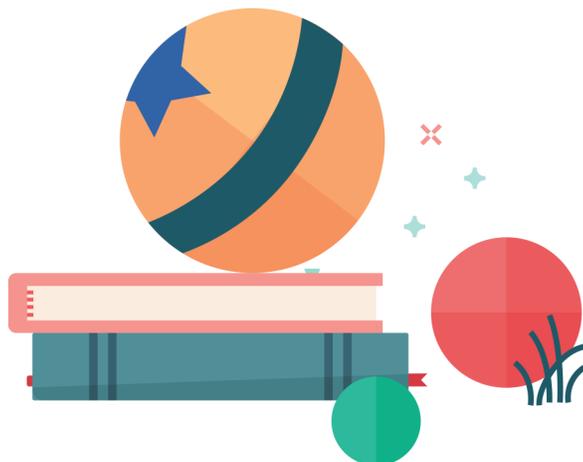


# Books, Blocks & Balls

"Our company hosts Help Me Grow family events. These celebrations offer educational games and activities that families can easily recreate at home. The parents leave the event feeling happy and more informed about ways they can play with their kids. We leave feeling like we have done our job by showing gratitude for their hard work and pleased that the families now have more tools to feel successful as a parent. It's a win for everyone!"

- Janae Moss, Parent Advocate & Business Owner



Created by:

**HELP ME  
GROW UTAH**

March 2017



# Table of Contents

<b>Overview of Books, Blocks &amp; Balls</b> .....	4
What is Books, Blocks & Balls.....	4
Why.....	5
History .....	5
Crosswalk with Five Protective Factors .....	7
<b>Community, Parent and Volunteer Support</b> .....	8
Community .....	8
Parent .....	8
Volunteer.....	9
<b>Components for a Successful Books, Blocks &amp; Balls</b> .....	10
Developmental Screenings .....	11
Books.....	13
Blocks.....	14
Balls.....	15
Welcome Table .....	16
Parent Resource Table.....	16
Volunteer Table.....	16
Protective Factors Table .....	16
<b>Planning Your Event &amp; Questions to Tailor Your Event</b> .....	17
Messaging and Marketing .....	17
Materials .....	17
Questions to Tailor Your Event.....	18
Suggested Timeline.....	20
<b>Hosting Books, Blocks &amp; Balls</b> .....	23
Size of Event Overview .....	24
Getting Started in a Nutshell.....	25
<b>Event Example</b> .....	26
Example Map.....	26
Example Flier .....	27
Example Checklist.....	28
Example Activity Station Instructions .....	30
Example Volunteer/Staff Sign-In .....	31
Example Family Instructions.....	32
Example Evaluation.....	33

# Overview of Books, Blocks & Balls

## What it is Books, Blocks and Balls?

Books, Blocks and Balls is an interactive parent event that allows the community a fun and entertaining venue to provide information about child development, developmental screenings, and community resources. Books, Blocks and Balls includes activity stations revolving around books (emergent literacy), blocks (emergent math and fine motor skills) and balls (gross and fine motor and problem solving skills). The beauty of Books, Blocks and Balls is the flexibility it provides to meet the needs of the community and the size of the venue. The event can include one activity station or a variety of activity stations.

On the surface, children are just playing, but in reality, this play encourages learning. Parents are encouraged to participate with their child. Many parents appreciate the simplicity of this activity and can visualize how to recreate these learning stations at home using everyday items and toys such as books, blocks and balls. The event focuses on child-led play. We encourage families to follow the lead of their child, even if the child stays in one place the whole time or if the child is bouncing back and forth from one activity to another.

Books, Blocks and Balls also introduces Help Me Grow and the services we can provide including screenings, care coordination, and connection to information and community resources. All of these services are available in both English and Spanish.



# Why Books, Blocks and Balls?

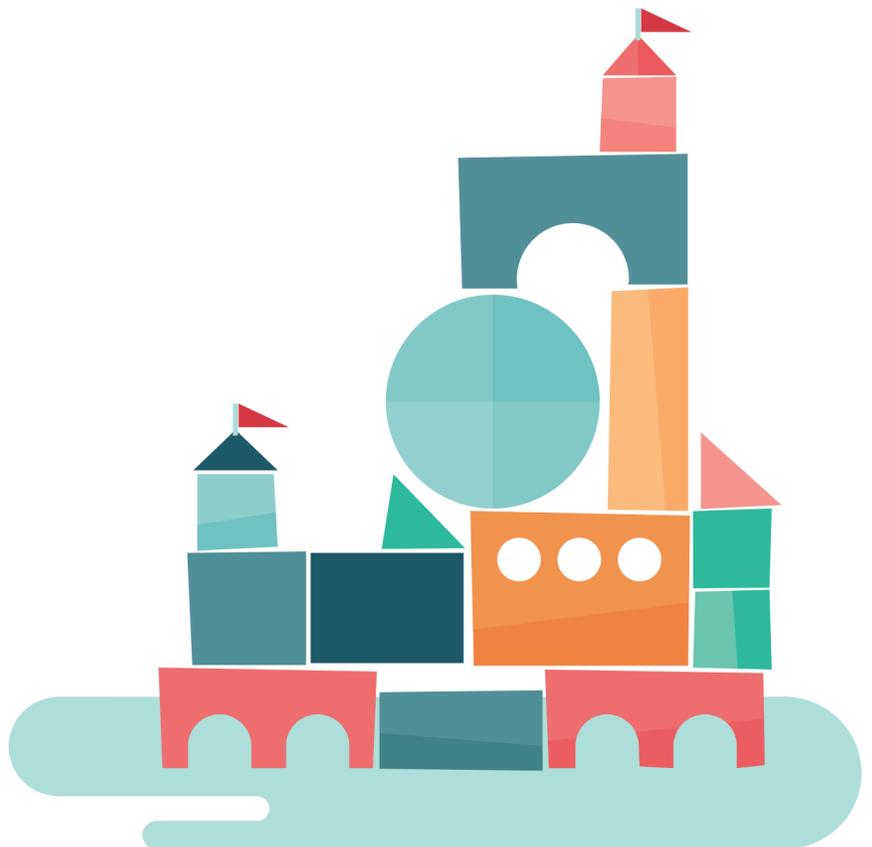
Help Me Grow Utah has always involved families since the initial planning stages. Parent engagement is integral with Books, Blocks and Balls. We want parents to know that they matter! Parents are a child's best teacher and number one expert. Child development matters. Staff and trained volunteers can share activities that focus on developmental milestones for children. Parents can help their child master skills through playing.

