

Good Readers - Healthy Choices

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The Need:

34% of American children enter Kindergarten without the basic language skills they will need to learn to read.



The facts:

- **88% of first graders who START below grade level in reading will continue to read below grade level in fourth grade.**
- **Reading difficulty contributes to school failure, which increases the risk of absenteeism, dropouts, juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy -**
- **All of which perpetuate the cycles of poverty and dependency.**



The Proposal:

- **Launch the Reach Out and Read Program in Kosciusko County.**
- **This program “immunizes” preschool children against illiteracy during critical years.**
- **The program incorporates pediatric health care providers, who are in a position of trust.**
- **The cost per child is \$50.**



Why is reading important?

**Reading is
the key to
education.**



Why is Reading Important?

- American businesses lose over \$60 billion in productivity due to employees' lack of basic reading skills.
- 43 % of adults at the lowest level of literacy live in poverty.
- The AMA states that low literacy skills increase health care expenditures by \$73 billion per year.



Why is Reading Important?

- For every \$1 invested in high-quality early care and education, society saves \$7.16 in welfare, special education, and criminal justice costs.
- Ready Indiana states that 1 in 3 people in the workforce cannot complete a job application.



Is Reading a Concern in Kosciusko County?

- Poor reading skills contribute to an illiteracy rate of 1 in 7 in Kosciusko County. (1 in 5 Nationwide)
- In Kosciusko County, 70.9 percent of freshmen graduate in 4 years. –
[Source The Kids Count in Indiana]



Who?



One of Reach Out and Read initiatives is to foster reading skills in **preschool** children through doctor wellness checks.



Goal

The mission of the Reach Out and Read Program is to increase the reading skills of all preschool children in Kosciusko County by utilizing routine child wellness checks and the compassion of our health professionals.



Why Preschoolers?

“Children who are read to early and often learn two things: First, that reading is important, and second, that they are important.”

--Laura Bush



Why Preschoolers?

- The first five years of life is the prime time for learning language and literacy skills.
- Window of Opportunity is open in brain development.



Why Focus on Child Wellness Checks?

- Doctors and nurses are trained in the developmental strategies of early literacy.
- Provides opportunity to speak with parents about the importance of reading aloud to their children and offering age-appropriate tips and encouragement.



THE RESEARCH

- **61 % of low-income families have no books at all in their homes for their children.**
- **Children from low-income families on average score 27 points below the mean reading levels.**



THE RESEARCH

- The gap between children from low and high income families on reading comprehension scores is over 40 points.
- 12.8 % of Children under 17 are living in poverty in **Kosciusko County.**



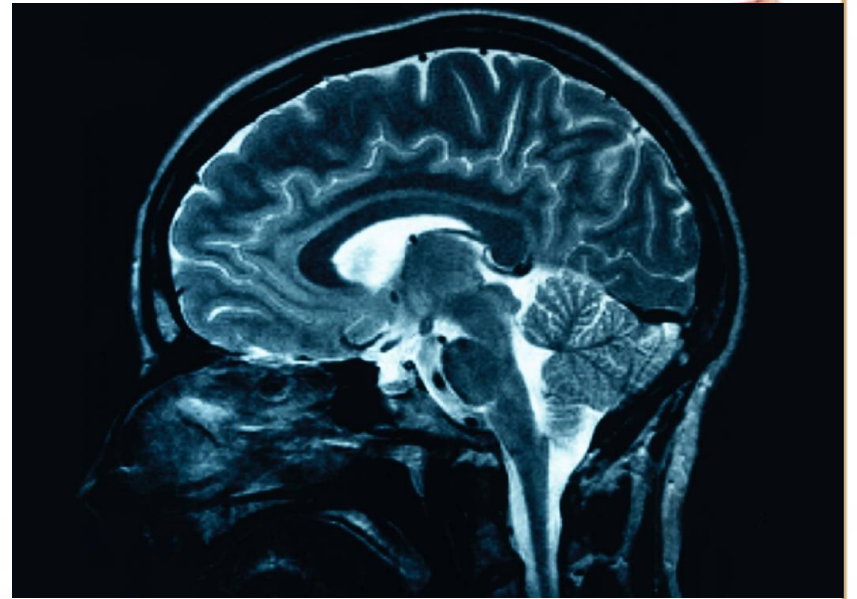
THE RESEARCH

- **The National Commission on Reading states, “The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.”**



SHORT TERM GOAL OF Good Readers – Healthy Choices

To have children enter kindergarten with the skills necessary to make continued learning easier.



