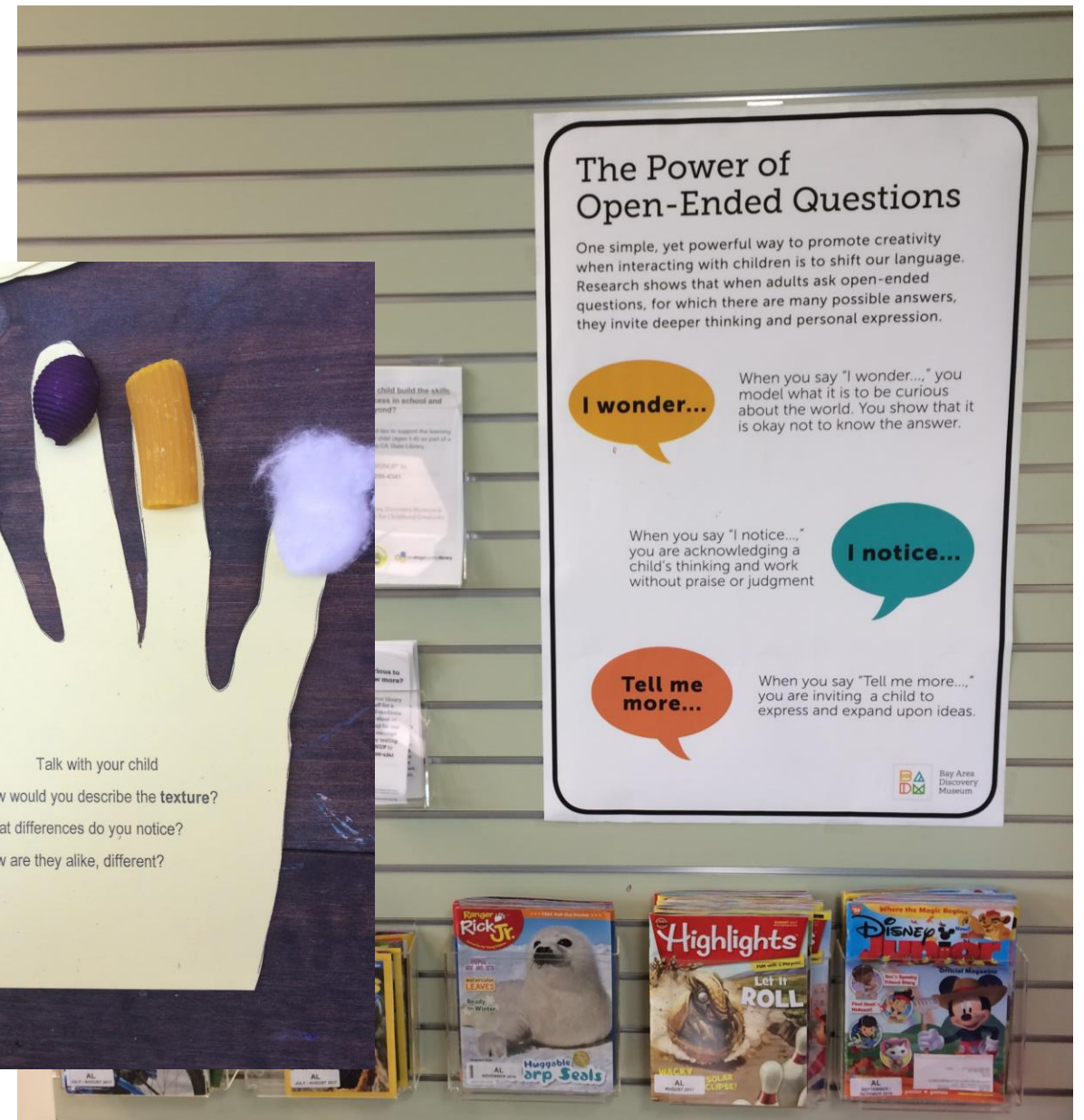
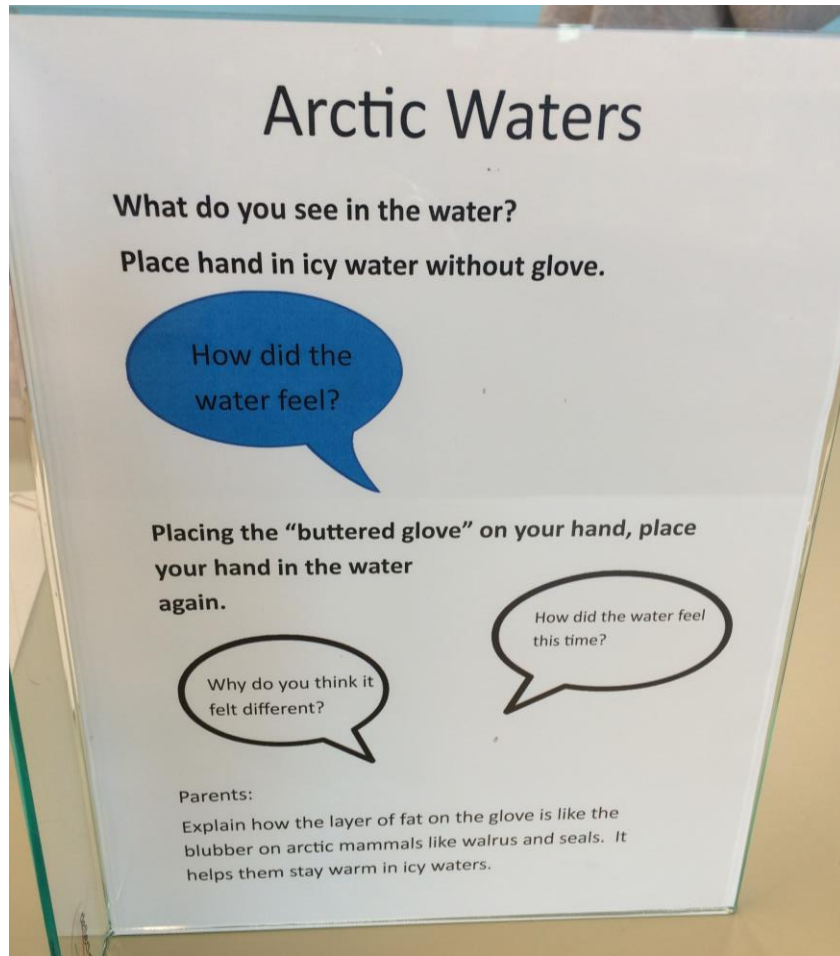


Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity

# Signs for Parents



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity



# Working with Babies (0-18 months)



Talk & Play

- Try new things
- Provide alternative communication
- Foster social interactions



Science &  
Math

- Embrace the mess
- Let children manipulate
- Compare and contrast



Body &  
Brain

- Demonstrate and name emotions
- Be patient with repetition
- Connect caregivers



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity

# Working with Babies



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity

# Working with Toddlers (18-36 months)



Talk & Play

- Let children help
- Play alongside children
- Ask children questions



Science &  
Math

- Explore cause and effect
- Use spatial talk
- Embrace the mess



Body &  
Brain

- Use games
- Limit instructions to 1-2 steps
- Give children choice and control



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity



# Working with Toddlers



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity

# Working with Preschoolers (3-5 years)



Talk & Play

- Praise persistence
- Use play to recognize emotions
- Use complex language



Science &  
Math

- Model curiosity
- Practice sequencing
- Embrace magical thinking



Body &  
Brain

- Let children plan and decide
- Incorporate songs and games
- Provide choices for materials



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity



# Working with Preschoolers



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity



# Working with Kindergarten through Third Graders (5-8 years)



Talk & Play

- Ask children to explore and explain
- Provide novel experiences
- Take a break from tech (adults!)



Science & Math

- Value failed experiments
- Read and make maps
- Use familiar materials in unusual ways



Body & Brain

- Help children create a plan
- Teach strategies to deal with stress
- Introduce more complicated emotions



