



## **Smith Library Hosts Early Childhood Workshops**

**Wylie, Texas, Feb. 20, 2019** – Wylie’s Smith Public Library, dedicated to offering learning and enrichment opportunities for the community, presents a new program: the SPL Play & Learn Workshops. This five-week program for kids age 0 to 5 and their parents or caregivers is a fun, informal, play-based program that provides a rich environment of toys, books, art activities, puppets, and musical instruments along with helpful child development information for the caregivers. The program runs for five weeks and meets on Monday nights from 5:45 – 7 p.m. beginning March 18.

In addition to providing creative play activities, a different professional is on hand each week to provide handouts to parents and to be available for questions and discussion during playtime. They are experts on milestones for children 5 and younger and are there to help parents ensure their child is meeting those milestones and offer help if they are not.

The workshops emphasize a different area of child development each week. Topics for the spring program include Early Literacy and General Parenting, March 18; Speech, Hearing and Language Development, March 25; Child Development, April 1; Nutrition, April 8; and Music and Movement, April 15. Each workshop builds on the last, so attendance at all five workshops is strongly encouraged.

The SPL Play & Learn Workshops program is made possible by a Family Place Grant from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, for which Library Director Rachel Orozco applied. The library met the criteria to become an official Family Place Library, which included setting up a specially designed space, outside the Storytime Room, outfitted with Duplo, blocks, puppets and a castle puppet stage, stacking and sorting toys, board books, and infant manipulatives, as well as brochures and books for parents and caregivers. The Family Place area is available whenever the library is open.

The Family Place Library initiative is a national model dedicated to providing early learning environments for very young children, their parents, and caregivers. Based on early brain development research, the Family Place Library supports the essential role of parents as first teachers and addresses the physical, social, emotional and cognitive aspects of child development to help build a foundation for learning during the critical first years of life.

The grant funded all the toys, equipment and information for the Family Place space and the workshops. Following the award of the grant, Orozco and Children’s Services Librarian Debbie Nowling, who oversees the workshops, participated in a four-day training session in Centereach, N.Y., and learned how to set up the Family Place area and present the workshops.

There is no charge to participate in the workshops, and registration is underway now via [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com). The program was initially offered in the fall, and attendance was limited to 10 families. Due to the program's success, attendance for the spring has increased to 20 families.

For more information, contact the library at 972-516-6250. Smith Library is part of the Wylie Municipal Complex, at 300 Country Club Rd., Wylie.

Media Contact:  
Craig Kelly, PIO  
972-516-6016  
[craig.kelly@wylietexas.gov](mailto:craig.kelly@wylietexas.gov)

About Smith Library – Founded in 1970 by Rita and Truett Smith, the library serves the informational, cultural and recreational needs of the over 50,000 Wylie residents. Last year, the library checked out over 500,000 items and hosted almost 190,000 visitors. More than 35,000 citizens have library cards, and the library offers 459 programs, attended last year by over 25,000 participants. The library was awarded the 2017 Texas Achievement in Library Excellence Award, placing Smith Library in the top 10 percent of public libraries in the state.