

# Making Connections Media Outreach Initiative

## School Readiness / CHAPSS

### Outreach Extensions

AECF's Core Result that Children are Healthy and Prepared to Succeed in School (CHAPSS) has a strong link to public television stations' Ready To Learn (RTL), Raising Readers, and Ready to Lead in Literacy (RTLL) curricula and resources. Site teams and stations can thus collaborate effectively to offer valuable educational services within the *Making Connections* neighborhoods to benefit children and families. Stations also increase the visibility and branding of the *Making Connections* (MC) Initiative, agencies, and families.

During the grant period of January 1, 2007 through October 31, 2008, the following results-oriented activities (see below) occurred. Outcomes include the following:

- Outreach Extensions leveraged grant funds from other sources – PBS and the U.S. Department of Education – to provide educational benefits to MC sites. The SUPER WHY Reading Camps built children's literacy skills and school readiness.
  - Based on pre and post test results, overall, campers showed significant improvement (at the 95% significance level) within each and every day's literacy skill set taught.
  - Word Decoding - 79% increase in children's ability to combine a letter's sound with the –ALL word family and read –ALL word family words
  - Word Encoding - 39% increase in children's ability to correctly identify the letters that make the given sound
  - Reading - 37% increase in children's ability to correctly read words and identify the opposites as presented in the episode
  - Letter Identification - 10% increase in children's ability to correctly identify letters from the alphabet (scores were high to begin with and therefore can be explained as a ceiling effect)
- Stations leveraged their grant funds from other sources to benefit the local MC sites – extending the MCMOI's sustainability.
- Stations/MC sites produced local broadcast town halls, documentaries, and roll-ins that raised awareness (local and statewide) of the vital need to build young children's literacy skills and prepare them for school. Broadcast capacity reached broad audiences.
- Through efforts such as the broadcast town halls stations and MC sites helped to establish wider community coalitions to create better futures for children through focusing on literacy and school readiness; these efforts will continue.
- Media support from public television stations lifted up the visibility of MC site resources and activities including showcasing quality educational programs through on-air spots and broadcast town hall roll-ins.
- Resources developed by stations and MC sites were used to train child care providers in the sites (to improve educational opportunities for children) as well as made available to local colleges and universities for training purposes.
- Stations/MC sites empowered residents to develop local solutions such as establishing networks of child care providers and implementing family book clubs, providing opportunities for leadership and skill development, and building their capacity to serve children and families.

## 2007/2008 Impacts

### A. Outreach Extensions leveraged the new \$20 million PBS SUPER WHY reading readiness series for preschoolers to assist MC sites.

In January 2007, Outreach Extensions (OE) received a contract from SUPER WHY/the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to conduct a national outreach campaign for a new PBS Kids literacy/reading series for three- to six-year-old children. Supported by a \$20 million dollar, three-year investment, the 65-episode series is part of PBS Raising Readers, focused on helping at-risk kids learn to read, and funded by a cooperative agreement of the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), and PBS. The series' overall objective is to teach preschool and kindergarten children to practice literacy skills in an engaging and motivating literacy-rich environment. Outreach extends the value of the series into the community, offering hands-on learning activities and community engagement.

Grant activities have been conducted for Year One (2007) and Year Two (2008) of the project. These are reported below. Additional Reading Camps will be conducted in 2009.

#### 1. OE secured SUPER WHY Reading Camp grants for several stations serving MC neighborhoods.

The SUPER WHY Reading Camps embrace a comprehensive literacy approach that achieves a balance between teaching skills and making literacy meaningful and relevant. Children learn the elements of literacy that reading researchers have deemed important to teach for this age: stories, characters, language development, vocabulary, letter identification, letter sounds, rhyming, word families, comprehension, and reading text. Projects assisted sites in achieving their CHAPSS Core Results.

### **2008 (All projects funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and U.S. Department of Education)**

#### • **Baltimore, MD**

**Maryland Public Television** conducted two SUPER WHY Reading Camps in 2008:  
- The DRU Judy Center, Ready, Set, Learn Summer Camp (June 16-20, 2008) at John Eager Howard Elementary School, Baltimore, MD 21217  
- Judy Center, Land and Sea Summer Camp (July 28-August 1, 2008) at Monrovia Park Elementary/Middle School, Baltimore, MD 21206

Maryland Public Television's camps are an interactive enrichment opportunity designed primarily for 5-year-old children in Baltimore City. The purpose of the camps is to promote language development and reading readiness skills for young children and enhance their formal school experience in kindergarten. *"Children enjoyed the interactive nature of the camp; they readily demonstrated their recall and prediction skills when led through the activities with the camp leaders."* Project reach: 39

#### • **Des Moines, IA**

**Iowa Public Television** conducted one SUPER WHY Reading Camp in summer 2008:  
- Perry Child Development Center, Perry, IA 50220 (July 7-11, 2008)  
Iowa Public Television's goal was to demonstrate that the Reading Camp concept can achieve replicable results in Iowa. The information gained from conducting the camp will assist IPTV (a statewide network) in acquiring funds and support to implement the Reading Camp model throughout Iowa in future years. IPTV partnered with the Perry Child

Development Center to offer the camp, building on an existing summer educational offering. The five day camp enhanced the children's normal daycare activities.