Parents are so busy that it can be challenging to attend traditional parenting classes. Books, Blocks and Balls is a parent-education event in disguise designed to help parents know how they can support their child's development and growth. Through interactions with parents at the event, we can educate them on the importance of child development and milestones, early detection of delays, and linking families to community resources. Learning happens as families interact in a fun and less-structured setting. Parents may leave with more confidence in knowing that they can support their child's development and be ready to enter kindergarten.

## History of Books, Blocks & Balls

Help Me Grow Utah has used the "Influencer model" created by VitalSmarts in several aspects of our initiatives. This Influencer model emphasizes that behavioral change will most likely occur when pressure is applied from multiple sectors, including personal, social and systemic sectors. Help Me Grow Utah explored ideas of engaging families, communities and businesses to provide fun parent engagement within the community.

Help Me Grow Utah was also inspired by the Blockfest model which provides a structured opportunity for parents and children to play with blocks together while teaching simple parenting techniques in the process. Through a combination of the Influencer model, Blockfest, and working with parents, Help Me Grow Utah developed Books, Blocks and Balls.



Help Me Grow Utah has always focused on the family. Our experiences working with parents taught us that the parents were looking for fun activities that they could do with their children. The activity needed to be entertaining, informative and convenient. We had seen other festivals that were either too structured or focused on a wide age range. Parents of young children is Help Me Grow Utah's target audience, so we decided to create an event that could be easily replicated in communities. We wanted an experience where parents could increase their understanding of child development, what they can do to support it, and where they could go to access resources.

Help Me Grow Utah uses the Books, Blocks and Balls events as a way to recruit families to enroll. Help Me Grow Utah sponsored large events with several activity stations to encourage families to attend. Teaming with community partners made the event more successful by providing a location, marketing and encouraging families to attend. As Help Me Grow expanded, it became more strategic to team with community partners to hold more frequent, smaller events. Help Me Grow Utah has since implemented "Learn and Grows" by partnering with local libraries. Through these events, one to three activity stations are used to engage parent and children interaction while staff are available to offer developmental screenings and answer questions.



# Crosswalk with Five Protective Factors

The Center for the Study of Social Policy engaged in research to identify characteristics or traits that can help families remain strengthened, provide for the optimal development of their children and reduce child abuse and neglect. Through an extensive literature review, field projects and state implementation they developed the Five Protective Factors:

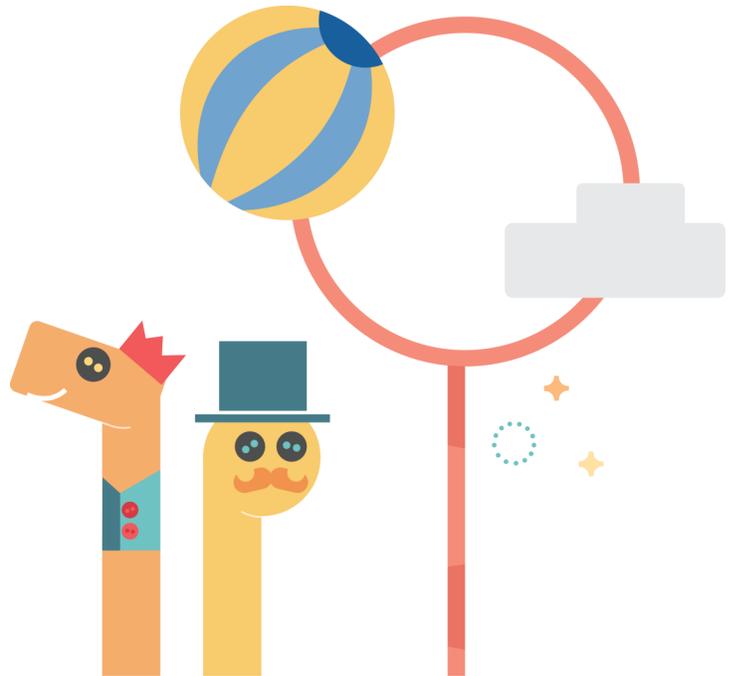
1. Parental Resilience
2. Healthy Social Connections
3. Concrete Supports in Times of Need
4. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
5. Social Emotional Competence of Children

The Five Protective Factors can be integrated in Books, Blocks and Balls through marketing and parent education to help families understand these five traits proven to improve the functioning of a family. Books, Blocks and Balls can be an effective platform where you can introduce, increase awareness or reinforce the

five protective factors. Parents are a captive audience as they play with their children at each of the stations. Having signage at the eye level of the parent at the stations is beneficial and can include this information. This will spark interest from the parent to learn more from volunteers, staff or visiting the parent resource table.

The protective factor table or the parent resource table could include a "Protective Factors: Parental Self-Assessment" to see a parent's strengths and offer support where they could use a little help. This assessment opens the conversation with staff and allows an opportunity to share additional materials with the family. You can find this open-source assessment at <http://www.cssp.org/reform/early-childhood/qic-ec/PAPF-Instrument-English.pdf> with a accompanying [score sheet](http://www.cssp.org/reform/early-childhood/qic-ec/PAPF-Scoring-Sheet-English.pdf). The score sheet can be found at <http://www.cssp.org/reform/early-childhood/qic-ec/PAPF-Scoring-Sheet-English.pdf>

For more information on Strengthening Families: Five Protective Factors, please visit: <http://www.cssp.org/young-children-their-families/strengtheningfamilies>



# Community, Parent & Volunteer Support

## Community Support

Garnering Community Support begins with identifying those partners that value parent engagement and would like to contribute to a successful event. Every entity involved should define their desired outcome and their willing contribution. This will help to structure the event so as to meet the many needs of all agencies involved. Community members can increase the reach of families and add a personal touch to the event. They will share information with their families, coworkers, neighbors and their other circles of influence. Through community involvement, more families will



be able to understand the importance of child development, early detection and delays, and connect to community resources. This act alone will significantly increase the benefit to families in your community.

