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Guidelines for Library Services to Babies and Toddlers

The Guidelines are developed as a joint project (2006-2007) of all sections of IFLA Division of Libraries Serving the General Public, and coordinated by the Libraries for Children and Young Adults Section.

The Guidelines are developed as a joint project (2006-2007) of all sections of IFLA **Division III. – Libraries Serving the General Public**, and coordinated by the Libraries for Children and Young Adults Section.

Division III. includes:

- Public Libraries
- Libraries Serving Disadvantaged Persons
- Libraries for Children and Young Adults
- School Libraries and Resource Centres
- Libraries for the Blind
- Library Services to Multicultural Populations
- Metropolitan Libraries

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SECTION ONE

The Guidelines are focused on the library services to babies¹ and toddlers², their families and supporting organisations dealing with early literacy and appropriate services for the very young.

Introduction

The United Nation's Convention on The Rights of the Child (1989) stresses the right of every child to the development of his or her full potential, the right to free and open access to information, materials and programs, under equal conditions for all, irrespective of age, race, sex, religious, national and cultural background, language, social status or personal skills and abilities.

The availability of library services for babies and toddlers is crucial. Early brain development research has shown the unequivocal impact that talking, singing and reading to babies and toddlers can have on their acquisition of speech and language. The child's environment contributes significantly to the development of pre-reading skills. A stimulating reading environment also involves the availability of reading materials.

Families all over the world need access to the tools available in their local libraries. An early introduction to the library allows for a comfort level, a willingness to ask for assistance, a place in which to seek answers and to learn about the resources and technologies available there or through the library. For children with special needs such as bilingual children, etc., early access to library services is even more important. Such exposure serves as a head start before formal schooling.

Purpose of the Guidelines

The purpose of the guidelines is to help public libraries in various countries throughout the world to implement high quality children's services. They are intended as a tool for both trained and inexperienced librarians who have the responsibility of serving families with babies and toddlers. In featuring guidelines for the youngest users, this document supports the African proverb, "It takes a *whole* village to raise a child."

Audience

The audience for the guidelines is practicing librarians, library administrators and decision-makers, students and instructors in library and information science training programs.

¹ Children from Birth to 12 months old

² Children from 12 months to 3 years of age

SECTION TWO

Mission of children's libraries

"By providing a wide range of materials and activities, public libraries provide an opportunity for children to experience the enjoyment of reading and the excitement of discovering knowledge and works of the imagination. Children and their parents should be taught how to make the best use of a library and how to develop skills in the use of printed and electronic media... Children should be encouraged to use the library from an early age, as this will make them more likely to remain users in future years." (*The Public Library Service – IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for development, 2001*)

By possessing a wide range of materials and activities, public libraries provide an opportunity for babies and toddlers, along with their carers, to find an area where they are welcome, an area rich in learning resources suited just for them, and the chance to experience the joy of rhymes, songs and board and tactile books perfect for their age group. Being part of the library community is an early social experience which sparks curiosity and the imagination. With educational toys, puzzles and playful books, the knowledge which grows between “the child and his/her carer” will eventually lead to a relationship between “the child and the books” available for them.

A print-rich environment is the stepping stone to reading and the next step, writing. Also, a positive experience early in life, will instil an interest in reading for life and the opportunity for good literacy skills.

Meeting the needs of families with children under three

Within the context of family learning and life long learning the unfettered access for children under 3 years of age to free public libraries is an essential human right and ingredient to enhance development of numeracy and literacy in later life.

Libraries should be for all children and it is therefore necessary that public libraries provide accessible materials and services for all regardless of disability. Accessible services including cultural programmes within the library should be planned with the needs of all disabled children to enable their full integration into society and with other library users.

Bilingual families need access to multilingual material and material in their first language in order to strengthen the relationship between children, carers and reading.

There should be special attention paid to the needs of children in rural areas and in areas with no services at all. A mobile library service should be provided and local premises used for outreach programmes.

Children and their families in urban areas might have special needs. In metropolitan areas, large populations suffering from various forms of deprivation such as poverty and illiteracy can be found. Reaching out with library services to small children in these target groups is a huge challenge. Focus on library services for babies and toddlers is not the only concern in poverty-stricken areas

in big cities. The victims of big-city life must also be taken into consideration; parents exhausted by life in high gear and a bewildering number of services available, and parents isolated from a traditional family structure are typical problems encountered.

Target groups

Very young children are dependent on their parents and carers for access to books, new technology and library services. This presents libraries with the opportunity to consider the needs of those adults and to influence their awareness of the importance of reading, books, multimedia and libraries in the development of young children.

The target groups for the development and delivery of services for the very young are:

- Babies and toddlers (children under three)
- Parents and other family members
- Legal guardians
- Carers e.g. childminders, day care staff
- Educators
- Healthcare professionals
- Other adults working with children, books and media

Goals of library services to babies and toddlers

- To facilitate the right of every baby and toddler to an environment which includes toys, books, multimedia and resources for them and their parents and other family members as well as for carers and other adults who work with young children;
- To create a print-rich environment to encourage a love of reading and books;
- To give early access to the development of multimedia skills and the use of technology;
- To provide material exposing various cultures in society;
- To encourage speech development of babies and toddlers;
- To develop language skills and bilingual skills, specifically with regards to linguistic and ethnic minorities;
- To inform parents etc. of the importance of reading/reading aloud for development of language and reading skills, specifically with regards to linguistic and ethnic minorities;
- To involve and train parents and carers in reading aloud, using books and other materials and parenting skills to improve the child's development and pre-reading skills;
- To involve and train parents and carers in the age-appropriate materials and resources available to them in their public library;

- To introduce “story”, to expose children and their parents and carers to other families and other cultures;
- To establish the habit of successful library visits, to lead to success at life-long literacy;
- To be an advocate and conduit for those who live with, care for and educate these babies and toddlers, now and in the future;
- To provide a space for children and their carers to gather, share and socialise;
- To provide a warm, welcoming and safe space for children and their families.

Services

Children’s library services should be seen as important and provided on a par with those services for adults. Children’s libraries should meet the exploratory, sensory and literacy needs of babies and toddlers.

Speaking, listening, reading and other literacy skills need to be introduced and reinforced at the earliest developmental stages. Music, areas for physical play (within reason for a library), centres for creative drama, housekeeping, simple science and social studies discovery areas and resources for parents and carers should be readily available. Training opportunities and make-it, take-it workshops need to be offered in the children’s library for parents and all those who work with young children.

Nursery rhymes, lullabies and other songs, picture books and storytelling, but also special computer programs like interactive picture books, are very worthwhile instruments to support the speech development of very small children.

As with numeracy and literacy skills, ICT skills encouraged at an early age, will provide any child with an accelerated learning ability and equip them with life and career skills in their formative and adult life.

Workshops should be developed for parents of babies and toddlers as a part of family education, as well as for carers and legal guardians.

