



B.C. First Nations Head Start Lending Library Program

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NAMGIS HEAD START IN ALERT BAY ON VANCOUVER ISLAND STARTED A LENDING LIBRARY PROGRAM after hearing about the idea of toy lending bags offered by the Mother Goose program. Although Namgis offers a reading time following snack, staff noticed that some children were too excited about going outside later or just not interested in reading at that particular time. Why not put together a reading bag that would benefit both the children and their parents?

Taking a book bag home would give parents the opportunity to share some quiet time bonding with their child in the comfort of their own home, while reading a book that would aid in the development of their child's imagination, language and early reading skills and develop a desire for life-long reading.

Head Start Coordinator Colleen Smith got material for assembling bags, then asked for two parent volunteers to help sew the bags together. Colleen and her colleague Sophia asked for feedback from the local health nurse on what topics were of interest to the parents, such as potty training, tantrums, etc.

Parents are given individual sign out sheets. They fill in the date when they sign the bag out and indicate when it's due back. After the first bags were out for a while, Colleen prepared an evaluation sheet to get feedback on the bags, with questions like: Was the book appropriate for the age of your child? Did you find the parent information pamphlet useful? How do you see the Lending Library affecting your child's development?

Contents of the Namgis Book Lending Bags

- Age-appropriate book
- Activity for parent and child to do together—such as making playdough, beading, doing a finger play or song
- Parenting information pamphlet on a specific topic—such as discipline, potty training, play and your toddler, signing with your child, etc.

“Allowing parents to assist and participate in programming and projects like this sends a message to parents that their opinions, thoughts and ideas are valued, especially when it comes to their

children.”

“This was a great chance for parents to participate by making it a joint project, in which listening to the parents’ requests and following through formed a positive partnership.”

Colleen Smith
Coordinator, Namgis Head Start