

## UHLS Youth Services Advisory Council

May 9, 2024

10:00-11:30 am, In-person at UHLS

**Attendance (12):** Mary Fellows (UHLS), Amy Jeansonne (UHLS), Sarah Stanwicks (APLM), Barbara Goetschius (RCSC), Donna Riley (POES), Danielle Weeks (VAFL), Suzanne Cardinal (NASS), Lee Ackerman-Sawyer (WSTR), Joelle Adler Hoagland (EGRN), Liz Kurz (EGRN), Lee Ricci (COLN), Leanna Sweet (GRAF)

### Mary's Highlights of the List

[I'm an American](#) by Darshana Khiani, ill. by Laura Freeman

[Made in Asian America: A History for Young People](#) by Erika Lee and Christina Soontornvat

[Deadliest Animals on the Planet](#) by National Geographic Kids

[Like Lava in My Veins](#) by Derrick Barnes, ill. by Shawn Martinbrough

### Great reads/views/ listens

[Solar Bear](#) by Beth Ferry, ill. by Brendan Wenzel (recommended for beautiful art and environmental message)

[Wake Up, Color Pup](#) by Taia Morley (fun for storytime)

[How to Catch a Mouse](#) by Philipa Leathers (fun for storytime, though you have to move around due to small size of book)

[How to Count to One: And Don't Even THINK About Bigger Numbers!](#) by Caspar Salmon, ill. by Matt Hunt (fun for story time)

[Flubby Is Not A Good Pet \(Flubby series\)](#) by J. E. Morris (recommended for early readers)

[Powerless](#) by Lauren Roberts (the librarian who read this couldn't recommend it, but says it's been very popular with teens)

### Book Clubs for Younger Children

Mary shared this idea from ALSC blogger Kary Henry

<https://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2024/04/my-first-book-club/>

[My First Book Club](#) – Deerfield (IL) PL - offered once a month for students in Kindergarten to first grade. Each session is 45 minutes long. Keep registration fairly small; each child gets a copy of the book to keep.

- We look at the cover together and discuss some pre-reading questions.
- My colleague and I alternate reading the chapters out loud to the participants as they follow along in their own books.
- At the end of each chapter, we ask a few discussion questions.
- We chat about our post-reading questions.
- We serve snacks (what good book club wouldn't?).
- A brief craft or activity rounds out the program.

The group shared their experiences with and thoughts about these kinds of programs:

- APL's Bach Branch hosts "Bookmark Bunch" for K-2 children.
  - Offered monthly to a max of 15 kids. Signup always fills.

- Kids are given copies of the book that they can take home after. They read along with the first few chapters and then do a related activity and make a bookmark.
- EGRN had a comic book club for upper elementary in the past and they're interested in starting a program with early graphic novels (ex. Dog Man)
  - Brainstormed idea that kids could read different characters in the text
- It was noted that grades 2-4 can get overlooked by programming, and parents have asked for more programs for this age

## Diverse Autism Representation in Our Collections

This discussion was inspired by an ALSC blog post, [Embracing Diversity During Autism Acceptance Month](#)

Discussion focused on how Autism is displayed in media primarily through white, male, heterosexual characters. While white boys are more likely to be referred for an autism evaluation, [ten times more likely, according to UCLA](#), we should be aware of the growing body of research that shows the diverse nature of Autism.

Some examples of this research include:

- [80% of autistic girls and women are not diagnosed until after age 18](#)
- Significant racial inequities are reflected in how BIPOC children are diagnosed and treated. [White children are 19% more likely to get a diagnosis than black children, and 65% more likely than Latinx children.](#)
- LGBTQIA+ representation is lacking. [70% of the autistic community identifies as non-heterosexual and 24% of the autistic community identifies as gender diverse, or trans](#)

This information about the diversity in the autism community that we may not be aware of leads to questions we should ask ourselves:

- Do we advertise our [sensory storytimes](#)? Does our marketing target BIPOC as well as white audiences?
- Are there sensory aspects we could incorporate into all storytimes?
- Are Pride events we hold accessible to autistic families?
- Do our books for sensory storytime include LGBTQIA+ representation?
- If we're doing outreach to autism preschools or special education classrooms – are the books we're bringing representing all kinds of gender identities and family structures?

During discussion, participants shared some ways they approach the balance required in welcoming and including kids and families with various neurodiverse and sensory needs, while also giving them the space to get comfortable with the environment and activities. Overall, the recommendation was to watch out for different needs and take a non-judgemental, calm, and accepting approach.

