



Chapbook...

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North Carolina Library Association**

Letter from the Chair 3/20/05

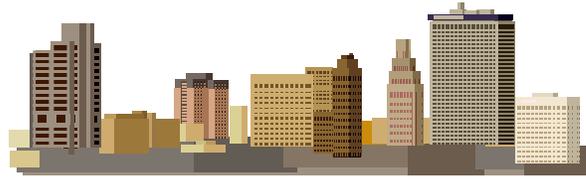
By Carol Laing McNeil

Today as I write, it is the first day of spring. Daffodils are blooming outside my window that is open to let a warm breeze blow in. There is something about spring that inspires me. In particular, it inspires me to clean every inch of my house. On a good year, it even gets me to clean my office. This year spring is hitting me especially hard. For that reason, I am determined to do something that I've been toying with for a while; that is, completely overhaul the Children's Service Section website.

As I look at our rather quaint website, I keep thinking that it could offer more for our members and visitors. That is where you come in. The Children's Services board can spend a lot of time discussing what we *think* members want to see when they visit the CSS website (and more than likely we will), or our members can simply tell us. For example, are you interested in links to youth services resources? Do you want to see a link to the NCCBA website or the current summer reading program page? What information or links can we provide that would make your job easier for you? Let us know what we can do to make the site more relevant to the people who use it.

After browsing other state library organization websites, I know that many organizations only list the chairs of their committees along with their email addresses. Our website gives contact information for our board members, lists our bylaws and even includes our quarterly publication, the Chapbook. I think our website is already a cut above most in the nation, but it would be great to streamline and enhance it. So, while you are in "spring cleaning" mode, please think of CSS and share your ideas with us.

Sincerely,
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From the State Library...

By Jim Rosinia

State Library Youth Consultant

When we last met <http://nclaonline.org/css/Chapbook2004-su-fall.pdf>, I was going on and on about Outcome-Based Evaluation (OBE). No need to go back and wade through that earlier piece, which was the first half of this two-part article. Let me condense those 1300 words into a few:

OBE is a tool for – you guessed it! – evaluating (i.e., measuring and documenting) the success of a program, service, activity, or agency that is based on – right again! – outcomes.

Jim [I hear you ask], would you please remind me: what are outcomes? Last time, I quoted the Institute of Museum of Library Services (IMLS) and I liked doing it so much that I think I'll do it again.

“[O]utcomes represent an achievement or a change in behavior, skills, knowledge, attitude, status or life condition of participants related to participation in a program. . . . [A]n outcome always focuses on what participants will say, think, know, feel, or be – not on mechanisms or processes [their emphasis] which programs use to create their hoped-for results.”

In other words, the primary focus of OBE is on the population(s) being served, not on the agency serving them. It asks a basic question: “So what?” Saying the library offered a program on early literacy that drew 30 people does nothing more than suggest the library’s ability to offer a program that drew 30 people. An outcome focuses on the population by asking the question: “So, what did those 30 people get out of it? Was there a change in their behavior, skills, knowledge, attitude, status or life condition because they attended the program?” And, since public libraries exist to serve the community, we should care about answering the question “So what?”

In that earlier article, I suggested that the first step in “doing” outcome-based evaluation was having an outcome-oriented program to evaluate. If you’re going to base your evaluation of a program on its outcomes, the program should be developed with the outcomes in mind. And the outcomes should be related to some community needs that you have identified; needs that exist in a segment of the population that you serve or in an unserved or underserved segment of your population. The example I provided in the article I wrote last time was similar to the one I used in the preceding paragraph: a need for parents in at-risk families to support the early literacy development of their very young children. I ended by saying, “Once you have identified the needs, you will also have identified the target audience for your program”.

And then I stopped, leaving you on tenterhooks for months. [I've never seen a tenterhook but, ouch!, being on them for months sounds painful so I guess I owe you an apology.]

So, what next?

