



Duane Sherrill photos  
Lisa Cripps reads “Giraffes Can’t Dance” to the dozens of children who came to the final summer reading program event at Justin Potter Library this past week. The book has an anti-bullying theme. The summer reading program will conclude with a party this Thursday at the county complex at 2 p.m.

# Never bully. Always support.



Over 45 children participated in crafts and other activities as part of the summer reading program at Justin Potter Library.

## Cripps conveys key message with help of a dancing giraffe

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Sending a powerful message, warning children never to bully others, Lisa Cripps of the DeKalb County Prevention Coalition used a storybook starring a giraffe to bring home her point during the next to last day of the Summer Reading Program at Justin Potter Library this past week.

“Encourage them to be the best that they can be,” she urged the 45 children who packed the

downtown library for the regular Thursday afternoon event. “Never bully. Always support.”

Cripps used the book *Giraffes Can’t Dance* to explain why it is bad to bully others. The children’s book by Giles Andrede and Guy Parker-Rees from Scholastic uses a Giraffe named Gerald to illustrate how bullying can hurt others. In the book, Gerald is made fun of by other animals in the jungle because he is uncoordinated and can’t dance. He leaves the party and meets a cricket who teaches him that he can actually dance.

“We can all dance when we find the music we love,” Gerald says in the end, realizing that everyone is unique in their own way.

Cripps said books like *Giraffes Can’t Dance* are a good way for parents to teach their children things like not bullying others and being respectful of the feelings of others.

“It’s the importance of reading with children at a young age,” Cripps said.

Studies have shown that it is imperative children be reading on grade level by the third grade or they are likely to permanently fall behind and never catch up.

The Summer Reading Program will conclude this Thursday at 2 p.m. at the County Complex with a final party.

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