## Parent Support



Parent volunteers are powerful contributors to Books, Blocks and Balls and to the early childhood movement in general. Not only will they increase your reach of families, they will be able to offer a different perspective as they work with the families who come to the event. As a parent, they will be able to make a connection with a struggling parent in a way a staff member might not be able to. It is often these parents who will have the compassion, empathy, and ability to encourage a parent to connect with resources to access the help they need. Never underestimate the power of involving parents in your events and your overall work.

# Volunteer Support

Volunteers are an untapped resource in building community capacity. Volunteers can be an essential piece to a successful event. You will expand your influence in the community as you utilize volunteers.

Recruit volunteers in a variety of places. Plan on recruiting more volunteers than you need. Be open to consider unusual sources of volunteers. Help Me Grow had a group of teenagers in rehabilitation who came and did face painting during a Halloween family event. Consider recruiting corporate volunteers. For these volunteers, it may be helpful to meet with them at their offices to review their assignments and give an overview of the purpose of the event. If there is a local university, recruit with the campus service club or identify professors who encourage or require community involvement and share the opportunity with them. Reach out to active civic or church groups to volunteer.

Build confidence, leadership and commitment among your volunteers. Utilize your volunteers in leadership positions at the event and, if possible, have the volunteers run the event with you acting as support. Allow them to take the lead in coordinating the activities during an event. Arrange a training before the event for these volunteers who will be leading different sections of the event.



# Components for a Successful Books, Blocks & Balls Event

Consider using a combination of developmental screenings and activities for books, blocks and balls to help you have a successful event. We recommend the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3). Plan ways to provide additional teaching opportunities to families by strategically placing parent resource tables around the activity stations. A volunteer check-in table will be helpful for your volunteers to get assignments.



# Developmental Screenings

Filling out a developmental screening draws parents' attention to skills their child already has and to those they have yet to learn in a non-threatening way. Developmental screenings also enable parents to strengthen their observational skills in regards to their child's development. If a parent understands their child better, they can advocate more effectively for their child. At an event, the developmental screening can open a conversation with a parent about their child's development, uncover any concerns, and allows you to better connect them to community resources.

There are different ways you can incorporate developmental screenings into your event. Some examples include:

- Offer an incentive, such as a book, to give to every child when the parent completes the developmental screening.
- Assign staff and trained volunteers roaming the event to encourage parents to complete the developmental screening while their child plays. Parents will have the chance to observe their child while completing the screening. Volunteers and staff can point out learning as it happens during play, and can reinforce parents giving close attention to their child.
- Set up a parent table where parents can come and ask questions. Offer the developmental screening to parents who have concerns or want to know where their child's development should be. We recommend staffing it with someone who is familiar with general child development and the screening you are using.
- Encourage parents to complete a developmental screening when you, staff, or volunteers are concerned about a child's development. Use phrases like: "We offer a fun developmental questionnaire..." or "Do you like tracking your child's progress? Here's a fun tool ..."

Share the screening in the way parents want to complete it. For some, this will be completing it electronically. For others, it will be easier to fill out a paper version. In Utah, we set up a texting line so parents can text the word "screening" to a number and it will send the link to complete the screening on their phones.

***Important!*** If you'll be including developmental screenings in your event, determine how you will link families to appropriate community resources, and what follow-up schedule you will adopt. The purpose of a screening is to identify developmental delays and connect the child to community resources.



### Helpful items to have at the event:

- Instructions on how to access the developmental screening electronically.
- A sign outlining the next steps for families, such as when to expect to receive a phone call to discuss their developmental screening, whether any community resources may be suggested, and if their results may be shared with any other providers (if applicable).
- Tablets for parents to complete the screenings.
- Developmental screenings for all ages you anticipate being at the event
- Pens and clipboards
- Folder or container to collect the finished developmental screenings.
- Staff or trained volunteers to answer parent questions and to give positive comments in the moment when they see positive parenting.
- If using the Ages & Stages Questionnaire, a phone or other device with wi-fi to access the age calculator website.



**Helpful hint:** Determine if you will score the developmental screenings at the event or if you will contact the families later. Help Me Grow Utah has found it helpful to give the results later. If giving the results later, be sure to give the parent a timeframe to expect a call. A care coordinator can call the family after the event to give results when they can spend time reviewing the screening, discussing any concerns and helping them choose appropriate resources. Parents can also take the scored screening to their pediatrician or school to facilitate conversation about their concerns.

# Books

Books encourage emergent literacy. Learning to read is a process and begins with foundational skills developed within the first few years of life. Parents can help children develop fundamental emergent literacy skills, such as smiling and babbling back and forth with your baby, helping a toddler learn words to everyday objects, and helping your child learn to count.

Pointing to various signs will help your child recognize letters and numbers. Books, Blocks and Balls is a great avenue to encourage activities that develop early literacy skills.



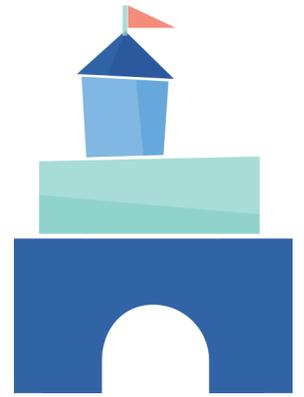
Examples of activity stations:

- Make a book fort using a table draped with blankets. Have an assortment of age-appropriate books for children to read.
- Have children act out a story from a book using puppets. Make it more exciting by setting up a puppet theater..
- Invite a storyteller to tell magical stories while interacting with the children.
- Encourage children to make their own book. Have materials available like paper, crayons, and staplers to encourage children to use their imagination.
- Allow children to act out a story through a Shadow Theater. Set up a white screen and shine a projector on the back of the screen. Encourage the children to go behind the screen and act out a story. The “audience” will be able to view their shadows telling the story.
- Have equipment to record a story. Encourage the child or the parent to record a story. Send home the recorded stories with the family..
- Choose a simple craft that goes along with a book. For example, if your story is about snow, you can have the child color a picture and then glue on cotton balls for the snow.



# Blocks

Blocks encourage emergent math skills and help strengthen fine motor development. Blocks can be used in conjunction with various activities. Use activities that encourage math skills by counting or matching blocks by color, shape or size. These essential math skills will help a child be ready to learn when he enters school. Playing with blocks encourages back and forth conversation between a parent and child. For example, a mom may say, this looks like a house. The child may respond by saying, this is a rocket!



