

## Maplewood Library grant to promote literacy

The home is a child's first classroom, the parents are actually the first teachers, and families who engage in literacy-related activities have children who are more successful in school. To help parents achieve this, Hilton Branch Library will be circulating child-sized backpacks full of materials that will encourage parents and children to read together. These backpacks are part of a grant awarded to Hilton by Prevent Child Abuse-NJ.

The 25 themed backpacks will circulate as a unit and contain children's books, interactive activity suggestions, manipulatives, books for parents, music etc. For example, a backpack with an alphabet theme will have the book *Eating the Alphabet*, magnetic letters, a compact disc with an alphabet song, and a matching game featuring the letters of the alphabet. Relevant books for parents may also be included. Families can check a backpack out for two weeks at a time. Class visits to Hilton Branch Library will also be a chance to get the literacy backpacks into the homes.

Hilton Branch Library will be working closely with the schools to make sure the word is out on this wonderful opportunity for families to share time together. A family literacy event will be in December.

