

## **March 2025 Children's Department Report**

March was an exciting and productive month filled with successful programs, professional development, and behind-the-scenes work to improve our department.

### **Children's Programming Highlights**

Our large weekend family program was a hit! We transformed the Children's Department into a carnival, complete with games, prizes, and snacks. With the help of staff and our amazing Teen Advisory Board volunteers, we welcomed approximately 60 attendees for two hours of fun.

Family Bingo also saw record attendance, reaching full capacity to the point where we had to turn families away due to space constraints. To accommodate the growing interest, we plan to expand seating into the Activity Room—a great sign of how much this program is resonating with the community!

On March 21st, we hosted our highly anticipated **Nerf Wars** event after hours, turning the Children's Department into a target practice zone and transforming the Adult Department into a Battle Zone with dimmed lights, disco lights, music, and plenty of action. Kids (and even some parents!) played for two hours straight, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Parents have already asked when the next battle will be!

### **Indiana Library Federation Youth Services Conference**

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the **Youth Services Conference**. It was a whirlwind trip, packed with educational sessions that will help us enhance programming and collection development at WPL. Some key takeaways include:

- Strategies to foster teen engagement through role-playing games and other creative initiatives
- New STEAM programming ideas
- Best practices for managing material challenges
- Effective ways to reach and engage families

Additionally, we took time to visit Monroe County Public Library before heading home to explore their youth and teen spaces and had the privilege of meeting with their youth director – something that was not part of the conference, but I felt would be beneficial. We sat down and discussed shared challenges and exchanged ideas, forming a valuable professional connection that I plan to continue.

### **Teen Advisory Board (TAB)**

This group continues to impress and inspire me. In March, we celebrated birthdays (with cake, of course!), brainstormed future teen displays and volunteer opportunities, and played games of luck. A volunteer has stepped up to play the Easter Bunny for our annual **Easter Eggstravaganza & Pictures with the Easter Bunny**, and another group is eager to organize an **Improv Class** for their peers.

TAB is more than just a teen program—it's a safe space for many of these young people, some of whom don't feel at home anywhere else. At our last meeting, one teen pulled me aside to thank me for the birthday cake, mentioning that it would be their only celebration this year. Others expressed concerns about potential library funding cuts, sharing that library programming is essential for their socialization and well-being. These teens are invested in the library's future, and their passion reinforces why the work we do matters. They aren't just attending programs—they're becoming lifelong library supporters.

### **Salary Request**

As I near the completion of my **Master of Library and Information Science** this May, I have submitted a formal request for a salary increase, attached to this report. I appreciate your time in reviewing my request and considering how my continued professional growth will benefit the library, especially as we navigate the current challenges facing libraries.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Children's Department and our mission to serve the youth of Whiting.

### Children's Program Attendance

Date	Children's In-Person Programming Attendance	Ages 0-5	Ages 6-11	YA	GA
3/1/25	Carnival Games				60
3/4/25	After School Bingo		21		
3/4/25	Night Owls Storytime		11		
3/5/25	Preschool Storytime	11			
3/5/25	Teen Advisory Board Meeting			17	
3/7/25	Little Explorers	17			
3/10/25	Creativity Club		21		
3/11/25	Family Bingo				59
3/12/25	Preschool Storytime	17			
3/12/25	LEGO Club		59		
3/13/25	Tween/Teen Makers			23	
3/14/25	Itty Bitty Storytime				
3/18/25	Crochet Meetup			5	
3/19/25	Preschool Storytime	14			
3/19/25	Wheelie Wednesday		21		
3/21/25	Little Explorers	14			
3/21/25	Nathan Hale 2nd Grade Class Visit		45		
3/21/25	NERF Wars		33		
3/28/25	Itty Bitty Storytime	20			
3/28/25	Teen Anime			5	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>119</b>

### Carnival Day





### Teen Advisory Board Meeting



**Family Bingo:** Some pictures from our St. Patricks Day themed bingo! Lots of winners, and a full house, yet again!





## ILF Youth Services Conference



## Tween/Teen Makers: Macrame Rainbow







## Social Media:

With lots of uncertainty surrounding libraries and funding, many had stories to share of what WPL means to them. Here are a few:

