

To: MSL Network Advisory Council

From: Sara Groves, MSL Communications/Marketing Coordinator

Date: October 26, 2011

Re: Early Literacy Statewide Initiative Update

There were two programs at the Fall Workshop that related to Ready 2 Read – Play in Libraries and Block Play. These two workshops were well-attended and both spoke to our next steps in the Ready 2 Read program, introducing the concept of “play” in libraries. Both workshops were packed and the speakers provided ample ideas for introducing things that librarians could easily work into their libraries, regardless of size and budget – which is one of the important messages we are trying to share.

Several additional libraries qualified for the books bins. In the past two years, we have moved forward from having fewer than five libraries providing early childhood programming to almost 70 libraries providing early childhood programming today. A huge accomplishment!

45 librarians attended the Ready 2 Read Rendezvous, a 3-day workshop scheduled on October 7 – 9 in Bozeman, MT. This training was supported in full by First Interstate BancSystem and it was truly a magical experience. Many of the librarians who attended had never had the opportunity to come to a training before. Additionally, a large group of children’s librarians were together for THREE DAYS STRAIGHT, which provided ample opportunity to share ideas, discuss challenges, and get to know one another. All meals and hotel were provided for attendees. Additionally, if attendees needed reimbursement for mileage, they were reimbursed up to \$100. All attendees were provided continuing education credits or OPI renewal credits for each session. The speakers and topics are outlined below:

Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs – Linda Clark

How can we give children the life skills they need to cope - even thrive - in our multi-tasking, multimedia, modern world? Ellen Galinsky, founder of the field of work-family studies, felt compelled to seek an answer to this question more than a decade ago when her own research showed that far too many young people were turned off to learning. Since then, Galinsky has conducted an extensive review of the research on how children learn best, including the filming of over 100 key researchers, many of them concentrating on what is happening in the earliest years of children’s lives. In *Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs* (HarperCollins, 2010), Galinsky distills her decade-long search for what matters most to children’s success today. In MITM segments during the Rendezvous, we’ll take a quick look at what Galinsky learned.

Making the Most of Your Library Space for Young Children and Families: Expectations and Guidelines From a Developmental Perspective – Christine Lux

In this workshop, you will learn what to expect from your youngest library visitors and their caregivers and also learn effective strategies and guidelines to make the library experience a positive one for all!

Growing Up Wild – Kurt Cunningham

Growing Up WILD is an early childhood education program that builds on children's sense of wonder about nature and invites them to explore wildlife and the world around them. Through a wide range of activities and experiences, Growing Up WILD provides an early foundation for developing positive impressions about the natural world and lifelong social and academic skills. You'll walk away from this workshop with new ways to provide exposure to science during storyhours.

Early Learning and the Public Library: Using Every Child Ready to Read 2 to Share Early Learning – Judy Nelson

Judy's workshop will review the American Library Association's new version of Every Child Ready to Read Campaign, focusing on what we've learned and know. She will present an overview of the first and second staff workshops, called "Early Literacy and Learning Spaces." Next, Judy will move onto an overview of the "Fun with Science and Math" workshop, material you can share directly with your youngest patrons and their caregivers. Judy will also demonstrate additional ways to use the Every Child Ready to Read materials effectively, such as incorporating the five practices into storytimes.

Learning Through Play: A Child's Work – Deanna Mackin

This workshop will take an in-depth look at the work of a child: PLAY! With an emphasis on block and manipulative play, participants will gain an understanding of the ages and stages of children's learning and how nearly everything that infants, toddlers, and preschoolers need to know before they enter school can be accomplished through play. Everyone will get a chance to have some hands-on play time as they explore the learning opportunities that can be provided for young children in the library setting.

Advocacy 101: Storytelling for Policymakers – Shannon Garrett

This 3-hour, intensive, highly interactive session will help prepare you to prove the value of early childhood literacy to legislators, local funders, library patrons, and other stakeholders. During this session we will find the story of early literacy in your community, practice storytelling and messaging around early literacy, and discuss ways to influence power brokers to support your programs. Participants will leave the session empowered to advocate on behalf of early literacy in front of any type of audience.

The additional money from the First Interstate BancSystem Foundation will be used to support the Ready 2 Read Goes Wild! trunk program that we have developed in partnership with Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks. Right now we have been focusing on the development of the trunks for Montana's tribes. I have met with the Office of Public Instruction's Indian Education division. They are helping us develop contacts and also helping identifying resources that are appropriate. We have begun trunk development on Fort Belknap and have identified other individuals who will lead the charge on other reservations. These trunks will be placed in a reservation's tribal library for use in their community, but will also be shared among libraries in the state via interlibrary loan.

The new Ready 2 Read PlaySpace opened at the Bozeman Public Library in mid-September. The PlaySpace offers high-quality toys (specifically unit blocks) and hands-on interactive tools with the goal of expanding the traditional role of children's services and increasing the capacity of libraries to recognize and realize their full potential as community hubs for healthy child and family development, parent and community involvement and lifelong learning beginning at birth. The Bozeman Public Library is our experimental PlaySpace. The PlaySpace is branded as part of the Ready 2 Read program through design, which was completed by the original Ready 2 Read designer. Our plan is to use funding from the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation to expand the PlaySpace ideas into libraries across Montana.

I have finalized language for five new brochures, five new posters, and five new bookmarks that will focus on the audience of families with low literacy skills themselves. These materials will tie into and promote the American Library Association's Every Child Ready to Read Campaign. The five themes are: Play, Write, Sing, Talk, and Read. I am working with the original Ready 2 Read designer and she is developing some new Montana animals and babies to deliver this part of the campaign. Printed materials should be available soon.

Ready 2 Read Goes Wild! – The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP), in partnership with the Montana State Library (MSL) and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Head Start division received a small grant from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Council for Environmental Education to help support the Read 2 Read Goes Wild! program. As part of this grant, trainings have taken place at Fort Peck, Fort Belknap, Lame Deer and Salish Kootenai, and Rocky Boy. Librarians have helped out around the state with the early literacy portion of the training. The grant closed on September 30; nearly 200 individuals on Montana's reservations reserved GUV and early literacy training.