TURNING THE PAGE: THE NEXT CHAPTER IN EARLY LITERACY INTERVENTIONS

Megan Carolan
Institute for Child Success
Agenda

• Why literacy matters
• Book deserts and community approaches
• Full-court press on literacy
  • Innovative non-classroom approaches
• Connecting to community-based efforts
• Engaging all adults
Why Literacy Matters
Why Literacy Matters

• 20% of 4-year-olds in poverty recognize all letters
  • 37% of 4-year-olds at or above poverty line
• 30% of first graders are not reading on grade level
• Challenges for low-income families:
  • Access to fewer literacy resources
  • Caregivers may have limited literacy skills
Literacy Trajectory

- Expressive and receptive vocabulary
- Early language abilities at age 3
- Expressive & receptive language, language awareness in K
- Word decoding in second grade
- Sentence reading in third and fourth grade
AAP position statement

• Encourage reading aloud
• Counsel regarding developmentally appropriate reading activities with exposure to books, pictures, and other written communication
• Provide developmentally appropriate books during well-child checks
• Have a multitude of options for promotion and support of literacy efforts
• Advocate nationally for promotion and support of early reading experiences
Importance of early literacy

- Children are born with building blocks, not bridges.
- Literacy is more than reading.
- Shared social-emotional stimulation between caregiver and child.
Trends in Early Literacy Policy

**Third grade literacy laws**
- Retained if not testing on grade level at 3rd grade
- Consequences on child’s development and expensive for districts

**Every Student Succeeds Act**
- 15% of literacy instruction funds for children birth to age 5
- “Develop or enhance comprehensive literacy instruction plans that ensure high-quality instruction”
“Book Deserts” and Community Approaches
Book Deserts & Literacy Access

• Area with intense lack of available reading materials
• Very poor neighborhoods in Detroit, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C.
• 2% of businesses sold any print for kids; many were dollar stores
• Lack of high-speed internet for low-income kids make paper books essential
• In Detroit, free book vending machines, sponsored by JetBlue
Full-court Press on Literacy
Literacy in Every Day Life

- Doctors’ offices
- Libraries
- Family literacy
- Grocery stores
- Barbershops
- Laundromat
- Literacy at home

“Implementing simple, cost-effective interventions in everyday environments may bolster children's language development and school readiness skills.”

- Kathy Hirsh-Pasek
Reach Out and Read

• Early literacy intervention builds off existing relationship between parents and medical provider
• At well-child visits from birth to age 5, children receive an age-appropriate book to keep
• Providers share age-appropriate guidance about literacy interactions with parents
• Unique opportunity for providers to stress importance of reading to young children and suggest reading activities
Program Outcomes

Research-based Outcomes
- Literacy & language skills
- Book ownership
- Frequency of reading
- Attitudes toward reading/literacy environment

Potential Outcomes
- Better parent/provider relationships
- Improved parent-child interaction
- Improved literacy skills
Libraries and Museums

• Libraries offered 2.3 million programs to kids under 11
• Every Child Ready to Read: training model for parents and caregivers to support literacy development in young children
• Family Place Libraries: asset-based approach focuses on whole child and role of parents as teachers
## Family Literacy Programs

- Develop literary interaction between parents and children
- Train parents as primary teacher for children
- Parent literacy training on economic self-sufficiency

### Children
- Increased reading time with parents
- Improved language skills
- Interest in books
- Enjoyment of reading

### Parents
- Increased confidence
- Literacy competence
- Increased understanding of role parents play in children's education
Grocery Stores

• Signs to start language-rich conversation in grocery stores

“I come from a cow. Can you find something else that comes from a cow?”

• In low-income community, language-rich conversations increased by 33% with signs

• Low cost intervention: $60
Barbershops

- Books available as children wait for themselves or family
- Barbershops as a key part of African-American men’s culture
- Barbershop Literacy project in Cleveland: books are made available, volunteers read to children, and Barber Literacy Mentors
- Serve as connection to other community efforts, pre-K enrollment, etc.

Barbershop Literacy Project’s Facebook page
Laundromats

- Books to borrow, or swap
- Posters to encourage conversation about what’s there
- Talk, sing, read
- Coloring and activity sheets
- Too Small to Fail & Annie E. Casey, Campaign for Grade Level Reading
  - Local models as well
Book Access Programs

• Imagination Library mails books to registered children every month, birth to 5
• Over 60 million books sent

• Open eBook: Adults working in programs with high rate of low-income children can register for access code
Daily Vroom

- Web and online tool offering tips to turn daily life into learning moments
- Daily prompts or choose from scenarios (waiting at doctor’s office, etc.) and age range
- Free, with support resources to bring into your community
“Teachable Moments” and Technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Interaction Project</th>
<th>Ready4K!</th>
<th>ReadyRosie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Specialists record parents with infants in waiting room; review and coach</td>
<td>• Weekly texts during pre-K year about K readiness skills</td>
<td>• Daily videos model conversations for families, up to age 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased teaching activities, lower parental stress, reduced developmental delays 33</td>
<td>• More frequent learning activities; children gained 2-3 months of learning in important areas of literacy</td>
<td>• Model behavior instead of written instructions - English and Spanish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wearable Tech

• Starling: baby-wearable device tracks number of words your baby hears and says each day

• Paired with app, you can set goals, track interaction, and find activities to develop further

• Not only for parents, but also child care providers

• Rich possibilities for children with possible delays
Lessons Learned

• Light touch programs can have short term impacts and “domino effects”
• Two-way communication - providers and parents partners in child’s development
• Multiple impacts beyond stated goals
• Population-based approaches can meet needs of at-risk families while reducing stigma
Map it out!
A day in the life of a family...

Map out the daily life of a family with young children. Where are opportunities for literacy in their communities?

Good morning!

Breakfast

Laundromat

Grocery Store

Car/Bus

Dinner time

Good night!