



## NEBRASKA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

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# **N E W S   R E L E A S E**

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## **Prime Time reading program to be offered at Malone Center**

The Malone Community Center in Lincoln is Nebraska's newest site offering Prime Time Family Reading Time to families with children ages six to ten.

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. Each program begins with a light meal and continues with storytelling and discussion based on award-winning children's books.

The Malone Center, in collaboration with Lincoln City Libraries, will host the free series on six consecutive Saturday afternoons, Feb. 13 through March 13. On March 20, participating families will meet at the Bennett Martin Public Library for a tour and concluding session.

Discussion leader Joel Gajardo and storyteller Marvie Sullivan 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 pre-reading activities will be available for younger siblings.

"We're not showing participants how to read, but why—for enjoyment, for insight, for conversation," said NHC Senior Program Officer Erika Hamilton, 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 is important in the classroom, in the workplace, and in life."

In a 2009 survey of more than 85 Nebraska families who participated in Prime Time, 88 percent said they spend more time reading now as a family, 91 percent said the program improved the way they read and discuss books together, 76 percent improved their attitude toward the library, and 100 percent showed interest in participating again in Prime Time or similar family reading and educational programs.

Initially developed by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, more than 55 bilingual and English-only Prime Time series have been held in 15 Nebraska libraries, five schools and one community center in the last five years, including programs in Lincoln, Omaha, Grand Island, South Sioux City, Norfolk and Scottsbluff. This will be Lincoln's second English-only Prime Time since 2004. A bilingual Prime Time is scheduled for April and May.

Prime Time is sponsored in Nebraska by the NHC with funding from the State of Nebraska and Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Prime Time partners in Lincoln include the Lincoln City Libraries and Lincoln Public Schools.

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, youth services supervisor for Lincoln City Libraries, at (402) 441-8565.

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