

June 2025 Children's Department Report

Children's Programming Highlights

We're officially one month into Summer Reading, and it's been an exciting and successful start! As of this report, we currently have **212 children and 36 teens** registered for the Summer Reading Program.

Our Summer Reading Kick-Off Party, held on Saturday, June 7th, drew over 175 attendees. A huge thank you to The Hotdog Guy for generously donating both food and time, and to CMC Creatives for providing face painting and glitter tattoos at a deeply discounted rate. We rounded out the event with yard games, bubbles and sidewalk chalk, music, water and juice, and of course, popsicles to keep everyone cool. Special thanks to Laurie, Debbie, Angela, Ashley, and Laura, whose help made the event run smoothly from start to finish!

Another highlight of the month was **Sandcastle Storytime at Whihala Beach**, which continues to grow in popularity with families each summer. This marked our fifth time hosting this summer program, and we had our biggest crowd yet—67 attendees! Families enjoyed beach-themed stories, followed by playtime on the beach, which included swimming, sandcastle building, temporary tattoos, and music. Thanks to the City of Whiting, we were able to offer free parking for attendees, making this a completely free event for both patrons and the library.

Crosstown Exotics visited again this summer with their educational reptile show – always a patron favorite! **133 attendees** saw, touched, and learned about toads, lizards, tortoises, and snakes!

In all, we hosted **20 programs** for the Children's Department with a total of **823 attendees**!

Whiting Pride

The library participated in **Whiting Pride** this month! Andy, Ashley, and I staffed our booth, where we promoted library services and offered free crafts and temporary tattoos for attendees. We partnered with Whiting High School's newly formed Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA), with many student members who use the library regularly! This festival was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the library as a welcoming and inclusive space for all members of our community. It was a fun, positive outreach event, and we were proud to be part of it!

Oilmen Fundraiser

Due to inclement weather, our fundraiser has been rescheduled to July 10th. We hope to see you there!

Virtual Conference

I recently attended the **Indiana Youth Institute's 2025 National Summit on Youth Well-Being**, a virtual, all-day conference focused on supporting the needs of young people. Topics covered included addressing economic barriers, supporting youth with disabilities, creating strong support systems, and understanding adolescent development and teen-specific needs.

Key themes that stood out included the importance of providing safe, welcoming spaces after school, investing in enrichment opportunities—especially in the arts, and serving as trusted mentors and professional connections for teens as they transition into adulthood.

I'm proud to say that many of the ideas discussed align with what we're already doing at Whiting Public Library. However, the conference gave me fresh perspectives and new ideas on how we can further build on our current programs and services. I'm reminded daily of how often the library is one of the few safe, trusted spaces for our local youth. Kids regularly reach out to me directly—whether it's emailing to ask when I'll be available to talk, seeking food and snacks, or simply needing a place to feel welcome and engaged.

Sensory Tool Kits

Following insights gained from the Indiana Youth Institute virtual conference and my own experiences working with our patrons, I assembled two in-house sensory kits for children and families who may benefit from them during their library visits. Each kit includes noise-canceling headphones, a variety of fidget toys, sunglasses for light sensitivity, a weighted lap blanket, an LCD writing/drawing tablet, and a visual timer. These items were carefully selected based on recommendations from Autism Speaks and by researching best practices from other public libraries across the country.

The goal is to help create a more welcoming and supportive environment for all patrons, especially those with sensory processing needs, by offering tools to help them feel more comfortable and engaged while visiting the library.

Aldi Grant

I'm pleased to share that the library has been awarded a **\$1,000 grant from Aldi**, which I applied for back in April. This funding will go directly toward supporting our After-School Snack Initiative, which has been running entirely on donations for the past three years.

Website Updates

I've spent the past couple of months updating and expanding our website to better serve children, teens, parents, and teachers—and I'm excited to share that those pages are now complete! Each section highlights our library's programs, literacy initiatives, volunteer opportunities, and other valuable services. I've also included a collection of free, trusted resources tailored to each age group to support learning and engagement beyond the library walls.

Whiting Public Library recognized, again!

Another one of our programs has received national recognition! Our **"Among Us in Real Life"** program was recently selected for inclusion on the **Programming Librarian website**, hosted by the **American Library Association (ALA)**. The full program plan was published on June 12th and is now available as a free resource for librarians across the country to use and adapt. You can view it here: <https://programminglibrarian.org/programs/among-us-real-life>.

Following that, the program was featured in **American Libraries Direct magazine** on June 18th and then shared statewide on June 20th through the Indiana State Library's Gaming ListServ, thanks to the Regional Coordinator for Professional Development. As a result, I've already heard from **Starkville Public Library in Missouri** and **Hamilton East Public Library in Indiana**, who both plan to run the program with their teen patrons this summer.

Our feature article in the January 2025 issue of **School Library Journal** is also still gaining traction! Just this month, a librarian in Massachusetts reached out after reading about our work. I'm now collaborating with her to help implement our Break-In Bags passive program at her library.

It's exciting and rewarding to see our creative programming ideas making an impact beyond Whiting, inspiring library professionals and engaging young patrons across the country!

