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Little Learners

INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUALS CONCERNED WITH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Dr. Monica Ultmann, a developmental pediatrician, recently received Missouri Child Advocate of the Year.

Reach Out and Read Director Receives Award

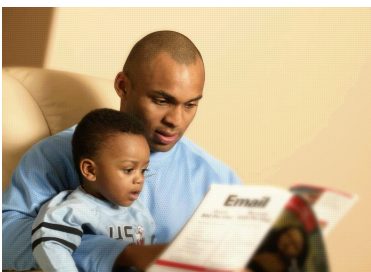
Submitted by Cassandra Slattery, Reach Out And Read



On January 31, child advocates and service providers gathered from across Missouri to participate in the 25th Annual Child Advocacy Day in Jefferson City. This event is held each year to give those interested in issues facing Missouri's children an opportunity to speak to their elected officials regarding current issues, and hear about what other child advocates are doing across the state.

This year, Reach Out and Read medical director, Dr. Monica Ultmann, received the Missouri Alliance for Children, Youth and Families award for Child Advocate of the Year. Dr. Ultmann has worked as a developmental pediatrician at SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center, and most recently brought an early childhood literacy program, Reach Out and Read, to the St. Louis Area.

Reach Out and Read is a nation-wide organization that promotes early childhood literacy by providing books to children during their well-child checkups. At over 30 clinics across metropolitan St. Louis, children receive books at their checkups from 6 months to 5 years of age. Pediatric healthcare providers give their parents information about the importance of reading to their children, so they will enter school ready to learn. For more information about Reach Out and Read, visit www.reachoutandread.org.



What is Little Learners

Little Learners is a new publications designed to keep the public informed about issues related to Early Childhood Education, particularly infants and toddlers. Several agencies within the Literacy Roundtable have come together to produce this first issue which is intended to be published quarterly. The Literacy Roundtable is a consortium of Literacy providers throughout Missouri and Illinois.



Reading to your child everyday helps him get ready for school. Let your child turn the pages and look at the pictures. Soon she will be reading to herself.

Reading Tips for Preschoolers

Submitted by Pat Simon, Ready Readers

Involve the children in the book as much as possible. Ask them to repeat or complete a phrase or a rhyme. Make exaggerated sounds and have them do so too. Change the pitch and tone of your voice for different characters in the book.

Ask questions: "What do you see?" "What do you think will happen next?" "What color is this?" "Is this polite?" "Is there a widget at your house?" "How many ducks are there?" Call the children by their names if you can.

Vary and exaggerate facial expressions.

Make sounds and have them repeat them. If someone knocks, bangs, whistles, etc. in a book, you and the kids can too!

Pat Simon is the Executive Director for Ready Readers.

Read Aloud Books for Children

Submitted By Maggie Dyer,
LIFT Missouri

Good Morning, Baby
Cheryl Willis Hudson
Infant

Chica Chica ABC
Bill Martin Jr. &
John Archambault
Infant/Toddler

While You Were Sleeping
John Butler
Infant/Toddler/Preschool

Goodnight Gorilla
Peggy Rathmann
Toddler/Preschool

These books can be found at your local library

AGENCY CONTACT

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Agencies Provide Free Books

Submitted by Caroline Mitchell, YMCA St. Louis

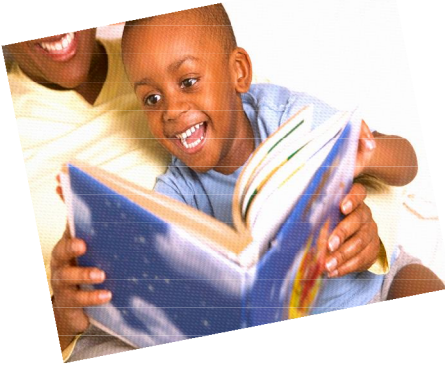
Beginning Babies with Books is a literacy and parent education program provided by the YMCA of Greater St. Louis provides books to low-income families with children ages birth through 6 years-old. BBB also provides free 1-hour parent workshops to childcares, social service agencies, schools, and healthcare organizations. Participants in these workshops receive children's books.

First Books provides books to non-profit organizations serving low income children through local grants and the National Book Bank distribution. Books from First Book must be given to the child for his or her home use, they may not be used to build school or classroom libraries. Local First Book grants serve the St. Louis MSA.

Read From the Start through the Missouri Humanities Council offers a sequence of classes to parents and childcare providers. Participants learn to enjoy sharing and extending books and receive a copy of each book to take home.

