YSRT Special Needs Storytimes and Beyond

Why?

1:54 children in Utah have autism
Special needs population highly underserved in libraries across the nation.
Provides early intervention to help children succeed in life.

How to Start

• Create a proposal that states why the program is necessary, how it relates to your library’s mission, and the objectives.
• Speak with Administration.
• Begin the process of planning months in advance by attending conferences, reading literature, and exploring Web sites about special needs.
• Market program to the community before it begins.
• Create a budget.
• Be flexible and don’t give up!

Programs for Preschool and School-Aged Children

Seven Senses: sight, smell, hearing, taste, tactile, proprioceptive, & vestibular
• Vestibular: ability to detect and coordinate movement
• Proprioceptive: body awareness; know what your body is doing
• Tactile: touch, pain, temperature, and pressure; sensitivity to touch.

Best Practices
1. Be flexible.
2. Set realistic expectations.
3. All children have strengths
4. Talk to the parents/caregivers
5. Relax

Programs for Adolescents

Online resources
• General
  • Utah Parent Center http://www.utahparentcenter.org/
  • Autism Speaks http://www.autismspeaks.org/
• Programming
• Storytimes for Autistic Children on ALSC blog
  http://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/?p=536
• Networking
  • Facebook (Big MAKS, Utah Autism Coalition, Autism Council of Utah – ACU, Autism Speaks)
• Purchasing materials
  • Know how much you can spend
  • Helpful websites include Achievement Products for Special Needs, Lakeshore

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