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San Diego Public Library Uses Scary Faces, Laughs to Launch Early Literacy Program

1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN ENCOURAGES READING TO INFANTS, TODDLERS WITH INCENTIVES AND REWARDS

SAN DIEGO – There was dancing, wiggling and laughing at all 36 [San Diego Public Library locations](#) this morning during the launch of a new literacy program for pre-readers. Library staff and City leaders assisted in the roll-out of 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten by reading and acting out the illustrated book, “Can You Make a Scary Face” by Jan Thomas, during synchronized story times at all library locations.

“Experiencing books at a very young age opens up so many opportunities for children – opportunities that pay off well into adulthood,” said Misty Jones, Director of the San Diego Public Library. **“By adding the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten early literacy program at all 36 San Diego Public Library locations, we’re giving parents a clear path to follow to develop literacy skills in their children before they begin school.”**

The 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program encourages parents and caregivers to read with children. According to the National Education Association (NEA), 26 percent of children who were read to three or four times a week by a family member, recognized all the letters of the alphabet. The ability for a child to recognize the alphabet drops to 14 percent for children who were read to less frequently. Additionally, research from the Educational Testing Service found having more types of reading materials in a home results in students having higher reading proficiency.

Library patrons who want to participate in the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program can [register online](#) or at any library location. Rewards are offered when parents, caregivers and children hit milestones on the way to reading 1,000 books. Participants can visit any library to receive rewards and

Smart Stripes, which are collectable badges that can be added to a lanyard or keyring. Milestones are recognized as follows:

- Registration – A 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten bookmark
- First 25 books – A 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten lanyard with a library card holder
- Every 25 books – A digital progress badge for participants using the online log
- Every 100 books – A Smart Stripe badge that marks a participant’s progress in the literacy program.
- 1,000 books – the final Smart Stripe badge and a certificate of completion

The San Diego Public Library thanks author Jan Thomas and the [San Diego Public Library Foundation](#) for donating copies of “Can You Make a Scary Face” for the launch of 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten.

About the San Diego Public Library

With a vision of being the place for opportunity, discovery and inspiration, the San Diego Public Library is a hub for knowledge and lifelong learning. As the largest library system in the region, it serves a population of more than 1.3 million people. Learn about events at the San Diego Central Library @ Joan A Irwin Jacobs Common and 35 community branch libraries, find links to programs and resources or search for materials in the online catalog at www.sandiegolibrary.org.

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