For many people the public library is not the first place they would go. In order to get everybody in touch with all the materials for babies and toddlers the library should get closer to the lives of people in the community. Waiting rooms (doctors, dentists, hospitals), family education centres, special small collections of picture books in day care centres, and pre-schools are perfect places to get in touch with the target group. Working together with staff of health care centres is necessary because in many countries almost all parents visit those centres with their babies where the growth, weight, physical and speech development are checked regularly. The early years are the most important ones for speech development and therefore library staff must focus on working together in a network of appropriate professionals.

But also storytelling, reading-aloud outside the library is very important in order to advocate the importance of reading and speech development for young children. Parks, waiting rooms and even supermarkets are ideal places to sit down with children for this activity. Parents should be informed about a library’s storytelling hours and outreach programs.

Special attention is needed for parents who are not native speakers of a country's language. Their children will be bi-lingual or speak a completely different language from the parents. It is important to support those families in their own language/culture and integrate them in their new environment. Where neither books nor librarians are available, oral development can be included in outreach programmes.

Materials and selection criteria

When building collections and services, librarians should choose materials which are of high quality, age appropriate, safe for babies and toddlers, challenging without being frustrating, worthy of attention for parents and carers, non-biased and non-sexist, inviting and satisfying to read.

Picture books are particularly important for this age group as they support all aspects of a child's development as well as providing an enjoyable, shared, experience between adult and child.

Books for babies should be made from different types of cloth (e.g. "touchy-feely" books). Illustrated tactile books which feature elements that children can touch, smell and hear, will play a vital role in the development of literacy skills for the disabled children.

Beyond traditional board books and picture books, children need soft fabric picture books with bright colour contrasts and some literacy materials with added Braille text, to entertain partially sighted children. Libraries for the blind in countries need to provide collections of special tactile picture books and audio books which can be borrowed by public libraries. Other types of books for children whose parents are partially sighted could include Braille on one page with a picture on the opposite page.

For multicultural populations, public libraries should have bilingual materials, materials in the various mother tongues of the community, materials exposing the diversity of the community. Audio books will offer information for those unable to read the language of their country.

Libraries which provide toys either for loan or for use in the library also need to give particular consideration to their safety and cleanliness. Toys should adhere to the safety standard of the respective country.

Information and educational materials for parents should be included in the library collections.

Environment

Babies and toddlers and their parents and carers should find the library an accessible, inviting, attractive, safe, non-challenging and non-threatening place to visit. There should be no barriers to access, like steps without elevators, or heavy doors, or areas which might be unsafe for crawling and toddling youngsters. Ideally, services for the youngest children should have an area within the children's area with developmental toys, child-sized furniture or clean rugs or surfaces for floor play and sanitary areas for caring for this age group, including

suitable toilet and diaper changing facilities either very near or within the library building. Breastfeeding or bottle-feeding areas for parents are also appropriate to consider.

Seating for adults needs to be available as well as for children. With these facilities provided, babies and toddlers and their parents and carers can have the opportunity to interact with other families in the area.

It is essential that the library is safe for use by young children. It is good practice to carry out a safety check of the library and take action to minimise potential hazards e.g. sharp edges on furniture and shelving are protected, electric sockets have covers. Libraries which provide toys must also ensure that they are clean and safe for children to use.

Good lighting and a clear contrast of colours makes it easier for a partially sighted child or parents to perceive the environment and orientate themselves in the library.

Networking

Many groups and organizations within the community have an invested interest in the youngest members of the community. Where health care facilities exist in the area, doctors, dentists and other professionals who care for babies, toddlers and their parents, will want to build a partnership to offer information and materials on preventative care, free clinics, access to special resources, etc. Pre-school and day care centres can supply information and the criteria for attending these facilities. Community centres can publicise their resources and programmes for this age group, their parents, carers and guardians. Resources for home-schooling, religious education, musical training, etc. can all be available in attractive notebooks or on bulletin boards. In turn, libraries can put posters, calendars, bookmarks and other library and reading promotion materials into the many facilities with whom they have built a partnership.

To contact the disabled children the library may co-operate with the local associations of children's rehabilitation or parents' groups. Librarians can invite them to visit the library and discuss their needs for service and materials.

Publicity

A positive, public profile for children's libraries is most important as parents, carers and those who work with babies and toddlers look to the library as a resource within the community for families to bring their young children to have fun, meet other children and families and attend programs and training in parenting skills.

Publicity ranges from simple techniques like leaflets advertising opening hours and services, to more sophisticated methods like marketing programmes and the use of web-sites to promote the library services and activities. All library partners within a community should be included in delivering publicity materials. It is necessary to work constructively with good marketing products which have both good aesthetics and content.

Information and signs should be in languages reflecting the community.

Human resources

Every library should have the support of a qualified librarian. Effective and professionally run children's libraries require trained and committed children's librarians with varied skills and professional training in child development, knowledge of the literacy continuum from a child's birth through three years of age, a nurturing attitude, familiarity with quality children's literature, creative in ways for babies and toddlers to socially interact, planning and communication skills to afford the best environment for this age group and their parents and carers.

A library should have the support of a librarian devoted and trained to the service and needs of disadvantaged patrons.

Staff must have cross-cultural/intercultural skills and competencies. The diversity of culture in a community should be reflected in staff, volunteers and libraries should make use of resourceful parents with multicultural backgrounds.

Alongside fully trained and equipped children's librarians, volunteers also play an important role. Volunteers can be trained in reading aloud and storytelling and perform those activities both inside and outside the library.

Management and evaluation

It is important that those who manage children's services participate in the planning process for the library as a whole, to insure an awareness and support for children's services in the overall goals and long term plans of the library.

Reliable performance information is a necessary tool for evaluation and improvement in providing for all segments of the population being served. Collecting statistics and anecdotal information³ on a regular basis, shows accountability, and assists with planning and future management decisions. Working from established competencies assures continuing staff development which allows for even better service to the public.

It is also vital to collect statistics on a community to map out cultural diversity in the area served by a library.

Funding

Core funding should come from the local or national government authorities responsible for providing a Public Library or, where appropriate, NGOs and other similar organizations which have the authority to provide free public library service at the point of use to children in every community.

Supplementary funding should be welcomed and sought to provide additional

³ The phrase "anecdotal information" means "hearsay" or evidence or information gathered informally by word of mouth and off the record quote for example.

services which cannot be wholly supported through the core funding authority e.g. books for babies schemes, national reading schemes.

SECTION THREE

Checklist

For the best results, while using this as an assessment tool, within each box, mark the month and year which matches your progress: for example, if your library "needs to consider" including services to babies and toddlers in their mission statement, mark "2007."

In the interest of serving BABIES and TODDLERS, parents, families, carers and those who work with very young children, **every public library shall:**

1. **strive to provide** high quality children's services, support early learning, family learning, and life-long learning, seeing those services as important, and treated equally with, services for adults.