- **San Antonio, TX**

**KLRN** conducted one SUPER WHY Reading Camp in summer 2008:

- YWCA, 503 Castrovilla Road, San Antonio, TX 78237 (June 23-27, 2008) (same site as 2007)

KLRN's SUPER WHY Camp for Kids utilized engaging clips and research-based curriculum from the PBS program SUPER WHY to immerse children in fun, age-appropriate learning that reinforced key reading criteria needed for reading success. The camp was part of the YWCA's existing summer educational program. The YWCA serves families whose median household income is less than half of the national average.

- **San Diego, CA**

**KPBS** conducted two SUPER WHY Reading Camps in summer 2008:

- National City Collaborative, National City, CA 91950 (June 16-20, 2008)

- Neighborhood House of Calexico, Calexico, CA 92231 (June 16-20, 2008)

The goal of KPBS' SUPER WHY Reading Camp was to engage young children in activities that address literacy, vocabulary, and fun learning. KPBS partnered with the National City Collaborative (NCC) to conduct the camp, which was held in a school setting and was part of an existing summer program. KPBS' second partner was the Neighborhood House of Calexico. The camp was also held in a school setting as part of an existing summer program. Neighborhood House is related to the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. *"Parents loved the camp program. Their children shared with them what they learned each day."* Project reach: 40

- **Washington, DC**

**WHUT** conducted two SUPER WHY Reading Camps in summer 2008:

- Ross Elementary School, Washington, DC 20009 (June 23-27, 2008) (18 children)

- Howard Road Academy Public Charter School, Washington, DC 20020 (July 7-11, 2008) (18 children)

WHUT, Howard University Television, provided low-income children and their families with learning-to-read resources. Howard Road Academy 600 students in grades K-7; the school is managed by Mosaica Education, Inc. The Ross camp served as a laboratory for WHUT, working in partnership with the Howard University School of Education, to learn replicable ways of providing literacy-enhancing activities to children using educational media. *"The camp was incredibly successful, evidenced by the post-assessments as well as by the positive attitudes of children and parents."* Project reach: 61

**2007 (With the exception of one Oakland Reading Camp, all camps were funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the U.S. Department of Education)**

- **Oakland, CA (2 Camps)**

**Reading Camp – Oakland 1** provided enriching learning experiences for 18 preschool children residing in the Fruitvale neighborhood. KQED worked closely with staff at Manzanita SEED and Community Schools, and their Even Start Family Literacy Program to present SUPER WHY materials, enhance children's reading skills, and engage parents. In the process, the station established itself as an important educational resource in the neighborhood. Project reach: 36

**Reading Camp – Oakland 2**, conducted by KQED in association with the MC site, was held at the Ready to Learn Reading Center in collaboration with Oakland Ready To Learn. The 22 children were diverse – African American, Vietnamese, Laotian, and Chinese. While

children participated in the camp, their parents enjoyed a series of parenting classes to help them support their children's literacy learning. (*Camp funded by AECF.*) Project reach: 44

- **San Antonio, TX**

The Reading Camp took place at the YWCA located in the heart of the 78237 zip code. The camp enhanced the literacy of 10 enrolled children and helped families find creative ways to “play” with their children while utilizing techniques learned in the camp. Children practiced their literacy and pre-reading skills through fun activities based on a television show that was interesting for them. KLRN continues to work in the area to offer support for child care staff, training parents and informal caregivers and has a network of partnering agencies working to improve children's lives – health, education, and family life. Project reach: 22

- **Baltimore, MD**

Maryland Public Television's Reading Camp was conducted as an interactive, summer enrichment opportunity for 15 4-5 year-old children in Moravia Park, located in the upper northeast section of Baltimore. The Camp promoted language development and reading readiness skills in an effort to enhance the formal school experience of children in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. One parent reported that she enjoyed sharing the Reading Camp experience with her child because it showed her “*different ways to teach (her daughter)...about letters.*” Project reach: 30

- **San Diego, CA**

KPBS' SUPER WHY Reading Camp engaged 15 children between 4-5 years of age in activities that address literacy and vocabulary. KPBS partnered with the Encanto Elementary school, a Title 1 campus; the majority of the students were Latino and African American. Parents were thrilled to see their children excited about the camp, knowing that they were also acquiring valuable literacy skills. Project reach: 30

## 2. Stations working with or serving MC sites received outreach campaign SUPER WHY Big Event Grants (2008) managed by OE.

***(Grants funded by The Annie E. Casey Foundation through the Making Connections Media Outreach Initiative)***

- **Des Moines, IA**

### **SUPER WHY at Iowa Public Television**

- September 4, 2008 – SUPER WHY at Birdland Park, Des Moines, IA

- September 3, 2008 – Forest Avenue Library Event, Des Moines, IA

Iowa PTV is partnering with ***Making Connections Des Moines***, the Child and Family Policy Center, and the Neighborhood Health Initiative to present an event focused on SUPER WHY as a tool for improved school readiness. It served as the fall kickoff for early literacy family book clubs in the MC neighborhoods and also helped new families connect to these year-long early literacy activities. Held during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in September, the event (500 people) took place in Birdland Park in Des Moines (MC neighborhood). The day before, during a follow-up early literacy opportunity at the Forest Avenue Library, children met the Super Why character and heard a story. Families were encouraged to watch SUPER WHY and use related educational resources. Dan Wardell, host of IPTV'S Kids Club, was the host/presenter of the events. Iowa Public Television is also exploring similar pre-events at the Northside Library and the Eastside Library that also serve the *Making Connections* neighborhoods. Reach: 8,100 at events; 14,000 promotion.

