

Some ways your library can help:

- create awareness for parents and caregivers at every age and income level on the importance of early literacy practices through baby, toddler and pre-k programs and parent/caregiver training at the library or at locations convenient to parents/caregivers
- train local childcare community in early literacy best practices
- inform local teachers of library efforts that complement school efforts
- work collaboratively with local schools or other agencies to get funding for early literacy initiatives in your community
- use your imagination, there are so many ways your library can work with you!

Want more information?

For more information about how you can work with your library, contact PLA –phone: 312.280.5025; email: pla@ala.org.

About PLA

The Public Library Association's mission is to enhance the development and effectiveness of public library staff and public library services. With 10,000 members and based in Chicago, at the American Library Association (ALA) headquarters, PLA is a member-driven organization that provides a diverse program of communication, publication, advocacy, continuing education, and programming for its members and others interested in the advancement of public library service. For more information about PLA, see our web page at www.pla.org or contact: Barbara Macikas, Deputy Director, PLA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Phone: 312-280-5025; fax: 312-280-5029; email: bmacikas@ala.org.

About ALSC

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association, is the world's largest organization dedicated to the support and enhancement of service to children in all types of libraries. The mission of ALSC is to support the profession of children's librarianship enabling and encouraging its practitioners to provide the best library service to our nation's children. For more information about ALSC visit our web page at ala.org/alsc or contact Stephanie Anton, Deputy Executive Director, ALSC, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Phone 312-280-2164; e-mail santon@ala.org.



Every Child
Ready to Read
@ your library®



Public Libraries
Community Partners for Early
Childhood Literacy Success



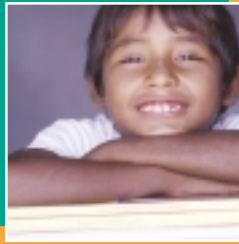
www.pla.org

Did you know?

Source: 2003 NAEP
(National Assessment of Educational Progress)



Nationally, 37% of fourth graders do not have even a basic reading level.



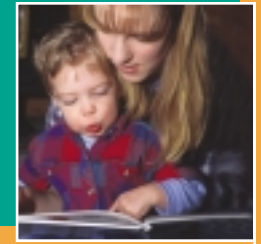
Knowledge of alphabet letters at entry into kindergarten is a strong predictor of reading ability in 10th grade.



Three-quarters of children whose reading difficulties are not identified by fourth grade will still have poor reading skills at the end of high school.



There is nearly a 90% probability that a child will remain a poor reader at the end of the fourth grade if the child is a poor reader at the end of the first grade.



Fifty-four percent of children eligible for the federal free-and-reduced-price lunch program and 45% of children living in central cities cannot read at a basic level.

Public libraries help children get ready to read

There are over 9,000 public libraries in the U.S. and each of these libraries is a center of community life for learning, literacy and culture. Hundreds of thousands of children read books from their public libraries and countless parents and caregivers read library books to babies and toddlers. Public libraries have a long and rich tradition of helping children become readers.

The Public Library Association (PLA), and the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), divisions of the American Library Association (ALA), recognizing the critical need for early literacy education and aware of the resources and knowledge librarians bring, worked with educators and researchers to develop successful public library programs that have been proven to make a difference. These programs allow all libraries to be even more effective early literacy resources within communities.

PLA/ALSC research is in— libraries make a difference

In 2002-03, PLA and ALSC conducted and evaluated early literacy library programs. The evaluation was designed to test whether parents and caregivers incorporated needed skill-building activities into their time with their preschool children and to document library effectiveness as early literacy providers. Librarians were trained using models developed for PLA by Dr. Grover C. Whitehurst and Dr. Christopher Lonigan, based on most current research-based findings concerning reading development in America's children. (For more information, see www.pla.org.)

Our research reveals that parents—*of every age, educational background, income level, and ethnicity—who participated in the public library early literacy programs significantly increased their literacy behaviors.* Teen parents and low-education and low-income parents,

who exhibited fewest of the literacy behaviors at the intake, showed significant improvement across all behaviors. In short, when public libraries, using current research practices, partner with the young child's most important teachers—parents and caregivers—there is a tremendous positive influence on those individual's behaviors and in getting preschool children ready to read.

Your library can help

Libraries are long-time partners with community organizations such as schools, childcare centers, pediatricians, parenting programs, Head Start, family service agencies, and many more. Your library can work with you to get best literacy practices out to the people most important to those children--their parents, grandparents, and caregivers—and to insure the children in your community are ready to read by kindergarten and to succeed in life.