

NoBo Corner
Library, aka the
story of
Goldilocks and
the Three Bears



NoBo Focus Group Trainer Evaluation June 8, 2017

6 participants (including 3 moms of small children)

1 staff member (observer)

1 Library Commissioner (observer)

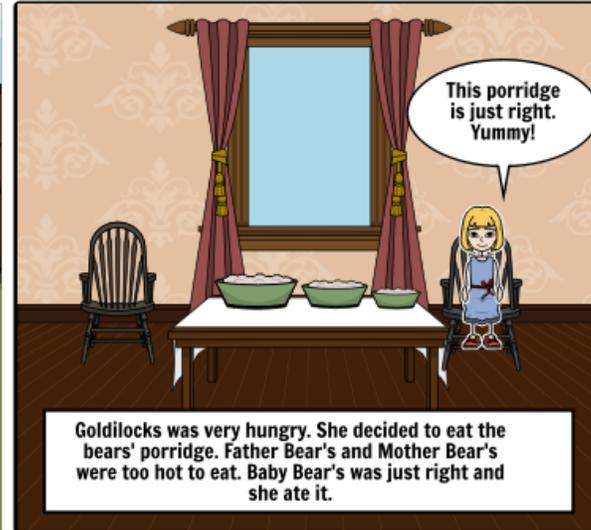
Once there lived in the woods three bears, Father Bear, Mother Bear and Baby Bear. They set out on a stroll one day.



There came a girl named Goldilocks.



This porridge is just right. Yummy!



Goldilocks was very hungry. She decided to eat the bears' porridge. Father Bear's and Mother Bear's were too hot to eat. Baby Bear's was just right and she ate it.



In the next room she saw three chairs. The first two were too big and hard for her to sit. Goldilocks sat on the small chair but then it broke down. She was sad.



Goldilocks was tired. She went to the next room where she saw three beds. The first two were too hard. She slept on the small bed.

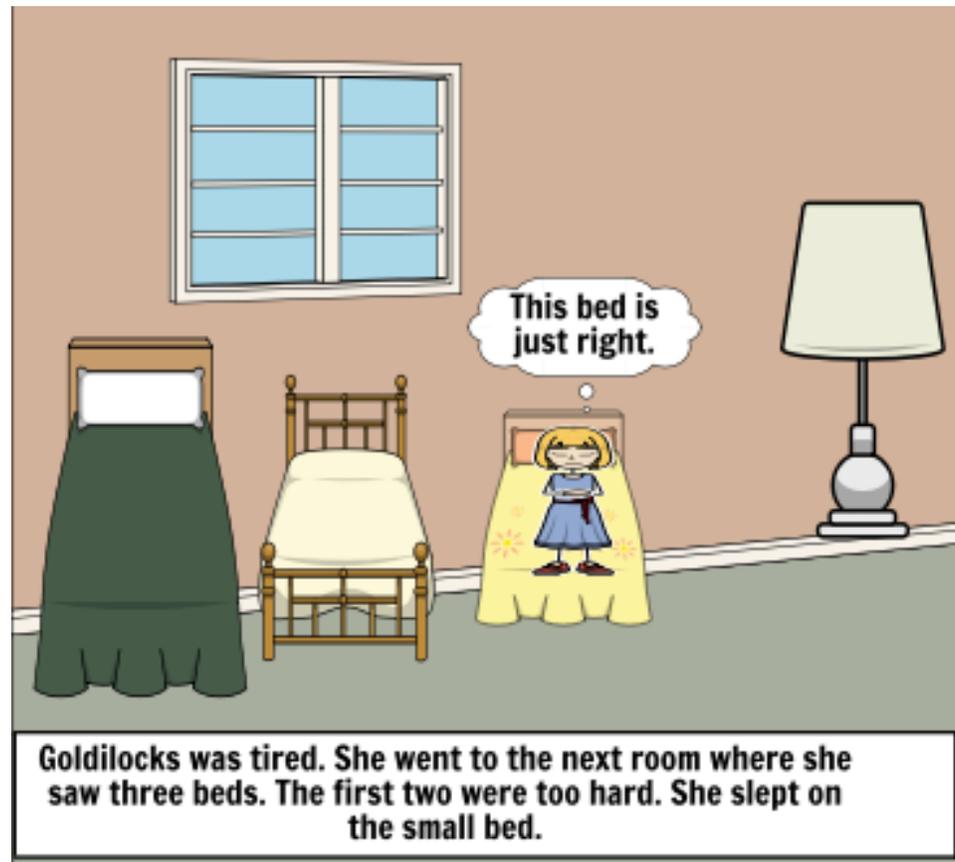
AAHHH!!