<i>Where is the library on this continuum?</i>			
_____	_____	_____	_____
needs to	in planning	already	achieving and
consider	stages	implemented	evaluating

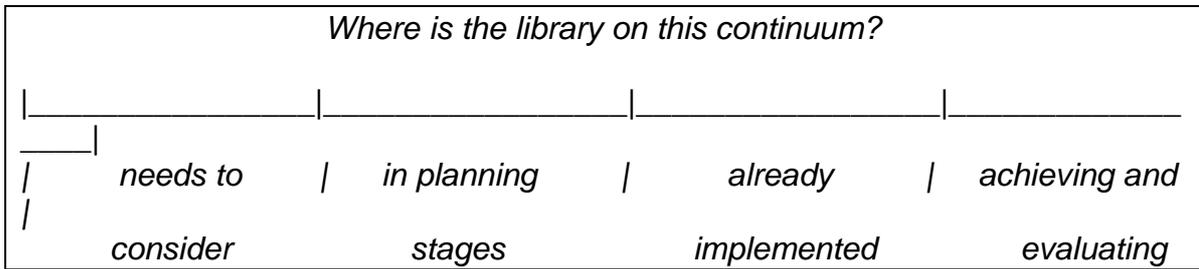
2. **include** service to BABIES (birth - 12 months) and TODDLERS (12 months - 3 years) in their mission statement.

<i>Where is the library on this continuum?</i>			
_____	_____	_____	_____
needs to	in planning	already	achieving and
consider	stages	implemented	evaluating

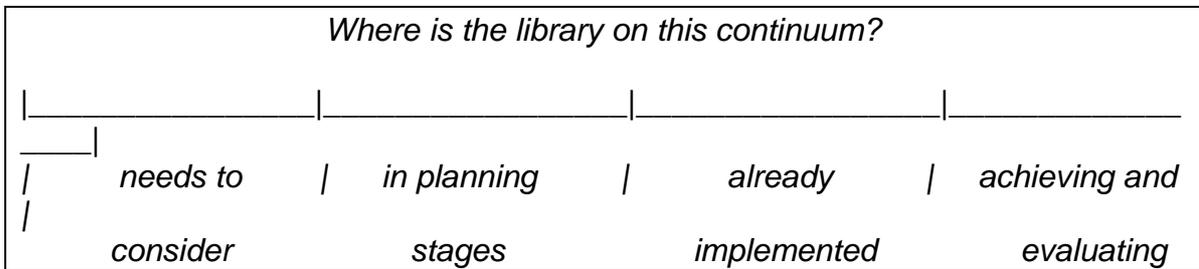
3. **ensure** ease in obtaining library cards and library privileges.

<i>Where is the library on this continuum?</i>			
_____	_____	_____	_____
needs to	in planning	already	achieving and
consider	stages	implemented	evaluating

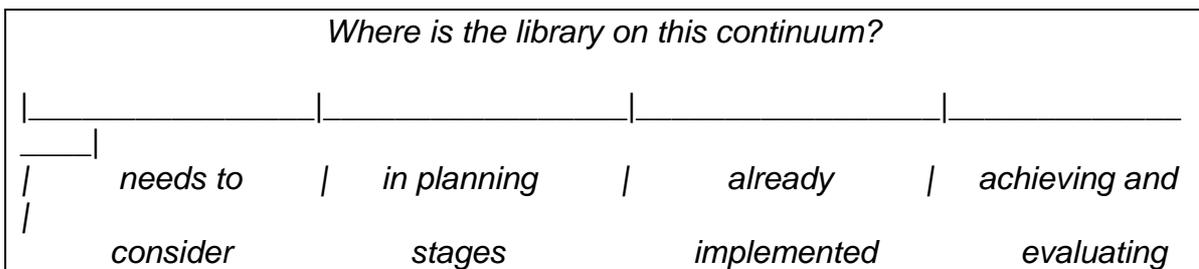
4. **understand** the need for prominent signage, in both words and pictographs, to allow patrons independence in navigating library locations.



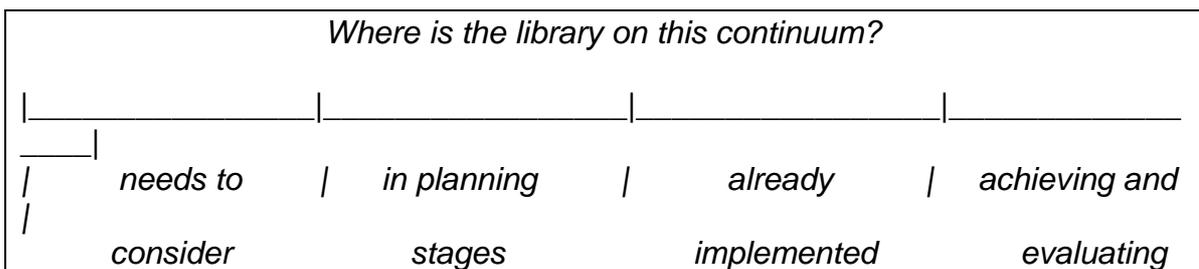
5. **provide** a clearly defined space dedicated to resources for BABIES and TODDLERS in all service locations, including mobile services and through delivery services.



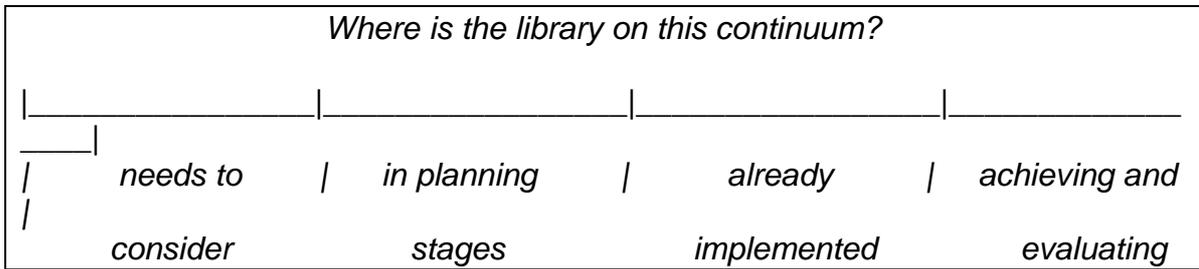
6. **provide** access to library buildings for prams, strollers, wheelchairs, walkers, etc.



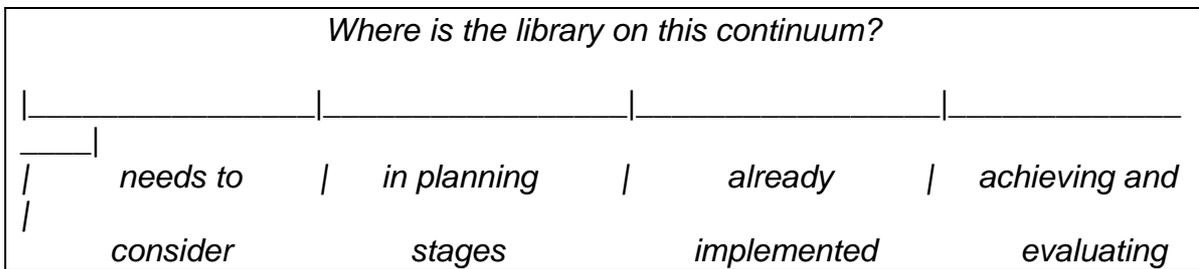
7. **select** and purchase materials for this audience, which support the literacy goal of "raising readers."



