

First 5 Amador sponsors nationwide literacy event Oct. 2

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By Bethany A. Monk (bmonk@ledger-dispatch.com)

It's a win-win for everyone - kids get a free book and an hour of interactive fun while parents get some time to kick back, relax and watch their kids enjoy a good story.

First 5 Amador and the Amador Community Foundation are sponsoring countywide "Read for the Record" events Thursday to support the national Jumpstart campaign, which highlights the importance of early education and literacy.

The way the campaign works is this: Hundreds of thousands of children and adults across the country will read the same book on the same day, Oct. 2. The book will be read in schools, libraries, stores, hotels, playgrounds, offices and homes throughout the nation. In Amador County, a slew of local locations, including the Jackson branch of the Amador County library and Family Learning Center in Ione, county schools and several other places, will host the special event at various times throughout the day.

Jumpstart's goal this year is to get 258,000 people to read the book Thursday, said Cheri Garamendi, First 5 Amador school readiness coordinator. Children and parents who participate in a "Read for the Record" event in Amador County will listen to the story and participate in literacy activities related to the book, she added. Children will then get to keep a free copy of the book.

"Studies show that the number of books in a child's home represents future reading success," Garamendi said. Even for children who are unable to read or are just learning to read, both Garamendi and Nina Machado, executive director of First 5 Amador, recommend letting the children make up their own stories when perusing a picture book. Having conversations with children regarding "what's happening in the story" or what they see in the pictures, is also highly beneficial for children. It's also good to have them point to the words when reading, she added.

Jumpstart's Web site at <http://www.jstart.org/>, includes several early childhood education resources, including these reading tips for families:

- Establishing a routine by choosing a convenient time to read with your child each day. Good times may include bedtime, after a meal, in the tub or after school. Keep a book with you while you're out of the house in case you have to wait somewhere with your child. Try to read to your child at least once a day.

- Read books your child enjoys. Peruse your library's children's room of books and search for a book that matches his or her interests.

- Talk about the book and ask questions about the story. Children often miss subtleties of books. Ask interpretive, open-ended questions like, "Why do you think she feels angry?" Refer to the book in your everyday activities, "This oatmeal reminds me of the mush in Good Night Moon."

- Read everything. Reading to your child is not limited to books. Read street signs, cereal boxes, junk mail, billboards, newspapers, and so on. Celebrate your child's recognition of letters and popular words like stop, exit, etc.

- Model writing for your child by reading aloud lists, postcards, and notes that you create. You can write a grocery list together and let your child "write" and then have him or her "read" it back to you.

Sometimes people may overcorrect young readers, but preschoolers learning to read should be allowed to make mistakes and just keep going. "It's best to let them tell the story," Garamendi said.

It's helpful for parents to help their children become familiar with the parts of a book, like the front and back covers, title page, and table of contents, if there is one.

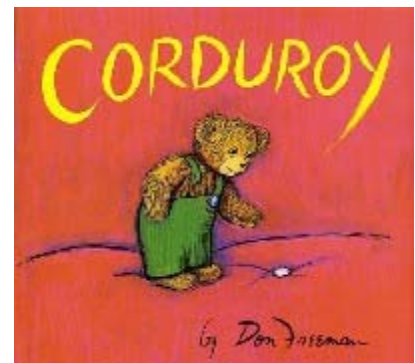
Children can also create their own books at home, Garamendi said. "Children are always fascinated with that.

"Parents are a child's first and most important teacher," Garamendi said, adding that it's First 5's goal to give parents the tools to encourage learning.



Kendra Morris, 2 1/2 years old, shows off a copy of "Corduroy" during Amador HRC Child Care Resources playgroup session outside the Ione Memorial Hall Wednesday. The book, by Don Freeman, is this year's "Read for the Record" book.

Photo by: [Bethany A. Monk](#)



"Corduroy," by Don Freeman, is a picture book that features a stuffed bear in a toy store waiting for a home. It was published in 1993.

Photo by: [Courtesy to the Ledger Dispatch](#)

"Reading opens up a whole new world for them," said Sue Bickford, technician and storytime coordinator for the Jackson branch of the county's library system.

Storytime, for children 0 to 5, takes place every Thursday at 10:30 a.m. at the Jackson branch. Story tellers make it fun, she said, and will use puppets, story boards and other activities to engage children. Children also become familiar with the library and can learn how to check out books. Children may also participate in storytimes, which are all free and open to the public, at the Lone, Plymouth, and Sutter Creek branch libraries on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. For more information, call 223-6400.

"Read for the Record" events, free and open to the public, will take place Oct. 2 the following times and locations: 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Sutter Creek Auditorium; 10 to 11 a.m. at both the Family Learning Center in Lone and the Upcountry Community Center in Pine Grove; 10:30 to 11 a.m. at the Jackson Library (reading only); 11 to noon at the Camanche Lake Community Center and 6 to 7 p.m. at the Amador Cooperative Preschool in Jackson. "Corduroy," published in 1993, is a picture book that features a stuffed bear in a toy store waiting for a home,

For more information about "Read for the Record," call Garamendi at 257-1092.

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