- An article in the summer 2008 issue of the *Making Connections* Des Moines newsletter promoted the upcoming big event. This newsletter was distributed to households of the 32,000 residents in the *Making Connections* neighborhoods.

- **Indianapolis, IN**

- **Let's Meet SUPER WHY in the Park**

- May 15, 2008 – Story Time at the Indianapolis Zoo
    - June 19-20, 2008 – Let's Meet SUPER WHY - Martindale-Brightwood and Fountain Square Libraries
    - June 21, 2008 – Let's Meet SUPER WHY in the Park
    - July 8, 2008 – Children's Story Time, Lebanon Public Library
    - July 22, 2008 – SUPER WHY Family Literacy Night, East Side Elementary School, Edinburgh
    - August 8, 2008 – PBS Resources Workshop
    - August 26, 2008 – Are Your Children Ready to Read? Workshop

WFYI used the popularity (40,000 participants) of its annual event, Let's Meet PBS KIDS in the Park (June 21) to increase the literacy experiences of Central Indiana's preschool children by introducing them to SUPER WHY and its rich resources. Two stages offered live entertainment and more than 40 tents featured a mix of entertaining and educational activities hosted by leading arts and service organizations. Children, parents, and caregivers (46) in two *Making Connections* neighborhoods (Martindale-Brightwood) enjoyed a preview (June 19-20) of Let's Meet through pre-event visits from Super Why. Hands-on literacy experiences were provided. Children received the "SUPER WHY and The Three Pigs Read Aloud Story," stickers, tune in information, Let's Meet in the Park information, and a ticket entitling them to a snack and a surprise at PBS KIDS Let's Meet in the Park. Story Time at the Indianapolis Zoo, in its second year, featured SUPER WHY (May 15, 2,000 participants).

On July 8, WFYI held a SUPER WHY Children's Story time at the Lebanon Public Library. Children and their parents (60) watched the Three Little Pigs episode. *The Three Little Wolves and The Big Bad Pig* was read aloud, and children made a pig puppet. Each child received SUPER WHY coloring sheets of each character, a book mark, a sheet of stickers and the SUPER WHY Activity Book.

On July 22, WFYI partnered with East Side Elementary School in Edinburgh to host a SUPER WHY Family Literacy night for preschool age children who will enter kindergarten in the fall. Children and their parents (45) watched "SUPER WHY & the Three Little Pigs" and participated in literacy activities. Each child received SUPER WHY coloring sheets, a book mark, a sheet of stickers, the SUPER WHY Activity Book and two books, *The Little Red Hen* and *The Three Bears*.

On August 8 and 26, WFYI partnered with Community Solutions and United Way of Central Indiana's Success By Six to provide professional training to childcare providers in the Martindale/Brightwood Neighborhood – to enrich their curricula and help them meet licensing requirements. The focus was on school readiness and literacy, utilizing PBS resources including SUPER WHY.

- **Louisville, KY**

- **Kentucky Educational Television SUPER WHY Event**

- April 11, 2008 – Trolley Hop to the Library
    - May 30, 2008 – Story Hour for Day Care Centers
    - May 31, 2008 – Summer Reading Kickoff, Louisville Free Public Library, York Street, Louisville
    - July 7–18, 2008 – Pee Wee Camp, Louisville (Wheatley Elementary School)

KET provided a series of enrichment activities promoting responsible use of media (focusing on SUPER WHY) and development of basic literacy skills. These activities were directed toward children and families living within targeted at-risk neighborhoods served by *Making Connections* Louisville.

The Louisville Public Library in partnership with KET and *Making Connections* Louisville (MCL) sponsored Trolley Hop to the Library during the week of spring break, and prior to CATS testing in Jefferson County Public Schools. The Library and the Speed Museum provided free transportation for families to travel between the library and the museum. The event, which provided fun activities for families, was attended by 350 children and 150 adults. Welcomed by the Super Why costume character, each child chose a book, stickers, and bookmarks from the resource table; adults received PBS Families Booklets.

On Friday, May 30, 40 children and their child care providers attended a Story Hour at the Louisville Free Public Library. Super Why welcomed the children, participated in Story Hour, and handed out books to each of the children.

The May 31 kickoff for the summer reading program, Reading Rocks, was attended by more than 400 children, all of whom received books; 250 adults also attended. Children were able to sign up for rewards such as coupons and backpacks as an incentive to read books during the summer. Promoted heavily throughout the MCL neighborhoods, the event provided an opportunity for many families (who would not ordinarily spend a Saturday afternoon at the library) to have a fun day and discover the many free resources the library can provide for their children. They also learned how their children could learn to read through watching SUPER WHY. MCL students had a chance to meet staff of the library as well as teachers from the schools in their neighborhoods. Super Why welcomed kids and their families and promoted PBS programming on KET throughout the summer months.