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity

# Working with Kindergarten through Third Graders (5-8 years)



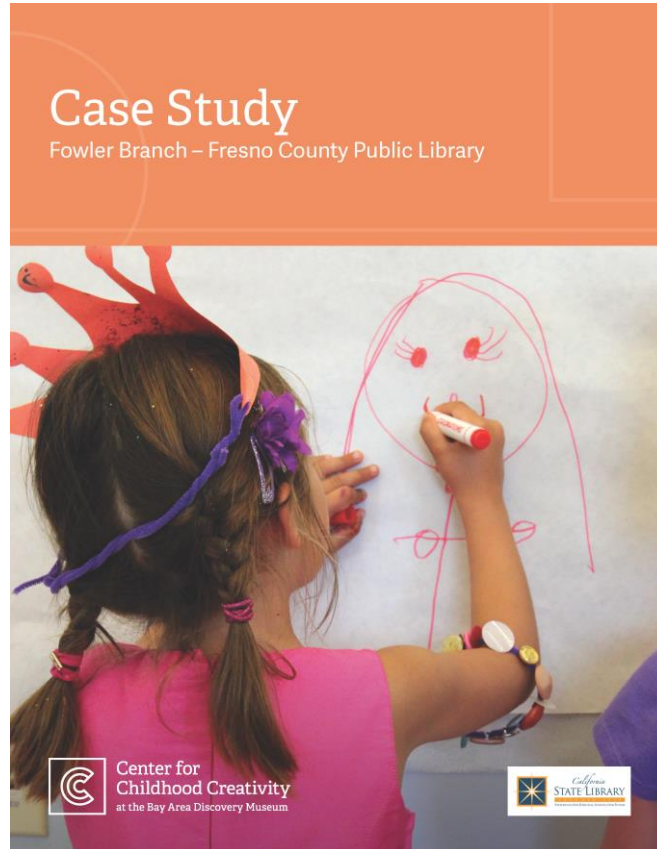
Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



