

Literacy Programs – The library serves as a center for literacy and learning by offering not only books, but also experiences that support reading, language development, critical thinking, and lifelong learning in all its forms.

1. **Storytimes (EG Books & Bubbles, StoryTown, Born to Read, Big Book Storytime, etc.)** – Storytimes are early literacy programs offered for children ages 0-5 and their caregivers. Programs focus on building early literacy or pre-reading skills such as vocabulary, print motivation, print awareness, narrative skills, and phonological awareness. These skills are essential for a child's development and for kindergarten readiness. Storytimes are active and interactive with lots of songs, rhymes and movement to keep little ones engaged while they are learning.
2. **StorySTEM** – A literacy-based program where the staff facilitator reads a book so that children learn about a topic and then engage in an activity based on the book to further explore the topic through experiential learning. StorySTEM focuses on science, technology, engineering or math related topics of exploration. For example, reading the story of the three little pigs and then offering children building materials to build structures out of different strength materials to practice their engineering skills and understanding of tensile strength.
3. **StoryArt** - A literacy-based program where the staff facilitator reads a book so that children learn about a topic and then engage in an activity based on the book to further explore the topic through experiential learning. StoryArt focuses on art-related topics of exploration. For example, reading *My Heart Is Like a Zoo* which features pictures of animals made out of different geometric shapes and then giving children cutout shapes to construct their own images.
4. **Early Explorers or Feelings & Friends** – These two programs combine elements of storytime and of free play and peer interaction for young children. The programs are literacy based and include a book and the early literacy skills, but also focus on peer to peer learning and social emotional learning and regulation.
5. **Bonjour Les Momes** – A bilingual storytime in French and English, designed for speakers of all languages to learn French or to experience a different language and culture in a welcoming and inclusive setting. This literacy-based program features stories, songs and rhymes and is facilitated by a volunteer who is fluent in French and donates her time to share this skill set with the community.

6. **Hola Bebe** - A bilingual storytime in Spanish and English, designed for speakers of all languages to learn Spanish or to experience a different language and culture in a welcoming and inclusive setting. This literacy-based program features stories, songs and rhymes and is facilitated by a volunteer who is fluent in Spanish and donates her time to share this skill set with the community.
7. **Read to Rambler** – A literacy-based program where children who are reluctant, nervous or struggling readers can read one-on-one to a certified therapy dog. The idea is to create a low pressure and non-judgmental environment where children can feel safe practicing and improving their reading skills by reading to a dog, instead of a teacher or peers.

Creativity & Expression - Creative programs provide opportunities for self-expression, skill development, and exploration across ages and abilities. These experiences support emotional well-being, confidence, and lifelong creative engagement.

8. **Music and Movement** – Music and Movement is an early childhood program designed for children under age 5 that combines songs, rhymes, and physical movement activities. While incorporating early literacy elements such as vocabulary and phonological awareness, the program places a strong emphasis on active participation and physical development. This program supports the development of both fine and gross motor skills, coordination, and body awareness in young children. Music and movement-based learning also strengthens listening skills, memory, and early language development while allowing children to learn through play and physical expression.
9. **Toddler Art** – Toddler Art provides children ages 1–4 with opportunities to explore a variety of art materials in a guided, supportive environment. Projects are process-based rather than product-focused and emphasize sensory exploration using different mediums and textures such as paint, chalk, and contact paper. This program supports fine motor development, creativity, and sensory exploration in early childhood. Process-based art encourages experimentation and self-expression while helping toddlers build confidence and familiarity with new materials. It also supports early cognitive development and caregiver-child interaction.
10. **LEGO Club** – LEGO Club is a play-based program where school-aged children (grades K–6) come together to build and create using donated LEGO bricks. Children are encouraged to work independently or collaboratively on imaginative building projects.

Appendix to Program Analysis Spreadsheet – Descriptions of Programs

Updated 2/16/2026

LEGO Club promotes creativity, spatial reasoning, and basic engineering skills. The program also supports social-emotional development by encouraging cooperation, communication, and peer interaction among children of varying ages.