Use the need you identified to create an outcome statement that expresses what you want to do in simple, concrete, active terms. (To make things a bit easier for you to follow – and for me to write – I'm just going to stay with the early literacy example from here on out, if that's okay with you. And if it's not okay with you? Next time you see me, remind me to tell you our family story that ends with the words “Better luck next time.”)

An outcome statement for “our” program might be “Parents of at-risk children will demonstrate increased knowledge about early literacy development.” Another might be “Parents of at-risk children will report an increase in behaviors that support the early literacy development of their very young children.” Yes, you can have more than one outcome statement. The former is a short-term outcome; the latter, a long[er]-term outcome. The difference will become clear later.

Next, in order to know (and describe) whether or not your program worked – i.e., whether or not you achieved a given outcome – you need at least one indicator for that outcome statement. Indicators are specific, concrete, well-defined, observable, and measurable characteristics, actions, or conditions. It's fairly easy to construct a good indicator if you use the format IMLS suggests:

Number and percent of a specific target population who report, demonstrate, or exhibit an attitude, skill, knowledge, behavior, status, or life condition in a specified quantity in a specified time frame and/or circumstance.

Say what? It's important but it's not as complicated as it might seem in IMLSpeak. Let me parse it for you.

Expressing both number and percent is important to get a clear sense of how many people you're talking about. Saying “50% of participants” doesn't say much if there were 2 participants. Saying “50% of 60 participants” is a more impressive stat.

You want to clearly specify your target population. “Parents” isn't specific enough. As good as it is, even “parents of at-risk children” isn't as specific as it could be. “Teen parents of very young children” provides a clearly defined group.

“Report, demonstrate, or exhibit” are three active verbs. Use them in your indicator and we're talking observable behavior or characteristics – no guesswork or assumptions or interpretation necessary.

The big six? The first four – attitude, skill, knowledge, and behavior – pretty self-explanatory: what a person thinks or feels about something; what they can do; what they know; how they act. Status? Something social or professional – e.g., employed, high-school graduate. Life condition? Think physically fit or non-smoker.

And the last phrase (“in a specified quantity in a specified time frame and/or circumstance”) is simply how much in what period of time or under what circumstances – e.g., “three times a week” or “4 or higher on a 5-point scale.”

So getting back to our example, an indicator for each outcome statement might be:

At the end of each workshop of the program, 50% of the 30 teen mothers participating will demonstrate they have increased their understanding of early literacy skills by successfully describing an activity they can share with children to help them develop that skill.

Two months after the end of the program, the percentage of the 30 participating mothers who report sharing books with their young children will have increased at least 15% over what was reported at the program’s outset.

There could be other outcomes for a program like this and their indicators might be the number and percent of participants who

- get their first library card,
- check out a children’s book within a week of the end of the project,
- state on an end-of-program evaluation that they learned something new and are glad they participated and/or that they would recommend the program to a friend.

But keep the number of indicators per outcome manageable – ideally, no more than three indicators per outcome.

For each indicator, you need a source of data. For the ones I’ve suggested, you could use: observations of participants’ responses during the session, follow-up interviews or surveys, applications for library cards, circulation records, evaluation forms.

In the previous article, I said a few words about the difference between outputs and outcomes. I said that, when using the former – the more traditional model of measuring library service – you counted “stuff”: e.g., how many programs were offered and how many people came to them. Clearly, OBE counts “stuff”, too. But it doesn’t stop there. It’s all about the people being served.

Once you’re clear about your outcomes, indicators, and data sources, there’s not much more to do! Oh, there’s the little stuff like developing program activities and finding creative ways of bringing your program to the attention of your target audience and making sure they feel encouraged and motivated to attend. But you’re used to that sort of work, right?

Outcome-oriented programs may require you to do things that are unfamiliar: registering participants and asking them for information (e.g., how they can be contacted after the program); finding ways to determine their pre- and post-program participation attitude, knowledge, skills, and behavior; following-up with an interview or survey.