Reach Out and Read makes literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric primary care, so that children grow up with books and a love of reading. Pediatricians encourage parents to read aloud to their young children and give books to their patients to take home at all pediatric well-child check ups from six months to five years of age, a total of 10 books. Parents learn that reading aloud is the most important thing they can do to help their children love books and to start school ready to learn..

Ready Readers provides community readers to childcare centers and preschool programs. They will come share a story time with the children and then provide each child with a new copy of the book that was read.



Read these common myths about reading to young children to find out how to help your child develop a love of books.

Myths About Family Reading

Submitted by Julie Douglas,
Missouri Humanities Council

- 1. Children learn to read when they start school.** False! Children begin to learn about language from the time they are born. When we read to babies and toddlers, we can help them make sense of language, grow their vocabulary, and learn that the words in a book have meaning.
- 2. Children can learn language just as well by watching TV.** False. Children need the interaction that happens when an adult reads to them. They need to talk about the book or story. But most importantly, they need to experience the pleasure of sharing a book with a special adult.
- 3. It is not good for a child to listen to the same book over and over.** False. If a child asks for the same book again and again, that's fine! Children enjoy hearing stories that are familiar and predictable. Invite the child to chime in on phrases that are repeated, or replace a word or two and let the child "catch" your mistake.
- 4. A book should be read from start to finish with no interruptions.** False! Consider the child's age level and attention span when choosing a book. Then, take cues from the child to tell you when he/she has had enough. Allow a child time to talk about the story or ask questions as you are reading. Start with very short story times and allow a child's attention span to grow.
- 5. Bedtime is the only time to read to a child.** False. Look for times during the day when you and your child can share a book. Pull out a book when you are waiting in line at the grocery store. Cuddle up with a book after bath time. Keep a book handy in the car or your diaper bag. Any time is a good time to share a book!

Activities To Get Children Reading

There are lots of reading games to play, even before your child starts reading. Here are some simple ways to make sure that words are an important part of your child's life.

Rhyming: Play rhyming games. Children who understand rhyming words are ready to learn to read and spell

Letter Sounds: Help your child listen for letter sounds, a basic step toward children reading

What Can You Read? Words are all around us. In fact, there is a phrase that describes this: "environmental print."

Label It: Sticky notes are a great way to get children reading wherever they go.

Use Technology: You can find great reading games and tools on the Internet. Start with *Building Blocks*.

www.bbblocks.samhsa.gov/

Activity Tip

When you share an activity like moving a toy car carefully along a taped roadway, you're giving your child a fun way to practice staying "on the road."

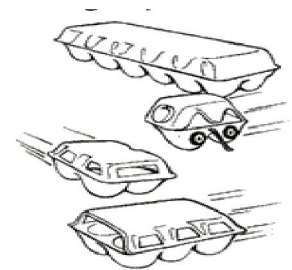
That's something your child needs for learning to use fingers carefully for writing. That kind of outer control can help your child develop inner self-control, too.

Activity Corner: Show & Tell

Submitted by Dale Berenc, KETC Channel 9

1. Have someone help you cut the egg carton crosswise, so there are four little wells and a hinge on one side that lets the top swing open and shut.
2. Cut out the side panels and back panels to make windows. You might want to glue clear plastic wrap over the inside of the windows and across the opening in front.
3. Poke slits in the sides of the passenger wells and thread garbage-bag twists to make seat belts.
4. You could paint the car and use magic markers to make headlights on the front, brake lights on the back, and wheels with hub caps on the side. Make buses from 6- or 12-seaters, or motorcycles from 2.
5. For a road, tape two strips of masking tape on the carpet or tabletop. You might also want to add handmade stop signs along the road.

Car & Masking Tape Roads



Calendar of Events



5078 Kensington
St. Louis, MO 63108

April 14, 2007

**Healthy Kids Day
YMCA Branches**

All YMCA branches will be holding open houses and events for families. Come sample healthy snacks, play games and try classes. For more information, call your local YMCA or 314-436-1177.

May 7, 2007

**South City/Carondelet YMCA Golf Tournament
in Forest Park**

Enjoy a game of golf while supporting the outreach programs of the South City and Carondelet Family YMCAs. To register, become a sponsor or get more information, call Mark Kuechle at 314-644-3100

June 17, 2007

**Father's Day Walk and Celebration
Forest Park**

Come celebrate fatherhood. The event will include a walk, workshops, story times, and resource booths. For more information call Thomas Johnson at 314-427-4940

June 7 & 8, 2007

**NCFL Children's Education in
Family Literacy ImPACT Training – Preschool
Kansas City, MO**

This training focuses on the skills and strategies important for educators of three-to-five year old children who attend family literacy programs. This training earns 14 hours of Professional Development credits.