

International Year of the Family

Library-based family literacy — Sue Scott, of the State Library of NSW, has some ideas for action



In a recent issue of the NLA newsletter *Link-up*, Sue Scott suggests some action that libraries could take as part of their response to the International Year of the Family. Her suggestions are reprinted here in the hope that they may be of immediate value to *inCite* readers and also trigger further thinking about the IYF. What is **your** library doing in this special year?

- *Reading skills workshops for parents, preschool teachers, family day care providers, literacy educators.* These could include: story telling techniques; the importance of reading to children for the development of literacy skills; how to select books for your child; how to involve your child in the reading process; activities for parents and children together, eg. work games, nursery rhythms; an introduction to the services of the library; helping parents to gain access to infor-

mation on parenting, health, nutrition and pregnancy.

- *Reading skills workshops targeting parents with low literacy.* These workshops would be similar to those discussed above but liaison would be required with local literacy tutors and staff would need to be aware of the special sensitivities of this group.
- *Free books to disadvantaged children.* This program would be run on a local basis and would involve liaison with the local community. It could be coupled with reading skills workshops for parents with low literacy skills.
- *Reading programs with children.* Many public libraries already run very successful reading programs for children. In addition to these, reading programs could be run at the beach, at swimming pools, at preschool centres, at workplace child care centres and at shopping centres.
- *Parenting information centres.* If not already happening, libraries could provide a collection of videos, tapes, books and pamphlets on parenting, pregnancy, health, nutrition and local com-

munity information, eg. lists of local preschools.

- *Outreach collections.* Libraries could lend out collections of children's material to preschool centres and family day care centres.
- *Computer literacy.* Libraries could provide access to educational computer programs to help raise computer literacy.
- *Programs for people of a non-English speaking background (NESB), people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.* The above programs could all be targeted to particular groups in the community. In addition, children and adults from NESB could be introduced to books in their own language.
- *Oral history.* Working with local schools, children could be encouraged to interview older members of the community.
- *Displays.* Displays could focus on various aspects of the family.
- *Family Newsletter.* Services to families provided by the library and the community.

(Reproduced by kind permission from an article in *Link-up* 84, February 1994.) ■

Award-winning library in the city

Perth City Library has won the inaugural Public Library Multicultural Services Award

The Award, presented by the Library Board of Western Australia, with sponsorship from the Office of Multicultural Affairs, recognises and encourages public library initiatives in the provision of services to multicultural or indigenous communities in Western Australia.

Mr Nhan Vo-Van, Assistant Secretary, Office of Multicultural Affairs, presented the Award plaque and cheque for \$1,000 to Perth City Town Clerk, Mr Reg Dawson, and Acting Manager of Library Services, Maureen Chew, at a function held last October at the Alexander Library Building, Perth. ■