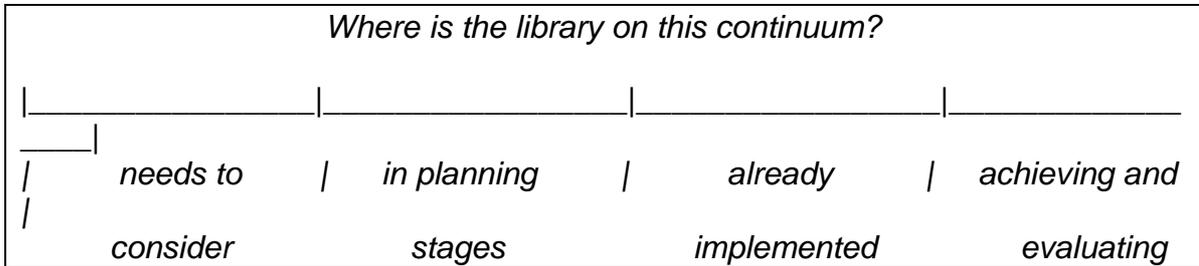
8. **provide** a welcoming environment that is comfortable and safe and conducive to early stages of development and learning.



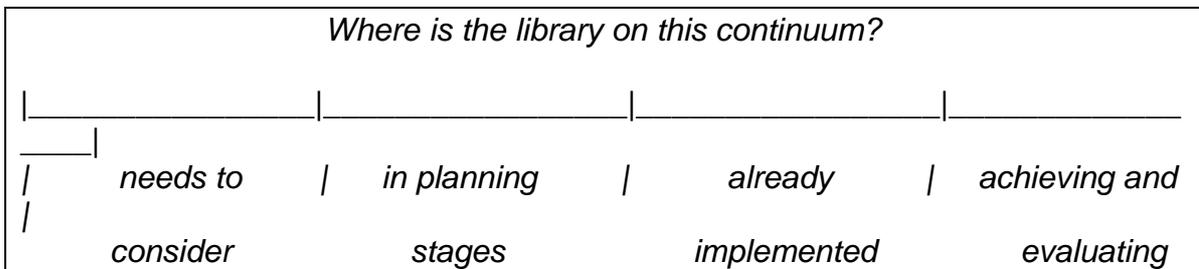
9. **provide** a generous number of age-appropriate resources, in a variety of formats, including: toys, print, multimedia, technology and adaptive devices.



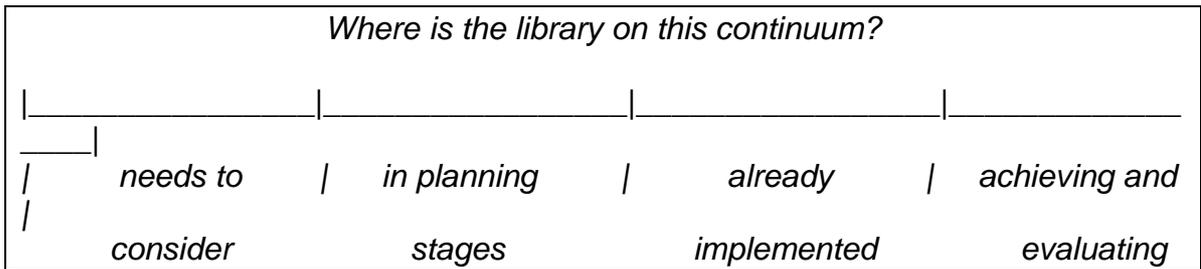
10. **provide** accessible materials and services for all regardless of ability.



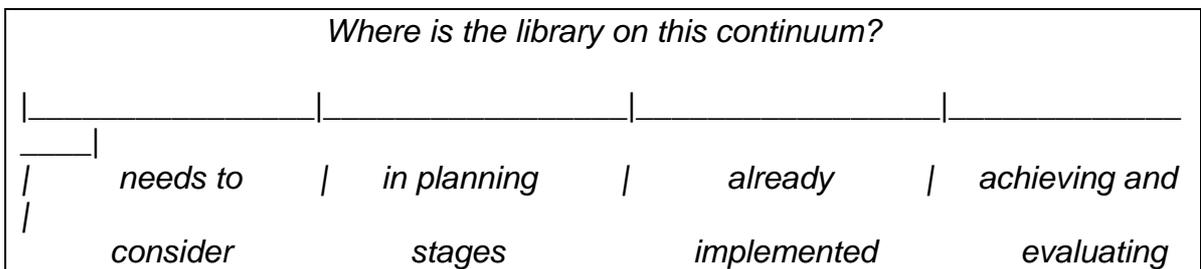
11. **maintain** adequate staffing to offer reference and readers' advisory services, as well as to present programs.



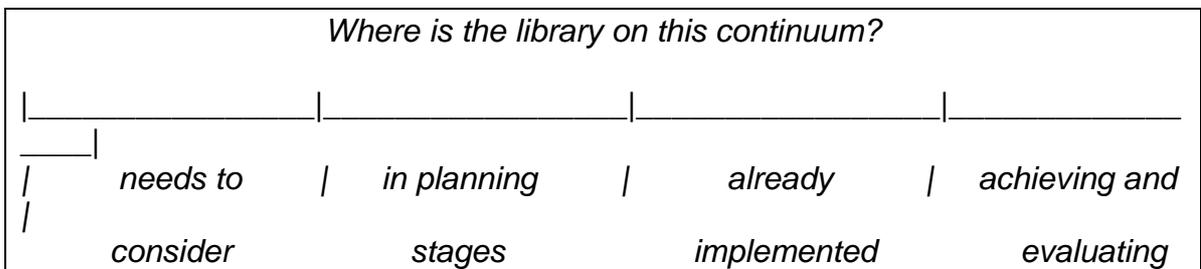
12. **be responsible** for up-to-date educational opportunities and training programs.



