TOGETHER, LEARNING MORE!

Interactive Family Learning in California’s Libraries

Elizabeth Rood, Ed.D.
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Based on current research, what kinds of experiences matter for development in children ages 0-8?

How does this research-base connect to library practice?

What California library jurisdictions offer programs that could provide exemplars of evidence-based, developmentally-impactful work with young children?
PROJECT COMPONENTS

SURVEY

✧ 395 library staff; 79 jurisdictions
✧ focus on space, materials, programs, needs
✧ strengthening knowledge and skills of those providing programs as top need
✧ developmentally appropriate practices, trauma informed approaches, and cultural competency noted
PROJECT COMPONENTS

SURVEY

- recent research on executive functions, pro-social skills, theory of mind, and language development

ACADEMIC LITERATURE

- evidence-based mechanisms for promoting healthy development: play, language exchange, child-driven inquiry, and emotional awareness
- understanding of threats and remedies to development
PROJECT COMPONENTS

SURVEY
✧ 13 in-depth interviews with leaders from 10 jurisdictions

ACADEMIC LITERATURE
✧ insights from those interviews are woven throughout the report

INTERVIEWS
HOW LEARNING INTERACTIONS DEVELOP AS A CHILD GROWS

FROM DEVELOPMENTAL DYAD

CHILD

PARENT

Builds social bonds and language

TO LEARNING CONTEXT

CHILD

OTHERS

A MEANINGFUL SOMETHING

Adults and peers

To do or explore

Promotes thinking and agency

BABY

ELEMENTARY AGE
WHY INTERACTIVE LEARNING WORKS

COMPONENTS OF INTERACTIVE LEARNING

- MEANINGFUL
- PLAYFUL
- SOCIAL
- CREATIVE
- PHYSICAL

Promotes communication and collaboration
Promotes exploration and experimentation
Invites children to take the lead
Prompts thinking and questioning
YOUR QUESTIONS
KEY FINDINGS

LIBRARY SERVICES CAN PROMOTE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT BY FOCUSING ON INTERACTION

✧ Designing experiences that create meaningful moments
✧ Supporting caregivers to play and explore alongside children
✧ Enabled by physical space and social environment
✧ More than a place of transaction
HOW DOES YOUR SPACE...

✧ Inspire curiosity and inquiry?
✧ Provide safe welcome and respect?
✧ Communicate your culture of learning?
KEY FINDINGS

ALLOW FOR A WIDE RANGE OF PLAY!

✧ Throughout elementary school years!
✧ Library staff guiding children’s play and discovery
✧ Modeling for parents how to support child-directed learning and exploration
✧ Offering unique experiences or resources
PLAY!

Develops cognitive, social, and emotional skills

Different kinds of play influence development in various ways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMAGINARY PLAY</th>
<th>SOCIAL PLAY</th>
<th>PHYSICAL PLAY</th>
<th>GAME PLAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Self-regulation</td>
<td>Fine motor skills</td>
<td>Executive functions (e.g., memory and inhibition)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reasoning</td>
<td>Pro-social skills</td>
<td>Scientific thinking</td>
<td>Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Language development</td>
<td>Language development</td>
<td>Creativity (when open-ended)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KEY FINDING

TRAINING FOR STAFF IS ESSENTIAL

¤ Focused on both child development and working with diverse families
¤ Awareness of trauma informed practice and implicit bias may strengthen asset-based parent engagement
¤ Diversity of staff need be prioritized!
KEY FINDING

PROMISING NEW TRENDS INCLUDE STEAM PROGRAMS, ONLINE OFFERINGS, AND FAMILY PLAY

✧ Try out new approaches! Build a growth mindset in staff to encourage innovations and flexibility
✧ Outcomes-based planning, informed by user feedback, will help to prioritize
YOUR QUESTIONS