

The Ready To Learn Book Initiative

The Community Idea Stations are committed to giving disadvantaged children the opportunity to read and to own new books. Our Ready To Learn Book Initiative is designed to work with already existing family literacy programs, tutoring programs, and mentoring programs, that are often burdened by minimal resources and limited financial support. These grants are designed to offer children an opportunity to receive a new book for their own home library.

The Ready To Learn Book Initiative is one integral part of our Ready to Learn service. Many of our literacy partners participate in this initiative. In this program, a child receives **one new book** per month for ten months. Each book is accompanied by a **parent handout** with reading suggestions and literacy activities that complement the theme of the book. Parents attend a series of **Ready To Learn workshops** that provide clear instruction on interaction and effective ways to read with children. At each workshop, each participant is provided a free learning kit which includes additional activities for parents/caregivers to use at home to improve children's literacy skills. Also included is information about educational resources such as libraries and our educational website. Not only are we giving the children books, we are giving the families literacy tools to extend the learning at home.

The basic project design for the Ready To Learn Book Initiative is:

- To partner with existing literacy programs in central Virginia.
- To provide each child in the program with one book per month for ten months to build a small home library.
- To provide parents with literacy activity handouts to accompany each book and to encourage literacy skill building activities at home
- To provide a series of Ready To Learn workshops to model best practices, to provide teaching strategies for parents to use at home, and to strengthen the work of our literacy partners.

Based on our past success, Ready To Learn expects an increase in the following outcomes:

- children's interest in reading;
- parental awareness and involvement in their role as a child's first and most important teacher;

- literacy resources and activities implemented in the home and early childhood classrooms; and
- parental awareness of the need for selective viewing of television programs.