

## Friends of The Children's Library

### Friends of The Children's Library

Child development encompasses mental, physical and intellectual development of the child. His/her love for reading strengthens their intellectual abilities and creative potentials; it also deepens their knowledge and expands their comprehension preparing them for responsible citizenship.

*Suzanne Mubarak*

### Why Children and why Reading?

Children's libraries are not only significant in preparing the children to be good readers, but they awaken in them an interest to explore their environment and surroundings, thus complementing their basic school education.

While schools can make a child literate, libraries can help make out of reading a joy, recreation and a vocation.

Books, particularly in the language of the country, can preserve culture, provide national identity and stimulate interest in history, science, literature, music and folklore, thus broadening the horizon of the child and deepening his thirst for knowledge.

### Pioneering Services: School Libraries:

The successful pioneer experiment initiated by the «Integrated Care Society for Primary School Children» of establishing school libraries, 1979-85 inspired the Society to promote a more comprehensive programme in this vital field.

The ambitious programme aims at constructing, establishing and supervising ten children's public libraries in various urban and semi rural-urban communities throughout Egypt within a two-year period (1985-87).

The libraries will serve children of 6-15 years of age; the young people of the adolescent age from 12-15 will be given particular attention; to develop the habit of reading to help children become more creative intellectually.

### Short Term Goals:

- Promoting the objectives of children's libraries through the community and schools.
- Conducting a social survey of every community which invites the establishment of a children's library.
- Finding the sites for ten libraries and obtaining the proper authorization for the use of the sites.
- Recruiting staff for these libraries and offering them in-service training programmes before they take up their duties.
- Promoting periodic refresher training courses for the staff.

- Establishing a professional supervisory unit for children's libraries in the society's administrative office to provide professional guidance to the libraries.

- Establishing a legal basis with the responsible government authorities in order that the libraries will obtain an on-going continuity.

- Establishing a community-parents committee to support the children's library and encourage community participation.

### Long Term Goals:

- To introduce the concept of the importance of developing the habit of lifetime reading, by making reading and related activities interesting to children and their families.

- To demonstrate the effectiveness of stories, story-telling, reading and other activities in spreading the messages of cleanliness, health, good nutrition and other things that contribute to a feeling of well-being in children.

- To provide a model for children's library service that can be replicated by other communities in Egypt.

- To help stimulate the school systems, government and private, to reactive or expand their school libraries particularly those for the young child, from 6-15.

- To provide researchers with several types of vocations to do long-term research in the reading interests and problems of Egyptian children.

- To establish a small system of children's libraries that will provide a continuity for several years of experience to work with children and books in Egypt, in a non-formal educational setting.

- To involve the parents of the children as members of the surrounding community to take special interest in the children's library in order to encourage community participation.

### Library Programmes And Activities:

- Reading guidance, helping children to select books to read.
- Story telling and story reading.
- Organizing school visits to the libraries for the purpose of establishing stronger links between the schools and the library.
- Children's reading interest clubs.
- Competitive children writings of books, stories and songs, etc.
- Learning about children of other parts of the world.
- Children POarents discussion.
- Staff working with parents to encourage children read at home.
- Learning about their communities.
- Puppet shows.
- Film programmes and other media.

### AL-RAIDA, IWSAW QUARTERLY

#### LEBANON

P.O.Box 13-5053  
Beirut University College  
Beirut, Lebanon  
Cable Address: BECOGE  
Tlx: BUC 23389 LE

#### U.S.A.

Beirut University College  
475 Riverside Drive,  
Room 1846  
New York, NY 10115

Director: **Julinda Abu Nasr**  
Advisor: **Rose Ghurayyib**  
Editor: **Aida Arasoghli**

### YEARLY CONTRIBUTION

Lebanon: L.L. 150 per year  
Other Countries: \$ 15 per year  
plus \$3 to cover postage