



## NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

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# **N E W S   R E L E A S E**

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**For release: Oct. 18, 2011**

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## **Prime Time program returns to Lincoln's Eiseley Library**

Prime Time Family Reading Time will be presented at the Eiseley Branch Library in Lincoln Thursday evenings through Nov. 17 with opportunities for Spanish- and English-speaking parents and their children. The first session was held Oct. 13.

Prime Time is a Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC) family literacy program designed to help strengthen participants' interest and skills in reading and talking about books. The six-week series is offered free to families whose children ages 6 to 10 struggle with reading.

Each program begins with a light meal and continues with storytelling and discussion based on award-winning children's books. All books are read and discussed in both English and Spanish. Books selected for the Eiseley series will help families discuss themes such as dreams, encounters, fairness, greed and kinship.

Storyteller Ricardo Garcia and discussion leader Joel Gajardo will introduce parents to the benefits and pleasures of reading and discussing stories with their children. Families will also learn about library resources and services. Separate reading activities will be available for preschool siblings.

Prime Time prepares elementary and preschool children "for being good students and wanting to learn," said Janine Copple, coordinator of the Eiseley series. Preschoolers, she said, have "learned how to be good listeners and pay attention in Prime Time and that made them ready for kindergarten."

A 10-year impact study found that students who participated in Prime Time during their early elementary years outperformed their peers on grade level content in standardized exams. Prime Time students scored higher in language arts and reading, mathematics, science, life science and other subjects. The study, published in 2010, was conducted in Louisiana where the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities developed Prime Time in 1991.

"We're not showing participants how to read, but why—for enjoyment, for insight, for conversation," said Erika Hamilton, NHC director of literary programs and state coordinator of Prime Time. "We look at situations in books and ask, 'Why did this happen?' 'Has this happened to you?' 'What would you do?' This kind of analysis helps students succeed in all of their classes, not just in reading and writing."

In Nebraska, more than 75 bilingual and English-only Prime Time series have been held in 14 public libraries, eight elementary schools and two community centers since 2002, including programs in Lincoln, Omaha, Grand Island, Norfolk and Scottsbluff. This will be Lincoln's 12th bilingual Prime Time, having held their first in 2005.

Prime Time is sponsored in Nebraska by the NHC with funding from the State of Nebraska, Nebraska Cultural Endowment and Carol Gendler. Local sponsors for Prime Time in Lincoln are Lincoln City Libraries; Lincoln Public Schools Federal Programs; Belmont, Campbell and West Lincoln elementary schools; and Lincoln Literacy Council.

The NHC is a private, statewide, non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

For more information or to register to participate, contact Vicki Wood at 402-441-8565.

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