It might not seem like every program is suited for OBE. Unlike, say, your Summer Reading Club, the example I've been using has a very specific and narrow target audience, clearly defined indicators for that specific target audience, and practical and manageable sources of the data you'll need to collect. (Do you think I chose that example at random? Mrs. Rosinia didn't raise any dumb children.) But even something as large as Summer Reading – and especially the individual programs that are part of the larger Summer Reading Club – should be approached with outcomes in mind. And, while it might not be practical to follow-up with all who participated in your Summer Reading program, think creatively about what you can do – perhaps a survey of a random sample of participants.

When you begin to plan a program – any program – ask yourself, “For whom am I doing this? And why? What do I want them to get out of it? Why am I spending time and money on this?” If a craft program teaches a skill or a juggling workshop builds participants' knowledge, think about simple ways of measuring that – perhaps a very simple and fun to complete “evaluation” form could be given to participants. Even if you don't think a program is intended to educate or train participants – even if it's “just” to give them something fun to do – it may have an unintended outcome like changing participants' attitudes about the value of the library. Think of potential outcomes and then think of creative ways to measure them. And then be sure to share your experiences with your colleagues – write an article for *Chapbook* or just post a message to NCKIDS.

Thinking about programs and services with outcomes in mind is an approach to consider and one that I strongly encourage you to try – on a small scale initially, of course, but give it a shot!

And, when you do, you'll be in a better position to answer when somebody asks, “So what?”

Books Alive!

By Claire Basney



In fall 2005, H. Leslie Perry Memorial Library initiated a program targeting school children of all ages designed to give teachers an opportunity to give their classes fresh approaches to subjects and curricula through the public library: Books Alive! At base a book-talk program, Books Alive! attempts to do exactly what its name would suggest—bring books and their subjects alive in the minds of the students participating in the programs. On top of summarizing books on or above the students' level, therefore; Perry Library's Head of Youth Services Claire Basney, brings activities, crafts, and games to spark the students' interest and imagination.

The topics of the programs are decided in advance by the participating teachers and by Miss Claire, usually paralleling the curriculum but taking a closer look at some aspect that would have to be glossed in the usual classroom setting, in the interests of time. There is little that cannot be requested or discussed. Programs have included "The Deep-Sea Floor" to complement an ocean unit, "Real Fairy Tales" to discuss genres of literature; and "Tsunamis" as a timely program when the Indian Ocean earthquake struck December 26, 2004.

Besides interesting students in books and their studies, Books Alive! is designed to turn reluctant readers into library users. Last week after the fairy tales program, a student came in requesting one of the titles from the program. As an added incentive to visit the library and take advantage of the resources available, students who visit the library, check out a book, and identify themselves as having been part of a Books Alive! program are awarded a free paperback of their choice.

Many grades and ages take advantage of this program, from first to fifth grade levels, including classes for exceptional students. Though this is only the first year of the program, teachers from five different schools, representing eight to ten different classes have requested programs. Though primarily elementary teachers and students are presently participating, Miss Claire hopes the program will expand to middle and high schools in years to come.

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Froggies Jump and Crickets too, Fleas Jump and So Should You!

By Theresa “Tree” Martus



Several years ago I gave up my job teaching freshman at a University in exchange for a position working with children at a public library. Now, you may think that these two jobs seem like night and day, but that is not the case. In both situations it often feels like an effort to have those involved sit still and listen to a story. I have now come to think that perhaps there is a good reason why this is such an effort. As a storyteller I am constantly surrounded by parents telling their little ones to “sit on your bottoms and listen to the story.” Now this may be a worthy suggestion for a group of twenty-five 19 year olds, but I have come to learn, the same does not hold true for twenty-five two year olds. Nor should it!

