



Celebrate Día 2009

Topic of the Month: El día de los niños

El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Children's Day/Book Day), known as Día, is an everyday celebration of children, families, and reading that culminates every year on April 30. It emphasizes the importance of advocating literacy for children of all linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Día is an enhancement of Children's Day, which began in 1925. Children's Day was designated as a day to bring attention to the importance and well-being of children. In 1996, acclaimed children's book author and New Mexico native Pat Mora proposed linking the celebration of children with literacy to found Día.

How can my library celebrate Día?

Día programs can range from a single story time to a citywide celebration. Be sure to start any Día program by talking about Día and why it matters. Here are just a few programming ideas (see the list of Día resources below for many more):

- You can celebrate Día as simply as offering a bilingual story time. Add related bilingual songs, finger plays, snacks, a craft, and/or a fun felt board story to the books for an inexpensive, engaging celebration.
- Create a display of bilingual books and books in languages common in your community. Consider including folktales from different cultures as well. Add bibliographies of those and other books in your collection and have them available printed in your library as well as on your website. In addition, encourage local bookstores to create bilingual book displays.
- Host a multicultural food program. If you have a kitchen area, this may include a cooking demonstration by a local chef or home cook. Otherwise, ask chefs and community members to bring in foods native to their ancestral cultures to share at the library; have them include information on that culture and the foods common to it.
- Offer a program featuring traditional crafts from a variety of cultures. Ask for community members to explain crafts from their cultures and assist children in making them.
- Similarly, have a program featuring dance from different cultures. This can include demonstrations and/or classes.
- Multicultural music is always popular and relevant to Día. Invite one or more musicians to give a short concert.
- Involve families in bilingual writing projects such as family stories and local histories, including oral histories.

- Assist young people in writing and illustrating bilingual books and presenting bilingual plays or readers theater.
- Take the opportunity to increase your bilingual collection.
- Host a children's writing or art contest, with the winner announced at a Día program.
- Invite families to share their traditions at a program on family and community traditions.
- Invite a local author to give a talk on his/her book and explain its cultural foundation.
- Collaborate with local schools and preschools, Head Start programs, and other family-oriented organizations to create larger joint programs.
- Día also provides a great opportunity to teach the community in general about multiculturalism, so consider programs for adults as well as children and families. Many of the ideas above could work for all ages.

What else can my library do?

Please **register** your library's Día events at <https://cs.ala.org/websurvey/alsc/dia/>! Random winners will be selected from throughout New Mexico from the registered site to receive one of five (5) **\$100 awards for their event!** The award will be posted at the New Mexico Library Association booth in Albuquerque on April 24, 2009.

Plus, register your events by April 25 and **receive up to 200 complimentary bilingual brochures** featuring recommended children's book titles and tips for parents on reading to and with children (while supplies last).

"Through Día partnerships, including partnerships with funders and the media, we gain needed help and strengthen our community," says Pat Mora (www.patmora.com), New Mexico author and founder of El día de los niños/El día de los libros.