

Everyday Advocacy

Counting Down to Capitol Hill

Quick Wins for National Library Legislative Day

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"Everyday Advocacy" empowers ALSC members to embrace their roles as library advocates by focusing on their daily efforts to serve youth and families. Each lighthearted column features easy-to-implement strategies and techniques for asserting the transformative power of libraries both within communities and beyond them. Please contact the ALSC Advocacy and Legislation Committee with comments and ideas for future topics.

An old proverb tells us March comes in like a lion and out like a lamb—something to do with weather and constellations, I think.

But as much as I love the thought of those curly spring babies frolicking in green meadows, they're a little too meek and mild for this particular column. (*Sorry, you sweet little things!*)

Yes, it's high time that lions-to-lambs adage got an "Everyday Advocacy" twist:

March comes in like a lion and goes out like an even bigger lion.

Now let's pretend that bigger lion is you. You're strong. You're mighty. You look majestic with the wind whipping through your mane.

And as your library's King or Queen of Children's Services, you're poised and ready to pounce on National Library Legislative

Day (NLLD). Your conquest awaits you May 5–6, 2014, in Washington, DC.

OK, then! Who's with me?

Right. So maybe you're not completely sold on all the lion imagery.

Fortunately, I have a Plan B to help you embrace your inner Aslan. With just a few Everyday Advocacy quick wins, you (*yes, you!*) can affect change for children and libraries on Capitol Hill.

It's just a few months until May, so let's get ready to roar!

Quick Wins for NLLD 2014

You don't actually have to be in Washington, DC, to make a difference at NLLD. Starting right now, you can chalk up many of these quick wins from your desktop, laptop, or smartphone. (*I know. Awesome, right?*)

1. Ask before you act. Before you email, call, text, or tweet, check with your supervisor about any advocacy-related limitations you may have on your professional role. (For example, lobbying might be OK as long as you're off the clock.)



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2. Start with your state. Ready to make someone's day? Contact the NLLD coordinator (www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/nlld/coordinators) for your state. Once you start receiving news and updates from this key contact, you'll feel like you've got a new best friend and personal NLLD guide.

3. Explore Everyday Advocacy. Created by ALSC members for ALSC members, the *Everyday Advocacy* website (www.ala.org/everyday-advocacy) will help you stay informed, engage with your community, speak out, get inspired, and share your advocacy story.

4. Delve into District Dispatch. The official blog of the ALA Washington Office, *District Dispatch* (www.districtdispatch.org) is your one-stop shop for the latest on library legislation. Sign up for text alerts, view issue briefs, and

link to the Legislative Action Center as part of your NLLD 2014 prep. You'll be ready to talk with legislators in no time flat!

5. Touch base with Twitter. New to social media? You might consider [Twitter](#). Once you set up your free account, you can follow your US senators and representatives as well as the ALA Washington Office (@ala_wo) for quick NLLD updates. Don't forget to use #nlld14 when sending your own tweets.

6. Invest in Virtual Library Legislative Day (VLLD). Can't make it to Washington, D.C., this year? Join other library advocates as they contact Congress from home during the first week of May. Five minutes are all it takes to make a big difference for libraries and the children you serve. Visit United for Libraries (www.ala.org/united) to get the 411 on VLLD 2014.

7. Connect with your community. Remember, you're not in this alone. Imagine a chorus of community stakeholders bringing your library message to Capitol Hill. Why not invite trustees, friends groups, and foundation members to join you? Call or email a few colleagues to say, "Hey, let's do this thing!" Make your enthusiasm irresistible.

Counting Down to Capitol Hill

See? You've got an abundance of tools, resources, and support for your NLLD efforts. As you count down to Capitol Hill and boost your confidence with these Everyday Advocacy quick wins, I hope you'll keep one thing mind—there's simply no better advocate for children and libraries than you. The Cowardly Lion you're not. You're Aslan all the way, baby. Now let 'em hear you roar! 🦁

JUMP START STORYTIME, continued from page 15

If you've been doing the same one for years, try something new. It will keep you on your toes, which means new energy!⁴

I began this article by stating how important it is to put *yourself* into the storytime. Will that happen when you're also trying to fit in all these components? Yes!

It will happen because *you* choose the stories, *you* choose the rhymes, songs and movements, *you* set the tone for how silly, nurturing, informative, supportive, and imaginative your storytime will be. The important thing to always structure into the storytime is your love for children and for wonderful books. 🦁

References

1. The tune for this can be found in Heather McNeil, *Read, Rhyme, and Romp: Early Literacy Skills and Activities for Librarians, Teachers and Parents*. (Denver: Libraries Unlimited, 2012), 132.

2. Jim Aylesworth, *Little Bitty Mousie* (New York: Walker & Company, 2007), unpagged.
3. McNeil, *Read, Rhyme, and Romp*, 111.
4. Additional opening, closing, and in-between songs can be found in McNeil, *Read, Rhyme and Romp*.

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