

You Asked: Library Trouble

This response comes from Sharon Bâby

Q. When I take my daughter to story time, all the other children are sitting with their parents while my daughter is charging everywhere pulling down books and babies and not wanting to sit with me. What am I doing wrong?

A. You are not alone; many parents, who are *not* at story time, stay home for similar reasons or because of the fear that similar scenarios might occur. You are likely not doing anything wrong. You are wise to seek help; you know that parenting is a challenge, and it's good to ask for advice from others.

You haven't mentioned your child's age. If she is between 8 months and 4 years of age, her behavior isn't unusual. Young children explore and move a lot; they are learning about the world around them. At the library she is surrounded by beautiful babies and books, and it's not surprising that it's difficult for her to sit still. Her behavior certainly is not "bad," and it isn't likely she doesn't want to be with you. More likely, because you are there, she feels safe enough to move away from you and be curious about her surroundings.

I am assuming she isn't bowling babies over on purpose, but rather she is intrigued by them. Teaching her how to be gentle around babies/pets/books is a valuable lesson that all children need to learn. Modeling, teaching with consequences, and encouragement will help her learn. Some examples are:

- Teaching with consequences: Hold her hands gently but firmly, look at her with your full attention, and say, "Books are for reading, not for throwing on the floor. Sit quietly or we will have to leave and come back another time." And then follow through.
- Or say, "Babies are for loving, not for hurting. Sit quietly or . . ."
- Encouragement (Even if it is for part of the time): "Thank you for sitting quietly." If she stays with you till the end of the session "You did it, well done!" If she gets up to explore again, simply say, "Now it is time for us to go. We will come back again next week." And then follow through.

Besides the age factor, your daughter's temperament could be playing a part in this situation. If she is naturally feisty, then she is more likely to need to move about; she may never be a "sitter." Think ahead to how well she will likely do in activities that require movement and quick thinking!

Another factor is that she may be a kinesthetic learner; she learns best when she is using all of her senses. If the storyteller isn't engaging the children and keeping them involved, it will be difficult for some children to stay focused.

It's great that you want to give your child this library experience; however, stories can be told or read by family during quiet times like when she's in the car, the tub, or ready to sleep. If socializing for both of you is the main objective, and this continues to be a struggle, then I would suggest a different kind of parent/child group, one that is a better fit for you and your daughter.

Fortunately, there are a number of websites that can tell you what is happening around Saskatoon: www.saskmom.com www.saskatoonmoms.com
www.saskatoonevents.com www.saskatoonadleriansociety.org

Enjoy your family.

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