



CENTRE COUNTY PREVENTION COALITION
A SAMHSA Supported Drug-Free Community Coalition
Led By Centre County Drug and Alcohol



ARTICLE 15 – June 25, 2008 – Catch The Reading Bug!
By Anita Ditz

Anita Ditz is the Children's Services Librarian at Schlow Centre Region Library. This weekly column, published on Wednesdays, is a collaboration of Centre County *Communities That Care*® serving Bald Eagle, Bellefonte, Penns Valley, and Philipsburg-Osceola Area School Districts, and Care Partnership: Centre Region *Communities That Care*® serving the State College Area School District.

The 17 year cicadas aren't the only insects that have arrived throughout Centre County! Visit any public library in the county and you will find children who want to "Catch the Reading Bug!" Since the beginning of June, hundreds of families have visited Aaronsburg, Bellefonte, Centre Hall, Philipsburg and State College libraries where staff have decorated the children's areas and planned exciting events to encourage children to read books and participate in library programs throughout the summer. Puppet shows, craft activities and storytimes can be found weekly and the July Worm Races will certainly be popular.

In addition to the public libraries, four State College elementary school libraries act as branches of Schlow Centre Region Library during the summer for six weeks beginning June 23. During the past three years, Care Partnership: Centre Region *Communities That Care*® has played a major role in ensuring that the Panorama Library in Boalsburg, Ferguson Township Library in Pine Grove Mills, and Radio Park Library and Gray's Woods Library in State College provide additional opportunities for parents and children to make reading an important part of their summer. Visiting these school libraries is a great way to build relationships within your neighborhood and to introduce entering kindergartners to the school they will attend in the fall.

Summer reading programs began in the 1890s as a way to encourage school children, particularly those in urban areas not needed for farm work, to use the library and develop the habit of reading. Numerous studies have shown that summer programs help ensure that school children retain reading and learning skills over the summer recess. More than any other public institution, including schools, libraries contribute to the intellectual growth of children during summer.

Librarians are partners with parents and teachers, keeping children and teens reading throughout the year. There are a variety of ways that parents can help children develop a love of reading:

- Start sharing books when your child is born, and keep reading with children into their teen years.
- Make a time and a place for reading in your home and talk about reading with your family.
- Take advantage of "waiting" time to share books: on trips, at the doctor's office, in line at the grocery store.
- Set a good example – read on your own.
- Allow your child to select books to read and be aware of your child's reading interests.
- Give books as presents.
- Register your child for a library card. Get the one free card that brings you a world of opportunity – no matter what your age.
- When preparing for family road trips, stock up on audio books from your library. Let your children choose some stories to listen to in the car.

Libraries grow new generations of readers – people who are curious and love to read. Summer reading programs are geared for reading for the fun of it. If you can read, thank a teacher. If you love to read, thank a librarian!

Care Partnership: Centre Region *Communities That Care*®
Serving State College Area School District
Dawn Taylor, Community Mobilizer
814-861-7424
dtaylor105@gmail.com
Web address: carecentreregion.org

Centre County *Communities That Care*®
Serving the School Districts of Bald Eagle, Bellefonte, Penns Valley, and
Philipsburg-Osceola
Kimberly Cassidy, Community Mobilizer
814-404-9511
centrecountyctc@yahoo.com
Web address: centrecountyctc.org