

March Into Literacy with 3 New Programs!

There are so many celebrations in March: Women's History Month, St. Patrick's Day, Deaf History Month, Youth Art Month, National Craft Month, Randolph Caldecott's birthday and more. These celebrations inspire displays, programming, social media posts, and Youth Services décor. However, we have an additional celebration that is near and dear to our reading hearts that will impact programming in more significant ways in the months ahead. It's *March Into Literacy Month*! Combine this with our ongoing "Chatham Reads" campaign, sponsored in part through LSTA grant support, and we are thrilled to announce the addition of three new programs for youth and adults to the Youth Services calendar.

Presently, Youth Services offers four book discussion groups: *My FIRST* (for grades K to 2 with an adult companion), *Chat & Chew* (for grades 3 and 4), *Mock Newbery* (for grades 4 through adulthood), and *Mock Printz* (for teens through adulthood). We are very excited to introduce another book group for teens and adults that will highlight books featuring difficult, current topics. From social justice and mental health to addiction and sexual harassment, no topic will be off the table. It's an opportunity to lean in, to admit that we are often uncomfortable about openly expressing ourselves, and to share a meaningful dialogue in a safe, neutral setting.

And if five book groups are not enough, we will offer another "mock" discussion group that will feature picture books. Our *Mock Caldecott* will begin in April and will run similarly to our *Mock Newbery* and *Mock Printz* groups. Each year the Association of Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), presents an award to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children. Using the actual criteria for award selection, we will read 2-4 picture books each month and name our own Caldecott Medal and Honor winners.

Lastly, we are working on an infant storytime. Presently, our youngest storytime targets children 18 months to 3 years old. This new story time will welcome newborns to pre-crawling infants and their caregivers, with a strong emphasis on sharing and modeling what we know about early literacy – those skills that must be in place before reading actually begins.

Tidings/Youth Services
Spring (March 1, 2018)

If you or a family member are interested in participating in these new programs, please contact Youth Services. We will, indeed, *March Into Literacy* this spring and underscore our commitment to a community that holds reading and literacy as a core value. Yes, “Chatham Reads!”

