
BOOKS AND BASKETBALL

Literacy, Inc. (LINC)

New York, New York

Literacy, Inc. (LINC) is committed to linking local resources in different neighborhoods throughout New York City to ensure that young readers are good readers. One of the community activities that LINC inspired was Books and Basketball, a practice that targeted a community of young readers who were very engaged in practicing basketball. LINC seized the opportunity to introduce books and reading to these children by building on their existing interest in the sport.

Books and Basketball aimed to reach children from two neighborhood schools in the Red Hook neighborhood of Brooklyn. LINC created the basketball league's reading program, while Red Hook Rise, a neighborhood association, created the league's game schedule. Parents and community members participated as guest readers.

Before each game, each team gathered around a table to read for approximately 20 minutes. After the game, both teams reconvened to talk about what they read. Students have been very disciplined about reading before and after the game. They have enjoyed reading about the sport they love, which makes reading a hobby for them.

To celebrate the successful season, the Red Hook Reads Team contacted the National Basketball Association to have an NBA player at the end-of-season event called

Books and Basketball Fun Day. LINC also contacted a book author to read aloud and autograph books. The Brooklyn Borough President attended.

It was not easy to contact the NBA to have a player available at this event. Fortunately, the team had a contact at a local supermarket who had been a former NBA player. He made possible the visit by NBA player "Tiny" Nate Archibald. Archibald loved the event, "This is great. We need to have more of this in minority neighborhoods."

Books and Basketball was part of a larger campaign called Red Hook Reads, which is managed by LINC and sponsored by Independence Community Foundation. Red Hook Reads activities are planned and implemented by the Red Hook Reads Team, an Action Team for Partnerships.

The team plans to continue the Books and Basketball activity, and will incorporate more ways to involve the players' parents.

Lori Bethea, Team Leader
(212) 620-5462