CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY
LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA)

Final Program Narrative Report
(LSTA Form 9)

Grant Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Torrance Public Library</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>The Library is for Everyone: Serving Children with Special Needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Award #</td>
<td>40-8337</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Period</td>
<td>2013-2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount of Grant Award</td>
<td>5000</td>
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<td>Amount of Grant Expended</td>
<td>5000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Match</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Kind</td>
<td>2999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Amount of Project</td>
<td>7999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Persons Served</td>
<td>76</td>
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Project Director

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Jay Spradlin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>3301 Torrance Blvd, Torrance, California 905053</td>
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This report is due on the date listed in the LSTA Grant Guide for this project. Follow this link to view the Grant Guide. [http://www.library.ca.gov/grants/lsta/manage.html](http://www.library.ca.gov/grants/lsta/manage.html)

Email this report in “word format” to lsta@library.ca.gov then mail ORIGINAL and 2 copies to:

California State Library
P.O. Box 942837
Sacramento, CA 94237-0001
Attention: Fiscal Office - LSTA

SIGNATURE: ______________________________________ DATE: ______________________________
(Please sign in blue ink)
**Project Final Report**

A final narrative report is required on the use of federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds following the completion of a project during each project year. The information you report will be used to complete the California State Library report of how funds were expended. Excerpts from this report may be submitted to the Federal government in their evaluation, or may be published by the State Library or shared with other institutions. Please answer all of the questions thoroughly. Please attach any reproduction copies of photographs of project activities or media produced for the project.

### Project Purpose

Include your program purpose statement here

This project will improve library service for children with special needs and their families by providing training to library staff; developing a series of adaptive, inclusive storytime programs; and bolstering the collection of circulating materials on topics related to children with special needs.

With the assistance of a hired consultant, library staff will learn how to recognize children with special needs and communicate with them more effectively. Youth Services staff will work with the consultant to develop a series of storytime programs designed to meet a range of developmental, cognitive, and emotional needs in young children. Library selectors will use professional media reviews and advice from the consultant to purchase adult and youth books on topics relating to children with special needs. Youth books will include both materials targeted to children with special needs and materials to help other children understand the experiences of children with special needs. Adult books will include materials targeted to parents and caregivers of children with special needs and materials to educate general readers about special needs.

### Project Activities and Methods

How did you accomplish the project? What were the steps involved? How did you engage the target audience?

**Training:** The project coordinator selected and met with a consultant to develop staff training on recognizing and effectively communicating with children with special needs. Three dedicated training sessions were held and the information was also presented at an all-staff meeting; in total, 57 staff members were trained.

**Storytime:** Staff selected and met with a consultant to develop a series of storytimes, adapted to the requirements of children with special needs. Supporting materials were purchased for the program, including manipulatives and sensory-enhanced books with textured pages, flaps, and other interactive elements. The storytime series was named “Friday Friends Story Circle” and was publicized on the library’s website, in communications to local agencies serving children with special needs, and with flyers distributed throughout the library system and to local agencies. From January through May, 2014, staff presented a series of 8 storytimes. Additional sessions are planned for the future.

**Print Materials:** The library purchased 76 titles on topics related to children with special needs. These were placed into circulation and are currently displayed in a highly visible section of shelving in the Youth Services area at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library. Signage indicates the purpose and provenance of the collection, and custom-created labels identify the materials from that collection. A special subject field was added to the bibliographic records for these materials, allowing for easy catalog searches; a link to the library’s catalog and that search term will be included in future electronic communication to local agencies.

### Project Outputs

What was created for the project and how much? (For instance three promotional brochures were created and 75 copies distributed; or three training classes were designed; two sessions of each were held, and 80 people were trained)
57 staff members received training on recognizing and more effectively communicating with children with special needs at three dedicated training sessions and at a regularly scheduled staff meeting.

Staff presented a total of 8 storytime programs from January through May, 2014

Total attendance at all story time programs was 19.

