



Harford County Public Library Unveils Refurbished Little Leapers Kits

Harford County Public Library's Little Leapers kits are being given a makeover courtesy of Celebree School.

Little Leapers, initiated in 2013 and available free of charge in all 11 branches, is a groundbreaking program developed to excite the Library's youngest customers about science and math. It includes pre- and early literacy skills-building kits with science and math themes for children from birth to five years of age. Each of the Little Leaper kits has activity suggestions for interplay between the caregiver and the child and may be checked out for 21 days at a time.

Celebree School, a leader in early childhood education and an original sponsor of Little Leapers in addition to being longtime supporter of Harford County Public Library, has made a three-year, \$30,000 commitment to refurbish the well-loved kits.

"We are so grateful to Celebree School for its support of this very important program for our youngest customers. Little Leapers is a fun and educational way to instill a knowledge and love of science and math at an early age," said Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library. "Over the past year, nearly 1,300 Little Leapers kits were checked out by Library families. Thanks to Celebree, we are able to keep these resources current and in top condition."

A total of 104 Little Leapers kits focus on 23 themes. Each of the kits includes various items and an activity binder to help children learn about the theme. For example, the I am an Astronaut kit features four books, an astronaut suit (orange one-piece, zipper and Velcro closures, NASA patch), shining stars projector, big view telescope with tripod, design and drill robot, a vinyl soft toy NASA space shuttle, wooden space puzzle and a space theme set with eight constellation cards, wood stand, flashlight, 10 space photo cards, Earth ball, moon ball, two astronauts with jetpacks and one miniature American flag.

Other Little Leapers kit themes are: All About Me; Colors, Shapes and Numbers; I am an Auto Mechanic; I am a Beekeeper; I am a Birdwatcher; I am a Camper; I am a Chef; I am a Construction Worker; I am an Entomologist; I am a Farmer; I am a Firefighter; I am a Fisherman; I am a Forest Ranger; I am a Marine Biologist; I am a Mechanical Engineer; I am a Meteorologist; I am a Nurse; I am a Paleontologist; I am a Train Conductor; I am a Veterinarian; Let's Get Ready for Kindergarten; and My Senses.

"At Celebree School, we believe that a lifelong love of learning begins in early childhood," said Richard Huffman, founder and CEO of Celebree School. "The Little Leapers program aligns perfectly with our mission to nurture curiosity and spark imagination. We're proud to help refresh these innovative kits so families across Harford County can continue exploring science and math together in fun, meaningful ways."

The Little Leapers program was started in 2013 following the success of Harford County Public Library's LEAP kits. LEAP Kits are circulating collections of high-quality science equipment, materials and resources that are packaged with easy, do-it-yourself activities and directions. They are designed for children in grades K-8, and allow families to learn, explore and play at home. The kits focus on 32 distinct topics ranging from pond life, how a tree grows, microscope activity, bridge engineering, building a car, dinosaurs, solar energy, getting to know the moon and more.

Harford County Public Library Foundation raises funds and awareness to support the Library's services, resources and capital improvements. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. To learn more about sponsorship, donation and endowment opportunities, please contact Amber Shrodes, director of philanthropy and community engagement for Harford County Public Library, at shrodes@hcplonline.org.

Harford County Public Library operates 11 branches located throughout Harford County offering access to ideas that inform, entertain and inspire. Last year the Library interacted with its residents more than 12 million times – borrowing free materials, visiting branches and the website, using free WiFi, and attending classes and events. In 2024 Harford County Public Library received the Maryland Library Association Excellence in Marketing Award for graphic excellence for the second time. For more information, visit HCPLonline.org.