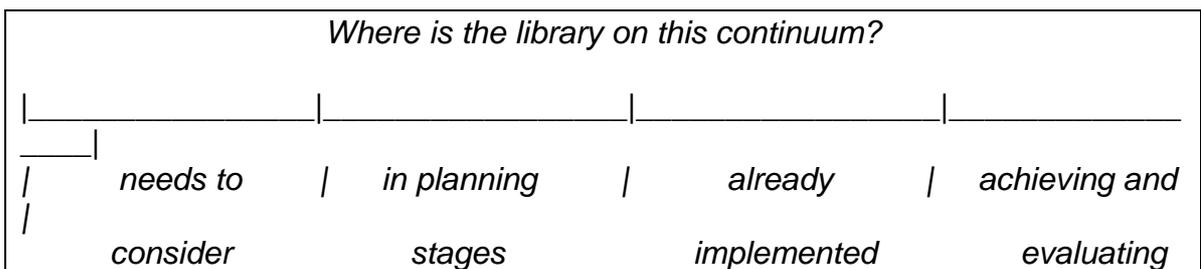
13. **recognise** and address the diverse language and cultural needs of library users when acquiring resources and planning services.



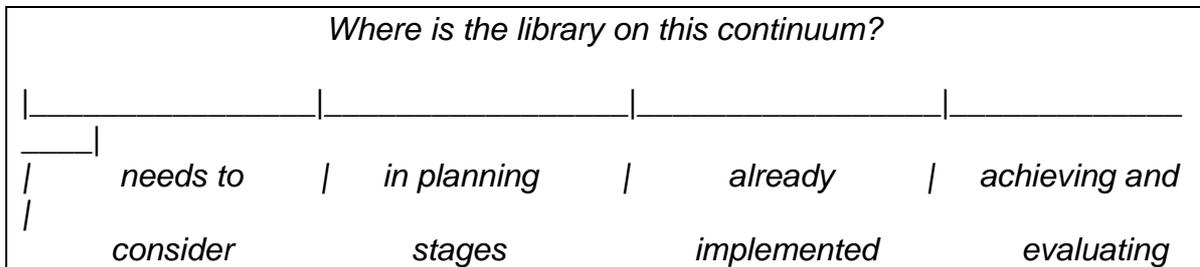
14. **offer** age-appropriate programs and activities at various times of the day and various days of the week, to accommodate the variety of schedules kept by their clientele.



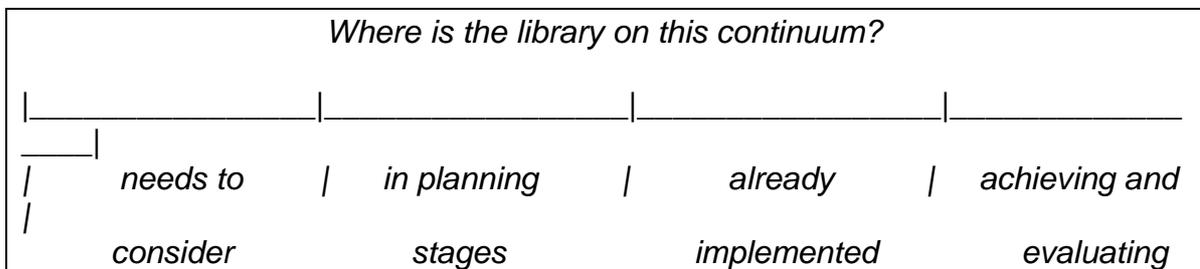
15. **provide** information fliers about library services throughout the community to attract the attention of everyone in the community.



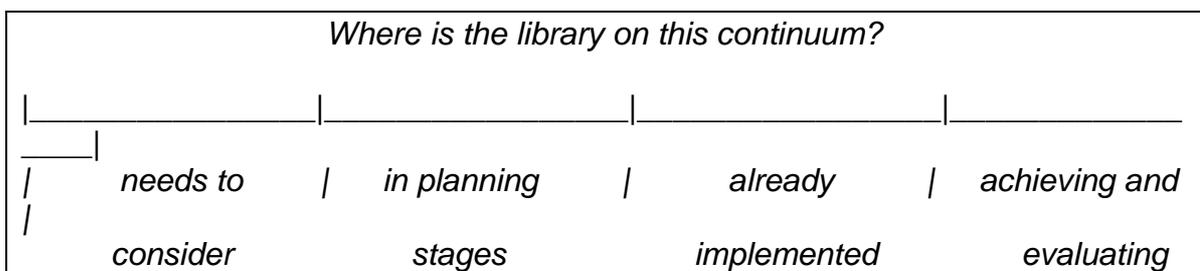
16. **develop** partnerships with community groups and organizations to ensure the best facilities, services, and opportunities for the youngest members of the community.



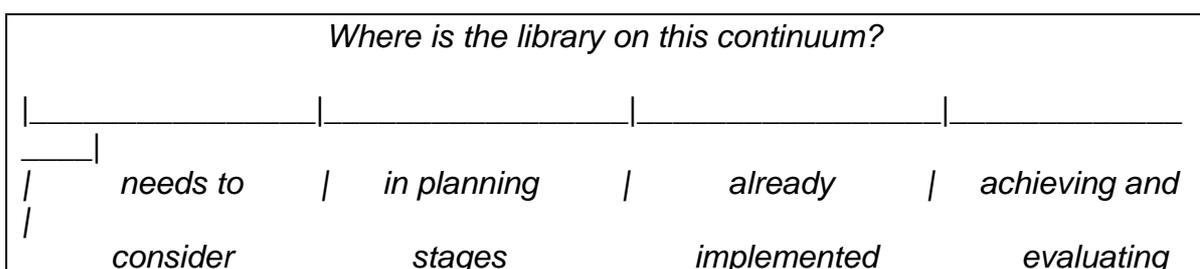
17. **invite** presenters and speakers to enhance and expand a variety of topics of interest like parenting skills, preparing for kindergarten, etc.



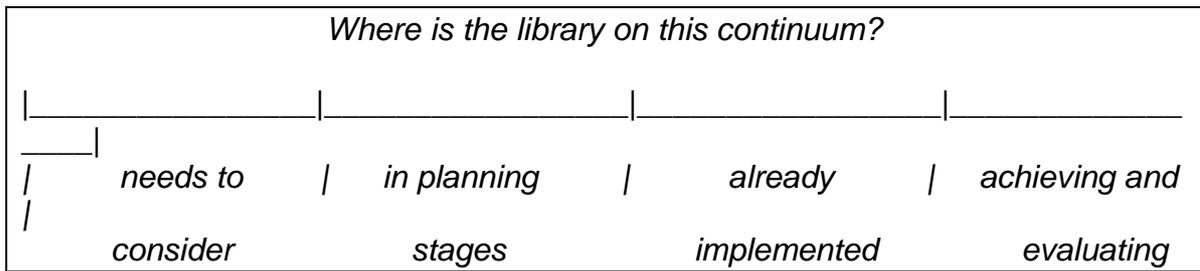
18. **stimulate families and carers** to see the library as a frequent destination for learning and fun.



19. **publicise**, through a website and a variety of other means, including oral media, and in the languages of the community, the values of the public library as a rich and welcoming community resource.



24. **keep abreast** of best practices from around the world and adapt and apply new ideas as they benefit the library in its quest for excellence.