## Examples of activity stations

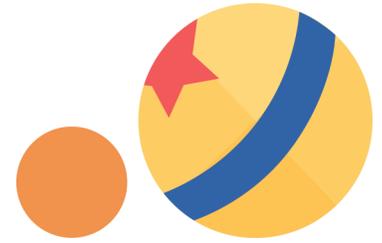
- Make large, lightweight blocks wrapping capri-sun boxes in contact paper. We love using the 3 Little Pigs story to encourage children to build and knock down blocks.
- Gather wooden blocks of various sizes and shapes. The possibilities are endless when you have cylinder, rectangle, square, triangle and half-circle blocks. We used volunteers to make most of our blocks.
- Small one-inch blocks to work with patterns. It is also fun to have some laminated sheets of paper with a variety of patterns and designs for children to copy.
- Tape up larger boxes, such as moving boxes, to create giant "blocks". Imagine playing with blocks that stack up easily taller than you.
- Use playdough to encourage children to make their own shapes and creations. Provide tools such as cookie cutters and child-safe scissors to expand a child's creativity. *Helpful Tip: Lay down plastic wrap to contain the playdough mess or choose a spot for the activity that is outside or located in an area that is easy to clean up.*
- Create a puzzle out of blocks for children to solve. Cut up an image to the shape of the blocks and mod podge onto the block. Make it more challenging by having a different picture on all sides of the block.
- Scales to allow children experiment with the weights of different blocks. Include signs with less than, more than, and equal to for the children to express math relational vocabulary.

## Additional Supplies:

- Foam mats to form the flooring for the stations. Not only do the mats define the activity area and add fun color to the station, they also make it softer for the parents to get down on the ground with their child.
- We enjoy having Community doll figures such as fireman, doctors available for children to use in imaginary play. Duplo or Lego figures work great too.

# Balls

Balls encourage gross motor development while allowing a child to problem solve. We have often included additional activities that incorporate gross motor or problem solving skills.



## Examples of activity stations

- Exercise balls. Children love to roll around on these larger balls.
- Wheelbarrow Ball Transfer. Have 1 or 2 child-sized plastic wheelbarrows and a bucket or two of small balls. Set up mini orange cones. The goal is to help the child put balls in the wheelbarrow and balance it as they weave around the orange cones. They will then transfer the balls to a container at the end of the course.
- Obstacle Course. Create a course out of circular tubes children crawl through, small hoola hoops children need to jump through, circular mats they have to skip across, or items to run around. The possibilities are endless! Don't be surprised when your course looks completely different at the end of the event. This obstacle course may evolve throughout the event.
- Bubble Wrap. Roll out bubble wrap to create a course. Kids will run around delightfully as they pop the bubbles. This is a really popular activity!
- Dinosaur Dig. Fill a kiddie pool with sand and hide plastic dinosaurs. Give children "tools" such as paint brushes, buckets, and pans to discover dinosaurs. Kid-sized hard hats and vests make it even more exciting!
- Bubbles. Use a bubble machine to let children try to pop the bubbles coming out. Another fun alternative is to have a bucket of bubble solution with large bubble wands for children to run around with as they make large bubbles.
- Packing Peanuts Pool. Fill a kiddie pool about a  $\frac{1}{3}$  full with packing peanuts. This is a great activity for infants while some toddlers will find it amusing as well. *Helpful Tip: Choose non-toxic packing peanuts that dissolve when sucked on and are safe to ingest.*

**Helpful Tip:** Create a map of the event with the layout of the various stations. This will save you time in directing staff and volunteers to where they need to be. This will allow them to have more autonomy in setting up their stations while you can focus on other items that need your attention.



# Welcome Table

Welcome the families to the event. Give brief instructions for them to enjoy their day. Encourage parents to follow the lead of their children. Let them know it's okay for them to spend as much or as little time as they want at each activity. Invite them to stop by the parent resource table. This table can be the same as the parent resource table depending on your event. One way of helping parents understand how the event is structured is by giving them an infographic with a brief overview and information to connect with Help Me Grow at a later time.

# Parent Resource Table

It is helpful to have a table set-up to direct parents to learn more about developmental screenings, community resources and any information being promoted. This is also a great place for parents to come to ask questions varying from wanting more child development information, completing a developmental questionnaire, and getting more information about community resources.

# Volunteer Table

Designate a place for your volunteers to sign-in. A sign is often helpful in guiding volunteers to the right place. Include a sign-in sheet if you want to track your volunteer hours. Determine where you want your volunteer to go. Give the volunteers instructions and a map, if provided, or guide them to the right locations. Have name tags available. If your area would benefit from knowing if a staff or volunteer speaks a foreign language, include this information on the name tag.

# Protective Factors Table

Consider having a table to promote the Five Protective Factors. Assign a worker or trained volunteer to talk to families about simple, everyday actions they can do with their children to build resilience and protect their families. Encourage families to complete the Protective Factors parental assessment. Staff or trained volunteers can then target the everyday actions specific to what the family needs. For example, a parent can make a map of their social supports and learn three things they can do to increase their social supports from sources such as informal, formal, spiritual, and physical.



# Planning Your Event

The beauty of Books, Blocks and Balls is the flexibility in implementing it! An event can be a large scale production, a few activities in the corner of a local library, or even a small activity at a booth during an outreach event. It can revolve around Dr. Seuss or be a Halloween event with children showcasing their costumes. The possibilities are endless. Here are some factors that will be helpful to consider while you plan your event:

## Messaging

How you market your event sends a powerful message to the community that parents matter. Decide what you want parents to learn and then develop your marketing materials and signage around your message. Consider where you will put your signage. Keep your materials and signage parent-friendly. We love using A-frames to share information to allow families to see messaging at eye level while playing with their children.

Find ways to make your messaging or protective factors more interactive. For example, you can encourage interaction between parents throughout the event by placing different questions at all the activity stations to discuss. One of the questions could be, "how do you redirect your child's attention when they are upset?" Use activities that will help the parents learn from one another to help them leave the event with more ideas to try at home.