Who is sleeping on my bed?

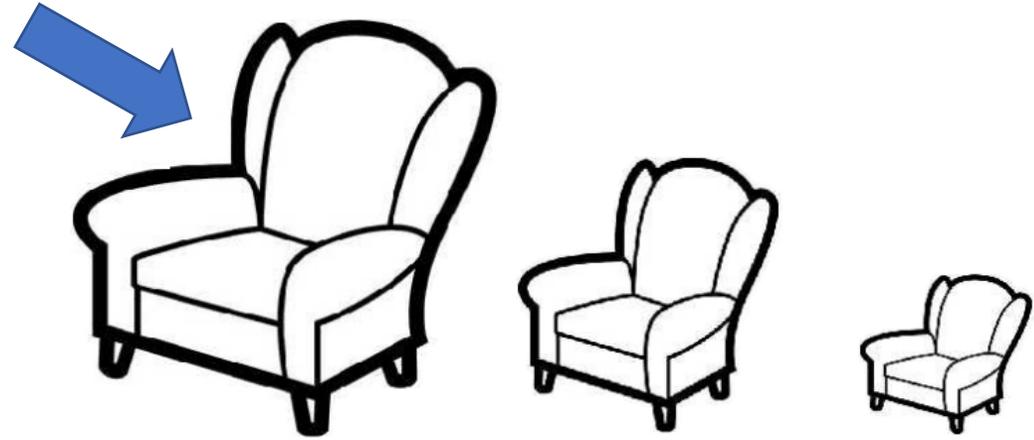


The three bears came back from their walk and was surprised to see someone sleeping on the bed. Goldilocks woke up and ran out.

Participants want a bigger library...but not too big



Too big



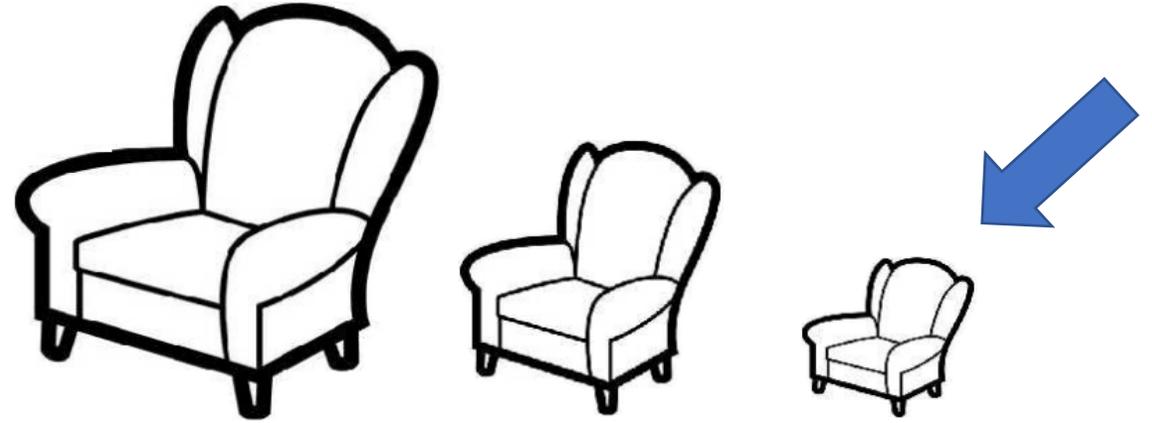
There is a fear that a space that is too big will invite in the homeless population

There is a sense among participants that the small size of the NoBo Corner Library is part of the reason that the homeless do not use the space

Participants are very worried that a large NoBo Branch will turn into the Main Library and that they will no longer feel safe in the library. One participant expressed that she does not let her daughter go to the Main Library by herself because she does not feel that her daughter is safe there.

