

## Young People to host book gifting day to tackle child literacy divide

Monday 18 February, 2019

**FREE books for disadvantaged children, storytelling sessions and craft activities organised by Bolton teenagers.**

Disadvantaged children who are 15 times less likely to achieve a reading age above average, are set to benefit from a 'book gifting day' organised by a group of Bolton teenagers. The event, led by youth charity Xplode will be held at Bolton Central Library on 2 March 2019 from 11am until 3pm.

The event comes as shocking figures from the National Literacy Trust revealed at more than 40,000 schoolchildren in Greater Manchester don't own a single book and have much poorer educational outcomes than their peers.

Volunteers aged 15-21 from Xplode came up with the idea as part of their 'social action project' where four times per year, they tackle a social issue that they've identified.

**Jacob Aspinall, 19, said:** *"We wanted to tackle the child literacy divide as part of our project and thought of the book gifting day because we can have real impact – I remember when we had to bring in a book to school and somebody brought in an Argos catalogue because they didn't own a book. This can't happen in 2019."*

**Saeed Atcha MBE, Chief Executive of Xplode said:** *"I just love how young people are identifying an issue and coming up with a solution to tackling it – social action should be part of life for all. For our team, this project is a great way to develop themselves and their community."*

**Emma Bateson, Collections Access Officer, Bolton Museums and Library Services added:** *"We are really pleased that the young people from Xplode magazine are holding their social action project in the library. Reading has a big impact on educational outcomes and life chances, and ensuring that every child has access to books is a key factor in raising literacy levels."*

As part of the event for children aged 7-11, there will be story telling sessions led by the Xplode volunteers, free Roald Dahl craft sessions and the chance to win a collection of Roald Dahl books worth over £100.

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