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##### Mpumalanga Marks Library Week

Promotion of IT usage and improving literacy levels is high on the agenda as Mpumalanga marks the 2013 South African National Library Week.

The library week is celebrated annually from March 16 to 23 and it is aimed at highlighting the importance of libraries. As custodians of librarians in Mpumalanga, the department of Culture, Sport and Recreation will pull all the stops to raise awareness on how people can use libraries to improve their lives.

Says spokesperson for the department, Ms Sibongile Nkosi, “Mpumalanga is focusing on the promotion of IT literacy and the use of Internet in public libraries. All public libraries are encouraged to open their doors to patrons to use IT and Internet during this week and beyond.”

The province launched Internet in public libraries last year November, which has seen the majority of libraries have access to the Internet. This has benefitted many patrons such as school pupils and students who use the technology to complete and research school projects.

According to Nkosi, there are six libraries, which have recorded an increase in IT usage in the province. “The libraries are Ekulindeni, Phumula, Mkhuhlu, Malelane, Mhluzi and Mzinoni and have been rewarded for their efforts with educational toys.”

So how did they select the best performing libraries? “We visited all libraries after the launch of the Internet to monitor IT and Internet usage and the six libraries came out on top,” explains Nkosi.

She adds that the educational toys will help these libraries to promote pre-school literacy because this is the best time to instill the love for reading and books.

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