SECTION FOUR

Best practices

Two divisions with the **American Library Association** (the Public Library Association and the Association for Library Service to Children) developed a series of parent and carer workshops to provide public libraries with vital tools to help prepare parents for their critical role as their child's first teacher. Using research on early literacy and brain development, the *Every Child Ready to Read @ your library* initiative was launched. The intent of the program is to firmly establish public libraries as a partner in the educational continuum. In many communities the library is one of the few resources available to parents with free programming, toys, books to borrow and an inviting place for them to bring their babies and their toddlers.

www.ala.org/alsc

Public libraries within the **United States of America** are cooperating with their local public broadcasting stations (PBS) to promote the *Ready To Learn* initiative. Funded by the United States Department of Education, the initiative creates engaging television and other electronic programming – all with the goal of helping children ages 2 and older get ready to read. Favourite current television shows like *Between the Lions* and *Sesame Street* are part of the partnership. New programs to be launched in 2007 and 2008 include *Word World*, *Martha Speaks* and *The Electric Company*. Television is a big part of many children's lives. This effort puts "quality" into the choices available to very young children and their parents and caregivers.

www.pbs.org/readtolearn

The **Medvescak Public Library** (Zagreb City Libraries, **Croatia**) provides a wide range of daily programmes for its local community, including activities for babies, toddlers and their parents such as common playing activities organised five times a week including story-telling, a toy lending service open daily, great picture-books collection for children under three, a popular educational books and magazines collection for parents, workshops and lectures for parents done by psychologists, pedagogues, doctors etc., and inclusion of parents in all activities with children. A special programme for babies and parents started in 1993.

www.knjizmed.hr

The Children's Section of the **Croatian Library Association** worked for three years on the project *Read them from the earliest ages*. Children's librarians from local public libraries visit the day care centres and talk to staff and parents about early literacy, the importance of reading to the child from birth, ways to read aloud and present high quality picture-books to the youngest. Information and educational materials are provided for educators and for parents, also available on-line.

http://www.hkdrustvo.hr/hr/strucna_tijela/17/publikacije/

In Denmark there is a public library project called *Det eventyrlige bibliotek* (The adventurous library) with **Danish Library for the Blind**. Its target group is children with disabilities and their families. They are invited to the library to see

the library's services and offerings to disabled children and have special programs designed for their needs. www.dbb.dk

The education of future readers is an author's program of **Russian State Children's Library**, continued by Children's libraries of Perm, Anadir and other Russian towns. The program involves weekly meetings with little children in the library, where in the form of games, babies got their first literacy education. They were read poetry and stories and discussed some points. The themes of the meetings were different, for example: *The Autumn, Brothers and Sisters, Poems about the Toys*, and others. The authors of the programs based their project on the ideas of L. Vigotsky and F. Dalto. They also published articles in Russian periodicals, which allowed other colleagues to use their experiences.

Babies create with paints, the exhibition of the babies' and toddlers' (6 months – 2 years old) paintings, made in the library and at home, was organised in the **Russian State Children's Library**. It was a co-project with International Children's Painting Gallery and Children's House No.29. Some of the young painters worked with brushes but most of them used their fingers, palms (maybe other parts of the body too). The colour combinations and expression were so great that all library visitors stared at the paintings, having presumed these were some modern professional works, before they read the information about the project. Not only the paintings but also the photos of "the authors" were presented. All participants of the exhibition received diplomas, delivered to the parents, but in later years, the babies will know that they have already received the "first in their lives" prize.

Several **public libraries** in Catalonia, **Spain** were involved in the program *Born to read* (Nascuts per llegir). The goal of the program is to promote the love for reading from the first months of life, establishing an affective link between children and adults around the book and, also, to involve the community that cares for young children such as parents, paediatricians, nurses, librarians, teaching experts and other professional people related both to the book and young children's literature. The project took place during a three-year period, from 2005 to 2007, and was aimed at all young children born from 2005 onwards in the municipalities which belong to the pilot plan. <http://www.nascutsperllegir.org/>

The **Barcelona Libraries (Spain)** organise the *Reading club for new parents*. There is a time for the mothers and fathers who have just had a child to learn to transmit the pleasure of reading and also gain access to books that talk about the task of being parents. The idea is to let them know about children's literature aimed at the smallest ones, as well as getting them closer to, and to recuperate, the oral heritage of verbal games and traditional 'lap' songs. This activity is carried out in 3 libraries of the Barcelona network.

Babies Reading Service (Servei de lectura a petits lectors): Many of **Barcelona's Province Municipal Libraries Network** (Catalonia, **Spain**) have a section available exclusively focused on babies, toddlers and the youngest children, which contains several materials suitable for this age range and intends to arouse their interest in reading from a very early age. In this section, children must always be accompanied by an adult who will look after him / her while they are using this service. There is a web page to present a very interesting selection of

books to better understand the problems of the youngest ones and assist them:
<http://www.diba.es/chilias/info/llistaguies.asp>
<http://www.diba.es/biblioteques/guia/serveis/llistaserveis.asp?servei=6>

In most **Swedish public libraries** there is a shelf with books for disabled children. They are called the *Apple shelf* – marked with an apple. On this shelf you find books with pictograms and bliss symbols, video books in sign languages for the deaf, tactile picture books for blind and visually impaired children. The tactile picture books are produced by the Swedish Library of Talking books and Braille (TPB). Some libraries also use the *Apple shelf* as a means for displaying pedagogic toys for toddlers. The Swedish National Council of Cultural Affairs has published guidelines for libraries that wish to develop their own apple shelf.

Nørrebro Library, a public library in Copenhagen (**Denmark**), has since September 2004 worked on a language stimulation project aimed toward the children and their parents in a multicultural area of the city. Through personal contact and by visiting the families four times, from birth until the start of school, the library wants to create a joint cultural understanding for a better development of language and speech. The project's preliminary result is a significant increase in the number of families visiting the library. The project has opened the way for a wider teamwork of groups to develop ideas and new models, working with bilingual families. The first year, the project was carried through with financial support from the Library Board Development Fund. *Biblioteksstyrelsen* project will continue as a natural part of the library service, with financial support from the library's own resources and a helping hand from The Ministry of Integration.
www.sprogporten.dk

Boekenpret is the reading promotion and language skills improving program in **public libraries** in the **Netherlands**. It's focusing on (low-educated) families, both original Dutch and immigrants as well, with children between 0 and 6 years of age. In a local network children health care centres, day care centres, preschools, primary schools and public libraries are working together. The professionals are educated by librarians in a special method on language skills (Taallijn VVE). In all age groups (0-2, 2-4,4-6) there are activities in the children centres and at home, based on specially developed materials. Collections of picture books are placed within the preschools and day care centres so parents can get used to borrowing a book on a regular basis. Parents are educated step by step in reading aloud, how to use picture books, sing songs etc. Those workshops, (coffee meetings) are organised in the library and the parents receive some new materials monthly, like small books, a hand puppet, flyers etc.
www.boekenpret.nl

The program *Books for baby* which one finds in all the **public libraries** of Quebec (**Canada**) encourages new parents to register their new born at the library. At the time of the inscription, they obtain a gift bag including a book for toddlers, reading tips as well as a magazine intended for the new parents. This program is a great success and makes it possible for young families to join and know the services offered at the library.