The most ambitious event was a school readiness camp for children beginning kindergarten in the fall (Camp Kindergarten/PeeWee Camp) and for those students entering second grade in the fall (Second Base/Summer Stars), both of which took place from July 7 through July 18 at Wheatley Elementary School. The original projection was to serve 30 children entering kindergarten. However, it was expanded to students transitioning to second grade who would benefit from the refresher course of the camp. The number of children served was increased from 30 to 47 pre-kindergarten children and 18 pre-second grade students – a total of 65 children. Each day, as children were dropped off, their parents were encouraged to stay for a series of workshops provided through *Making Connections*. Through its SUPER WHY grant, KET conducted a workshop on how to build children's literacy skills and use media responsibly to promote success in school.

- KET RTL Parent Workshop: Six parents each received three books, Raising Readers DVD's, PBS Families booklets and literacy backpacks.
- Graduation Dinner: 240 people attended – all served dinner; 65 children received six books each – total of 390 books distributed.
- Coverage for the events of Camp Kindergarten/Summer Stars through the *Louisville Courier Journal* (weekly circulation of 550,000).

- **San Antonio, TX**  
**SUPER WHY in Your Neighborhood**
  - Las Palmas Library
  - The Neighborhood Place (Family Service Association)
  - United Way's Great Start
  - Bazan Library

- AVANCE, San Antonio
- La Fiesta Grocery Store
- Burger King Restaurant
- Good Samaritan Center

KLRN conducted eight events over the course of five days (August 17-31, 2008) at venues such as community centers, libraries, childcare centers, and businesses throughout the *Making Connections* San Antonio area. Families participated in literacy-related SUPER WHY activities; each family received a free children's book as well as other literacy-focused giveaways. Events consisted of activity stations at which early childhood professionals helped families to understand the concept of the activity and the importance of working on that particular literacy skill with children. Costume characters – Super Why and Princess Presto – were present at each event; staff took Polaroid pictures of each child with a character. Reach: 1,000 at events; 1.5 million through promotion.

*Making Connections* San Antonio has a new Web site with a calendar component; KLRN used the site to promote the week of festivities. Additionally, the Spanish-language newspaper that serves the *Making Connections* area (*La Prensa*) published articles about community improvement events and projects from *Making Connections* partners. KLRN produced and aired an English and Spanish 30-second spot, and created a project web page with details about the events and an open invitation for public attendance.

***(Grants funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and U.S. Department of Education)***

- **Atlanta, GA**

**Georgia Public Television** conducted its GPB Community Day Featuring SUPER WHY:

- September 26, 2008 - Augusta Children's Festival Kick-Off, Jessye Norman Amphitheater-Riverwalk
- September 27, 2008 - GPB Community Day, Georgia Public Broadcasting, Atlanta, Georgia 30318

In November 2007, GPB successfully celebrated ten years in its downtown Atlanta location with its first Community Day. Attended by more than 3,000 people, this year's free celebration built community relationships and extended the GPB and SUPER WHY brands. Children enjoyed book readings, performances, storytellers, illustrators, and authors, and participating in SUPER WHY activities. On the day before the event, GPB traveled to Augusta, GA for the kick-off of the Augusta Children's Festival, which drew 2,500 preschoolers. Teachers, caregivers, and parents attended with their children, many of whom are from low-income areas. Educational give-aways were provided.

- **St. Louis, MO**

**KETC television** celebrated SUPER WHY at Arthur's Picnic in the Park

- September 26, 2008 - KETC, 3655 Olive St. 63108 (Kids Club, invitations only)
- September 27, 2008 - Forest Park, City of St. Louis

SUPER WHY made a huge splash at the premiere children's event in St. Louis, with more than 20,000 children and their families in attendance. In its eighth year, and free to the public, Arthur's Picnic in the Park hosted by KETC was held on Saturday, September 27 in Forest Park. The Super Why costume character helped kick off KETC's brand new Kids Club by appearing the day before at the first ever Kids Club event. At the main event, hands-on literacy activities related to the series were offered in the SUPER WHY tent.

- **Louisiana**

**Louisiana Public Broadcasting & SUPER WHY** at the Red River Revel

- Red River Revel, Shreveport, LA, October 11-12, 2008

Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB) provided educational activities to 1,200 families and children, utilizing resources provided by the SUPER WHY series. LPB had a booth at the 22nd annual Red River Revel in Shreveport, the station's second largest market. The event featured a costumed character and interactive, hands-on literacy activities for children taken from the SUPER WHY Web site. Promotion reached 288,500.

- **Denver, CO**

- **Rocky Mountain PBS Kids Fun Fest**

- - KRMA's studios, Denver, CO 80204, July 19, 2008

The Rocky Mountain PBS Kids Fun Fest was bigger than ever in 2008, with 5,100 in attendance. Fun Fest remains the station's largest community outreach event. Now in its 12th year, the Fun Fest was again held on the grounds and in the station's studios. In the past couple of years, Fun Fest has had to expand to the street in front of the facility to accommodate the increasing number of guests and sponsors. For the 2nd year in a row, SUPER WHY's Storybrook Village became center stage. As in last year's event, RMPBS set up a big SUPER WHY booth, offering hands-on literacy activities, near the entrance of the main studio where people saw it as they came in. Promotion reached 150,000.

