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Young Mothers' Club

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One day while I was working at Cuyahoga County Public Library's Warrensville Heights Branch, I was sitting at the information desk and a young mother approached me. She asked me, "Can you buy some diapers for my daughter? She is wearing her last one and I do not have any money." I thought she had a lot of courage to ask me this, so I decided to buy the diapers for her. But it did not stop there. I started thinking about resources that could help the young mother and her child. Later on that evening, I started to think about when I was a young mother and all of the many young parents I saw at the Library branch each day. Then, my light bulb moment came. I would start a "Young Mothers Club" support group.

Through a lot of hard work, the Young Mothers Club is now a reality. The Club is an inter-generational program that brings experienced mothers together with at-risk mothers under the age of 25 to provide them with support and encouragement. The Club meets for 12 consecutive meetings, and gets an average of 15 young mothers who come on a regular basis. Club members learn how to take advantage of all of the community resources available to them, and how the Library can play an active role in supporting and empowering them to be productive citizens.

Early literacy is integral to the program and the Club includes several components to foster it, including a young mothers book club, financial literacy classes, information about healthy living and referrals, resources and training to assist with the obtainment of high school and continuing education, resume building, and job search and job interview skills workshops.



Through the Young Mothers Club we have demonstrated our responsiveness to community needs. With the Club's success Cuyahoga County Public Library has started a teen parenting work group to pilot it at the Maple Heights Branch with the eventual goal of expanding these support services to young mothers throughout our library system of 28 branches that serve 47 communities.