

Time to Start Reading

By Landa Towns

In an effort to promote youth literacy, the YM&YWHA of Washington Heights and Inwood have teamed with McDonalds on Dyckman Street to sponsor a Weekly Reading Program. The first reading session was held on Tuesday, April 16th at 4 in the afternoon. This reading program, a community effort on the part of the Y, is also being made possible with help from Literacy, Inc. (L.I.N.C.) and the McDonalds which has donated the space for the Reading Program to meet **every Tuesday from 4pm-6pm**. "This is a program that we have implemented in some parts of Brooklyn and has been a success, so we thought that it would make a big difference for the children here in Washington Heights and Inwood," said Rosa Sanchez, Literacy Coordinator for L.I.N.C. Every week the Reading Program will welcome a guest reader to read to the children. This week it was a volunteer named Evelyn Infante. After being told of the program by the Program coordinator from the Y, Abraham Palma, Ms. Infante said, "After it was explained to me what we were trying to accomplish I jumped at it, anything to make the kids read and enjoy it."

All of the books that belong to the Reading Program are in both English and Spanish so children will not be discouraged from reading regardless of language. The books were donated from numerous associates of the program such as the President



-PHOTO BY LANDA TOWNS

A young participant of the new Weekly Reading Program in Inwood.

of the Y, Dr. Ruth, some from L.I.N.C., and even the local children's clothing store Young World donated books for the children to keep. The idea of the Reading Program is to encourage literacy throughout the neighborhood. "My hope is that other organizations will pick up the idea and implement it for their children so they can learn to read and enjoy reading. It's free for everyone and all are welcome," said Abraham Palma.