Developed by **Communication-Jeunesse** in Quebec (**Canada**), *Toup'tilitou* is a programme of awakening to the reading and the writing for the 0-5 years. The principles of the program are: to emphasise playing and the pleasure of discovery;

to encourage the manipulation of books from birth on; to establish a relationship for the child with books as he plays with them and to create an environment favourable to reading. *Toup'tilitou* offers workshops about children's literature and presenting books, highlights the annual awards given to books, suggests activities and story time presentations at the libraries, at book fair trades and other literary events.

The **Hamilton Public Library** (Ontario, **Canada**) offers a rich learning environment, an informal meeting place and a destination for young families. The library's Play Corners are filled with toys that promote early literacy, motor skills development and cognitive development. Every branch library has a collection of parenting materials to inform parents about the growth and development of their infant. The library's core programming includes weekly *Story Time for Babies* starting at birth. *The Every Child Ready To Read @Your Library* initiative, developed by the American Library Association, is incorporated into the Story Time programs. This integrated approach to early literacy seamlessly connects sharing good books with the six skills necessary for reading success. To reach out to Hamilton's diverse community, the library presents rhymes, stories, and songs at local mother and baby groups. All new mothers are visited by a public health nurse at the hospital. During this visit, they receive a *Read to Your Baby* book bag, developmental/health information as well as a special invitation to visit their local library for a free board book when they register their newborn for a library card.

<http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/LibraryServices/>

Bookstart (**United Kingdom**), run by national charity *Booktrust*, was the first national baby book-giving programme in the world. *Bookstart* began in the UK in 1992 with 300 babies. By 2001, there had been over one million *Bookstart* babies (Bookstart Partnership Report, 2003). The programme works through a multi-agency programme involving public libraries, education authorities and health services who provide a free pack of books to every baby, with guidance materials for parents and carers and often targeting the socially isolated. The *Bookstart pack* is usually delivered to families at babies' 7-9 month health check with their health visitor. The pack includes a canvas bag containing two board books, a book of nursery rhymes, advice on sharing books with a list of good books for babies, information about libraries and an invitation to join. Informal library events such as rhyme time or story times are also offered.

In England, two additional packs have been available since 2006 – *Bookstart Plus* for 18-month-olds, and *My Bookstart Treasure Chest*, aimed at three-year-olds. www.bookstart.co.uk

Bookstart Campaign began on April of 2003 as a model project for 930 babies at Junrang public health Centre, Seoul, **South Korea**. The *Bookstart Campaign* was first developed in the United Kingdom in 1992, followed by wide expansion around the world in more than 10 countries. To introduce the Campaign to the Koreans, a private organization named *Bookstart Committee of Korea* was established and *Bookstart* campaigners from the UK and Japan were invited to discuss their experiences and case studies.

As of August of 2004, many of the self-government organizations and public libraries are actively participating in the *Bookstart Campaign*. These districts include Junrang-gu of Seoul, Yonsu-gu of Inchon, Jung-gu of Seoul, Suncheon,

Seocho-gu of Seoul, Jechon, Sokcho etc. The *Bookstart Campaign* first started in a community health centre by giving picture books to babies under the age of one as a present, but as time passed local public libraries actively joined and became associated with the reading project.

The *Beautiful Granny Storyteller's Workshop Project* (Seoul, **South Korea**) was planned and coordinated by the *Seoul Society for Children's Library and Literature* (SSCLL), and supported by the *Grant for Woman from Seoul City*. The workshop third started in 2004. Grannies are learning and practicing story-telling, reading aloud, singing songs and nursery rhymes etc., at the workshops. They have chances to volunteer as storytellers at libraries, kindergartens, schools, social education centres, etc. Grandmothers (the OLD) and grandchildren (the YOUNG) come together through fairytales, picture books, and stories. They are playing and communicating with each other. They also become familiar with children by volunteering at storytelling hours in libraries as a storyteller. Since, many libraries have used supporters/ volunteers for children's service programs, especially for family storytelling hours.

On the **Bærum Libraries' (Norway)** initiative the *Project Health Care Centres* started in 1991. The intention was to reach out to expectant parents, parents with young children, parents with ethnic minority backgrounds, juveniles and expectant mothers who utilise the health care centres in Bærum municipality, with information about the importance of children's books for language development. In 2002 libraries and the health care centres decided to continue this work with a permanent agreement on an administrative level.

Cooperation between the health care centres and the libraries ensures that everyone with children from the age of 9-10 months is made aware of the services of the library. This is reinforced at subsequent health check-ups. The staff at the health care centres have a routine for distributing brochures and materials prepared by the Library to the parents when the child is approximately 9-10 months old and at the 2 and 4-year check-ups. They share what the library has to offer and remind parents about the importance of reading to their child.

There are many different **Children's mobile libraries** offering targeted services to children **around the world**. The following three are particularly noteworthy:

Soria Moria in Norway provides a vehicle for children which is a very colourful van with puppets, ghosts and a storytelling chair. It visits schools, playgroups, etc. The van deservedly won the livery prize at IFLA 2005. It is staffed by an exuberant librarian, who tells ghost stories while dressed as a ghost and does belly dancing, as well as having puppet shows. This is an exceptional outreach service.

Netti Nysse from Tampere (**Finland**) is an innovative mobile library service provided by two vehicles. They serve the general public but with an emphasis on children and a strong presence of ICT and technology. The original vehicle is a bendi-bus with the children's section in the rear part.

Birmingham public library service (UK) has a very popular vehicle dedicated to children. This is immaculately kept despite giving 15 years service to the more socially excluded areas of Birmingham. Like the Norwegian service there is an exuberant member of staff who empathises well with his customers. The service visits schools, playgroups, community centres and special community

events. This vehicle has twice won awards at the *UK Mobilemeet*.

Some **African** publishers do make the effort to overcome a lack of appropriate reading materials for babies and toddlers in public libraries. Nouvelles Editions Ivoiriennes in the Ivory Coast and Ruisseaux d'Afrique in **Benin**, for example, have published several titles for the youngest child. But the most original idea is the "*pagnes-livres*", which are books made of tissue, created and printed in **Mali**, that can be found in **Malian public libraries** and can be "read" to toddlers and manipulated by them. After an Alphabet book of Malian children's names and another illustrating words in the Bamanan language (published by CEBA), the association *Malira* has recently produced a third cloth book, "1, 2, 3", a counting book showing vegetables and giving their name in 4 Malian languages. The book is also sold in France with profits going to two village libraries in the Timbuktu region.

www.malira.org

Urayasu Public Library in the suburb of Tokyo, **Japan**, provides a programme called *Enjoying Nursery Rhymes with Babies* for babies and toddlers between 6-months and 1-year-and-2-months, and for toddlers over 1-year-and-3-months and their parents. It is organised once a month with activities such as reading aloud nursery rhymes and picture books. Librarians visit day care centres in the city and some of the public kindergartens to offer similar services. A *Bookstart Picture Book Program* is offered for 5-month-old babies and their parents once a month in various residential areas for the convenience of the participants. It is held in cooperation with the city of Urayasu. The Urayasu Public Library provides another program called *Picture Books for Parents and Children*. This library has a reputation for providing a very high level of services in Japan.