76 books were added to the circulating collection on topics related to children with special needs. These items are a mix of adult and children’s books. Among the subjects covered are working with school districts to create an individualized instruction plan, learning basic life skills, making friends, and books by individuals recounting their own experiences about growing up with special needs or being the parent of a child with special needs.

18 cushions were purchased for seating during the story times; these were bought at the suggestion of the consultant, who advocated them as a way to define personal space for children at the storytimes, as well as to provide support for children with core strength limitations.

14 items were purchased for use as manipulatives in storytime.

24 sensory-enhanced books were purchased for use with the new storytimes; these include books with textured pages, flaps, and other interactive elements.

### Project Outcomes (if applicable)

Please state the outcomes and the results of your evaluation.

**Training:** Staff participating in the training sessions were surveyed before and after each session. Overall, staff showed a 45% increase in awareness of children with special needs and a 63% increase in their understanding of appropriate styles of communicating with children with special needs.

**Storytime:** Staff leading the storytime sessions verbally surveyed parents and caregivers about their library use and their experience with the new storytime program:

- 100% indicated that their child enjoyed the inclusive, adaptive storytimes.
- 75% percent attended two or more story time sessions.
- 75% indicated that they were using other library services or resources, including borrowing materials.
- 25% of those using other library services said that they had not done so before attending the storytime series.

**Print Materials:** Materials were ordered in May and were made available to the public in July. Since then, 37% of the items have circulated

### Additional Project Outcomes

Please state any additional intended or unintended outcomes and what data sources you used.
Since this project began, there have been many examples of staff displaying a higher level of awareness of children with special needs, both within our community and at large. Staff have discussed having "a-ha" moments when they realized that patrons they were assisting - both adults and children - perhaps had disabilities that were not readily apparent and staff have adjusted their approach to assisting them. Some staff have mentioned taking greater notice of news stories and articles in professional media about people with special needs; for example, the City Librarian frequently shares articles she has found on related topics, including one on how Disney theme parks accommodate children with special needs and their families. This project has also made library staff more aware of how other departments in the City interact with people with special needs.

**Anecdotal Information**
Tell us a story. Give two or more examples of how the project has helped an individual or group in your community.

Training included a segment on using "people first" language when talking about disabilities and special needs, i.e., referring to the person before identifying his or her condition or disability. For example, one would say "a child with autism" rather than "an autistic child" with the ideal of emphasizing the person, not the condition. Since training, many staff members have been observed using "people first" language in conversations pertaining to patrons with disabilities.

One mother and her son who attended storytime frequently perfectly illustrate the goal of making families like theirs feel welcome and comfortable in the library. The boy is profoundly affected by Angelman syndrome; he does not speak, communicating instead through an electronic device, and he has some impulse control issues. He and his mother stayed for an hour or more after each storytime that they attended, exploring the children's area of the library and meeting any staff members who were out on the floor. His mother said that she had not brought him to the library before because she did not know how he would behave and feared that he would disturb other library users. The new storytime provided the impetus for her to bring her son to the library for the first time.

Another mother said that she was surprised to see the library offering a storytime especially for children with special needs; when informed about the new books that were being ordered on topics relating to special needs, she was very excited and wanted to know more.

Staff learned that Friday, the day of the week chosen for the new story time series, was problematic due to existing programs in the community geared toward children with special needs. As a result, staff are investigating moving future storytime sessions to Saturdays in order to minimize conflicts and increase attendance.

**Exemplary Project**
If you feel your project was exemplary and others could learn from it and replicate it, please tell us why.

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**FEEDBACK FOR THE CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY ON THE GRANT PROCESS**
We want to learn and improve our grant processes. Please let us know what worked and what we could do differently to make it a better experience. Thank you!
The Word documents associated with this process - the original application and the budget and narrative reports - lacked some standard functionality. For example, it is not possible to highlight and edit a chunk of text in the middle of a section; one can only highlight an entire paragraph, or place the I-bar and delete character by character. While not a major impediment, this does make revision and editing more time-consuming.