In daily storytimes I attempt to gather twenty-five two year olds in a room for about 30 minutes. I walk in there with an armful of good intentions; books that I have fallen in love with and that I hope they will enjoy. Things start off just fine with a bit of music and dancing and a fingerplay or two, but then the real task sets in; *reading* a book. Reading for children is a task laden with difficulties. In my case twenty-five very active, very curious, and very loved difficulties. It is my struggle to find books that will engage a two year old whose mind is apt and ready to absorb every bit of information and to set that new knowledge into motion. Lots and lots of motion! The key is to stop thinking about reading as something we do “for them”, but rather “with them” thereby actively bringing the story to life!

“Grown-ups” like you and I have learned how to put what we learn into mental motion, but for children whose every encounter is a chance to engage the senses, it is important that we don’t limit the opportunities for learning to the words or pictures on a page. When we physically engage the five senses we help even the youngest children develop the skills they will need as they learn to read on their own. **By putting a story into motion we are helping to promote a child’s developing awareness of print, the phonology of words, comprehension of text, letter and word recognition, knowledge of narrative, and most importantly themselves.**

Learning is a full contact experience and, as part of the learning experience, so is reading. By making reading a full-contact sport we can open up the world of ideas and knowledge! Unlike a second grader who can pick up *Junie B. Jones* and imagine the world described, the youngest children need that world created with them in a framework that they can understand; one that is moving, active, and vibrant.

As adults we have learned that it is right and proper to sit and listen when spoken to (although some of my freshman may have needed a refresher on this). But I say to my fellow “grown-ups”, every now and then, let your kid be a kid! Speak to them in a language they can understand; movement. By bringing literature to life through movement you are helping to teach about reading, enhancing awareness of the text and concepts, and you are creating an amazing opportunity for your children to learn through play. Any one of us could read *Going on a Bear Hunt* and, as adults, we would understand the implications of walking across the bridge, climbing up a tree, and running from the bear. But for children with active minds and bodies, simply reading is not enough. Bring literature to life!

So, limit those requests to “sit on your bottoms.” Grab a book, stand up, run from that bear, roar like a lion, wave your knees and move! Motion is a key to learning. Every time we hop like a bunny or shake like a tree we are not only setting the children into motion but we are, through our storytelling, setting learning into motion as well.

So I say to you, get up off of your bottoms. You have been sitting long enough reading this article. It is time to put what you have read into motion. Here are some great books tested during many a toddler story time to get you up on your feet putting literature into motion.

Cauley, Lorinda Bryan. *Clap your Hands*. New York: Putnam Juvenile, 1997.

A charming book with bright illustrations that will truly stretch your child’s imagination. Rhyming text inspires children to engage in a variety of activities from mimicking the movements of animals, pointing out different colors, locating their fingers and toes and saying their names.

Charles, Donald. *Calico Cat’s Exercise Book*. Chicago: Children’s Press, 1982.

An oldie but a goodie! Calico Cat loves to exercise. Together with Calico Cat we learn simple concepts such as throwing and catching as well as left and right thereby providing the opportunity to teach key concepts through physical activity.

London, Jonathan. *Wiggle, Waggle*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1999.

Now how could a book that starts with the line, “Now this is your chance to do an animal dance” be anything but fun! Large illustrations of well-known animals greet readers into a world of movement. From boinging like a kangaroo to walking “pish-posh” like a cat, this book will definitely get you moving!

Newcome, Zita. *Toddlers: Animal Fun*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 1999.

A wonderful book sure to get you moving. Simple text and soft illustrations of small children at play help to introduce various animals and the sounds and movements associated with them. Children are led through the wild kingdom swinging their “arms like a monkey in a tree” or fluttering their “wings, be a butterfly.”

Rosen, Michael. *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt*. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 1989.

Another classic! We are invited to join a family as they take a hike through the woods in search of a bear. They swish through the tall grass and splash through the river on their way to the cave. And what should they discover there but bear! And what should we do then? Run! A great book for the whole family!

