Laughter for the Health of It

Using Therapeutic Laughter in Library Programming

Wendy Street
Pella Public Library, Pella, Iowa

What is therapeutic laughter?

The therapeutic use of humor and laughter to improve emotional well being in order to facilitate improvement in health.

-Reference.MD

“A clown is like an aspirin only it works twice as fast.”

--Groucho Marx
Health benefits of laughter

- Reduces stress, depression, anger and anxiety
- Strengthens our immune systems and helps us recover from illness
- Adjusts blood pressure and blood sugar
- Can help healing – causes an increase in vascular blood flow and in oxygenation of the blood which enables the body to repair itself
- Improves breathing, digestion and sleep
- Burns calories
- Makes us feel good – laughter releases a chemical called serotonin into our brains.
- Connects us to others – laughter is contagious, shared laughter promotes bonding, unity and solidarity within a group while having fun

Let’s give it a try!

Laughter Programs
Becoming a Laughter Leader

- World Laughter Tour  
  http://www.worldlaughtertour.com
- Laughter Yoga International  
  http://laughteryoga.org/
- Laughter Yoga Institute  
  http://lyinstitute.org
- American School of Laughter Yoga  
  http://www.laughteryogaamerica.com
- Fake it

Why do laughter programs?

- Wellness is a popular topic
- Brings new people in the library
- Excellent outreach
- Media attention
- It’s fun!
- Why not?
For more information

- International Society for Humor Studies [http://www.hnu.edu/ishs](http://www.hnu.edu/ishs/

Show and Tell

**Caution! Adults at Play.**

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