11. **Pickup Crafts** – Pickup Crafts are informal, self-guided craft activities typically offered on weekends when staffed programming is limited. These crafts are often seasonal or themed and allow children and families to participate at their own pace. This program ensures continued access to creative activities for families. Pickup Crafts encourage creativity and fine motor skills and allows us to celebrate holidays and special events like Lunar New Year, President’s Day, Veteran’s Day, Flag Day, etc.
12. **KidConstruct** – KidConstruct is a hands-on building program for children in grades PreK–2 that uses recycled and upcycled materials to create original projects. Participants are encouraged to explore, build, and problem-solve individually or with peers. This program fosters imagination, early engineering concepts, and creative problem-solving. By using recycled materials, KidConstruct also introduces sustainability concepts while supporting social-emotional skills through collaborative play and shared exploration.
13. **Sensory Play** - Sensory Play is a child-centered program that offers hands-on activities designed to engage the senses through materials such as water, sand, textures, sounds, and movement. Activities are open-ended and developmentally appropriate. Sensory Play supports cognitive development, fine motor skills, and self-regulation, supporting children with sensory sensitivities, developmental differences, or neurodiverse needs. This program provides an inclusive environment where children can explore at their own pace, supporting diverse learning styles and needs.
14. **Little Leaps** - Little Leaps is an early childhood creative movement class where stationary and locomotor skills are explored. These concepts include rhythm, tempo, levels, and opposites. Classical music is used to inspire and engage children. The program is designed to support gross motor development, coordination, and body awareness in a fun and age-appropriate setting. Movement-based programs also support confidence, listening skills, and social interaction among young children.
15. **Dungeons & Dragons** – Dungeons & Dragons is a tabletop role-playing game program for teens where participants collaborate to create characters, tell stories, and solve challenges guided by a facilitator. This program encourages creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, and communication. Through collaborative storytelling and problem-solving,

teens develop social-emotional skills and engage with peers in a structured, inclusive environment.

- 16. Anime Club** - Anime Club is a program where teens gather to watch, discuss, and engage with anime and related media. Anime Club supports social connection and self-expression by providing a space for teens to connect over shared interests. Interest-based programming encourages engagement, fosters a sense of belonging, and supports positive peer interaction in a safe environment.

Community Building & Public Service – A core goal of the library is to create a safe, welcoming space where people can come together to learn, explore, and connect. These programs reinforce the library’s role as a welcoming gathering place, information hub, and connector of people and resources, strengthening community engagement and well-being.

- 17. Pokémon Club** – Pokémon Club is a program for children in grades K–6 that provides a safe and welcoming space for Pokémon card trading and fan interaction. Participants can trade cards, play the game, and connect with peers who share similar interests. Because trading Pokémon cards is often restricted in the public schools, this program fills an important community need by offering a structured and supervised environment. Pokémon Club supports social-emotional development, communication skills, and peer connection.
- 18. Tween Club** – Tween Club is an after-school program designed specifically for students in grades 5 and 6. Activities include simple crafts and hands-on projects such as tie-dye, Perler beads, and other interest-driven activities chosen by participants. Tweens are an underrepresented group in library programming and often fall between traditional children’s and teen services. Tween Club provides an age-appropriate space where participants can build confidence, creativity, and peer relationships in a safe, fun environment tailored to their developmental needs.
- 19. Library Birthday Party** – The Library Birthday Party was a special event celebrating the library’s 150th anniversary, bringing children and families together for cake, crafts, and community celebration. Participants created birthday cards and shared messages about why they love the library. This event fostered community pride in celebrating a major milestone for the Library and Town.

- 20. Ice Cream Social** – The Ice Cream Social was an all-ages community event celebrating the library’s 150th anniversary. The event featured ice cream donated by Tulmeadow Farms and highlighted historical photos of past Simsbury ice cream socials from the Simsbury Historical Society. This program honored local history and traditions while creating opportunities for intergenerational connection. By reviving a beloved historic event, the library strengthened community identity and engagement.
- 21. Q Plus Preteen** - Q Plus Preteen is a supportive program for preteens that offers crafts, activities and social connection in an affirming and inclusive environment. This program provides a safe space for preteens to explore identity, build confidence, and connect with peers. Inclusive programming like Q Plus Preteen demonstrates commitment to equity, belonging, and emotional well-being for all youth.
- 22. Homeschool Hangout** – Homeschool Hangout brings homeschooling families together in a relaxed, recess-style environment where children can play, socialize, and interact with peers. Optional activities such as crafts or board games are provided. Homeschool families may have fewer opportunities for informal peer interaction. This program supports social development, community connection, and inclusivity by offering a safe, welcoming space for homeschool students to engage with others.
- 23. International Faire** – The International Faire is a volunteer-led event run by local au pairs who share information, traditions, and experiences from their home countries with children and families through displays and activities. This program promotes cultural awareness, global learning, and appreciation of diversity. It supports the library’s mission to provide access to diverse perspectives and encourages cross-cultural understanding within the community.
- 24. Family Photoshoot** – The Family Photoshoot is a community service program sponsored by the Simsbury Camera Club, where volunteer photographers provide low cost family portraits. This program increases access to professional-quality photographs, which can be financially inaccessible for some families.
- 25. Meet the Cast of Anastasia** - Meet the Cast of Anastasia is a collaborative program between the Library and Simsbury Public Schools, allowing community members to meet student performers and learn more about the high school’s production. This partnership supports arts education, celebrates student achievement, and strengthens connections between the library and the high school by encouraging community members to go see the show.