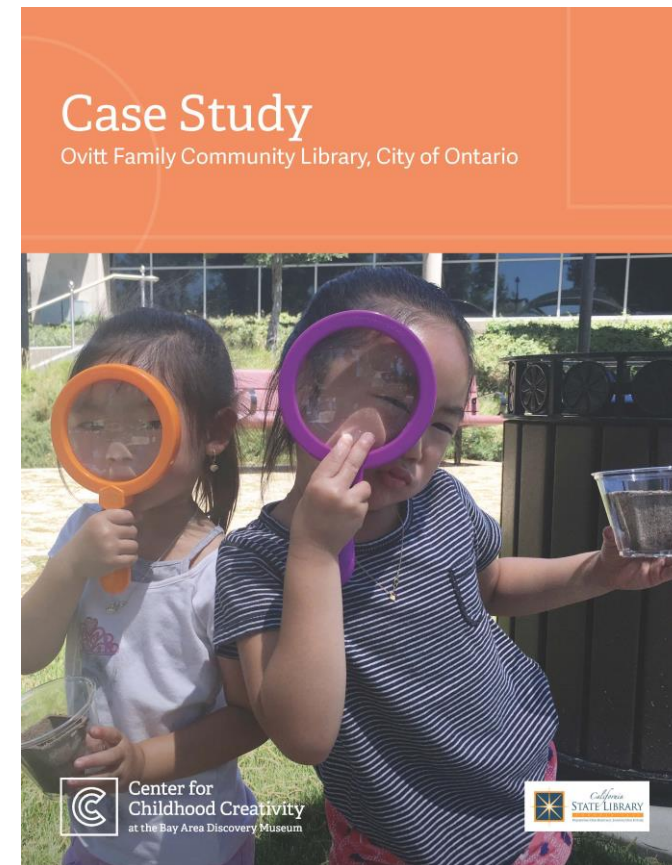
@BADM\_org @C4Creativity

# Case Studies

## Fowler Branch Fresno County Public Library



## Ovitt Family Community Library City of Ontario



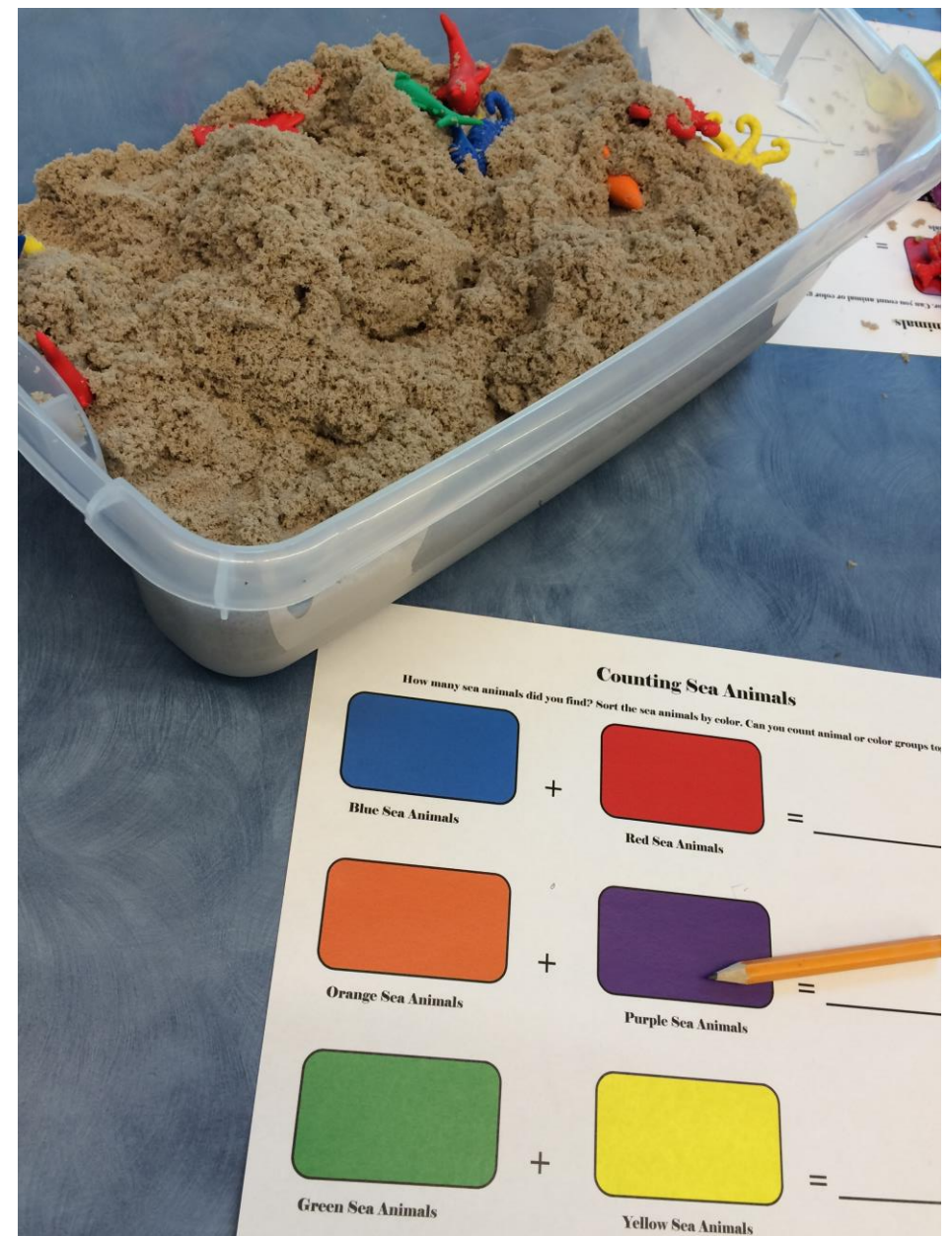
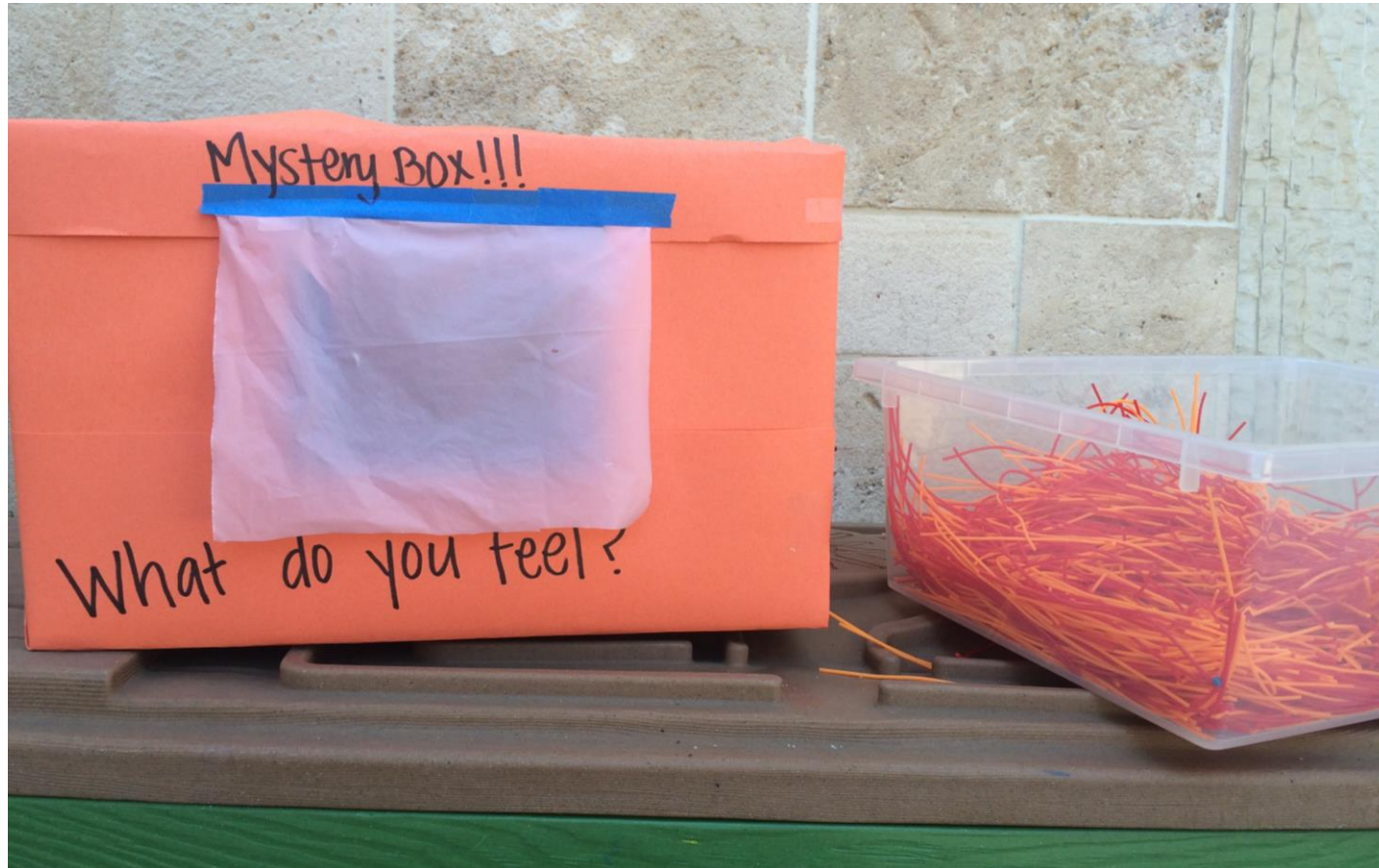
Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity



# Hands-on Activities



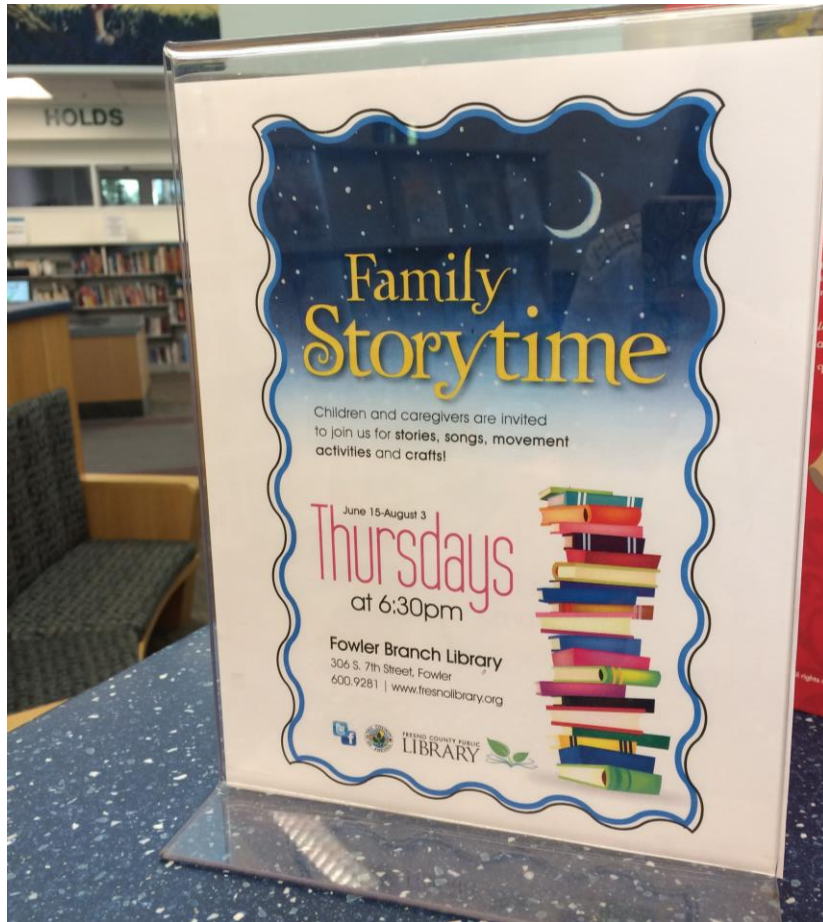
Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity



# Storytime



*"...this is not something new...it's lending that extra degree of support to something you are already doing and it's giving you the language to talk about it more intelligently so you can advocate for it more effectively and get better funding in the future."*



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity

# Program Planning & Reflection

## Planning

- ☐ How will families adapt the activity to the age and developmental level of their children?
- ☐ How will everyone feel welcome at your program? Verbal greeting, signage, topic, etc.