WNBA All-Stars Read

Christina applied to be 1 of 100 WNBA All-Stars Read host sites and WPL was selected by their committee! We have a display in the Children's Department of books featuring girls and women in sports – complete with swag and prizes sent by the committee! Thank you to Christina for applying on behalf of the Children's Department!

Children's Program Attendance

Date	Children's In-Person Programming Attendance	Ages 0-5	Ages 6-11	YA	GA
6/2/25	Rainbow Day				37
6/3/25	Night Owls		10		
6/4/25	Preschool Storytime	17			
6/6/25	Little Explorers	35			
6/6/25	Nerf Wars		33		
6/7/25	Summer Reading Kick-Off Party				175
6/10/25	Family Picnic Bingo				35
6/11/25	Preschool Storytime	23			
6/12/25	Tween/Teen Paint & Sip			19	
6/13/25	Itty Bitty Storytime	12			
6/13/25	Science Heroes Show		27		
6/16/25	Sandcastle Storytime	67			
6/18/25	Preschool Storytime	31			
6/20/25	Little Explorers	19			
6/20/25	Smarty Pants Balloon Show		53		
6/24/25	Family STEAM Squad; Catapults				14
6/25/25	Preschool Storytime	36			
6/26/25	Teen Anime			12	
6/27/25	Preschool Storytime	35			
6/27/25	Crosstown Exotics Reptile Show				133
	Total	275	123	31	394

Family STEAM Night: Catapults



NEW In-House Use Sensory Kits



Whiting Pride!



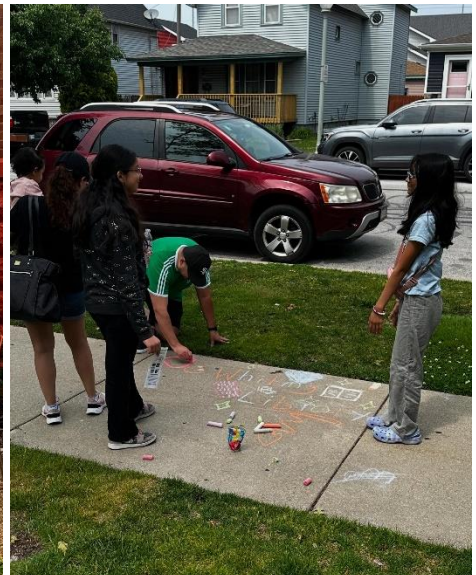
Sandcastle Storytime



Crosstown Exotics



Summer Reading Kick-Off Party



Tween/Teen Sip & Paint



Coming up in July:

WHITING PUBLIC LIBRARY

CHILDREN + FAMILY PROGRAMMING

JULY 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 6pm: Night Owls Story Time 	2 10am: Preschool Storytime 2:30pm: Teen Advisory Board <small>Must be a registered T.A.B. member, gr. 7-12</small>	3 	4 LIBRARY CLOSED HAPPY 4th of July	5 3pm: Wacky Water Day! 
7  6pm-8pm: Among Us In Real Life <small>3th-6th Grade registration & waiver required</small>	8 8pm: Family Bingo National Freeze-Pop Day! 	9 10am: Preschool Storytime 	10 2pm: Tween/Teen Makers: Snail Globes 	11 10am: Itty Bitty Storytime 2pm: Silly Safari! 	12
14  10am: Sandcastle Storytime @ Whihala Beach	15 8pm: Knit & Crochet Meetup 	16 10am: Preschool Storytime 	17 2pm: Creativity Club; Perspective 	18 10am: Little Explorers <small>18m - Preschool w/ adult</small> 2pm: Istvan & His Imaginary Band! 	19 
21 	22 6pm: STEAM SQUAD 6pm: Pride Social Club (7th-12th gr) 	23 10am: Preschool Storytime 	24 2pm: Teen Anime (7th-12th Grade) 	25 LIBRARY CLOSED PIEROGI FEST	26 LIBRARY CLOSED PIEROGI FEST
28 Rock Painting 	29 	30 10am: Preschool Storytime 	31 Last Day of Summer Reading!		

Night Owls Storytime: Get cozy in your pj's, grab your favorite stuffy, and head over for bedtime stories and crafts with Ms Laurie!

The Teen Advisory Board (T.A.B.) Monthly meeting. You must fill out the registration form located on our website or in the Teen Newsletter.

Wacky Water Day! Come dressed to get WET and bring a towel! Sprinklers, water bombs, and games out on the library lawn! All ages

Among Us in Real Life: Perform tasks throughout the library after hours - don't get caught by the IMPOSTOR!! Grades 3-6

Tween/Teen Makers: Make snail snow globes with us! All supplies provided. Grades 6-12

Silly Safari: Stop buy the library for a fun animal show with Amazon John! All ages

Sandcastle Storytime: Meet Ms Adrienne & Miss Laurie at Whihala Beach for stories and sandcastle building! All ages. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Creativity Club: Learn how to make a cool perspective drawing with Ms Adrienne! All ages

Istvan & His Imaginary Band: A fun concert for kids! All ages

Rock Painting: Stop by to paint rocks to hide around town! All ages

SUMMER READING ENDS ON JULY 31ST!

www.whiting.lib.in.us |
 1735 Oliver St. Whiting, IN 46394 |
 219-659-0269 |
 @whiting_public_library |
 @whiting public library