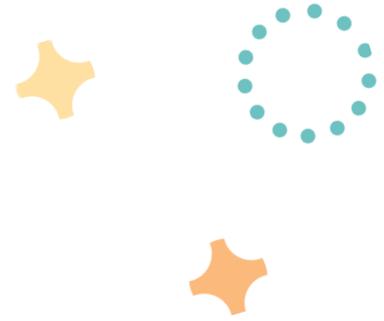
## Materials

Look through the components of the event. Go station by station and table by table and list all the supplies you need. Making a detailed list will allow others to help you gather the materials. Also note if a community partner will be bringing an item so your helper knows to skip over that item. Consider if supporting items, like an extension cord or a dolly, will be helpful. We've always found it helpful to have additional basic office supplies on hand, such as a stapler, various types of tape, string, hammer, and zip ties.

**Helpful Hint:** Pack materials together based on station. This will make it easier for volunteers and staff to set-up and clean-up the station without additional instruction.



# Questions to Tailor Your Event



## Partnerships

Will you be joining forces with another community partner? Will it be a joint effort or will you be in charge of all the preparations? Will there be more than one partnership? Will there be various partners throughout the community? What is the group's collective desired outcome?

## Space

What will your space be like? Is it a large or small space? Is it a child-friendly space? Will it be indoors or outdoors? If outdoors, do you have a plan for inclement weather? Does the space accommodate for people with disabilities? Does the space have a drinking fountain or access to restrooms?

## Advertising

How will you advertise for your event? Will you spread the word through your community partners? Will you use social media? Will you use the radio? Do you have access to unique resources in your area? Will your method reach your target audience? Will the audience understand your message? Will you use printed or electronic fliers?

## Families

How many families do you anticipate attending? Are there special needs of the families you are inviting? Will you be advertising for the event or will you partner with another agency who will be inviting their clients?

## Data Collection

Will you be collecting data from the event? Will families be required to RSVP for the event or can anyone attend? Will there be a sign-in process for families? How will you track the number of participants? What information is important or required to gather from the event? How will you collect feedback from the participants? Who will analyze the data? How will you measure optimal impact? How will you use your data to replicate the event?

## Materials

What materials do you have access to? What materials does your community partner have access to? Will the available materials be beneficial to provide activities the parents and children can engage in?

## Signage

Will you want signage at the event? Will you have signs for the various stations, areas, and tables?

## Messaging

How will you present your message to parents? How will you maximize the opportunity to educate parents and the community? How will you promote child development and milestones? How will you share the importance of early detection? How will you encourage families to get connected to resources? How can you instill in families the five protective factors? How can you convince parents they are their child's expert and that they, as parents, matter?

## Manpower

How many staff will be available? Will you utilize volunteers? How will you recruit volunteers? How long are the staff and volunteers available? Who will train the staff and volunteers? Who will be involved in the event set-up and clean-up? Who will help gather and load/ unload the materials for transportation?

## Agenda

Is there something specific you are promoting? Is the event in conjunction with a holiday? What do you plan to achieve by this event?

## Take Aways

Will you be sending anything home with the family? Who will be responsible for these items? Will every family be able to have one or will there be a drawing for the item?

## Transportation

How you will transport the materials to your activity site. Will your vehicle be sufficient? Will you need a large vehicle? Will you need to arrange for a trailer? Will there be sufficient parking to leave your transportation vehicle at the site? Who will load and unload the materials?

## Storage

Will you need to store the activity supplies? Do you have the capacity to store it? Will you need to find another place to store the supplies? Who will have access to the supplies?

## Reviewing the Event

How will you determine whether the event was successful? Will you do evaluations with families and volunteers? How will you track things you want to keep the same or change up for next time? What can you do to involve more partners or volunteers next time? Did families connect to the resources being promoted? How can you improve the quality of the event?

# Suggested Timeline

Many factors will determine how much time will be needed to plan an event, such as if this is the first time for an event, communication between community partners, how much staff time can be used toward this event, and if equipment is already accessible. Consider your situation and adjust the suggested timeline below.

Time Before	Task
3-4 Months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine and meet with community partners.</li> <li>• As partners, determine the desired outcomes of the event.</li> <li>• Determine date and location. If needed, do a site visit to view the space.</li> <li>• Decide on general activities. Decide what equipment you have access to, what can be borrowed, and what needs to be purchased.</li> <li>• As partners, determine the type of parental permissions you need for developmental screenings.</li> <li>• Determine general messaging. Create and order signage for the event. Consider signs for messaging, activity stations, volunteer check-in, and volunteer parking.</li> <li>• Determine if any incentives will be given to encourage families to attend. Arrange for these items to be available.</li> <li>• Consider what kind of transportation is needed to transport materials to activity site. Make any necessary arrangements.</li> <li>• Determine assignments and timeline of accountability between your agency and any partner agencies.</li> </ul>
1-2 Months	<p><u>Activity Stations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize activity stations.</li> <li>• Create a map of set-up. Include where the activity stations will be, if there will be chairs around the event, if awnings would be beneficial, etc).</li> <li>• Create a master list of supplies. <i>Helpful tip: Be as thorough and specific as you can. Add checkboxes if desired. This list will ensure everything is pulled together for the event.</i></li> <li>• Consider purchasing needed equipment now.</li> <li>• Determine where you will store the equipment.</li> <li>• Create activity station instructions for volunteers and staff. These can be specific to the individual stations or general to the books, blocks or balls area.</li> </ul> <p><u>Messaging</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine what messaging will be shared with families. Create materials needed. Consider if you need to have your messages in more than one language. Consider where this information will be. Will you need something physical to put the sign on, such as A-frames?</li> <li>• Have signage to identify restrooms and water areas.</li> </ul>