*"When I was little, there would be very lonely summer days. Both of my parents worked and, both siblings being older than I, I was left to my own devices. The library was right across the street! Ms. Laurie can attest that there were many days I spent playing with the doll house, participating in youth group, coloring, scooting up and down the aisles on a step stool reading books about different animals, and hanging with my friends in a place that didn't require money AND had air conditioning. The library is one of (if not the only) the only places an individual can go to without being expected to spend money. If the community thinks kids are wild now, wait until they lose their safe space for after school shenanigans. Libraries are free. Older kids can go there after school until their parents come home from work and their parents don't have to pay for child care. Child care is an expense that many families can't afford. Closing libraries is just one more way officials will further the elimination of the middle class." - Mandy E. 46394*

---

*"Whiting Public Library is by far one of the most inclusive, public spaces in town. They not only provide the necessary materials and assistance to improve ones education, they also provide a safe "third place" for adults and children alike. The staff there is so kind and helpful and really makes the community feel more like home. I'm always excited to find new books and other media every time I visit, and I'll always remember WPL as the first place to make me feel welcome when I moved to Whiting." - Tea K. 46394*

---

*"Inter-library loaning is a god-send. Not many people share some of my niche interests, but some library, somewhere in the Evergreen system usually has the books I'm looking for. I also LOVE Libby. I have "read" so many more books than I ever could have sat and read by listening to audiobooks while driving. Since I lean toward nonfiction, I guess the library has made me smarter 🤖 I see that programming is paid for by more local entities, but I would not want to see any of those funds eaten into for things IMLS covers. It is thanks to the library that I have met so many of my neighbors. Our library has the most excellent programs that really draw in the community and that's too important to mess with." - Kristine D.V. 46394*

---

*"The [Whiting Public Library](#) was one of the first places we took my son to when we moved to the area. He was 1 and would attend Ms. Laurie's story time, and that's when, I truly believe, his love for books formed. He's now almost 9 and his love for reading has not faded. He excels in school, particularly math and reading, and I know this is due in part of what he's learned at the library. The staff is dedicated to getting to know their patrons, and making everyone feel comfortable. Ms. Laurie's kindness and patience made it so easy for my son to feel welcome as the new kid in her groups. Ms. Adrienne took the Youth Services department and made it so much more inclusive to fit the diversity of our town, making everyone feel like they have a place here. All of the staff have has always been so kind and welcoming. They quickly learned my family, what our likes were and what to recommend to fit our preferences. Thank you, [Whiting Public Library](#) , for everything you have done and will continue to do!" - Holly & Kayla S.R. - 46394*

---

*"Some of my fondest memories in childhood include the Whiting Public Library. The summer reading program was the best! And they wouldn't let you just say you read it, the librarians would quiz you to ensure you did read. I remember getting a plaque for reading 100 books over the summer for the centennial anniversary. "I remember watching Lizzy Borden on microfiche and singing "Lizzy Borden took an axe and gave her father 40 whacks. When she saw what she had done, she gave her mother 41." I don't know why but that one was my favorite to watch. I remember renting CDs weekend with [my friend] when we were in high school. Musicals and Brit Pop were a favorite genre.*



*It gave me a love of seeking knowledge, questioning things, researching answers and not just accepting because someone told me it was an answer.*

*Libraries are the foundation of a healthy community. It's an outlet for connecting, for learning, for thriving, and for quality of life. Research shows that libraries connect disadvantaged citizens with resources they won't otherwise have access. Tax documents, Internet, books, and even social services. Taking that away only furthers inequity." -Angela L. 46077*

*Whiting Public Library has been an excellent source for me with their Saturday learning classes & the Seed Library. The reading room also provides countless magazines & papers which some would not be able to afford to subscribe to. - Lynn M. 46394*