26. Valentine's Day Party - The Valentine's Day Party is a themed program designed for children and families that includes crafts, food, and activities centered around kindness and friendship. The program provides a festive and welcoming environment for participants to celebrate the holiday together and promotes social interaction, creativity, and positive social-emotional development. By focusing on themes of kindness, sharing, and friendship, the Valentine's Day Party helps children practice interpersonal skills while engaging in age-appropriate activities.

27. Teddy Bear Sleepover - The Teddy Bear Sleepover invites children to bring a stuffed animal to the library for a pretend overnight stay. Participants enjoy activities during the drop-off event and later return to pick up their stuffed animal and to watch a slide show of the teddy bear's "adventures" in the library overnight. This program is a partnership with the Simsbury Junior Woman's Club, whose volunteers take all of the photos and put the slideshow together. The program fosters imagination, storytelling, and is a beloved annual event.

28. Pizza, Popcorn & PJs - Pizza, Popcorn & PJs is a partnership between the Library and Social Services. The food is purchased through the YSB grant and provides lunch to people and families who may qualify for free or reduced school lunches on a day off for the public schools. The partnership with the Senior Center and the family-friendly movie choice encourages attendance from a wide range of community members and supports community connection.

29. Children's Resource Expo – This free, volunteer-based event brings together local organizations, businesses, and service providers focused on children and families. Attendees can explore educational, developmental, and recreational resources in one convenient location. This program supports families by increasing awareness of community businesses, resources, and services by acting as a central hub for information.

30. Volunteer Expo - The Volunteer Expo connects community members with local nonprofit organizations and volunteer opportunities in Simsbury. Participating organizations share information about their missions and volunteer needs, allowing attendees to explore ways to get involved. This program encourages civic engagement and community involvement by making volunteer opportunities more accessible. It supports lifelong learning and personal growth while reinforcing the library's role as a facilitator of community connections and service.

31. Human Library - The Human Library is an interactive program where participants can “check out” people instead of books to engage in open conversations about lived experiences, identities, and perspectives. The Human Library promotes empathy, inclusion, and understanding by encouraging respectful dialogue and challenging stereotypes. This program supports the library’s mission to provide access to diverse perspectives and foster an informed, connected community.

32. Sweet Connections - Sweet Connections is a social program designed to bring community members together through guided activities, conversations, and light refreshments, often centered around relationship-building and shared interests. This program is a partnership with For All Ages and supports social connection and combats the loneliness epidemic by providing a welcoming space for individuals to meet and engage with others. Social programs like Sweet Connections contribute to overall community well-being.

33. Outdoor Hikes - Outdoor Hikes are guided group walks or held at locations around Simsbury. This program promotes physical activity, wellness, and appreciation for Simsbury’s many beautiful parks, nature preserves and trails. It provides a way for community members with a shared interest in nature and the outdoors to connect through the safe and welcoming environment that library staff create, since this can be a more solitary hobby.

34. Sustainability Fair – The Sustainability Fair is a partnership with the Sustainability Committee and many other organizations in Town including businesses and non-profits like the Simsbury Land Trust. This volunteer-led community event features local organizations, educational displays, and activities focused on environmental awareness, conservation, and sustainable practices. This program raises awareness about environmental issues and empowers community members with practical information to make sustainable choices.

35. Passport Processing - Passport Processing services provide community members with assistance in submitting passport applications and is a revenue generating service for the Library/Town. The Library’s passport service increases access to essential government services in a convenient and family-friendly location for community members, since we will meet them in the Children’s Room so kids can play next to parents who are filling out paperwork. This service supports equity, accessibility, and is a civic resource.

