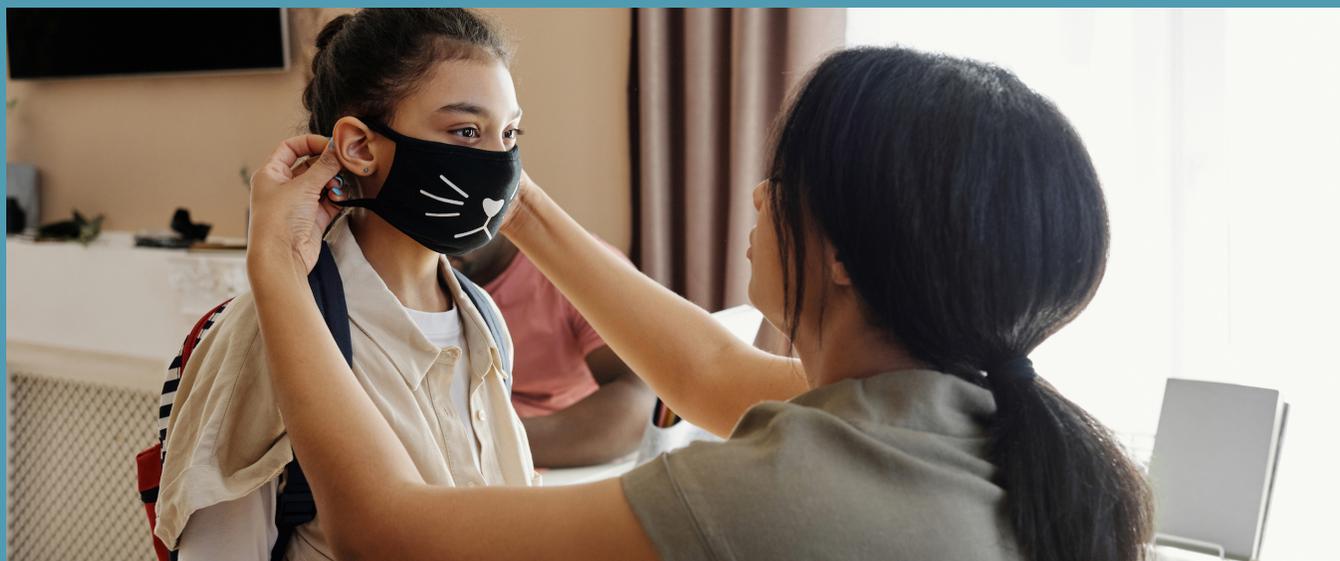


BERKS LIBRARIES

Berks Libraries' e-newsletter for educators, homeschool families, childcare providers, and community partners.



Libraries and *Your* New Normal

Whether your new normal includes Zoom classrooms or you find yourself a first time homeschool parent, the library is constantly evolving to meet the needs of our educators and community partners.

In this newsletter, you'll learn about the ways we adapted to *your* new normal to create a stronger library for you:

- The student and patron demand for eBooks led us to expand the scope and size of our e-collection by thousands of brand new titles, including diverse stories and #ownvoices for YA and middle-grade readers.
- Your children and students need screen-free opportunities for learning: we hear you! Kids can now explore tactile and sensory activities as part of our new Accessibility & Supportive Learning Collection.

All library locations are working closely with local families, teachers, and partners to create a new normal that is successful for our students. Reach out to your local library and be a part of these amazing new changes.

IN THIS ISSUE

**THOUSANDS OF NEW
E-BOOKS AT YOUR
FINGERTIPS**

**SUPPORTING STUDENTS
WITH ADAPTIVE NEEDS**

**LIBRARY SERVICES AT
YOUR LOCAL
SUPERMARKET?!**

**WE'RE YOUTUBE
FAMOUS**

NEW Resources from Berks County Public Libraries

Thousands of new books now available!

Now there are even more reasons to get you and your students a library card—thousands of reasons!

Berks Libraries has expanded its e-collection by 2,058 titles thanks to a generous grant from the [Berks County CARES Grant Program](#).

With new eBook and eAudio, including a diverse collection of teen and middle grade titles, students will have their pick of thousands of books for self-directed reading time, school projects, or just plain fun.

Public interest in digital library books has increased since the start of the pandemic,” said Amy Resh, system administrator for Berks County Public

Libraries. “In light of the limitations set by COVID-19, Berks libraries made it a top priority to provide increased digital access to library materials.”

Libraries saw an increase of 53% in checkouts on Overdrive, the digital platform libraries use to house the e-collection. From March to June 2020, over 48,000 e-books were borrowed from Berks Libraries.

Along with new and diverse titles, additional copies of perennial favorites and popular bestsellers were also purchased to meet the demand of library patrons and students.

Accessibility & Supportive Learning Collection

Looking for new ways to engage students and children with adaptive needs? We have you covered!

Berks County Public Libraries launched a new Accessibility and Supportive Learning Collection. This collection is a curated group of games and activities to support young learners with adaptive learning needs. A variety of kits are available for you to check out including braille Rubik's Cubes and UNO cards, sensory materials, Phonics flip books, STEM resources, and many others!