*"Storytime gives my babies and I something to do each week. A chance to make new friends and learn." - Amada D. P. 46394*

*"WPL gives me a safe place to bring my son during the day to play, learn, and grow." - Maddi C. 46394*

*The Whiting Public Library played a huge role in my children's love for books, crafts, adventures and so much more. We've never been to a library as attentive as the WPL. So many programs and services offered for kids right in the heart of the city.*

*In addition to the kids services the adult services offered for the community is just as great. Craft programs, trivia, tool rentals, books and magazines, the list goes on and on. More than you'd ever expect!*

*Our most cherished memory of the WPL is the book pick up/ drop off during the Covid shut down of 2020. Calling in our book and craft kit orders and riding our bikes to the library to pick them up will always hold a sweet sweet memory at such a scary time for us. We love the WPL and the librarians ❤️ and they're definitely worth fighting for. - Sarah B. 46394*

#### Coming up in April:

### WHITING PUBLIC LIBRARY CHILDREN + FAMILY PROGRAMMING

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 	2 6pm: Night Owls Story Time	3 10am: Preschool Storytime 2:30pm: Teen Advisory Board <small>Must be a registered T.A.B. member, gr. 7-12</small>	4 10am: Little Explorers <small>18m - Preschool w/ adult</small>	5 Easter Eggstravaganza <small>11a-12p 1p-2p</small>	
7	8 8pm: Family BINGO	9 10am: Preschool Storytime 2:30pm: Youth Lego Club	10 3:15pm: Tween/Teen Makers; Pencil Makeup Case	11 10am: Itty Bitty Storytime	12
14 	15 3:15pm: Teen Lego Club 6pm: Cookie Decorating with Sweets by Lorena! <small>Registration Required</small> 6pm: Knit & Crochet Meetup	16 10am: Preschool Storytime 2:30pm: Wheelie Wednesday	17 	18 <b>Good Friday</b> <small>LIBRARY CLOSED</small>	19
21 	22 6pm: Pride Social Club <small>(7th-12th gr)</small>	23 10am: Preschool Storytime 2:30pm: Barbie Club	24 3p: Gutsy Gourmet <small>(6th-12th Grade)</small> 	25 10am: Itty Bitty Storytime 3p: Teen Anime <small>(7th-12th Grade)</small>	26 
28 3pm: Mind-Bender Monday 	29 6pm: Sticker Swap!	30 10am: Preschool Storytime	<p>Read a good book lately? Fill out the review on the back!</p>		

### APRIL 2025

**Easter Eggstravaganza:** Stop in to take pictures with the Easter Bunny and enjoy a craft and scavenger hunt!

**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 membership meeting. You must be registered.

**Creativity Club:** Learn about new artists and methods after school with Ms. Adrienne!

**Family BINGO:** Bring the family to the library for BINGO! Five rounds with prizes and activities! All Ages

**Wheelie Wednesday:** Build tracks and roads, race your friends! Grades K-5 \*toys provided

**Lego Club:** Stop in to build with us! All Ages

**Tween/Teen Makers:** Kids in 6th grade+, stop in after school to make something fun!

**Family Game Night:** Stop in to play games with your friends and family! Games provided for all ages!

**Knit & Crochet Meetup:** Kids of all ages can meet up at the library to work on projects together!

**Little Explorers:** Sensory Play for 18m-Preschool. Must be accompanied by an adult.

**Sticker Swap:** Bring your sticker collection to the library for trading with other collectors!

**Pride Social Club:** A hangout for LGBTQ+ teens and their friends! 7th-12th grade

**Mind-Bender Monday:** Trivia for kids in the Children's Department after school!

**Gutsy Gourmet:** Taste test unique foods and flavors! Call ahead if you have allergy concerns.

[www.whiting.lib.in.us](http://www.whiting.lib.in.us) | 1735 Oliver St. Whiting, IN 46394 | 219-659-0269 | [@whiting\\_public\\_library](https://www.instagram.com/whiting_public_library) | [@whiting public library](https://www.facebook.com/whitingpubliclibrary)