

# Books and Blocks @ the Library

## Categories

Community , Education

## Location

South Texas

## Cycle Year

2016

## Nueces County Keach Family Library

<http://www1.youseemore.com/nueces/>

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## Used for

The Keach Family library recognizes the need to provide resources, information, programs, and support to all families. The Books and Blocks @ the Library program will help achieve those goals by creating two different book clubs: the American Girls Club and the LEGO Blocks Club.

## Benefits

Books and Blocks @ the Library encourages participants through imaginative play by role-playing and creative play, and offers Nueces County youth, especially those from low income families, toys they may not have access to. The program will raise awareness in the county that the library is not just a place for books, but rather that the library offers a wide array of programs that engage and educate youth to become lifelong learners.

## Proposal Description

The Nueces County Public Libraries (NCPL) consists of two branches: the Keach Family Library (KFL), the main site located in Robstown; and the Bishop Branch, a smaller satellite branch located in Bishop about 17 miles from Robstown. The NCPL plays a vital role at the heart of the community and serves a high need area with many English language learners, economically disadvantaged, and “at risk” students. According to the United States Census Bureau, 18.4% of Nueces County is living below the Federal Poverty Guidelines (2009 – 2013), which is higher than the 17.6 % for the state of Texas as a whole. NCLS provides professional services for all users and offers equal access to an extensive collection of materials, and a range of services to meet educational, recreational,

cultural, and informational needs to all Nueces County residents. The library recognizes the need to provide resources, information, programs, and support to all families. The Books and Blocks @ the Library program will help achieve those goals by creating two different book clubs: the American Girls Club and the Blocks Club. Each club will help area students and children experience a rich learning experience using tools that challenge their creativity, enhance their knowledge of American history and STEM concepts, and encourage imaginative play, an important aspect of literacy. The American Girls Club will be opened to youth ages 6-13. Participants will learn about American history through the "American Girl BeForever" collection of dolls and books that makes history come alive in a fun, accessible way. Some of the interactive highlights include: participants will receive a journal, which can they keep, to write down their adventures and experiences. This helps children practice their writing, which, along with reading and playing, is a tenet of Every Child Ready to Read. Participants will share their adventures and experiences during the book club. The Every Child Ready to Read is an initiative from the Public Library Association (PLA) and Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) to educate parents and caregivers about the importance of early literacy in their child's life. Currently there are 9 character dolls in the American Girl BeForever collection. Each character has a set of three corresponding books. The books highlight the life and times of each character's time period. Each participant will be able to check out the set of books. For example the Kaya book set includes *The Journey Begins: A Kaya Classic 1*, *Smoke on the Wind: A Kaya Classic 2*, and *The Roar of the Falls: My Journey with Kaya*. Participants will discover the traditions of the Nez Perce people and the character's reaction to the adventures and dangers they encountered. Participants will also have a chance to play with the 18-inch doll, along with historically accurate clothing, furniture, and accessories from the time period and adventures as they read about the character's life. Each doll costs \$110.24. NCPL will like to purchase 5 of each doll. There will be a limit of 10 participants at each book club event. The club will meet once a week for three consecutive weeks. During this 3 week period we will focus on one character in the BeForever Collection. Each week discussion will center around one of the books in the set. NCPL will buy \$9,000 of American Girl Dolls, accessories, replacement parts, carrying cases, notebooks, and display cases. One set of each doll will be displayed in the children's area to help promote the book club. Dolls, along with their accessories, will be available for checkout for one week. Children who check out a doll at the library will receive a doll kit, which includes a doll, accessories, the first book in the series about that doll, a notebook in which the children can record the adventures they have with the doll, letters for both the child and the parent on how to care for the doll, all in a rolling traveling case for easy transport. The following are the characters in the American Girl BeForever collection: Kaya, an adventurous Nez Perce girl with a deep respect for nature and a dream of being a leader. Caroline, a heroic girl who must test her bravery and wits to help her family during the War of 1812. Josefina, a quiet New Mexico girl who uses her heart to heal others in 1824. Addy, a courageous girl who escapes slavery and keeps her family strong in 1864. Samantha, a kindhearted girl in 1904 who won't let "proper" society stop her from helping others. Rebecca, a lively girl who wants to shine bright for others in 1914 New York City. Kit, a clever girl with a can-do attitude who creates better tomorrows in 1934. Maryellen, is an enthusiastic, optimistic, ambitious, and imaginative girl in 1954. Julie, an upbeat San Francisco girl who stands up and fights for what's right in 1974. The Blocks Club will be open to all youth ages 4-18. The library wants participants to discover STEM concepts through active, inquiry-based or problem-based learning activities, and playful learning using LEGO blocks. The utilization of LEGO materials as a

tool to teach is restricted only by the limitations of the user's imagination. LEGO Education has kits for all age groups, kits that focus on STEM concepts to encourage and educate students and children in the science, engineering, and computer technology fields. The Blocks Club will meet twice a month for an hour and will be limited to 16 participants. There will be 2 instructors to manage the club. Each meeting will have a theme or challenge. The LEGO creative builder cards, which will be purchased along with the LEGO blocks, lists building challenges. The participants will then have 45 minutes to build and create. The last 15 minutes of each Club meeting will be used for participants to discuss their creation with the group. Five participants will be chosen at random to have their creation displayed in our children's area until the next Blocks Club meeting. A display case will house the creation along with a card that has the child's first name, with parent's permission. Displaying their creation will help promote the Blocks Club and give participants a sense of pride in seeing their creations displayed. A sign will also be posted that lists the next Blocks Club meeting and urge children to register. NCPL will buy \$10,000 in LEGO education products. The Books and Blocks @ the Library will be lead by Laura Chapa, Youth Services and Reference Librarian, and Crystal Drillen, Technical Services/Information Literacy Librarian. Laura Chapa is the Youth Services and Reference Librarian for the NCPL with seven years of youth programming and reference experience. She received her Master's in Library Science from the University of North Texas in 2008 and is always looking for ways of improvement. Ms. Chapa is currently in charge of planning and implementing all youth activities and programs for both library branches. This includes NCLS's annual Dia de los Ninos Celebration and the Summer Reading Program. If NCPL is awarded the grant, Ms. Chapa will be the Project Director and will submit reports, perform outreach, and other grant requirements. Crystal Drillen graduated from University of North Texas in 2014 with a Master's in Library and Information Science with a certificate in Digital Content Management. Mrs. Drillen is the current Technical Services/Information Literacy Librarian, helps staff the circulation desk, provides ready reference, reader's advisory, pays bills, and orders supplies. Mrs. Drillen helps the Library Director maintain the library operating budget. Mrs. Drillen will be the Financial Manager for the grant and will be in charge of the budget and ordering all supplies. Nueces County Public Libraries wants to better serve area youth by offering educational programs that are fun and engaging at both the Keach Family Library and the Bishop Branch. Books and Blocks @ the Library encourages participants through imaginative play by role-playing and creative play, and offers Nueces County youth, especially those from low income families, toys they may not have access to. The program will raise awareness in the county that the library is not just a place for books, but rather that the library offers a wide array of programs that engage and educate youth to become lifelong learners. Timeline March– submit grant application April – proposal reviewed May – Award notice and check received and order all materials and supplies and promote upcoming events on activities calendar, website, social media, and library signage. Advertisement will be \$500.00 June - Books and Blocks Club begins.

Submit Proposal for Review