

# Congregations & Early Childhood

*From the Early Childhood Faith Initiative, a collaboration between Durham's Partnership for Children & End Poverty Durham*

Year 2, Edition 3

November 2011

## CONTENTS

**Section 1...** Faith Coordinator News: Lunch & Learn: 11/8/11: Holidays, Young Children & Stress

**Section 2...** Resources & Materials: Why Read Aloud to Young Children?

**Section 3...** Quotes: Reading

**Section 4...** Sharing Ideas: Reading Aloud to Children – JUST DO IT

**Additional Information:** Useful Web Sites

### **SECTION 1: FAITH COORDINATOR NEWS: Lunch & Learn Nov 8, 2011**

#### **Reducing Holiday Stress for Families with Young Children**

Join us for a facilitated session on holiday stress. The variety of upcoming religious holidays includes lots of hustle and bustle which generates an environment of stress for young children. We will look at ways congregations can help families to prioritize for the holiday season. The session will be held at Duke Memorial UMC (504 W Chapel Hill Street) in the Soul Café, 11:30-1:00. Beverages provided. Registration encouraged: 919-732-1524 or [winniewmorgan@juno.com](mailto:winniewmorgan@juno.com)  
Free & open to all!

### **SECTION 2: RESOURCES & MATERIALS: Why Read Aloud?**

#### **Why is reading aloud to young children so important?**

- Children who live in print-rich environments and who are read to during the first years of life are much more likely to learn to read on schedule.
- Reading aloud to young children is not only one of the best activities to stimulate language and cognitive skills; it also builds motivation, curiosity, and memory.
- Early language skills, the foundation for reading ability and school readiness, are based primarily on language exposure - resulting from parents and other adults talking to young children.
- Research shows that the more words parents use when speaking to an 8-month-old infant, the greater the size of their child's vocabulary at age 3. The landmark Hart-Risley study on language development documented that children from low-income families hear as many as 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers before the age of 4.
- Books contain many words that children are unlikely to encounter frequently in spoken language. Children's books actually contain 50% more rare words than primetime television or even college students' conversations.
- The nurturing and one-on-one attention from parents during reading aloud encourages children to form a positive association with books and reading later in life.
- Reading aloud is a proven technique to help children cope during times of stress or tragedy.
- Reading difficulty contributes to school failure, which increases the risk of absenteeism, leaving school, juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy - all of which perpetuate the cycles of poverty and dependency.

Source: <http://www.reachoutandread.org/parents/readingaloud/>

### SECTION 3: QUOTES – Reading

Children are made readers on the laps of their parents. **Emilie Buchwald**

There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world. Love of books is the best of all.  
**Jacqueline Kennedy**

Reading aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will eventually require for learning to read. **Marilyn J. Adams**

A house without books is like a room without windows. **Heinrich Mann**

You may have tangible wealth untold. Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold.  
Richer than I you can never be - I had a mother who read to me. **Gillian Strickland, poet**

### SECTION 4: SHARING IDEAS – Reading Aloud to Children

**Are you reading to your infants/toddlers in your nursery?** Are there age appropriate books in all your faith class rooms? Is reading aloud to your preschoolers a part of your faith curriculum? After reading this, we hope you will increase your reading aloud to young children!

According to Mem Fox, author of *Reading Magic*, "If parents understood the huge educational benefit and intense happiness brought about by reading aloud to their children, and if every parent—and every adult caring for a child—read aloud a minimum of three stories a day to the children in their lives, we could probably wipe out illiteracy within one generation." This is a pretty bold statement, but one that many Early Childhood professionals firmly believe in. Reading to a child can and should begin as soon after birth as possible, as it will help with brain development, speech skills, as well as simply bonding with the child, which will help in other developmental areas as well.

From: **The Importance of Reading Aloud to Children** By Tracy Buckler  
<http://www.childcarelounge.com/parent-articles/reading-aloud.php>

**The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)** "strongly recommends reading to children every day, starting after they are first born," because "reading stimulates the development of the brain, language and a closer emotional relationship with a child." You can start reading to children from the moment they are born. Infants love to hear the voices of their parents. It doesn't matter what you read - just the togetherness of your baby and you is what counts whether you are reading from a child's book, the sports section, or a cookbook.

**Importance of Reading Aloud:** Reading aloud to young children is the single most effective thing parents can do to help prepare their children to succeed in school. Unfortunately, fewer than half of U.S. children ages 5 and under are read to every day, placing them at risk for reading delays and school failure.

**Outreach Opportunity: Genesis House:** Volunteers are needed to start a 0-2 reading program at Genesis House. Genesis Home is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping families with children overcome homelessness and achieve self-sufficiency while residing in a safe and supportive environment. Contact Tasha Melvin, [volunteer@genesishome.org](mailto:volunteer@genesishome.org)

**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Barnes & Noble Holiday Book Drive:** Go to Barnes and Noble at Southpoint and buy a book that will be donated to a young child in need. Books will be distributed by Durham's Partnership for Children.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[www.dpfc.net/EarlyChildhoodFaithInitiative.aspx](http://www.dpfc.net/EarlyChildhoodFaithInitiative.aspx); [www.endpovertydurham.org](http://www.endpovertydurham.org);

[Sign-up for e-news from Durham's Partnership for Children, follow the Partnership Blog and join us on facebook!](#)

To unsubscribe, for more information or to provide feedback, contact Winnie Morgan at [winniewmorgan@juno.com](mailto:winniewmorgan@juno.com).  
Please forward this newsletter to appropriate persons on your staff or submit their e-mail.