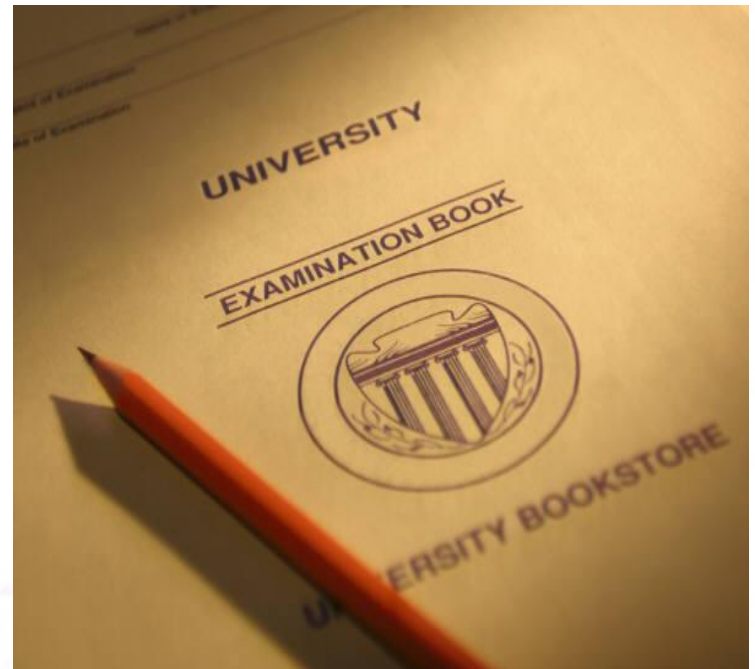
Intermediate GOAL OF Good Readers – Healthy Choices

To make school a
positive learning
experience.



Intermediate GOAL OF Good Readers – Healthy Choices

To increase
reading levels
and
standardized
test scores.



LONG TERM GOAL OF Good Readers – Healthy Choices

- **To have higher graduation rates.**
- **To break the poverty-illiteracy link related to poor reading skills.**
- **To reduce the illiteracy rate related to poor reading skills in Kosciusko County.**



Why Reach Out and Read?

- **A Trusted Messenger**
- **Broad Scope and Reach**
- **Hope for Educational Success**
- **Positive Reinforcement**
- **Stretching Every Dollar**



PARENT INFORMATION

**What Good
Readers – Healthy
Choices wants
parents to know...**



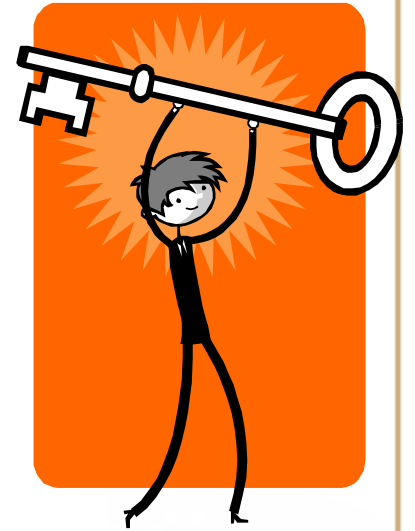
**If a MAGIC KEY
existed to
unlock your
child's
success in
school and in
life---**



**But, the key
must be
turned a little
each day---**



**Would you be
willing to turn
the Key DAILY
for your Child?**



**The MAGIC KEY
is
READING
ALLOUD
TO YOUR
CHILDREN.**



Early Reading and Parent Involvement



- Children begin to get ready to read long before they start school.
- Parents know their child best.
- Parents are their child's first and lifelong teacher.



How can the community help?

Time spent reading to a child is an investment in the child and the community.



How can the community help?

***Reading to a
child--***

priceless!