- **Detroit, MI**

- **SUPER WHY WTVS**

- - Freedom Hill Park, June 18, 2008 (Kids Club Live)

- - Detroit Festival of Arts, Children's, June 7, 2008

Detroit Public Television (DPTV) integrated SUPER WHY resources into a highly visible signature event focused on literacy. Kids Club Live at Freedom Hill Park included a stage show, Read-Aloud tent, hands-on activities, and costume characters. This year, DPTV offered roaming SUPER WHY activities and a "television studio" at which children could see themselves on TV in the Storybrook Village with SUPER WHY characters. The annual event attracted more than 4,000 3-6 year-olds and their families. Promotion included:

- 1.2 million ValPak buckslips
- 47,000 buckslips mailed to DPTV donors
- 500 "graduation" certificates featuring SUPER WHY were given to area kindergartners
- 70,000 copies of *Signal* magazine featuring SUPER WHY and Kids Club Live
- Metro Parent Magazine ad featuring SUPER WHY
- African American Family Magazine ad featuring SUPER WHY
- Detroit Free Press ran a photo of SUPER WHY to promote the event

At the Detroit Festival of Arts, DPTV's booth was visited by approximately 150 children. Children and families learned about SUPER WHY and its children's literacy resources.

### **3. Stations working with or serving MC sites received outreach campaign SUPER WHY Launch Grants (2007) managed by OE.**

- **Hartford, CT**

- **SUPER WHY: The Town Meeting** was a component of Connecticut Public Television's Connecting Our Communities programming initiative, designed to educate viewers about the long-term benefit of early learning programs in Connecticut. Broadcast statewide on October 25, 2007 (54,000 viewers) and hosted by Anita Ford Saunders, this live, one-hour, televised, town meeting in association with *Making Connections* Hartford brought together experts on early childhood education, policymakers, parents, teachers, and community leaders to discuss how critical it is to help kids in low-income neighborhoods gain early pre-reading skills and learn to read. Panelists included: Angela Santomero, executive producer, creator, and head writer, SUPER WHY; Margie Gillis, project director, Haskins Literacy Initiative;



Elaine Zimmerman, executive director, Connecticut Commission on Children; Mike Rafferty, instructional specialist for language arts, Norwalk Public Schools; Carl Guerriere, director, Greater Hartford Literacy Council; and Josephine Smith, principal, Dr. Ramon E. Betances Elementary School. Audience members consisted of family members, childcare providers, teachers, and community activists. How-to information for parents was designed to help them play a supportive role in their children's school readiness. An outcome of the town meeting was preparing communities to analyze, reflect, organize, and act on behalf of children – to create better futures for them. *Project includes funds from AECF as well as CPB/DOE.* Total project reach: 195,839

- **Des Moines, IA**

Iowa Public Television (IPTV) conducted a series of five different educational events via the Iowa Communications Network (ICN): Dan Wardell's SUPER WHY Reading Party, SUPER WHY Books Don't Have to be Flat, and SUPER WHY Fairy Tales. The Fairy Tales included Jack and the Beanstalk, Princess Knight, and Goldilocks and the Three Bears. To reach low-income communities such as the *Making Connections* neighborhoods, IPTV partnered with 53 libraries, 755 school districts (ICN sites), and childcare providers across the state to recruit participants.

IPTV Ready To Learn (RTL) staff has been involved with training more than 160 trainers from community partner organizations throughout Iowa (including those in *Making Connections* neighborhoods) that conducted a series of 8 RTL training sessions for families and early caregivers in their local communities. Information about the early literacy benefits of SUPER WHY was provided to each of these trainers. Total project reach: 232,312

- **San Antonio, TX**

KLRN, in collaboration with *Making Connections* San Antonio, produced and broadcast a Literacy Town Hall on Tuesday, April 8, 2008. Entitled "Raising a Community of Readers," the town hall examined what parents can do to foster literacy with their preschoolers. Free shuttle transportation brought MC residents to KLRN's studios. Hosted by Emmy award winning journalist Tanji Patton, the event raised awareness of the importance of early childhood literacy in the community as well as highlighted local programs and services that are available to families. Panelists included: Viki Ash, children's services coordinator, San Antonio Public Library; Dr. Michaela Cole, director, Early Childhood Education Program, Our Lady of the Lake University; Todd Greaves, principal, Loma Park Elementary School, Englewood ISD; Mariana Pena-Flores, parent and child care provider, A-2-Z Childcare; Rebecca Ramos, TEEM project coordinator mentor, State Center for Early Childhood Development; Pamela Toman, project chair, Literacy San Antonio; and State Representative Mike Villarreal, District 123. With an effort toward finding solutions, panelist and participant dialogue covered: what early childhood literacy means and its importance to San Antonio's present and future; the challenges that impede early childhood literacy; the roles of parents, teachers, community, business, and government in creating an environment that promotes early childhood literacy; and where do we go from here? In addition to multiple broadcasts, DVDs of the town hall are supporting the work of child care providers and agencies in the MC site. Total project reach: 600,000

- **Washington, DC**

WETA's project encouraged underserved families to participate in literacy activities. For its family literacy event, "Celebrating Reading with SUPER WHY," WETA partnered with SPARK DC, an initiative of the Mayor of DC that is run by the National Black Child Development Institute. The project, which helps prepare 3-6-year-olds for school, serves

