



News Release

September 26, 2022

For Information, contact:

Aja Michael-Keller

260-421-1265

amichael-keller@acpl.info

StoryScape Early Learning Space Opens at ACPL

(FORT WAYNE, IN) – The Allen County Public Library invited guests to tour the new StoryScape at a grand opening on Friday, September 23. StoryScape is the newly reimagined early child learning center located at the Main Library in the Children's Services department. The space uses hands-on learning tools and library materials to encourage young children to read, sing, write, talk, and play.

The space replaces the much-loved Early Child Center which welcomed children for more than 13 years. StoryScape builds upon that prior success by introducing a flexible space of more than 2600 square feet primarily focused on ages 7 and younger. StoryScape features a Baby Garden for infants and toddlers to practice gross motor skills and three learning stations for early learners to practice imaginative play, hands-on learning, and themed exploration with parents, caregivers and big siblings. The spaces will regularly refresh to engage children with interesting new play opportunities.

"This is a place where children get to be the authors of their own stories and caregivers get to join them in that journey," said Youth Services Manager Marra Honeywell. "The look of achievement and wonder when a new crawler crosses the Baby Garden bridge or the accomplishment that comes with finding prehistoric treasures in Dino Dig is quite the cause for celebration."

StoryScape also connects this play experience to the world of books and readying. The space hosts the popular StoryTime sessions each week and the Librarians have taken great care to place books at kid-level. The goal is to connect playtime to books and learning.

The space was funded primarily through a \$250,000 gift from the Allen County Public Library Foundation, as well as, Library reserve funds. It was envisioned following the

closure of the Early Child Center with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and has been under construction for the past year. It opened in June 2022.

“At the Allen County Public Library Foundation, we were proud to support this engaging space that celebrates books and learning,” said ACPL Foundation Board Chair Rich Beckman. “StoryScape gives the Library the opportunity to change and grow as our community changes and grows. This is how we as a community support them in encouraging lifelong learning and discovery.”

StoryScape is open during normal business hours for the Main Branch. It is free and open to the public.

For more information about StoryScape and other youth activities at the Allen County Public Library, call (260) 421-1200 or visit acpl.lib.in.us/explore/youth.

About the Allen County Public Library

The Allen County Public Library (ACPL) has fostered lifelong learning and discovery in northeast Indiana for more than 125 years. The ACPL consists of fourteen branches throughout Allen County, serving more than one million visitors per year. The ACPL's collection includes more than 2.7 million items, with a circulation total of 3.6 million items borrowed annually. It also houses The Genealogy Center, the nation's largest public genealogy research center, and The Rolland Center for Lincoln Research, consisting of more than 20,000 artifacts related to President Abraham Lincoln.

###