Reid, Rob. *Wave Goodbye*. New York: Lee & Low Books, Inc., 1996.

A great book to end our list on. Wave your fingers and your toes, your ears and your nose, and say goodbye with all the different parts of your body. A great book sure to get you moving (right out the door)!

Theresa "Tree" Martus is a Children's Librarian for the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County with a Master's in Children's Literature from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Editor’s Note: This article will appear in Volume 6, Issue 6 of The Five Owls for Parents, a free-distribution newsletter published by the Five Owls (www.fiveowls.com <<http://www.fiveowls.com/>>).



2005 ALSC Award Winners

- *Newbery Medal*

Kira-Kira, by Cynthia Kadohata, Atheneum Books for Young Readers/Simon & Schuster

- *Newbery Honor Books*

Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy, by Gary D. Schmidt, Clarion Books/Houghton Mifflin Company

Al Capone Does My Shirts, by Gennifer Choldenko, G.P. Putnam's Sons/Penguin Young Readers Group

- *Caldecott Medal*

Kitten's First Full moon, by Kevin Henkes, Greenwillow Books/Harper Collins Publishers

- *Caldecott Honor Books*

The Red Book, by Barbara Lehman, Houghton Mifflin Company

Coming on Home Soon, by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by E.B. Lewis, G.P. Putnam's Sons/Penguin Young Readers Group

Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale, by Mo Willems, Hyperion Books for Children

- *Batchelder Award*

Delacorte Press/Random House Children's Books, publisher of The Shadows of Ghadames, by Joelle Stolz, translated from the French by Catherine Temerson

- *Batchelder Honor Book*

*Farrar Straus Giroux, publisher of **The Crow-Girl: The Children of Crow Cove**, by Bodil Bredsdorff, translated from the Danish by Faith Ingwersen.*

*A Richard Jackson Book, Atheneum Books for Young Readers/Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division, publisher of **Daniel Half Human and the Good Nazi**, by David Chotjewitz, translated from the German by Doris Orgel*

- *Sibert Medal*

The Voice that Challenged a Nation: Marion Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights, by Russell Freedman, Clarion Books/Houghton Mifflin Company

- *Sibert Honor Books*

Sequoyah: The Cherokee Man Who Gave his People Writing, by James Rumford, translated into Cherokee by Anna Sixkiller Huckaby, Houghton Mifflin Company

The Tarantula Scientist, by Montgomery, photographs by Nic Bishop, Houghton Mifflin Company

Walt Whitman: Words for America, by Barbara Kerley, illustrated by Brian Selznick, Scholastic Press/Scholastic Inc.

- *Wilder Medal*

Laurence Yep, award-winning author of books for young people

- *Carnegie Medal*

Paul R. Gagne and Melissa Reilly of Weston Woods Studios, producers of "The Dot", in association with FableVision, based on the book by Peter H. Reynolds

- *2006 May Hill Arbutnot Honor Lecturer*

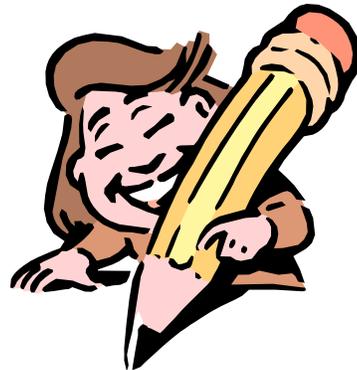
Russell Freedman, renowned author of outstanding nonfiction books for children and adults

Chapbook...

...Quarterly Journal of the NCLA/Children's Services Section

The mission of Chapbook is to inform those involved in Children's Library Services about:

- **Statewide trends in Youth Services**
- **Workshops for professional development**
- **Successful programs and upcoming events**



From the Editor.....

I invite our readership to submit articles to the Chapbook; to share your tried and true special programs, or interesting projects, or upcoming events whereby all readers may be informed or even motivated to try something new. There is no deadline.

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