1,000 families in the poorest wards in DC. Other partners included the Department of Parks and Recreation and DC Public Libraries. WETA also offered Ready To Learn workshops to help childcare providers and parents build their children's reading skills using the SUPER WHY series and materials. Total project reach: 117,998

**4. Stations working with or serving MC sites received SUPER WHY promotional grants (2007) recommended by OE.**

- **Indianapolis, IN**

WFYI hosted a SUPER WHY activity booth in the Children's Area of the Penrod Art Fair, a high profile annual event at the Indianapolis Museum of Art that reaches up to 20,000 people. The Children's Area drew 9,000 parents, grandparents, and children, 75 percent of whom were preschoolers (ages 3-5). The booth provided SUPER WHY literacy activities and the opportunity to view the show. Parents received information on preschool education and literacy. In addition, WFYI visited 14 child care centers and Head Start classrooms (including those in the MC neighborhoods) with the Super Why costume character, providing take-home literacy information.

- **St. Louis, MO**

Now in its seventh year, Arthur's Picnic in the Park, hosted by KETC/Channel 9, annually draws more than 20,000 people. This free-to-the-public family event gives parents and children, and particularly low-income families, the opportunity to learn more about KETC's educational resources and programming. SUPER WHY added new emphasis on literacy and learning to read. The United Way of Greater St. Louis was a key outreach partner. With funds (valued at \$25,000) from Sigma-Aldrich, KETC developed an insert on reading readiness, early literacy, and the station's education services for the *St. Louis Business Journal*. This insert was bound in the 200,000+ copies of the *Journal*. In addition, it was reprinted and distributed to more than 30,000 low income families in the region.

**B. With MCMOI funds (from AECF) Outreach Extensions supported MC sites on their CHAPSS projects, some in association with the local public television station.**

**Louisville, KY**

**KET/Making Connections Louisville Partnership**

The partnership between *Making Connections* Louisville (MCL) and Kentucky Educational Television (KET) was a huge success, engaging 1,375 children and 677 adults with quality activities and resources, including the distribution of 1,615 books to families. Funding for the partnership was directed toward two specific areas of need: (1) to boost the quality of child care for *Making Connections* families, and (2) to increase literacy levels of at risk children. The following activities supported these needs in 2008:

- 3/29/08: MCL sponsored a health fair at Presbyterian Community Center with KET and approximately 20 other associations participating. KET provided a costume character (Super Why) for the event as well as a resource table offering age-appropriate books to the 220 children (and 135 adults) who attended the event as well as PBS Families Booklets on raising healthy children, pencils, and stickers. Additionally, a film clip of SUPER WHY was available for viewing throughout the day.
- 6/07/08: As part of a "get healthy" initiative, MCL heavily advertised the opening of the Farmers Market at Mezeek Middle School in the MCL neighborhoods. MCL staff were present to offer referral services on child care, medical needs, and general assistance. KET provided a costume character (Clifford) as well as a resource table with books, stickers, and pencils for the children

(60) and PBS Families Booklets for parents/adults (45). The relaxed atmosphere was a great opportunity to talk to parents about the value of reading aloud to children to build basic literacy skills as well as to monitor children's television viewing.

- 6/21/08: The state of Kentucky requires professional development for all child-care providers, and the ability to be employed is dependent on meeting that requirement. KET provided a four-credit-hours training to 16 staff members of St. Benedict Early Childhood Center in Louisville. The training focused on two key areas: strategies for building basic literacy skills through The Learning Triangle (a multi-sensory approach to learning – view, read, do) and strategies for conflict resolution through the Mr. Rogers “What To Do With The Mad You Feel” curriculum. As an incentive for attending the training, besides gaining professional development credit, each attendee was allowed to choose a literacy kit to take back to the classroom. An additional 34 kits were provided to *Making Connections* to be used as an incentive to parents to encourage more parental involvement with the center providing care for their children.
- 07/26/08: The Farmers Market offered farm produce as well as an opportunity for families in the MCL neighborhoods to get checkups, immunizations, and school supplies for their children prior to the start of the school year. With music, food and entertainment, the event was well attended – 200 children and 70 adults. KET provided books as well as pencils, stickers, and posters to all children in attendance.
- Family Health Literacy Kits were designed to engage parents, childcare providers, and educators in conducting activities to promote healthy eating, healthy habits, exercise, and body imagery in young children. Based on the Learning Triangle (Read, View, Do), they include: SESAME Street Happy Healthy Monsters DVD; Activity guide for coaching adults to use the guide effectively, Activity Board Game, Backpack Carrier, CD with downloadable print materials, and seven books: *Gregory the Terrible Eater; Feast for 10; More Spaghetti, I Say!; Fast Food; Healthy Me; Kicking, Running, Stretching; and Healthy Eating*. Through MCMOI funds, the kits were developed by KET in support of MCL's school readiness work.
  - 90 Family Health Literacy Kits were delivered to Wheatley Elementary School for parent engagement activities. Training is provided by KET.
- 8/21/08: MCL Network Night was attended by 75 families. Besides a Clifford costume character, KET will also provide a resource table with books, PBS Families, stickers, and pencils.
- 8/30/08: MCL Community Event was attended by more than 100 families. KET provided a Clifford costume character, books, PBS Families, stickers, and pencils.
- 9/16/08: Open House at Wheatley Elementary with a total student population of 349 children drew 150 children and their families. The school has been designated as a “focus school,” meaning that classroom size has been limited; Kris Rogers (*Making Connections* Louisville) will spend one day per week working on school readiness outreach activities.
- 9/20/08: A second training session for daycare providers was provided at St. Benedict Early Childhood Center.

