

# Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

[www.ci.norfolk.ne.us](http://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us)

February 22, 2013

## “1000 Books Before Kindergarten”



Sophia Sauser may be only two and a half years old but she's had more books read to her than most people read in a lifetime. Since October, she has listened to other people read her 1,000 books.

It all started when Sophia's mom, Jennifer, learned about a new program at the Norfolk Public Library called "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten". In the program, parents, siblings, or anyone willing to participate, reads books to a child. The titles of the books are recorded in a three ring binder provided by the library. Children receive a reward for every 25 books that are read to them.

"The U.S. Department of Education states that 'the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children. A great marker for future success in school is how much exposure even very

young children have to books," said Karen Drevo, Youth Services librarian.

So far, 85 children have signed up for the program including a baby that's only a month old. Drevo said studies show developing literacy skills begins at birth and continues through the toddler and preschool years.

The "1000 Books" three ring binder also includes lists of book suggestions for the parent. A book can be read to the child more than once much to many parents' chagrin. Fortunately Sophia's favorite books are "The Duckling Gets a Cookie", "Rattletrap Car" and "Skippy Jon Jones in the Doghouse" which Jennifer says are fun to read.

"We'll read 7-10 books a day-before bed, at naptime and just to take a break. I have always liked to read. My mom is an elementary school librarian so she has good books to recommend," said Jennifer who added that she tries to squeeze a few books in for herself when she can.

Jennifer and her husband, Joe, trek to the library every Saturday morning to check out books and participate in the library's Lapsit program where the librarian reads to younger children. Jennifer and Sophia go to the library for Wednesday morning Lapsits also.

Drevo has another reason for promoting the program. It gets children to the library, teaches them how to respect books and gives them an appreciation of the wide range of stories found in the library.

The "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" program is free to library members who have a current library card. All that is needed to become a member of the library is to show a valid ID. There is no fee to obtain a library card.

"It's free to check out books so every family can afford to read to their children. No family can afford not to read to them. The investment of spending 15-20 minutes a day reading to your child is priceless," said Drevo.

For more information go to the library's website at <http://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us/LIBRARY> or <http://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us/library/1000%20books.htm>.