

## **1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN**

By Jill Jennings

The Spirit Lake Public Library invites you to participate in this free program which encourages you to read 1,000 books with your child before s/he starts kindergarten.

The concept is simple; the rewards are priceless. Read a book (any book) to your newborn, infant, toddler, or preschooler. The goal is to read 1,000 books (yes, you can repeat books!), before your little one starts kindergarten. Does it sound hard? Not really, if you think about it. If you read just one book a night, you will have read 365 books in a year. That is 730 books in two years, and 1,095 books in three years. If you consider that most children start kindergarten at around 5 years of age, you have more time than you think. But you must get started!

You begin by stopping by the Spirit Lake Public Library to register. You will receive all the program materials, including a reading log. The friendly library staff will help you and answer any questions that you may have. Next, begin reading with your child! Studies have shown that reading with our children provides a great opportunity for bonding. Reading together is fun and will create life-long memories for both of you. Keep track of the titles you read on the log. If you are able, record all books being read to your child. This includes teachers, siblings, babysitters, etc. After you finish each sheet of 100 books, bring it and the folder to the SLPL. The log will be signed and dated by library staff, and you will receive a sticker for the folder to represent the 100 books read. Then with a new reading log in-hand, you can continue to read more books. At different milestones along the journey, your child will receive some special extra rewards.

After you complete that 1,000<sup>th</sup> book, come back to the library. Your child will receive a certificate and will be recognized on the 1,000 Books Wall of Fame. Annually, all “graduates” of the program will receive an invitation to a celebration that is held at the Spirit Lake Elementary School. After that, just keep reading! Literacy and a love of books are great gifts we can give to all our children!