### **Des Moines, IA**

- The Child and Family Policy Center is collaborating with Iowa Public Television in providing family book clubs in Polk County, with an emphasis upon young children and their parents in *Making Connections* neighborhoods. The direct impact for the family book nights have been enthusiastic parents and children who are doing more reading-related activities with one another as well as families who are networking with one another. According to Charles Bruner, executive director, Child and Family Policy

Center, “*This has been a great success and continues to build support for early literacy in our community.*”

- The project supported an additional eight book clubs throughout 2007, enlisting 50 young children (ages 2-5) and their parents, with 80 percent new to any *Making Connections* program. This work has been integrated with other family engagement strategies within *Making Connections* and Polk County, including Born Learning, home visiting programs operated through Visiting Nurse Services, and transition planning work with seven *Making Connections* elementary schools.
- To date (2007), the station and site have conducted 8 IPTV family book club sessions in the following locations: Learning of The Lord Church = 19 participants; Oakridge = 22 participants; Wallace = 27 participants; McKinley = 14 participants; Capitol View = 32 participants; Edmunds/King = 17 participants; Caregiver 2<sup>nd</sup> year = 45 participants and Caregiver new class = 30 participants. Total to date = 206 participants. In addition, residents helped organize and conduct the family book club sessions, offering opportunities for leadership and skill development from those who have participated in such activities in the past.
- At the request of *Making Connections*, book clubs will be held at 13 sites in fall 2008.
- October 2007 – May 2008, Iowa Public Television (IPTV) partnered with *Making Connections* and the Child and Family Policy Center to provide Ready To Learn Family Book Clubs (7) and one Ready to Learn Child Care Provider Book Club. The clubs helped parents and caregivers learn how to: share reading aloud with their children, use public television resources for educational purposes, engage their children in hands-on activities, and increase their children’s school readiness. At the end of each session, each family or child care provider took home a free book to build their book collections. IPTV trained each of the book club facilitators. Each club had room for 15 families and met on a monthly basis from October through May (8 times during the year). Clubs were offered in English, Spanish, and one in Arabic. Dinner and child care were always provided. Participating sites included: St. Paul Church, Oakridge 1, Oakridge 3, McKinley Elementary, King/Edmunds Head Start, Hola Center (outreach center for Latino families), Capital View, and the Provider Book Club. Pre and post surveys conducted by IPTV showed the following results:
  - Participants reported conversing more often with their children and were more likely to teach new vocabulary during those conversations. They also showed significant improvement in asking and answering questions while talking with their children.
  - Participants reported reading more often to their children and making more use of school-readiness strategies. They made particular gains in “talking about new words” in the stories they read and improved in asking/answering questions.
  - Participants also reported using IPTV and Ready To Learn programs and resources more often, helping prepare their children for school. They also practiced more “co-viewing” (watching TV along with their children) to support their children’s learning.
  - Parents reported communicating with teachers more often about the educational progress of their children, increasing (on average) from a monthly basis to a weekly one.
  - Total use of screen media by children declined, from an average of 2-3 hours/day to an average of 1-2 hours/day, bringing it in line with American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations.

## **Indianapolis, IN**

- Literacy/School Readiness Town Hall Meeting:** Broadcast (33,000 viewers) on February 21 and 23, 2008 “Ready to Read: A Community Conversation” was produced by WFYI in collaboration with the MC sites. The show was rebroadcast on April 3 and additional airings are planned. Partners included the Indianapolis Marion County Public Library and the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children. Other stakeholders included United Way of Central Indiana and United Way Success By 6®. The project’s purpose was to draw attention to early literacy and the practices that can build literacy skills and increase a child’s readiness for school including how-to strategies for parents and child care providers. The site of the Town Hall was the just-renovated Central Library, which offers state of the art literacy experiences for children from infancy through the teen years. The host of the show, Cheryl Parker, is a news anchor for Fox 59, an Annie E. Casey Foundation Journalism Fellow, and chair of United Way Success By 6® public awareness committee. The extensive list of panelists and guests was drawn from partnering organizations, a wide range of early education specialists and providers, state agency officials, and the MC sites. Roll-ins featured four programs in the MC neighborhoods: The Harmony Learning Center, Even Start, Kingsley Terrance, and Play and Learn, and one rural school, Thornton Elementary. Public television stations throughout Indiana were invited to broadcast the show. Copies of the show were sent to Ready to Lead in Literacy coordinators at Indiana PBS stations and to schools of education for training purposes. WFYI also produced a chaptered DVD of the show and a discussion guide, which were distributed to the MC (Martindale-Brightwood and Southeast) neighborhoods and Near Eastside neighborhood, a United Way target area. WFYI and United Way are now forging a more formal collaboration for its Ready To Learn focus area and Success By 6®. The station is also part of an emerging citywide initiative that will focus on creating a more literate community.
- Public television station WFYI partnered with Indianapolis Public Schools #51 and #37 (in Martindale-Brightwood) to provide parent education to parents of K-3 children. WFYI facilitated ten **Ready to Lead In Literacy workshops** at each school between January and June 2007. Each workshop included a 15-30-minute session with adults only and a 30-45-minute activity session with adults and children participating together with various tasks. Workshop topics include: *Basic Ready To Learn*; Tips for Training the Tube; Literacy Development with Clifford, the Big Red Dog; Language, Literacy, and Lions; Hear It: Phonemic Awareness and Phonics; Understand It: Fluency and Vocabulary; Process It: Test Comprehension; Dialogic Reading and Media; Math is Everywhere; and *It’s a Big Big World Science and Geography*. Families received books for their children at each workshop. Parents commented on how much they benefited from the new information and being able to use it right away.
- From November 2007 through May 2008, WFYI partnered with Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) #51 for the second year and, despite some IPS policy changes, were able to increase participation over last year. In January IPS decided that all parent workshops should be used to introduce the testing methods IPS used with the children. After hearing this, the Parent Liaison at IPS #51 decided to cancel all scheduled WFYI workshops. We were able to work out a solution that the training time would be shared and the workshops were adapted to match the testing topic that was covered during the workshop. A series of four workshops was provided.

