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**New Little Free Library Ribbon Cutting event at Oregon Department of Human Services St. Helens office**

A ribbon cutting for the new Free Little Library is planned for Thursday, January 30, 4 p.m. at the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) office at 500 N. Columbia Highway.

Author Vera Ahiyya of the book series “KINDergarten” and “Getting Ready” will be doing a reading. The student winner of the Columbia County Art Contest for the Early Literacy Toolkit will also be honored for their work.

There will also be Little Libraries coming soon to ODHS offices in Astoria, Clatskanie, Seaside and Tillamook in the next several months.

The Little Free Libraries are a collaboration between Northwest Early Learning Hub of Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties and ODHS. Northwest Early Learning Hub is housed at Northwest Regional Education Service District. It is one of 16 Early learning Hubs of the Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care (DELC)

A survey was conducted with community partners asking if they thought little libraries would be good investment. There was also community input on the themes and what books should be included so that the books would be inclusive of different cultures.

“We had three aims. We wanted to improve children’s access to high quality books; we wanted to support parents and their kids; and to support teachers and care providers with information about the science of reading,” Abbey Lutskovsky, the Hub Early Learning Coordinator, said.

Tim Cork, the ODHS District Manager for Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties is a member of the Hub’s Governance Council and was more than willing to host the libraries inside or outside ODHS offices in the area. The St. Helens office includes: Aging and People with Disabilities, Child Welfare, Oregon Eligibility Partnership, Self-Sufficiency and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

“It was a good way to work with the community – we’re here to help,
 Cork said.

The double-decker libraries are stocked with books for children aged from birth to five years old. There will also be parenting books for adults. People can take a book or leave a book. There are Little Libraries inside other ODHS offices in Oregon, but these are the first in this area’s offices.