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The Burleson Public Library is one of 24 libraries in Texas to be invited to participate in the Family Place Libraries Program. The goal of this national program is to expand the role of public libraries as community centers.

“I believe that this program is an excellent fit for us and will assist us in continuing our focus of programming to support early literacy, school readiness, and strengthening families,” Director of Library Services Marc Marchand said. “We are excited about the opportunity!”

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission’s initiative connects children’s librarians and libraries in 27 states and in more than 400 sites nationwide to help build healthy communities and healthy families recognizing that literacy begins at birth. Family Place Libraries redesign the library environment to be welcoming and appropriate for children beginning at birth; connect parents with the resources, programs and services offered at the library and other family service agencies; and reach out to non-traditional library users. This creates the network families need to nurture their children’s development during the critical first years of life and helps ensure all children enter school ready and able to learn.

Michele Wilson, children’s librarian, and Amanda Cadenhead, programming and reference services librarian, will attend a four-day training in Long Island. The training is provided by a \$12,000 grant. The Texas State Library will provide each participating library with \$6,000 to purchase learning tools, furniture, shelving, and a parenting collection for Parent/Child workshops and for developing a family-friendly interactive public space in the Burleson Public Library’s children’s area.

Marchand said that the library staff is working on developing coalitions/partnerships with community agencies; creating and maintaining a family-friendly interactive public area in the children’s room; implementing a minimum of two, five-week session series, one hour each week, of the Parent/Child Workshop each year; and developing a Parenting Collection in or adjacent to the Burleson Public Library’s Children’s Room.

To read more about Family Place Libraries, go to  
<http://www.familyplacelibraries.org/>