



## Library Development

### Grant Project Reports - 2009-11

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### Brooklyn Public Library

Contact Name: Steven Lamonea; 718-302-3485

Project Name: Brooklyn Builds Readers (BBR)

Project Amount: \$75,728

Brief Project Description: Brooklyn Builds Readers is an early literacy initiative promoting the importance of interactive play and shared-reading at home. The program helps babies and toddlers build reading and communication skills and enhances Brooklyn Public Library's (BPL) existing *First Five Years* program. A series of literacy programs that emphasized play at 10 BPL branches and off-site locations is offered.

Needs Addressed: Play is widely acknowledged as an essential element of learning and is critical to cognitive, linguistic, and motor skill development. There is an extensive body of empirical research demonstrating the benefits of play on learning, as evidenced by a meta-analysis of 46 studies on the positive effects of pretend, or "sociodramatic" play, on cognitive functioning.

Target Audience: The "Brooklyn Builds Readers" initiative expands upon BPL's system-wide *First Five Years* (FFY) early literacy program, and specifically targets Brooklyn children from birth to age three and parents/caregivers. FFY programs are open to these children and their families and cater specifically to low-income, non-English speaking and immigrant families.

Staffing/Volunteers/Partner Roles:

- Read to Me
- Living for the Young Family through Education (LYFE)
- Excellence Baby Academy
- Bedford-Stuyvesant Preparatory High School

#### Accomplishments for 2009-2011:

- Created a borough-wide campaign highlighting the importance of play for early childhood learning and literacy.
- Developed and disseminated educational materials regarding learning activities and literacy building play to parents with children up to age five.
- Brought classes or groups of children to local libraries for BBR sessions and/or special events.

#### Evaluation and Results:

- Sign-in sheets and surveys were used to measure attendance and satisfaction.
- Pre and post-program evaluation methodology were available in English, Spanish, Russian, Polish and Chinese.
- Results were shared with interested organizations in New York State at the end of the project period.

#### Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:

- In spring 2011, BPL received a grant from the Altman Foundation, a key sponsor of the First Five Years program, to support a program assistant and continue providing *Read Play Grow* activities at branches and community locations. The program will be expanded to 13 neighborhood libraries and one high-traffic off-site location in during 2012.

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## Buffalo & Erie Co. Public Library

Mary Jean Jakubowski; 716-858-7190

Project Name: Ready-to-Read, Ready-to-Learn at the Library

Project Amount: \$71,760

Brief Project Description: The Buffalo and Erie County Library and Project FLIGHT are collaborating with area schools, health care agencies, and individuals to present a holistic framework to address issues of academic under-achievement, literacy enrichment, and remediation for at-risk children and their families through early childhood literacy programs at

the Central Library and three library branch locations.

**Needs Addressed:** The City of Buffalo is ranked third in the United States for child poverty. Over 80% of children in the Buffalo Public Schools qualify for free or reduced lunch. These children, along with those living in Erie County, grow up in homes with low literacy rates. Approximately 130,000 adults in the City of Buffalo read at or below basic level as defined by standard literacy level measures (City of Buffalo Literacy Needs Assessment, 2006).

**Target Audience:** The program's target audience is children (birth to 5 years old), their families or caregivers, children's librarians, and elementary teachers in the city of Buffalo.

**Staffing/Volunteers/Partners Role:**

- Project FLIGHT
- Kaleida Health
- Buffalo Hearing and Speech
- Buffalo Public School #3, Enterprise Charter School & Hoover Elementary School

**Accomplishments for 2009-2011:**

- Create a collaborative framework of families, volunteer organizations, schools, literacy providers and librarians from which to reach out to target audience to deliver essential services.
- Provide early childhood literacy programming and services to at-risk, underserved populations and launch four "Library Literacy Centers".
- Improve library staff skills and knowledge regarding outreach, community services, collaboration, coalition building, emergent and family literacy, model programs, information and referral, and family support practice.

**Evaluation and Results:**

- An asset inventory was performed on all program parents/caregivers for "Family Place Libraries" program
- Pre and Post workshop surveys were given to all participants.
- Data will be evaluated on new library users, library card distribution and changes in circulation levels for parents/children's library materials.

**Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:**

- The central site continues to have problems with parking and walking accessibility. The library may need to offer two different sessions in order to address the specific needs of different groups, including language differences,

in the future. Also, the library may need to re-locate within the City of Buffalo.