### Related book recommendations:

From Mary

- [Ellen Outside the Lines](#) by A.J. Sass
- [The Trouble with Robots](#) by Michelle Mohrweis
- [Dear Mothman](#) by Robin Gow
- [Izzy at the End of the World](#) by K.A. Reynolds
- [A Day with No Words](#) by Tiffany Hammond, ill. by Kate Cosgrove

- [My Rainbow](#) by Trinity and DeShanna Neal, Trinity Neal, ill. by Art Twink

From the group

- [My Brain is Magic: A Sensory-Seeking Celebration](#) by Prasha Sooful, ill. by Geeta Ladi
- [Why Johnny Doesn't Flap: NT is OK!](#) by Clay Morton, Gail Morton, ill. by Alex Merry
- [Little Senses Series](#) by Samantha Cotterill

## UHLS updates

- **SRP supplies**-let us know if you didn't get something you asked for. We also have extra Adult Posters and the Early Childhood themed posters both large and flyer-size. Let us know if you want any of them.
- **RIF books**-*Hollow* is in. *Elatsoe* should be here soon. We'll send them out once they're all in.
- **SAIYL Grant**-Mary will send out update and self-discovery tool soon
- **GOAT**-We had 40 participants from all over the region at this recent event focused on Teen Services. It was a great day with lots of opportunities to talk and share ideas.
- **Schenectady PL**-There were questions about Schenectady wanting to join our ILS.

## SRP:

### Discussion about Equity

From Gabby Stoller - Youth Services Librarian, Meridian Library District in Meridian, Idaho  
ALSC Blog post [Is Your Summer Reading Program equitable?](#)

Last year she began a personal mission to start looking at how equitable her library's summer reading was. They made two big changes:

- "We began tracking our program with the format of days read and **not** minutes read. By counting days, we give everyone the same base line. **Everyone** has twenty-four (24) hours in the day. Some children will read multiple hours within a day; others can make it ten (10) minutes. They made this change.....and people loved it! They thanked us for considering all abilities.
- We picked prizes that were **actual** prizes. A prize that has an age restriction and/or a buy an adult, get a kid entree free is not so much a prize as an obligation. How does a prize that is "come in with an adult to get your free X" work with a single parent and multiple children? What about families on a tight budget? Asking them to purchase something isn't equitable. So if we give out something other than books, it needs to have no other financial burden. A coupon for a free ice cream is **actually** a coupon for a free ice cream, no strings attached."

### Related ideas and plans from our group:

- Several of the libraries will offer different ways to meet the challenges. Some of them are using "Choose your own adventure" style wording. POES has stamp booklets with different paths and different types of activities.
- VAFL will stamp passports for reading OR program attendance. They also plan to tier programs so that all ages feel welcome. Ex-welcoming teens to make crafts with younger children if they're interested.

- WSTR offers Coffee Connect after storytime so that parents can also connect. They find this especially helpful in their rural area where people feel more isolated. They've also worked with the local food pantry to provide bags to all attendants.
- It was recommended to be mindful of the way we talk about vacations. Family vacations and trips are not a reality for all kids.

### Quick Hacks for Décor

Mary shared some ideas she found in a search for "Adventure Decor":

- Using sticks for rustic decor, can even use them to create signage
- DIY tents made of sheets
- Make your own trail mix station
- Upcycle honey bears by adding a straw for drinks
- Create a signpost with arrows pointing out different things
- Make a river out of blue table cloths

Ideas from the group for Decor and Activities:

- COLN is decorating their overhead walkway to make an impact when people enter the library
- Family Fort Night on a Friday evening after hours
  - Is it time to bring back stuffed animal sleepovers?
- POES will partner with Rensselaer Youth Outdoors to have outdoor kits to checkout. The Boy Scouts will offer an orienteering program.
- EGRN gives kids lanyards and they earn badges for challenges. The badges are created by them with a button maker.
- Lee R. shared ideas for performers to be hired. He's had great success with Fantasy First Character Entertainment. Here are some of his [other recommendations with contact information](#). (Note: The Rolling Pebbles won't be available until fall. Lee will keep us posted)
- VAFL will feature a big map to track how to visit different places through books and media
- Other map ideas:
  - Ask your community for maps, there are plenty lying around that could be used for various purposes
  - Reimagine local areas by adding features or renaming places
  - Make a fantasy map by drawing around rice to give texture ([example here](#))
  - Make maps of their own houses
  - Roll dice to determine map features ([example here](#))

### SRP Booklists

#### [ALSC 2024 Summer Reading Lists](#)

Print and share as is or use the list as a hack for creating your own branded list. Be sure the check that books on a list you provide are available in your collection.

#### ARCs Available!

<http://reports.uhls.org/cgi-bin/staff/arc.pl>

( These ARCs cannot be added to your collection in any way.

By requesting ARCs, you are agreeing to give them to your kid, tween, or teen readers.)

**Next Meeting:** Virtual, June 10, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

**Upper Hudson Youth Services**

Mary Fellows - 437-9880 X228 – [mary.fellows@uhls.org](mailto:mary.fellows@uhls.org)

Amy Jeansonne - 437-9880 X231 – [ys.support@uhls.org](mailto:ys.support@uhls.org)

**Quote of the day:**

"Reading makes all other learning possible. We have to get books into our children's hands early and often."

- Barack Obama