WFYI was able to partner with one other IPS school, #56, in the Martindale/Brightwood neighborhood to provide parent workshops. These were enormously successful with 75 parents attending one workshop. WFYI also offered two workshops to the entire IPS

kindergarten teaching staff, including teachers from Martindale/Brightwood. The project reached 137 parents, 43 kindergarten teachers, and 892 children.

- 13 faith-based childcare providers were identified by the MC sites as having the capacity and interest to improve their curriculum for children. Working in collaboration with the Child Care Mentor Project, WFYI created a series of four training sessions based on Ready To Learn and Ready To Lead in Literacy curricula and media awareness. The four workshops occurred on August 19 and 26, and September 2 and 9, 2008.

## **Providence, RI**

### **2007**

MC-Providence, which has received the assets of and management for the Reentry National Media Outreach Campaign from Outreach Extensions, is incorporating reentry into its school readiness plan. The site is using the “*Visiting Day*” episode of *READING RAINBOW*, which introduces a family separated by a prison sentence, and *XIARA’S SONG*, the story of a seven-year-old coming to grips with the fact that her father won’t be free from prison until she’s 17. The site is building a strategic campaign to educate child care providers so they are more knowledgeable about the needs of children of prisoners. The project offers tape distribution to providers, community screenings, and a feature in the Reentry Campaign E-Newsletter.

### **2008**

*Making Connections* Providence plans to implement an early childhood education strategy through the Play and Learn model to benefit incarcerated parents at the Rhode Island Department of Corrections. The strategy for using “*Visiting Day*” is two-pronged. Screenings are hosted for families preparing to visit incarcerated parents as a means to orient and support children who will be engaged with their parents in Play and Learn activities at the corrections facility. Likewise, incarcerated parents preparing for Play and Learn with their children will view the film in a guided training session.

## **C. Stations leverage their own grant funds to benefit MC neighborhoods.**

### **San Antonio, TX**

KLRN is using its Raising Readers funds from PBS Raising Readers to benefit parents, caregivers, and children in the neighborhoods served by MC-San Antonio.

- A Community Leaders Breakfast hosted by KLRN was held on July 29, 2008 at the Galeria Tonantzin in the Guadalupe School of the Visual Arts. The event focused on how KLRN can help community leaders, childcare providers, and parents raise childhood literacy through the Raising Readers program.
- August – December 2008, KLRN is piloting a program at the H-E-B grocery store on the West side funded by PBS Kids Raising Readers and United Way. The purpose of Shop & Learn is to offer parents and other caregivers easy-to-use, literacy-based activities to make grocery shopping with young children a learning experience. The model, which uses activity cards, provides helpful strategies while creating a positive learning environment for children. Activities for infants and toddlers and preschoolers are developed around four themes: colors, sounds, numbers, and letters. After completing a certain number of activities, parents/providers can receive incentives such as books and educational games for their children. Super Why is one of the theme characters.

**D. Outreach Extensions will leverage funds from a \$1.5 million grant from The Wallace Foundation to create media projects on educational leadership and school achievement at selected *MC* sites in association with local public television stations.**

- Serving sites such as Des Moines, Hartford, Louisville, and St. Louis, projects will include the production of half-hour documentaries and town halls to present local issues and strategies for action.
- National partners (National Governors Association, Council of Chief State School Officers, National Conference of State Legislatures, and National Association of Boards of Education) will advise stations on key issues as well as identify policymakers who may participate in broadcast town halls.
- The outreach DVD (national distribution) will include an executive video for policymakers in an effort to build public will for the improvement of education leadership in schools, leading to student achievement.
- The project focuses on the critical importance of highly effective school leadership to turn around low performing schools and raise student achievement, especially in our nation's highest needs schools. Project impacts are to raise awareness; educate and motivate key audiences, including opinion leaders in policy and education; provide resources; and spur collaboration and action.



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