There are 1,840 local governments in Japan and the *Bookstart Program* is offered in 597 of them. In many of the local communities the librarians visit public health care centres to introduce the books at health check-ups for babies by giving out free picture books, but the city of Urayasu offers the service for the babies and the parents at the library. Public libraries usually work in collaboration with volunteer groups but this library is unique in offering all of its services for babies and toddlers under the instruction of librarians.

The **Osaka Prefectural Central Library** is located in the second largest prefecture in **Japan**, following Tokyo. It provides a program called *Story-telling Cradle* with interactive games of nursery rhymes and reading aloud picture books for up to about 15 pre-registered families with babies and toddlers between 5-months and 1-year, and with toddlers between 1-year and 2-years-and 3-months. It is held twice a month in 3-month sessions. Another program called *Dandelion – Playground for Parents and Children* is held twice a month for toddlers up to 2-years-old and their parents to offer activities with picture books, hand games, nursery rhymes, and rhythm games. Anyone can join without pre-registration. In collaboration with librarians, volunteers qualified as nursing staff, instruct the parents on how to interact with small children through nursery rhymes and books. In Japan, library services for babies and toddlers started with the so-called *healthcare libraries* in the 1980's, and is now drawing an increasing interest following the introduction of *Bookstart* established in the UK in 2000, the National Year of Reading for Children, and the establishment of the *Law on the Promotion of Reading Activities for Children* in 2001.

Bebeteca is the **Cuban** name of the public libraries' strategy of the last ten years which exists to develop new spaces and services to toddlers and young children and their families. The most important thing for parents to realise is that every toddler possesses a certain amount of creativity. By presenting creative activities, librarians train parents to understand the importance of creative expression in a child's development and the need to provide opportunities for creative activities such as storytelling, playing make-believe, and using art materials. Librarians show parents how to choose the right books and how to read a story aloud to ensure their children will be readers in the future.

Search: *Bebeteca* programa nacional lectura Cuba

Babies love books is a programme of the **Würzburg Public Library, Germany**. Every week, mothers bring their babies to visit the public library to join the program. The library provides story-telling, playing and singing with the children aged from birth - 3 years old.
www.stadtbuecherei-wuerzburg.de

The **children's librarians of Paris (France)** have conceived *L'arbre à histoires (The Story Tree)* with an artist, Alix Romero. It is a tree shaped wooden structure about 1.50 metres high. Ten plastic boxes are included which are like small houses. Each box contains the setting, toy figures and objects corresponding to a story for toddlers. The figures and objects can be taken out and manipulated. Among the authors and stories, one can find Helen Oxenbury, John Burningham, Mary Wabbes, Michel Gay, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, etc. The librarian first reads the story while showing the book's illustrations and the figures to a small group of children between the ages of 1 and 3 years old and their parents or carers. The children are always fascinated to see the illustrations come to life. They can, after hearing the story, handle both the book (each child is given a copy) and the different figures and objects. Usually, at the end, it's the book that attracts their attention. This is a good introduction to books and stories for children and for adults who are not already familiar with these traditional stories.

The *Baby Library 2.0* programme is a new activity in the **Danish Library** in Flensburg (**Germany**) which started in 2007, inspired by the discussions in the IFLA Children's Section Standing Committee. The programme is held every Wednesday for two hours. In Germany, where the library operates, mothers stay home with the little ones for a minimum of 3 years, so there is a big demand for a place to meet and exchange information and share experiences. The equipment is the same as for every day library activities but a pushcart with special baby toys and a thick carpet for the youngest is added. Coffee for the grownups and juice for the children are provided. The programme consists of: a short presentation of simple songs, a presentation of quality websites about childcare, board games, an introduction to magazines and new novels for the grownups, music on CD for babies and suggestions for excursions for the family. A web blog is used as a planning tool. It is updated according to each presentation. The presentations may be combined or linked together for longer presentations, e.g. at meetings for parents in kindergartens.
www.babybiblioteket.blogspot.com

"Learning the love of reading through a gift: an adult reading a story" is the goal of the **Italian national project *Nati per Leggere*** promoted since 1999 by the

Paediatric Cultural Association, the Italian Libraries Association and the Centre for Child's Health. The project's aim is the promotion of early and emergent literacy through reading aloud and shared readings in families starting with the child's first year of life. This is an opportunity to provide for the baby's well-being and to encourage language development and to build a relationship between parents and their children. Public health paediatricians are trained to provide guidance to parents during well child visits for youngsters from 6 months until 6 years of age, about the importance of reading aloud. Whenever possible, a new book is given to the child at each visit and parents are invited to use the library. Many libraries all over the country have increased their services, book collections, and activities for babies and their parents, supporting babies' first natural reading experience and nurturing them through different activities. Reading aloud and sharing developmentally appropriate books relating to babies' needs is shown in the *Manifesto on the First Book* produced in Brescia.

http://www.provincia.brescia.it/biblioteche/bibliografiempl/primo_libro.pdf
www.natiperleggere.it

The *Bookstart* programme in **Brilon Public Library, Germany**, started in January 2006. In close cooperation with the local hospital and the paediatricians, every mother gets two free packs of books and the so called *reading ladder for growing children* to inspire, stimulate and create a love of reading. The first pack is given by the hospital nurse shortly after the birth of the baby. The second pack is given by the paediatrician when the child is 2 years old. The reading ladder promotes the idea of early book sharing in more than 150 communities in Germany. The reading ladder is a measuring rod in hard plastic for kids up to 10 years of age. It hangs in public places: the waiting rooms of doctors and speech therapists for children, kindergartens, primary schools and public libraries. According to the age of the child, the ladder gives basic information about how parents can support the early literacy of their child. Additionally, a small leaflet gives book recommendations. www.leselatte.de

www.buecherbabys.de
www.stadtbibliothek-brilon.de

A parenting and family literacy area within **public libraries in United States** has a collection of books to assist parents with their new responsibility. Here are books telling the month, by month growth and developing skills of their newborn. Resources might also include advice on how to cope with the new schedule, demands, and stresses of adjusting to a new baby in the family. Comfortable seating affords a moment's respite to look at a parenting magazine, check a community resource notebook for the community health clinic's schedule, have a conversation with another parent or caregiver of a child the same age or even feel free to nurse or feed the baby. This caring environment builds confidence for the parent or caregiver in the community's concern and willingness to provide for every child's well-being.