- 36. Notary Services** - Notary Services allow patrons to have documents notarized by trained library staff member during designated hours. Providing notary services meets an important community need by offering affordable and accessible document verification.
- 37. Teen Advisory Board** - The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) is a group of teens who meet regularly to provide input on library programs, services, and collections, and may assist with planning and volunteering at events. TAB empowers teens by giving them a voice in library decision-making and leadership opportunities. Participation builds communication, collaboration, and civic skills while ensuring that library services remain responsive to teen needs and interests.
- 38. Homeschool Hangout** - Homeschool Hangout is a program designed for homeschool students and families to gather for educational activities, social interaction, and resource sharing in a supportive environment. This program provides homeschool families with opportunities for socialization, collaboration, and enrichment. It supports diverse educational paths and provides an inclusive learning space for all families.
- 39. AARP Tax Assistance** – This program is a partnership with Simsbury Social Services and the Senior center and is This program is specifically targeted at older adults who cannot afford average cost to file taxes on fixed incomes. 2025 stats: 84% of the taxpayers were seniors (60 and older). Tax return preparation fee savings of about \$130,000. 75% of the senior taxpayers were 70 years or older with the average age 77 and 29 in their 90's. There were 172 returns with refunds totaling over \$324,100, average just under \$1,900. 24% of the senior taxpayers have an AGI below the federal poverty level.
- 40. Family Pride Picnic** - The Family Pride Picnic is a family-friendly community celebration that brings people together in an inclusive, welcoming environment to celebrate LGBTQ+ identities and allies. This event promotes belonging, visibility, and community connection. Pride programming reinforces the Library and Town's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and ensures the Simsbury community is a safe and welcoming space for all residents.
- 41. Spanish Conversation Group** -The Spanish Conversation Group is a hybrid program that meets both in person and online, allowing participants to practice conversational Spanish in a supportive, informal setting. This program supports language learning, cultural exchange, and lifelong education of Simsbury community members. The hybrid format increases accessibility for participants with varying schedules.

Experiences & Skill Building - Experiences and skill-building programs provide hands-on, interactive learning opportunities across a wide range of topics and age groups. These programs support lifelong learning, confidence-building, and personal growth by allowing participants to learn through doing in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

42. **Chess Club** - Chess Club is a volunteer-led program where children in grades 2-6 gather to learn strategy, practice, and play chess in a fun and supportive. Chess Club supports critical thinking, problem-solving, and strategic planning skills. The program encourages patience, focus, and sportsmanship while providing a social setting for participants to engage with peers who share similar interests.

43. **Macramé** - Macramé workshops introduce kids to the art of knotting and fiber-based crafts through guided, hands-on instruction from a local entrepreneur. The program focused on a wall art project suitable for beginners. This program fosters creativity, fine motor skills, and mindfulness through hands-on art-making. Craft programs like macramé also support stress reduction and provide opportunities for social connection and self-expression.

44. **Live Action Role Play** - Live Action Role Play programs invite participants to engage in collaborative storytelling through character creation, role-playing, and interactive scenarios, often incorporating simple costumes or props. LARP is offered by a local entrepreneur and encourages creativity, teamwork, communication, and imaginative play. It supports narrative development and social skills while providing a welcoming space for participants to explore identity and storytelling in a structured, inclusive environment.

45. **Accessible Art Workshops** - Accessible Art Workshops were designed by a local entrepreneur to ensure participants with special needs or disabilities can engage in creative art-making. The programs incorporated adaptive tools, flexible instruction, and inclusive materials to meet diverse needs. These workshops promote equity and inclusion by removing barriers to artistic participation. Accessible art programming supports self-expression, confidence, and community connection and our commitment to serving all community members.

46. **Crazy 8s Math** - Crazy 8s Math is an interactive math enrichment program that uses games, puzzles, and collaborative challenges to help children explore mathematical concepts in a fun and engaging way. This program builds confidence and interest in math by emphasizing problem-solving and creative thinking in an activity-based way that is

less intimidating for kids who may struggle with math at school. This program supports STEM education and helps participants develop positive attitudes toward mathematics.

47. Riverside Reptiles - Riverside Reptiles is an educational program featuring live animal demonstrations led by trained presenters. Participants learn about reptile biology, habitats, and conservation through hands-on observation. Live animal programs spark curiosity and support experiential learning. Riverside Reptiles promotes science literacy, environmental awareness, and respect for wildlife while offering a memorable educational experience.

48. Game Club - Game Club provides a space for teens to play board games, card games, or video games together in a structured yet relaxed setting. Games are selected to be age-appropriate and inclusive. Game Club supports social interaction, cooperation, and critical thinking. Through gameplay, participants practice turn-taking, communication, and problem-solving while building connections with peers.

49. Maker Monday - Maker Monday is a hands-on program that introduces teens to maker activities such as crafting, building, or simple engineering projects. Activities rotate to expose participants to a variety of creative skills. Maker programs encourage innovation, experimentation, and learning through doing. Maker Monday supports STEM/STEAM education, creativity, and confidence-building while creating a safe space for exploration and creation.

