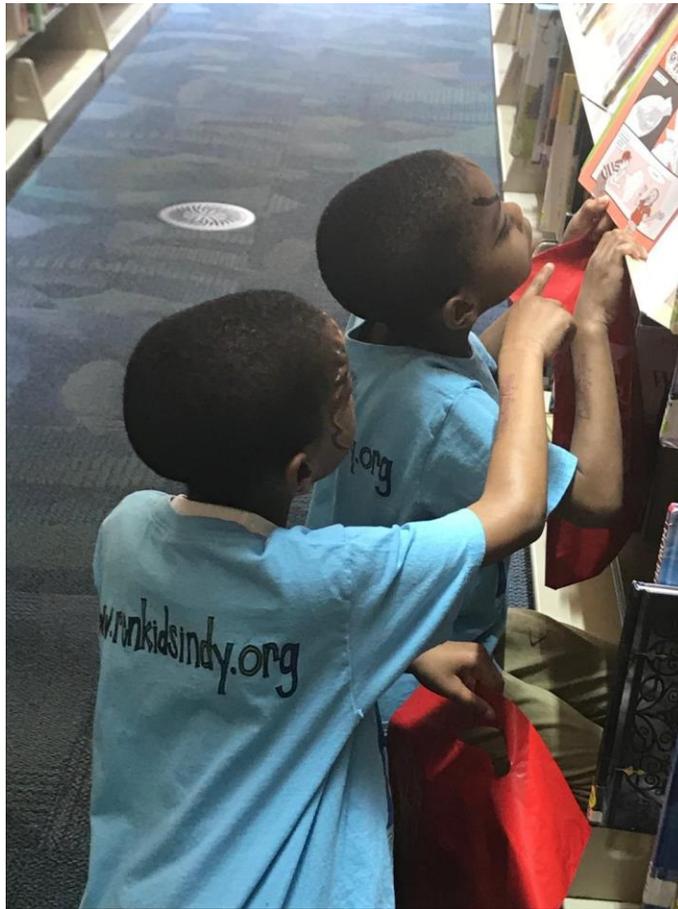


El día de los niños/El día de los libros

By Shawnta S. Barnes – April 30, 2018



Pat Mora, author and poet, is the founder of El día de los niños/El día de los libros (Children's Day/Book Day) typically called Día. In 1996, Mora shared the purpose of creating this day:



In 1996, I learned about the Mexican tradition of celebrating April 30th as El día del niño, the day of the child. I thought, “We have Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. We need kids’ day too, but I want to connect all children with book joy, the pleasure of reading.”

Although April 30th is the big Día celebration date, this initiative emphasizes the need for making diverse books and book joy a year-round focus. Representation matters, but it is more than having various shades of brown faces in books. Various cultures, beliefs, and languages should also be represented. According to the [Día website](#):

Día is a nationally recognized initiative that emphasizes the importance of literacy for all children from all backgrounds. It is a daily commitment to linking children and their families to diverse books, languages and cultures. The common goals of all Día programming are to:

- *Celebrate children and connect them to the world of learning through books, stories and libraries.*
- *Nurture cognitive and literacy development in ways that honor and embrace a child's home language and culture.*
- *Introduce families to community resources that provide opportunities for learning through multiple literacies.*
- *Recognize and respect culture, heritage and language as powerful tools for strengthening families and communities.*



On Saturday, April 28, my husband, boys and I attended Reach Out and Read IN Children's Day at Central Library with the nonprofit organization Renaissance Kids, Inc. Our boys participate in the Ren Kids programming and they had a great time exploring the library and participating in various activities such as watching a movie, enjoying African dance, getting their faces painted, learning some martial arts, and browsing through books. They were amazed to learn there was a whole section of books written in Spanish and we also looked at some Spanish & English bilingual books.

Exposure is key. If we want our children to grow up with an appreciation of their culture and the culture of others, we have to teach them about it. If we want our children to love books and love reading, they need many opportunities to explore a myriad of books and Día is a great day to start.