They want the branch to be bigger, yes, but they also want retain a neighborhood feel

Too small



Not enough books(!) came across loud and clear (several participants said they have “read all the books” at the branch)

Not enough DVDs

Not enough space:

Feels awkward to read to your child when you feel so exposed in the space

Want more kid’s program, but what do you do when too many kids show up?

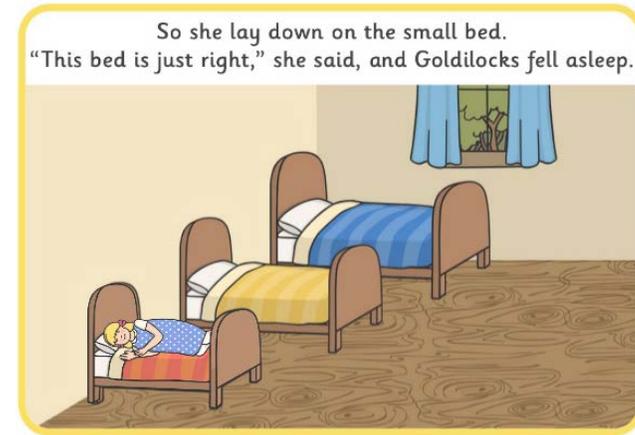
There are “no nooks,” comfy spaces where you can curl up with a book

No spaces for events

No spaces for community meetings

Does not feel like a space to “hang-out” in; you come in, pick up your books and go

Just right



MORE books and DVDs for everyone

However, if there can only be room for one expanded collection, one participant advocated for more children's and teen books, as these groups often need to browse to find a new title. In contrast, often times, adults know exactly what book they are looking for and will place a hold.

Rotate the collection more often, bring in new titles and highlight them

A makerspace

Spaces for events and community meetings (for book groups, teen groups)

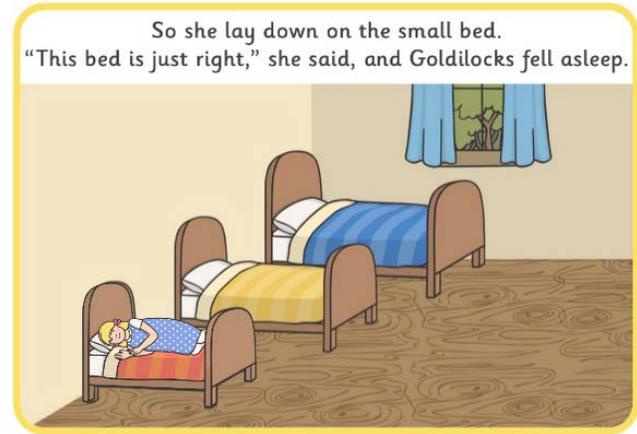
Space to relax and to see and say hi to neighbors; keep it local

More privacy to sit and read

A café

Expanded hours; don't close on Thursday and Friday (hard to remember the varying hours)

Just right



More programs

This group would be interested in:

Programs for elementary-aged kids

Book talks for adults

Book group for adults

Tech support

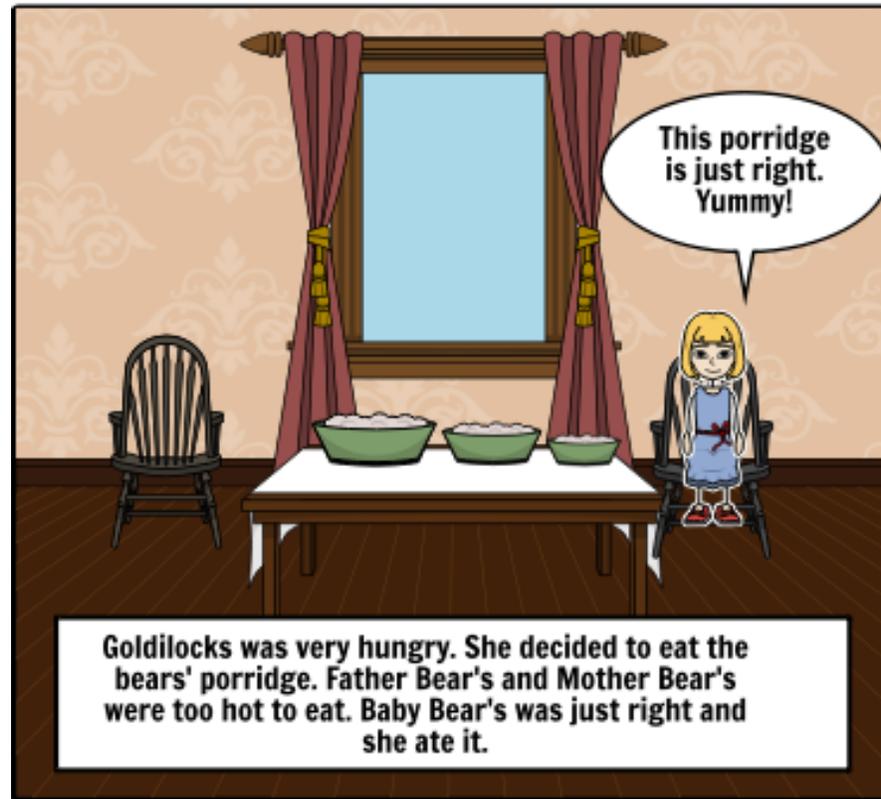
Hands-on programs, like weaving

Musical events

Movies

Makerspace

NoBo is a great community...but feels “cut-off” and “transitional”



NoBo strengths



NoBo is

A friendly community

Diverse

Growing

Engaged

Active

Affordable

Close to open-space access, a library and shops

The library's role

The library supports the NoBo community by

Being a free resource

Increasing literacy

Developing a love of books

Being a place to meet people

Building a sense of community

Being a vital, civic space

Being a place for conversation

Encouraging summer reading



NoBo improvements



NoBo is

Cut off from services, such as a grocery store and post office

Feels transitional; commercial and residential real estate still haven't figured themselves out yet

Is a "hodge-podge of stuff"

"Still in the making," participants are both nervous and optimistic about "what the making will be"

Diverse but siloed

Home to a temporary library

The library should be



A safe haven; be a safe place to visit

Expanded so as to say, "we're here to stay"