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## Dormann Library

Carol Berry; 607-776-4613

Project Name: My First Teacher

Project Amount: \$65,526

Brief Project Description: *My First Teacher* was developed for at-risk families with children ages birth through five. Specifically, the project targeted 500 families who are enrolled in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program. Project staff conducted "Reading Corners" and other outreach initiatives at four monthly WIC clinic sites in the target area. The goals of *My First Teacher* were to improve early literacy skills of children through the promotion of intergenerational family literacy activities, and to increase the availability of library resources and programs that encourage parent/child reading activities.

Needs Addressed: *My First Teacher* addressed a significant community need – preparing at-risk families, who are either parenting or expecting young children, to be effective as their children's "first teacher". All too frequently, at-risk parents do not understand the importance of early language development or fully comprehend their role as their child's "first teacher". Unfortunately, it is a very real possibility that children in these families will enter school lagging behind their peers in early literacy and other academic skills.

Target Audience: While the project included library-based programs and resources that were marketed and available to the general public, the project specifically targeted at-risk families who were enrolled in WIC and other community-based services. These families are often characterized by one or more at-risk indicators, such as low family income, teen parents, or public assistance recipients.

Staffing/Volunteers/Partners Role:

- Literacy Volunteers of America
- WIC Program

Accomplishments for 2009-2011:

- Provided community-based outreach activities that target at-risk families currently enrolled in existing programs

that serve families with children 5 or under, or who are pregnant.

- Prepare children to succeed in school.

#### Evaluation and Results:

- Circulated a high number of library materials.
- Observed the number of people attending various programs.
- Gauged participant satisfaction gained through individual conversations.

#### Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:

The director of Dormann Library will continue to build a library collection that supports early literacy initiatives, as funds permit, and work with the Pre-school Children's Services Coordinator to improve and enhance two literacy programs - Story Time and Cuddle Up - which are offered each week at the Dormann Library. Families served by the First Teacher grant will be encouraged to attend.

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## The New York Public Library

H. Jack Martin; 213-340-0908

Project Name: Daddy and Me @ the Library

Project Amount: \$75,728

Brief Project Description: The New York Public Library (NYPL) spent the last two years implementing *Daddy and Me @ the Library*, aimed at strengthening NYPL's outreach and programmatic offerings to male caregivers in the library's service areas of the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island. NYPL hosted special programming geared to male caregiver and parent audiences. Project goals included encouraging fathers to attend the library's early childhood programs and providing training to help incarcerated fathers read to their children and engage them in literacy activities.

Needs Addressed: Studies indicate that children whose fathers have read to them are better readers and perform better in school. There are also benefits reported for the fathers themselves, including greater literacy skills, greater confidence and self-esteem, improved father-child relationships, and increased engagement with learning (National Literacy Trust, 2008).

Target Audience: The project served fathers and male caregivers of children from birth to age five. This audience

includes working fathers, stay-at-home fathers, single or divorced fathers, teen fathers, caregiver grandfathers, non-custodial fathers, stepfathers, adoptive or foster fathers, and other male caregivers such as brothers or uncles.

#### Staffing/Volunteers/Partners Role:

- New York City Department of Corrections
- Rikers Island Correctional Facility

#### Accomplishments for 2009-2011:

- During year two of the project, NYPL implemented an expansion of the correctional services pilot that was introduced the previous year.
- One of the most important links to successful re-entry for incarcerated populations is a strong family bond, which the Daddy & Me program sought to foster with a multiple-session early literacy workshop.
- The programs were very popular, with 1,649 parents/caregivers and children attending 53 programs in all, at locations in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island.

#### Evaluation and Results:

- 37 participating sites observed the number of people attending various programs.
- Total number of users served: 1,816.
- Number of workshops/programs: 82

#### Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:

The library recently received a modest private grant to continue literacy-related activities at Rikers Island Correctional Facility. Funding will expand the current availability of library services and support a bi-weekly "suitcase" library service for detained teen girls at the Staten Island Residential Center.

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## **Olean Public Library**

Kathleen Price; 716-372-0200

Project Name: LEAP Forward at the Library

Project Amount: \$25,935

**Brief Project Description:** The Olean Public Library continues to partner with Olean Family Connection Even Start and provides library and early literacy experiences for young, low-income, and disadvantaged parents and children. Project *LEAP (Learn, Explore and Participate) Forward at the Library* focuses on families who are not traditional library users and who are less likely to use early literacy behaviors with their children.