The activities come in four categories: Language & Counting Development, Sensory Exploration, Tactile/Braille Learning, and STEM Resources.

Many kits are also a perfect supplement for kids who need extra tactile support during remote learning or who are struggling with screen fatigue.

[Click here for the catalog of items](#), place them on hold using your library card, and pick them up at your local library location.



Partnership Spotlight: Grab a Storytime at your Supermarket

Families can pick up free library activities at their grocery store, thanks to an innovative partnership between Hamburg Public Library and Redner's of Hamburg.

"As I pivoted our library's youth services in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, I hoped to find a way to distribute materials to our community's youth and their families," Becky Hartman, Children's Library at Hamburg Public Library, said.

Redner's of Hamburg provided the perfect partnership by providing an easy and accessible way for the library to meet parents where they already were during the pandemic — the grocery aisle.



After gaining permission from Redner's management last spring, Hartman created a library display next to the cash registers, containing free library activities tailored to different age groups. Kits included critical thinking puzzles, STEM projects, and literacy activities like the very popular Storytime Experience Kit.

"Our Storytime Experience Kits essentially offer parents and their children a prepackaged storytime, similar to those I hold in person at the Library during non-pandemic times," Hartman said. The kits include elements of literacy, early math, motor skills practice, and hands-on learning opportunities like crafts and manipulatives. Some kits even correspond with virtual programs available on Hamburg Public Library's Facebook page.

In total, 1743 activity kits have been distributed since spring 2020 between the Redner's location and an identical display at the Hamburg Public Library. Community feedback has been overwhelming with some activities being claimed within an hour of being stocked.

This innovative community partnership is just one example of how libraries are reaching families during the pandemic. If your organization would like to partner with your local library to help reach families, don't hesitate to reach out!

And The Winner Is...



Each year, the Pennsylvania Library Association chooses the best book by a Pennsylvania author or illustrator to receive the Carolyn W. Field Award.

This year, two librarians from Berks Libraries were on the committee and the books that were chosen were:

Winner: *Slay* by Brittney Morris

Honors:

A Boy Like You by Frank Murphy
The Important Thing About Margaret Wise Brown illustrated by Sarah Jacoby
The Last True Poets of the Sea by Julia Drake
A Time Traveler's Theory of Relativity by Nicole Valentine

Partnership Opportunity: 1000 Books Before Kindergarten



Let the library help get your students get set for kindergarten with our 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program.

This special incentive program for little ones from birth to age 5 challenges families to finish 1000 books before their first day of kindergarten.

Download a log to pass out to your students or families. Parents, teachers or caregivers can read any book to their little one to work towards the goal of 1,000 books. Even books your read in the classroom or daycare can count!

Children can hand-in their log to earn small prizes along their journey to 1,000 books, including picture books and our exclusive 1000 Books t-shirt, starring our famous Fox character!



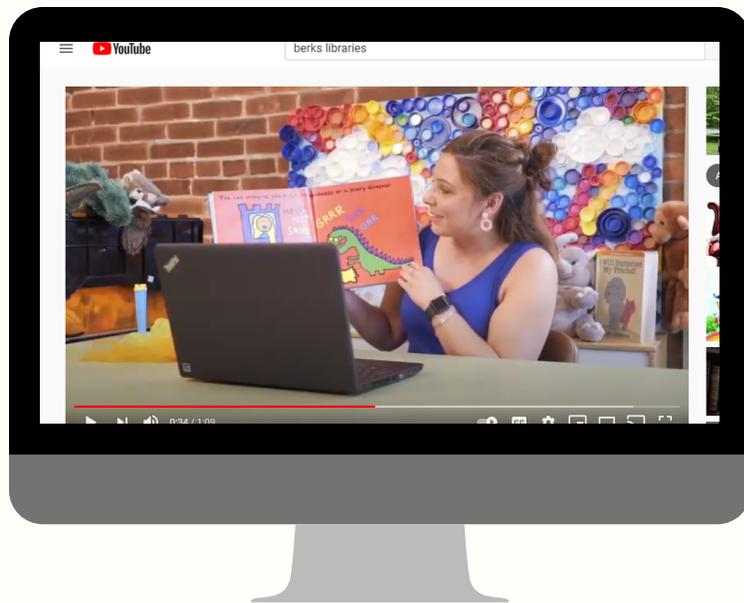
Passing out the 1000 Books Log is an easy way to partner with the library and introduce our services to your students or clients. Contact us for help setting up this program in your class, daycare, or program!

Like, Share, & Subscribe!

Did you happen to catch our new commercial on social media? During these challenging times, library staff are working hard to connect you with the books and resources you love.

[Click here for our Youtube page!](#)

Take a peek and share it on social media to show your students and families how libraries are continuing to serve them during the pandemic, and how we are keeping them safe. Whether they are browsing the stacks or picking up a grab-and-go learning kit at curbside, our libraries are here for you!



GET CONNECTED

Did you enjoy the newsletter? Please help spread the word by forwarding it in an email or posting a link to it on social media with the hashtag #berkslibraries

For more information or questions, please reach out to us!

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