<p>1-2 Months Continued</p>	<p><u>Volunteers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create your list for volunteer/staff assignments for the day of the event. You can make the actual assignments closer to the event.</li> <li>• Recruit volunteers.</li> <li>• Create volunteer sign-in sheet if applicable.</li> <li>• Differentiate a way to distinguish your staff, partners and volunteers at the event so parents can easily identify someone to ask. For example, will you have matching t-shirts?</li> <li>• Create nametags for staff/volunteers. Include indication if the person can help in another language. For example, Hablo Español.</li> </ul> <p><u>Photos of the Event</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review your organization’s policy for taking pictures and obtaining permission from parents.</li> <li>• Create “No Photo” labels for families wishing not to have their picture taken.</li> </ul> <p><u>Evaluation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a survey to send to our partners and volunteers to see how their experience was. This will be sent after the event.</li> <li>• Develop a survey for parents to fill out the day of the event to capture their experiences. Remember to keep it short and simple. It might be nice to have a way to track verbal responses instead of a paper copy.</li> </ul> <p><u>Delegate Responsibilities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create any staff assignments and deadlines.</li> </ul>
<p>2 Weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verify advertising has gone out, including advertising done by partners.</li> <li>• Begin gathering materials so you have time to obtain any remaining needed items.</li> <li>• Arrange the materials for the activity stations by stations to make the set-up more efficient. You can also group these stations by books, blocks, balls, and various tables areas.</li> <li>• Make sure you have enough printed copies of your developmental screening by age and language.</li> <li>• If you have a group of volunteers, arrange for a training before the event. For example, a corporate group of volunteers can be met at their offices to review their assignments and give an overview of the purpose of the event. Also clarify which areas they will be in charge of.</li> </ul>
<p>1 week</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review assignments with staff.</li> <li>• Arrange for transportation to transport materials if needed.</li> <li>• Make sure all printed materials needed are ready.</li> <li>• Double check arrangements to be able to access the activity site the day of the event for set-up.</li> <li>• Arrange for water for participants.</li> </ul>

Day of Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange enough time to set-up the event without being rushed.</li> <li>• Make sure all stations and tables are ready to set-up at least half an hour before the event begins.</li> <li>• Train any last minute staff or volunteers.</li> <li>• Identify restrooms and water areas. Have signage if possible.</li> <li>• Make sure someone is at the volunteer table to direct staff and volunteers to where they need to be.</li> <li>• Elicit feedback from parents through your chosen way to gather information.</li> <li>• Take lots of pictures.</li> <li>• Have fun!</li> </ul>
Post Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the event and create a list of potential changes you'll make for next year. <i>Helpful hint: You'll forget by the time the event comes around, so be detailed during this section.</i></li> <li>• Send thank yous to community partners and volunteers for helping.</li> <li>• This may be a good time to send a survey to our partners and volunteers to see how their experience was.</li> <li>• Make sure items borrowed are returned in good condition.</li> <li>• Give copies of the volunteer list to community partners if needed.</li> <li>• Go through paperwork. Give any enrollment forms or completed screenings to Help Me Grow and any other organization that needs them.</li> <li>• Update volunteer list with those who are interested in continuing to volunteer.</li> </ul>

# Hosting Books, Blocks & Balls

Most of the work for a Books, Blocks and Balls will be in the planning station. Once the event is set-up, this really is a relaxing event with the opportunity to mingle with parents and model play at the different stations.

During the event, invite staff and volunteers to encourage parents to play with their children. Talk about some of the benefits the activity provides for their children. Answer questions. Observe children and recommend a parent complete a developmental screening if the staff or volunteer have concerns.

If you have the manpower, encourage 1-4 staff or trained volunteers (depending on size of event) to roam the event and talk to parents about developmental screenings, answer questions, and talk about community resources.

Determine if you will do an evaluation. Help Me Grow Utah used to do evaluation forms, but have since moved away from that. The developmental screening can also be used as an evaluation to determine how much parents interacted at the event. Any event is successful if the parent was engaged. Take any feedback from parents, volunteers and staff to make adjustments for the next time this event occurs.



# Tasks for Hosting Various Size Events

## Very Small Event

1. Select activities and materials to share based on the amount of space you have such as the length of the table.
2. Facilitate event.
3. Evaluate event.

## Small Event

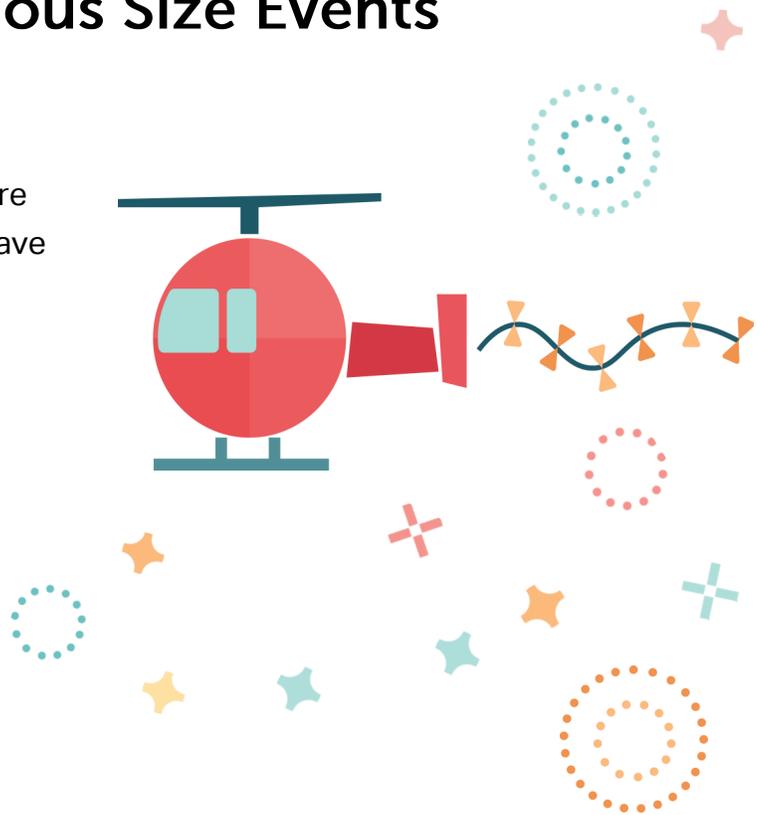
1. Transport materials.
2. Set-up station.
3. Facilitate event.
4. Evaluate event.

## Medium Event

1. Assign staff and volunteers to each area. This person will be over the area and individual activities in their area for set-up, event support, and cleanup of their area.
2. Gather and transport materials. If possible, label boxes, etc by area and station.
3. Unload materials. Set up stations.
4. Support parents through the event.
5. Clean-up and load materials for transportation.
6. Evaluate event.

## Larger Event

1. Assign staff and volunteers to each area or activity. Designate a lead person to be over the area for setup, event support and cleanup of each area.
2. Gather and transport materials. If possible, label boxes, etc by area and station.
3. Unload materials. Invite several people to help. Instruct them where to take each item.
4. Set-up stations. Designate a person over each area (books, blocks, balls, tables). This person will direct the staff and volunteers assigned to set-up of the stations in their area. Train any volunteers (this can also be done as a whole group if desired).
5. Assign staff and volunteers to individual stations. Support parents through the event. As needed, round up objects that have migrated to other stations.
6. Direct clean-up and loading materials for transportation.
7. Evaluate event.