**Needs Addressed:** The most critical time to influence a child's literacy is before he or she enters school. Early experiences largely determine a child's future learning success. Research has shown that when mothers frequently speak to their infants, children learn almost 300 more words by age two as compared with children whose mothers rarely speak to them (Huttenlocher et al., 1991; also, Hart Risley, 1995). Parents, who are preoccupied with the daily struggle to ensure that their children have enough to eat and are safe from harm, may not have the resources, information, or time to provide the stimulating experiences that foster optimal brain development.

**Target Audience:** The Even Start program in Olean serves approximately 40 families per year who are all below the poverty line and in which the parents need adult education instruction in order to receive a high school diploma or GED. More than 50% of the parents are teens.

**Staffing/Volunteers/Partners Role:**

- Olean Family Connections — Even Start (Even Start)
- Even Start assisted Olean Public Library in planning, project activities, and evaluation.

**Accomplishments for 2009-2011:**

- Each session emphasized one pre-reading skill; narrative skills, print motivation, vocabulary, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and print awareness, as defined by the "Every Child Ready to Read" project.
- Children and parents participated in storytime format program that included age-appropriate stories, word games, songs and finger plays, baby sign, and related hands-on activities.
- The Olean Public Library's parent/teacher collection, which was about 90% print material, added additional early literacy and parenting materials in alternative formats to specifically accommodate the needs of parents in the target population.

**Evaluation and Results:**

- 24 Even Start families with 34 parents and 41 children and 12 additional families with 18 adults and 22 children participated in the program. This was a total of 36 families consisting of 52 parents and 59 children.

- Participants were offered additional incentives at each session to check out library materials relevant to the topics covered. 94% participated.
- Parent participants have been observed checking out books from the library for their children.

Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:

The library will continue this project when the project grant period is over. The program will be incorporated into the regular program offering of the library and will be supported through the Olean Public Library children's program budget.

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## **Potsdam Public Library**

Sarah Sachs; 315-265-7230

Project Name: Science in the Library – Something to Talk About

Project Amount: \$19,391

Brief Project Description: Science and literacy are natural partners. For preschoolers, the activities and language of science provide a uniquely rich and exciting environment for building vocabulary, one of the most critical skills for future success in school. Children entering school from low-income homes have been shown to have significantly lower vocabulary acquisition than children from middle income homes. (Sinatra, 2008).

Needs Addressed: "Science in the Library" addresses a three-part need identified by research and experience: low income children need increased experience with: vocabulary and science readiness, and their teachers need to become more aware of library resources to meet those needs.

Target Audience: The project focused on preschoolers and parents from lower income homes who live within the four county region of the North Country Library System. At the time the grant was planned, the percentage of resident families living below the poverty level was 22.75%. With current unemployment numbers hovering at 10.5%, that number of families will certainly increase during the next count.

Staffing/Volunteers/Partners Role:

- Eight libraries: Potsdam Public Library, Ogdensburg Public Library, Massena Public Library, Canton Free Library, Flower Memorial Library, Lowville Library, Fulton Library, and Oswego School District Public Library

- St. Lawrence County Head Start, Jefferson County Head Start, Lewis County Head Start, Oswego County Head Start and SUNY Canton's Early Childhood Education Program.
- Dana Barry, Senior Grant Writer for the Center for Advanced Materials Processing (CAMP) at Clarkson University and Carolyn Stone, instructor in the Department of Literacy Education at SUNY Potsdam.

#### Accomplishments for 2009-2011:

- Engaged low-income children in science and reading.
- Taught area Head Start teachers, Even Start teachers and others how to implement this program.
- Taught low-income parents how to practice early literacy skills in the home.

#### Evaluation and Results:

- Participants in the science and literacy workshops/training sessions were surveyed both before and after the trainings to collect information about the effect of the training. Analysis of the surveys reported 93% of the Head Start teachers said that they felt more comfortable about using science in their lessons and that they gained tips and information to help them meet their science curriculum goals.
- After the presentation of the library component of the workshop, 93% of the participants said that they learned new ways to use the library and its resources and also felt more confident about selecting age-appropriate science books for their classrooms.

#### Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:

Grant goals were to provide knowledge and access to resources which could help with the everyday needs of teachers and parents. The placement of programming materials in participating libraries encouraged the programmers to integrate science into weekly activities. Library staff members engaged in ongoing conversation about science activities and the grant team hopes to continue this and expand the program to other libraries in the system. Now that the resources and training are in place, the project will continue as long as there are staff members. Science has proven to be a very engaging subject for staff, parents and children.

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## Queens Borough Public Library

Silvana Vasconcelos; 718-784-2112

Project Name: Early Literacy Enrichment Program

Project Amount: \$63,026

**Brief Project Description:** The purpose of this project was to promote early childhood literacy in new immigrant and native-born families through workshops which use oral language, reading, music, movement, arts, video and nutrition for children and families. During year two of this project, the library provided early childhood education and interactive literacy workshops for children one to four years old and their parents at Queens Library Ravenswood Family Center/Welcome Center and four childcare centers close to Ravenswood Family Center.

**Needs Addressed:** As of the 2000 U.S. Census, 57% of Long Island City's population are immigrants, nearly 38% of whom have less than a GED or high school diploma. 70% of children are born to women who are immigrants. This program aimed to: increase parent literacy skills on all levels and build confidence to foster academic achievement among this group and their children.

**Target Audience:** The program targeted parents with less than a high school diploma and immigrant parents with low literacy skills in English.

**Staffing/Volunteers/Partners Role:**

- The Queens Museum of Art
- Cornell University Cooperative Extension
- PS112, Voice Charter School and Academy of the City Charter School

**Accomplishments for 2009-2011:**

- At the Literacy Zone/Ravenswood Family Center, the library provided sixty (60) two-hour early literacy workshops to 35 children and their parents. These workshops focused on active learning through read aloud, arts, crafts, music and movement activities. In addition, Head Start teachers, Even Start teachers and others were taught how to implement the program.
- By the end of program, participating families received a total of 144 children books to add to their home libraries (33 families received a total of 4 books each and 2 families received a total of 6 books each) and borrowed 117 books
- Participants were exposed to best practices for teaching early literacy skills in the home

**Evaluation and Results:**

- Ninety children were pre and post-assessed. Seventy-six (76) children 3-4 years old were assessed to measure changes in areas of color knowledge, alphabet recognition, name recognition and number sense. There was an overall increase in all of these areas.
- Fifteen children ages one to three were assessed on their ability to separate, interact with other children, manipulate objects, respond to their name, increase vocabulary and follow simple directions. All four of the two and three year old children participated in activities and improved fine motor skills.

#### Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:

The library would like to continue this project. In order to continue we would need \$19,236 for the early literacy specialist wages, \$1,696 for social security and \$600 for supplies and materials.

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## Richmond Memorial Library

Diana Wyrwa; 585-343-9550

Project Name: Eat, Read, Grow

Project Amount: \$26,982

**Brief Project Description:** The *Eat, Read, Grow* program is an initiative to promote healthy lifestyles to area families with preschoolers. The program combines story time for the preschoolers with activities designed within two modules: nutrition and gardening. The nutrition module focuses on educating families on basic nutrition principles. The gardening program demonstrates how families, especially those with financial concerns, can maximize their food budgets even with small-container gardens.

**Needs Addressed:** The Batavia community continues to face challenges. 41% of K-8 school population is eligible for free or reduced price lunches. The community is awakening to health concerns created by poor diet and unhealthy lifestyles. Agencies, including the library, have united to take action. This has helped provide a direct link between the *Eat, Read, Grow* program and the community's *Get Fit* coalition.

**Target Audience:** The target audience was families with pre-school children. The library specifically promoted the program at a local low-income housing project. The program was duplicated in a childcare center that is specifically designated for families of migrant farm workers.

#### Staffing/Volunteers/Partners Role:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension Master Gardener program
- Migrant Day Care Center and Headstart

#### Accomplishments for 2009-2011:

- Parents and children learned rudimentary gardening skills and potted plants. With these plants, family menus were supplemented with nutritional home-grown produce.
- Story time provided age-appropriate books about produce, gardening and nutrition
- to read to their children.

#### Evaluation and Results:

- For each module, the library asked parents for feedback. Children come into the library each week and proudly announce what they have eaten from the garden!
- The morning sessions of our *Eat, Read, Grow* had an average attendance of 16 plus one parent or caregiver per child, and the evening session had an average attendance of 24 plus at least one parent and frequently two parents per child.
- For the outreach sessions at the Agri-Business child care center (three classes) and Head Start (five classes) there was an average student population of 14. For the outreach program at Get Fit average attendance was 12 families for each of the ten sessions.

#### Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:

This project may be continued in a variety of ways. The nutritional segments can be easily incorporated into existing family story hours. These programs can be tailored to include specific themes that focus on the nutritional needs of the participating families. The gardening portions of the project require more materials. The library is currently looking at additional grant opportunities to make sure this program continues to be available to area families. Long-range plans are to continue to develop this concept and create a community garden.

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## Seneca Falls Library

Kathleen Miller; 315-568-8265

Project Name: Raising Readers

Project Amount: \$25,750

Brief Project Description: The Seneca Falls Library, located in the village of Seneca Falls, partnered with local daycare / preschool providers, schools and other community organizations to implement *Raising Readers*. This program improved early literacy skills in young children, ages birth through five, and strengthened parental/caregiver involvement in children's literacy development.

Needs Addressed: Population in Seneca Falls and the surrounding area need help to strengthen early literacy skills and to increase parent/caregiver involvement in children's literacy development. The Seneca Falls Library serves an isolated, rural area with a large number of children who qualify for free and reduced lunches (33%), substandard Regents English Competency scores (34% scoring at 85 or above), and high numbers of adults with low or no literacy skills (40%).

Target Audience: *Raising Readers* targets children ages birth through five and their parents and caregivers who live in Seneca Falls and the surrounding area. Target audience includes 270 children who are enrolled at Seneca County Head Start – 102, Creative Choices Child Care – 112, Learning Tree Child Care – 36, and Stepping Stones Preschool – 20.

Staffing/Volunteers/Partners Role:

- Seneca Falls Central School District
- Finger Lakes Library System
- Seneca County Head Start, Creative Choices Child Care, Stepping Stones Preschool, Learning Tree Child Care

Accomplishments for 2009-2011:

- Based on results from pre- and post-program surveys, it is believed that the story times increased reading readiness in 0-5 year olds, increased participation by parents/caregivers in early literacy development, enhanced comprehension of the 6 early literacy skills for young children, and promoted enthusiasm for reading.

Evaluation and Results:

- A survey was conducted of reading readiness indicators in September 2010 and again in June 2011.

Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:

We will continue to offer weekly story times at the library and will be adding another day to our schedule in September. Our relationships with the outreach sites will continue, making communication of our special event offerings and visits (both children to the library and our Children's Librarian to the sites) a priority.

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## Southern Tier Library System

Lorie Brown; 607-962-3141 x209

Project Name: Beginnings

Project Amount: \$30,342

**Brief Project Description:** *Beginnings* was an early literacy project that to train parents and caregivers in early literacy techniques. The focus was on the essential foundation of pre-reading and pre-writing skills in children from birth to age 5. A key component of the project was training library staff and staff from partner agencies in simple pre-reading activities for parents and caregivers. Parents learn from staff and agency modeling of these activities.

**Needs Addressed:** The five rural counties (Allegany, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Yates) in the Southern Tier Library System's (STLS) service area are among the most rural and poorest in the state. The impact of the national economic recession over the course of this project makes *Beginnings* even more essential.

**Target Audience:** The project will target parents, caregivers and children from birth through age five. Within the five counties, the total population under the age of five is 16,675.

**Staffing/Volunteers/Partners Role:**

- Hornell Children's Home, Hornell Headstart,
- Corning Community College Child Care Center, The Nonnie Hood Parent & Family Resource Center,
- Wayland-Cohocton Early Headstart, Wayland-Cohocton Elementary School
- Finger Lakes Library System

**Accomplishments for 2009-2011:**

- Provided resources and taught skills to parents/caregivers so they could send their children to school with the pre-reading skills necessary to succeed in school.
- Increase the number of onsite and off-site library programs for the target audience.

Evaluation and Results:

- Each training session had an evaluation questionnaire which indicated attendees' knowledge- base before and after the training. Evaluations had rating scales and open-ended questions.
- Quantitative evaluation methods for library programs and trainings included the number of programs and trainings as well as the attendance at programs.

Changes/Recommendations/Continuation Plans:

This project will be continued but on a much smaller scale. Inserts that feature early literacy skills will continue to be included in picture books of the system-level rotating collections. This will continue the project goal to present information on literacy skills to a wide patron base.