Built beyond it's temporary storefront

A permanent part of the neighborhood

An anchor for the neighborhood

A civic counter-balance to the commercial area

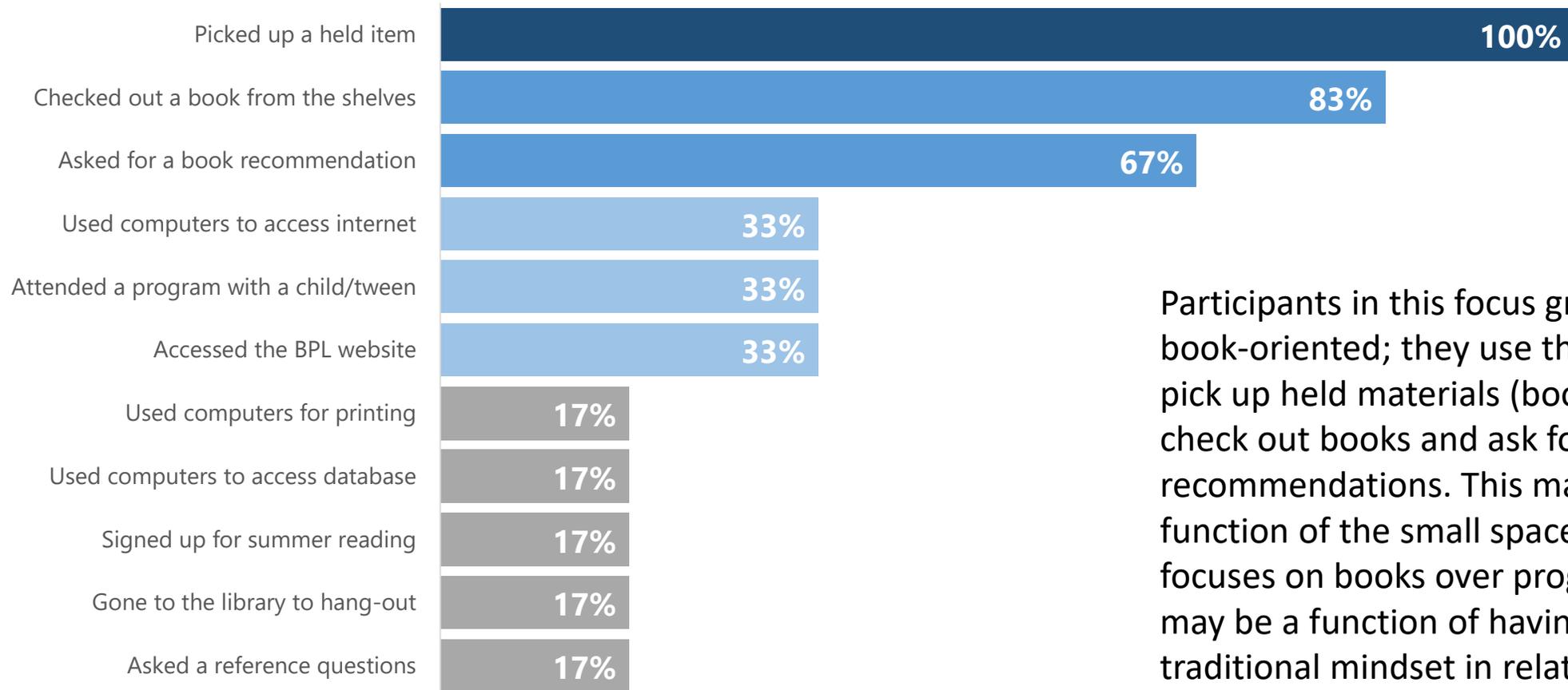
A source of pride

Fun

A community hub; a place to learn about community events, participate in events and programs, meet neighbors

Other thoughts

NoBo Usage: In the past 6 months, have you...



Participants in this focus group are very book-oriented; they use the library to pick up held materials (books and DVDs), check out books and ask for book recommendations. This may be a function of the small space, which focuses on books over programming, or it may be a function of having a more traditional mindset in relation to libraries.

How to stay relevant

Market programs better

Offer more programs

Host Spanish story times; brings kids in at a young age

Add Spanish classes for adults

Have a more dynamic, rotating selection of books and DVDs

More foreign language DVDs

Have the complete series for series books

Offer volunteer opportunities

Offer more bike parking

Potential partners

Schools

Co-ops

HOAs

Larger, Holiday neighborhood association

CU for programs

Farmer's Market organization

NoBo art organizations

- Be part of First Friday Art Walk

- Create art at library

- Show art at library

What else

Parking is a challenge

The library is well used by some people in neighborhood; uncertain about reach into all areas of the community

Unsure the community knows about the ability to place holds; that the library is more than just the size of the NoBo branch

Intersection in front of library is dangerous for families with small children; poor sight lines, people stop past the cross walk

There is a tension between feeling safe in the library and recognizing the need to be open to everyone in the community

“How do you not become a de-facto day shelter?”

Frustration among avid users that this is not a “true library”

Kudos

“The librarians are amazing”

NoBo Corner Library feels welcoming

There is a benefit to the small space; you get to know the librarians