

**A Daisy book, surely you've heard of it!**  
**After all, Daisy brings excitement and diversion into your life...**



For 2 % of the population, reading is not all that self-evident. In rest homes, care institutions or simply at home, the elderly often have to give up reading. They are forced to do so because their eyes fail them or because it is difficult for them to hold a book. We are all getting older, as a result of which this group is only growing bigger.

But cultural participation is a right for elderly people with print disabilities too. Their pastime or reading pleasure is perhaps even more important than for others.

In 2009, the Flemish authorities invested in technical aids and a campaign in order to make it possible for the elderly to keep reading. Because everybody can read!

### **Campaign for the elderly**

On 26 January 2009, the Flemish authorities and the “Luisterpuntbibliotheek” (Flemish Library for Audio Books and Braille Books) launched a joint campaign for the elderly in order to promote audio books. In practice, the “Vlaamse Ouderenraad” (Flemish Council of the Elderly) was associated with the project from the very beginning. This council of the elderly immediately gave good tips and advice, and brought together “Luisterpunt” and the Flemish authorities with the umbrella organisations of rest homes and service centres. It was the beginning of a great story...

### **Daisy\* players**

All rest homes, service centres, rest and nursing homes, short stay centres and day care centres received a Daisy player from the Flemish authorities.



In total, more than thousand Daisy players were distributed. By means of such a player, people can listen to the 15,000 audio books in Daisy format which are lent out by “Luisterpunt”, free of charge. These books have been read out loud in a studio and were put on a CD-ROM, intended especially for people with print disabilities. These are people with reduced eyesight or persons who find it difficult or impossible to hold a book.

Care facilities which gladly wanted to receive a second player on account of the many interested readers they accommodate, the different locations they work on or the diverse divisions they have, were sent a second player, also free of charge. The same applied to Geriatrics and Palliative Care Services in hospitals that also wanted to receive a Daisy player and heard about the campaign for the elderly through the media or word of mouth publicity. A player was sent to them upon request.

## Posters, leaflets and manuals

As part of this campaign for the elderly, four beautiful pictures of people who try to express what books can bring about were taken especially: they can make you laugh, touch you, amaze you and give you shivers. The pictures were used for four posters, in a leaflet providing more information on Daisy books and “Luisterpunt” (the Flemish public library for people with print disabilities, where Daisy books can be borrowed, free of charge), and in a brochure for occupational therapists, animation services employees and volunteers who work with books and Daisy books in care facilities. In addition, a Daisy instruction leaflet and a ‘How to use the Daisy player’ guide were also printed.

This material was distributed to all addresses which had received a Daisy player, to all libraries, to “Zorgbib” (Care Library), OKRA (an association for people older than 55), S-Plus (a socialist organisation for senior citizens), health services, opticians, ...



## Media campaign

Throughout Flanders, articles on this campaign for the elderly have appeared in dozens of periodicals, membership magazines, newspapers and municipal information papers. A radio commercial was made especially for Radio 2 and broadcast in February 2009

(<http://www.luisterpuntbibliotheek.be/nl/actueel/nieuws/een-luisterboek-dat-spreekt-voort-zich-ook-op-radio-2>). Five listening posts were (and are) at the disposal of rest homes, service centres and libraries in order to focus on the campaign and on audio books.

## Workshops

Last year, “Luisterpunt” organised workshops for these occupational therapists, animation services employees and volunteers who work with books and Daisy books in care facilities.

During these workshops, “Luisterpunt” paid attention to the library’s functioning, its services, the collection, Daisy, Daisy books and Daisy periodicals, the idea behind the campaign, and provided explanation about the Daisy player, the website and the “Luisterpunt” online catalogue.

## Books

All care facilities have the possibility to request a collection of Daisy books on loan from “Luisterpunt”. The number of books may amount to 50 or 100 titles for instance (as many as wanted), which may stay at the rest home as long as needed. The rest home may decide for itself which books it wants, or it may leave the choice of books up to “Luisterpunt”. If this is the case, “Luisterpunt” takes the wishes of the inhabitants into consideration. There is really something for everybody: long and short stories, from Kopsaliek to Aspe, comedy, historic novels, informative books, ...

Books can of course be exchanged, or all the books written by favourite authors can be requested. Rest homes can also work together with “Zorgbib-Rode Kruis” (Care Library-Red Cross) or with the local library. “Zorgbib” has a large collection of Daisy books on loan, and about 80 % of all local libraries are developing a Daisy section.

## Figures

During the first shipment, 1,200 Daisy players (in round figures) were distributed for this campaign. Until the beginning of 2010, about 200 additional players were requested and sent. There are still requests, but only sparsely now.

In May, all care facilities received an offer to request another – free – Daisy player. The initiative was taken by the Flemish authorities (which had paid for the players) and “Luisterpunt” (which takes care of the administrative processing and shipment). Until now, 63 care facilities have requested 78 players.

In all, spread over the different care regions, 33 workshops were organised. They took place in rest homes and service centres, with the exception of 5 workshops which were organised in libraries. By means of these workshops, "Luisterpunt" was able to reach 500 occupational therapists, animation services employees and volunteers from "Zorgbib-Rode Kruis" and some associations for the elderly. This amounts to an average of 15 participants per workshop.

At the end of July 2010, "Luisterpunt" had distributed 297 collections on loan in rest homes and service centres. Most of the time, a collection on loan consists of 100 books, but it can also be 20 or 50 books. The conversion of these figures shows that "Luisterpunt" sent 27,458 Daisy books to rest homes and service centres.

Luisterpunt has had 5 listening posts made. They are mostly lent out for one month. 31 libraries and 6 rest homes have borrowed a listening post. In addition, the listening post was displayed during 7 activities organised by "Luisterpunt" itself.

### **And now...**

The story definitely has not come to an end. We intend to evaluate the campaign this year, examine what else we can do and see how we can provide more and better help for care facilities!

In this respect, many care facilities work together with public libraries, and elderly people who live at home often also prefer to stick to their familiar library to borrow a Daisy player and Daisy books. This is why all libraries have been offered to request an almost free Daisy player at the end of May (there is a contribution of 50 EUR for administrative expenses). This initiative was also taken by the Flemish authorities (which had paid for the players) and "Luisterpunt" (which takes care of the administrative processing and shipment). Until the beginning of August, 50 libraries reacted to this (and requested 83 players).

In addition, "Luisterpunt" is putting together a welcome information kit for new readers at present, providing information on Daisy, the book collection and the library's service. Elderly people will be offered the opportunity to borrow a Daisy player for a few months, together with this kit, so that they do not immediately have to buy one but can try the player out first.



\* Daisy stands for Digital Accessible Information System. This is the worldwide standard for audio books for people with print disabilities. Daisy audio books contain two structures: an mp3 structure, which makes most books fit on one single CD-ROM (up to 22 hours of playing time on one CD-ROM) and a Daisy structure which makes it possible to use a Daisy book like a regular book, which is an important advantage compared to the ordinary audio book. This structure allows you not only to leaf through the book, to listen to certain parts again or to read ahead, you can also take a break, place bookmarks and read your favourite extracts again, control the reading speed, stop reading at one point and automatically resume from there next time