# Getting Started in a Nutshell

1. Determine community partners
2. Determine date and venue
3. Determine station activities (including tables) & create map of event with stations
4. Create a master list of supplies
5. Advertise the event
6. Recruit volunteers
7. Prepare any training materials
8. Assign staff and volunteers to areas and stations
9. Gather the materials
10. Transport materials
11. Set-up
12. Run event
13. Clean-up
14. Evaluate the event



# Event Example

## Partners

Help Me Grow, Local Head Start, Corporate Volunteers

## Venue

Head Start location

## Station Activities

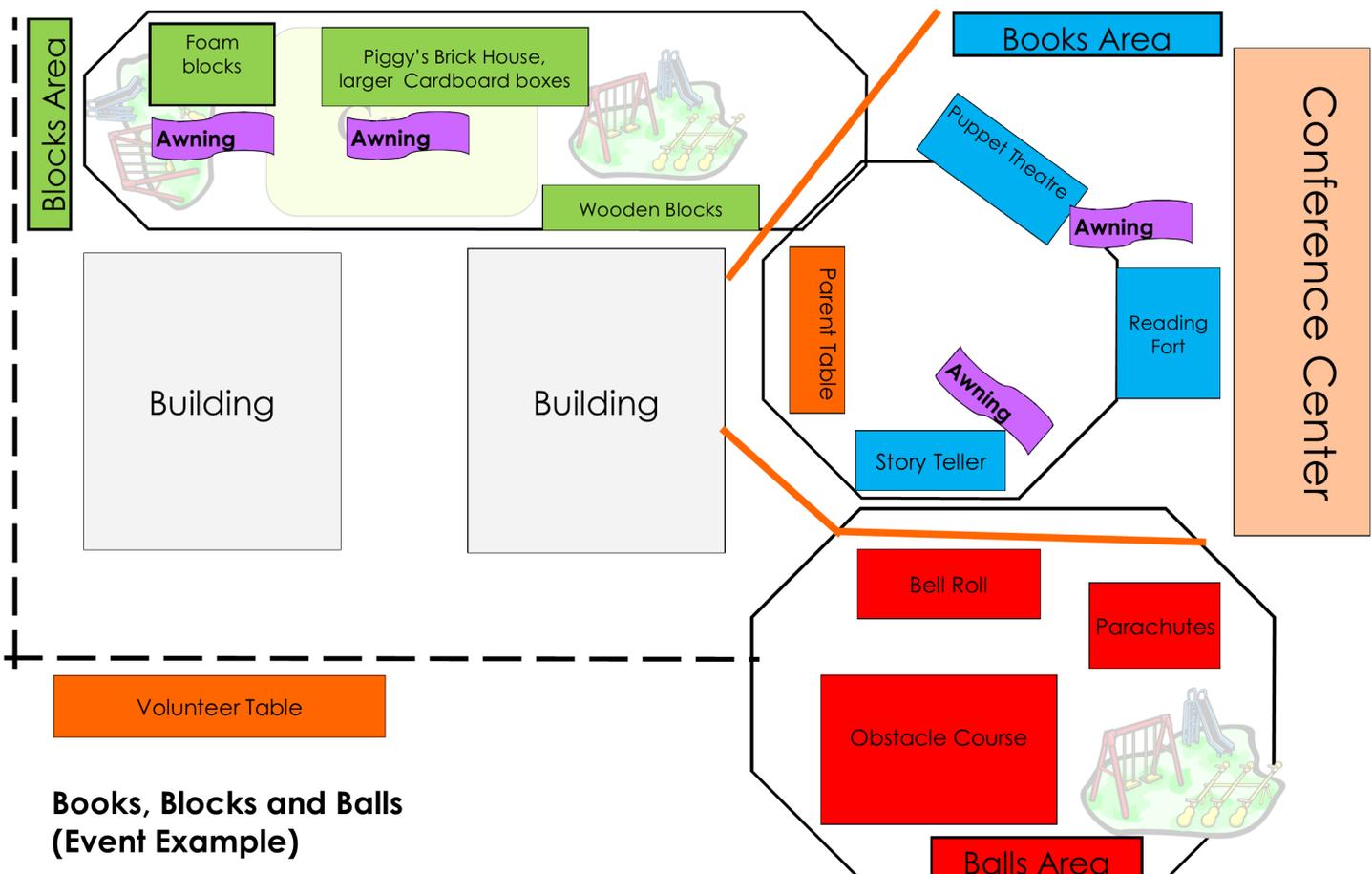
Tables: Parent, Volunteer

Books: Reading Fort, Puppet Theater, Story Teller

Blocks: Piggy's Brick House, Unit Blocks/ Tangrams, Foam Blocks

Balls: Obstacle Course, Parachutes, Belly Roll

## Event Example Map



**Books, Blocks and Balls  
(Event Example)**

# Event Example Flier

Here is an example of an event flier. This one prints two per page.

## Help Me Grow Utah Family Event

Come play with your children and learn how

**Books, Balls, and Blocks**  
encourage child development!



Thursday, September 8, 2016

Morning students 9:00-10:30 a.m.

Afternoon students 1:30-3:00 p.m.

(during regular school hours )

Parents who come will receive a **FREE** book for their child.

Siblings are welcome!

Questions? Call 801-234-9876



**HELP ME  
GROW** UTAH



United Way  
of Utah County

# Event Example Equipment Check-List

## Tables & Miscellaneous Items

### Set-Up

- Activity Station Signs
- A-Frames
- Water jugs (2)
- Ice for jugs
- Dixie Cups
- Map copies (5)
- Weather back-up plan
- Parking signs for volunteers
- Camera
- Parent Infographic
- Awnings (4)

### Extra Items

- Staplers
- Extension Cords, hammer, tarps
- Duct tape & masking tape
- Scissors
- Zip ties

### Parent Table

- Table & 3 chairs
- Developmental screenings
- ASQ Activity Sheets
- Free Books for parents
- Pens

### Volunteer Table

- Table & 3 chairs
- Volunteer Sign-in List
- Volunteer Nametags
- Assignment List
- Map & Instructions for Volunteers
- Hablo Español Tags
- Permanent Markers
- Pens
- Evaluation sheets