50. Stitch Squad - Stitch Squad is a fiber arts program where teens learn and practice skills such as sewing, embroidery, knitting, or crocheting in a collaborative environment. This program supports fine motor skill development, patience, and creativity. Stitch Squad also encourages intergenerational learning and social connection while preserving and sharing traditional craft skills.

51. Kitchen Odyssey for Homeschoolers - Kitchen Odyssey is a hands-on cooking and learning program for homeschool students ages 5–12 and their caregivers. Activities focus on basic cooking skills, food exploration, and collaborative learning. This program supports life skills, STEM concepts, and family engagement through experiential learning. It also provides homeschool families with enrichment opportunities and social interaction in a supportive setting.

Business-Related - Business-related programs offer workshops, talks, and resources focused on entrepreneurship, professional development, and economic literacy. These

programs support local economic growth and workforce readiness by providing accessible learning opportunities for professionals, job seekers, and small business owners.

- 52. Northstar Digital Literacy Workshops** - Northstar Digital Literacy Workshops provide guided instruction using the Northstar platform to help adults build essential computer and technology skills. Digital literacy is critical for employment, education, and daily life. These workshops help reduce the digital divide by providing accessible, skill-building opportunities in a supportive environment.
- 53. LinkedIn 101** - LinkedIn 101 introduces participants to the basics of creating and maintaining a professional LinkedIn profile, including networking and job-search strategies. This program supports workforce development by helping participants build professional online presence and networking skills essential in today's job market.
- 54. Yes, Chef! with Small State Provisions** - Yes, Chef! is a culinary program featuring a local business, Small State Provisions, that demonstrates cooking techniques and shares food-related knowledge with participants. This program supports lifelong learning, local businesses, and community engagement through shared culinary experiences. Food-centered programs also encourage social connection and cultural exchange.
- 55. Tariffs and Your Portfolio** - This financial literacy program explores how tariffs and global economic policies can impact personal investments and financial planning. By providing accessible financial education, the library empowers community members to make informed decisions and better understand complex economic topics.
- 56. Job & Career: Age, Search, and Winning Strategies** - This program focuses on job-search strategies, addressing age-related challenges and best practices for navigating today's employment landscape. The program supports job seekers by offering practical tools, encouragement, and up-to-date information, contributing to workforce support and economic resilience.
- 57. Making Sense of the 2025 Rollercoaster with Tim Baker of Metric Financial** - This program features a financial expert discussing current economic trends and market volatility, with a focus on helping participants understand how broader economic factors affect personal finances. Financial literacy programs empower community members to make informed decisions and reduce anxiety around complex economic issues.

- 58. Meet the Maker with Kim Dittrich of Wanderbrush for Live Wreath Workshop** - Meet the Maker is a hands-on workshop led by local artist Kim Dittrich of Wanderbrush, where participants learn wreath-making techniques during a live demonstration. This program supports local artists, creativity, and experiential learning. Maker-led workshops provide participants with unique skill-building opportunities while supporting local entrepreneurs.
- 59. Environmental History: From Theodore Roosevelt to Modern Environmental Law** - This educational lecture, presented by Professor Joseph MacDougald, explores the historical development of environmental policy from the early conservation movement to modern environmental law. The program supports civic knowledge, environmental literacy, and informed citizenship. Educational lectures reinforce the library's role as a trusted source of lifelong learning.

Makerspace (Classes/Workshops Limited Amount of Participants) -

Makerspace programs provide hands-on access to tools, technology, and creative equipment through small-group classes and workshops. Limiting class size ensures safety, individualized instruction, and meaningful engagement. Makerspaces support innovation, skill development, and equitable access to creative technology.

- 60. Sewing Machine 101** - Sewing Machine 101 is an introductory class that teaches participants how to safely and confidently use a sewing machine. Instruction includes basic machine operation, threading, stitching, and simple practice projects. This program builds practical life skills and supports creativity and self-sufficiency. Introductory instruction reduces barriers to using shared equipment and empowers participants to continue learning independently.
- 61. Sewing Classes** - Sewing classes offer guided instruction for participants at varying skill levels, focusing on sewing techniques, pattern use, and project-based learning. These classes promote creativity, fine motor skills, and problem-solving while supporting lifelong learning. Sewing programs also encourage sustainable practices such as mending and repurposing clothing.
- 62. Cricut Classes** - Cricut classes teach participants how to use Cricut cutting machines and design software to create custom projects such as decals, cards, and apparel. This program builds digital and creative skills while expanding access to maker technology.

Appendix to Program Analysis Spreadsheet – Descriptions of Programs

Updated 2/16/2026

Participants gain confidence using design tools and equipment that may otherwise be cost-prohibitive.