## Reflection

- ☐ Did families interact with their children during the program? How?
- ☐ Were there any moments of conflict among children? If so, how did you use these as learning opportunities?





# Example Activities

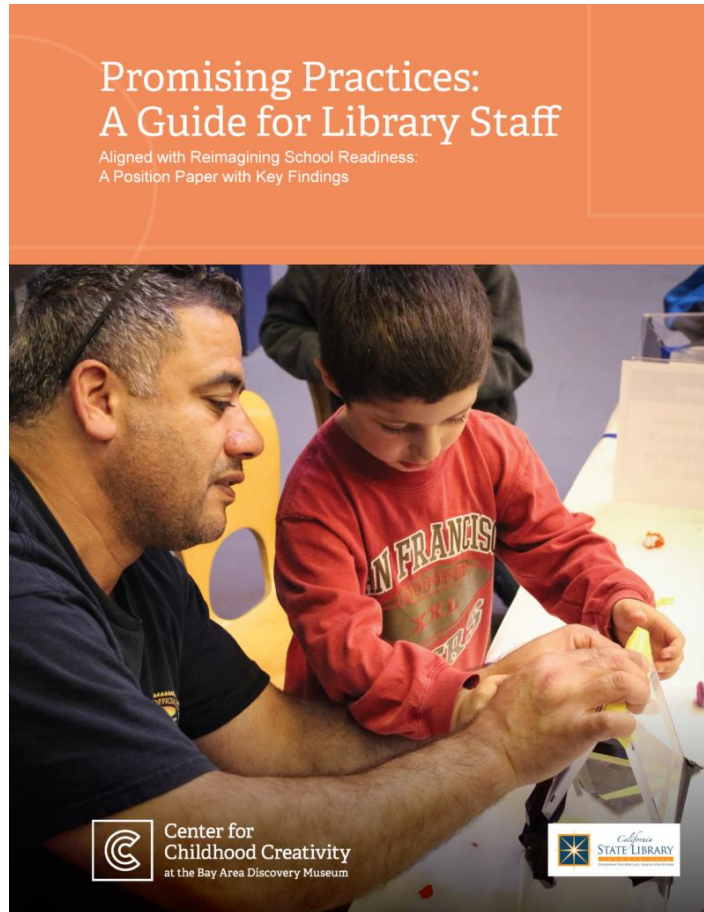


Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity

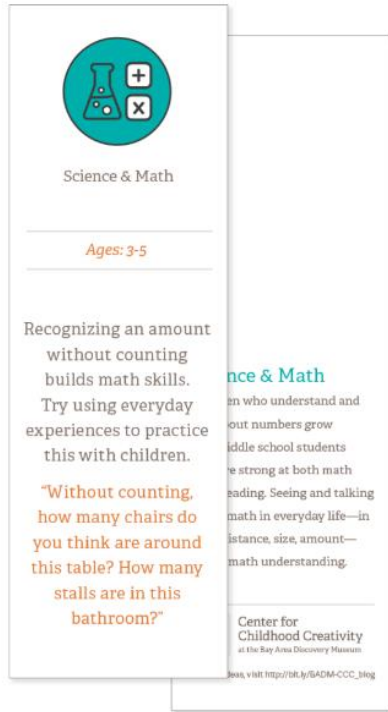
# Reimagining School Readiness Toolkit



[http://bit.ly/CCC\\_toolkit](http://bit.ly/CCC_toolkit)



# Upcoming Reimagining School Readiness Webinars



**Toolkit Overview:** Wed., Apr. 17, 2019 @ Noon Pacific

For more information and to register: <http://bit.ly/SRWebinarSeries>



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity



Thank you for your feedback!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ELFCCCWebinarEvalMar2019>



Bay Area Discovery Museum &  
Center for Childhood Creativity



@BADM\_org @C4Creativity