## Books

### Reading Fort

- Table
- Variety of blankets
- Books
- Seat cushion-type pillows

### Puppet Theater

- PVC Puppet theater set
- Puppets
- Books
- Mats for audience to sit on

# Equipment Check-List Continued

## Books Continued

### Storyteller

- Stories for story teller if necessary
- Mats for audience to sit on

## Blocks

### Piggy's Brick House

- Smaller brick cardboard blocks
- 3 Little Pigs story board
- Mats

### Wooden Blocks

- Wooden blocks: various sizes, shapes
- Community figure dolls & cars
- Mats

### Foam Blocks

- Foam blocks
- Mats

## Balls

### Obstacle Course

- Child-size plastic wheelbarrows
- Cloth balls/ other balls
- Buckets or baskets
- Small orange cones
- Hula hoops
- Fabric tunnels
- Step stones

### Parachutes

- Parachutes
- Balls of various sizes

### Belly Rolls

- Large exercise balls

# Activity Station Sample Instructions for Volunteers

Here is an example of an activity station instructions for volunteers.

## Ball Stations

**You may be helping with one or all of the following stations:**

- Obstacle Course
- Parachutes
- Belly Rolls

Here are some simple things you can do during play:

1. Have each person hold onto one or two handles of the parachute. Count and throw the balls into the air.
2. Variations include aiming the balls toward other players or trying to throw the balls while rotating the parachute clockwise, or not using the balls at all, just going under the parachute.
3. Help children stabilize with their bellies on the exercise balls. They will giggle with delight as you move them back and forth.
4. Create an obstacle course for the children. Demonstrate how to go through the obstacle course.
5. The course can pass through various types of obstacles and toys. Feel free to create your own "rules" to make it fun and interesting.
  - a. Two kids will start at the same time
  - b. They will first fill the wheelbarrow with balls
  - c. Push the wheelbarrow to a basket where they'll unload the balls then leave the wheelbarrow
  - d. Last, run to the pool filled with balls, crawl through the balls then out of the pool and run to the finish line
  - e. Once the first two children are finished, the next two will go through the course.

**HAVE FUN!! You get to be a kid again!**

**Thank you for volunteering!!**

# Volunteer & Staff Sign-In

Here is an example of a sign-in sheet for volunteers and staff.

**Volunteer & Staff Sign-in**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrived</b>
<b>Tables</b>		
Area Lead	Chelsea	
Welcome/ Parent / Screening	Jordan	
Welcome/ Parent / Screening	Sylvia	
Volunteer	Michelle	
<b>Books</b>		
Area Lead	Matt	
Reading Fort	Heather	
Puppet Theater	Nathan	
Story Teller	Laura	
<b>Blocks</b>		
Area Lead	Tyler	
Piggy's Brick House	John	
Wooden Blocks	Megan	
Foam Blocks	Katie	
<b>Balls</b>		
Area Lead	Kristen	
Obstacle Course	Robin	
Obstacle Course	Emily	
Parachutes	Kara	
Belly Roll	Samantha	

# Family Instructions

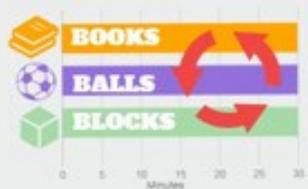
Here is an example of instructions for families.

## Help Me Grow Family Event



The purpose of a Help Me Grow family event is to create an environment where parents and children can bond through play! Play best happens naturally and with little structure.

Parents



You will stay with your child and their class. The class will rotate through each play area.



Water jugs are found in each area for the children, parents and teachers.

### HOW TO PLAY WITH KIDS

Ask questions about

- Shapes
- Numbers
- Colors
- Cause & effect

Explain BIG words

Talk about feelings

Play pretend!

### What is Help Me Grow?

Help Me Grow promotes optimal development of young children by linking families to information and community resources related to child development and parenting.



**If you have questions about your child's development, call us!**  
**801-691-5322**  
**or dial 2-1-1 and ask for Help Me Grow!**

**Since March 2010...**

- 2542 Families Supported
- 3522 Developmental Screenings
- 5573 Referrals to Local Resources

**11 ELEVEN**  
KBYUTV

A local partner invested in the success of your family. Visit their website for information about some great children's programs!  
[www.kbyutv.org](http://www.kbyutv.org)

# Evaluation

Here is an example of an evaluation given to the volunteers and families.

## Family Event Evaluation form

Please help us grow by answering some questions about your experience!

Please tell us about your experience at the Family Event today by circling the number that shows your level of agreement.

At the family event today:

- I am more aware that playing with blocks can help my child learn math skills.
- I am more aware of how to support early literacy learning for my child.
- I am more aware that playing with balls will help support my child's problem solving skills.

Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly Agree
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

What was your favorite activity?

What was your least favorite activity?

On a scale of 1-5, how happy were you with your experience at the Help Me Grow Family Event?

Very Unhappy		Neutral		Very Happy
1	2	3	4	5

Please share your observations of **one child** who came with you to the Family Event using the words below. Circle all of the words that describe what your child was doing at the Family Event.

Child's age: \_\_\_\_\_

Watching others	Focusing	Sorting	Adding	Balancing
Describing	Experimenting	Problem solving	Planning together	Excited
Taking turns	Listening	Laughing	Predicting	Observing outcomes
Estimating	Asking questions	Counting	Building with others	Making patterns
Having fun	Smiling	Wondering	Proud	Pretending
Thinking	Sharing	Being creative	Naming	Comparing

Suggestions?

Thank you for coming!

**Volunteer Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Company/ Dept:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What Volunteer Assignment did you have today?**

Classroom Helper    Book Area    Ball Area    Block Area    Other

**How many years have you participated at this Help Me Grow event?**    1yr    2 yrs    3yrs

**How would you rate this year's event to the others?**    Not as good    Same    Better!

**How would you rate the volunteer training?**    Not Enough    Just Right    Too Much

**Which activity area did you like the best?**    Books    Balls    Blocks    N/A

**Would you like us to contact you to volunteer again?**

Yes! These are awesome!                      Nope. But I'll see you next year!

**How can we make this better?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT! YOU ARE AMAZING!**

# Notes



**Good luck &  
have fun!**

**HELP ME  
GROW UTAH**

Help Me Grow Utah  
PO Box 135,  
Provo, UT 84603  
801-691-5322