

DESCRIPTION OF SUCCESSFUL READING PROGRAMME PROGRAMME TITLE: "Book Start: Growing up with Books" PROGRAMME ORGANISER(S): Österreichisches Bibliothekswerk (Austrian Library Network)	
<b>Description Created by LiRe Partner Institution: _ The Institute for Children's Literature</b>	
Time & Place	Target Group(s)
2006 – ongoing	This programme is continually growing, as more and more libraries in the whole country are getting involved in it. It is difficult to estimate participation, as it is spread all over the country and consists of many small projects. The target groups are children and their parents. Ages: Starting from 0 and up
<b>Short Description (Max. 200 words)</b>	
<p>In 2006 the Austrian Library Network started the Programme "Life Tracks" with the purpose to supply the libraries in Austria with materials for a new culture of "meeting". The first pillar of this Programme was the "Meeting of Generations". Then followed the pillar "Meeting of Cultures". The third pillar is the Programme "Book start: Growing with Books". The target groups are children and their families. This third pillar was created with the purpose to win these target groups as members of a network of knowledge, and as companions on the long way of exciting meetings with books.</p> <p>Book start is an international project; the idea coming initially from the UK is already developed in more than 20 countries, each one adapting it to its reading tradition, culture and conditions. The main idea of the worldwide Book Start movement is to encourage parents and all other people working with children to enjoy reading books together with children from as early an age as possible. Public libraries are the heart of this programme, which consists of many smaller projects.</p> <p>Austria possesses a great number of public libraries that are closely connected to their local communities. Addressing all age groups, they are the ideal hub for Book Start activities and local Book Start networks. So far, these initiatives have been taking place on a regional level. The Austrian Library Network's programme is therefore an attempt to bring these existing initiatives, ideas and experiences into a closer exchange and form them into a coordinated movement.</p>	
<b>Objectives (General &amp; Specific)</b>	
<p><b>General Objective:</b> The Book Start programme in Austria promotes early reading and family reading as a condition for success in school. Further the project accompanies the children and young people through their school time with good ideas and activities concerning reading.</p>	

**Specific objectives:**

- To spread the Book Start idea among the libraries and the population.
- To promote the importance of family literacy.
- To develop material and guidelines at the local and regional level.
- To consult and support Book Start activities on local and regional level.
- To develop materials and other assistance to support and apply the Book start activities.
- To bring together and summarize the experience acquired from working within a project.
- To make multimedia presentations of the most successful Book Start projects.
- To work with the society and involve people from the cultural and social management spheres.
- To develop workshops and seminars, courses and meetings for librarians on the topic of the Book Start Programme.
- To develop interest towards languages.

**Scheme of Reading Promotion Actions & Activities**

The subheadings of the Book start movement are:

- Searching and discovering together
- Finding and inventing stories
- Reflecting about me and other miracles
- Crafting and playing with words
- Growing with books

These are the actions undertaken under this programme:

1. Assure an early access to parents of newborn babies. In this phase parents are open to ideas and suggestions.
2. Organize basic and advanced training for librarians in the field of family literacy.
3. Supply materials that promote closeness between parents and children and invite them to experience a common approach to the world of reading, storytelling and participation. Flyers, picture books on cardboard, picture books on paper, and others are created for this purpose.
4. Help parents to come closer to their children through storytelling; discovering and observing what helps children develop. This can be done individually or in group events, where parents of newborn babies, toddlers or older children are invited in order to learn more and to experience the importance of reading aloud, storytelling, etc.
5. Create connections and links with libraries and reading promotion organizations, as well as encouraging various forms of cooperation among parent-child groups, nurseries, kindergartens, schools, paediatricians, the municipal council, the parish, social welfare, etc. in order to develop the continuing exchange of ideas and

experience. Supply background information for other supporters such as family members, professionals etc. Gather documentation and information about good practice.

6. Provide Personal guidance and individual support for the development of new projects. For example a Book Start package for the youngest children is prepared by the programme organisers and recommended to librarians and parents, together with a booklet about the programme. Access is given to an extended network of artists, writers, publishers, trainers, librarians and scientists.
7. Provide translations of material in other languages. Book Start builds bridges for children who live in Austria but whose parents come from other cultures. By having access to texts in translation, children and parents can connect with their own culture and join the networks of reading, learning and storytelling.

In addition, the Institute for Children's Literature maintains an active exchange with international partners and their initiatives. A DVD has been produced with materials for the Books Start project: Book start cinema with Book start activities for children; Video clips with information for parents; Materials for book discussions.

#### **Results / Indicators of Success**

As a result of the Book Start project:

1. Families buy more books.
2. Families find more time to read together.
3. Public libraries are used more often.
4. Children are challenged to speak about the books they have read.
5. Participating children are better prepared for school and show better results in schools.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

(WHAT WORKED WELL AND WHY)

The Austrian Library Network's Book start programme has been developed out of the activities of local public libraries, being based upon a high degree of voluntary work and individual commitment. The support and dedication of various artists and writers have given the programme its specific touch. The programme has shown its potential for further creative development and proves to be a joyful and sustainable tool in the important field of reading promotion.

Started as a small initiative by some public libraries, Book Start has developed networks of parents, readers, librarians, and individual people and institutions interested in children's reading. This programme is in constant development.

#### REFERENCES

Ehgartner, R. (2011). *BuchStart: Mit Büchern wachsen, Informationen, Impulse, Ideen*. Mit Illustrationen von Helga Bansch. Österreichisches Bibliothekswerk.

#### LINKS TO FURTHER MATERIAL

[www.lebensspuren.net](http://www.lebensspuren.net)

[www.buchstart.at](http://www.buchstart.at)

or

[www.Bookstart.at](http://www.Bookstart.at)