

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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