

Ready to Succeed

An Early Literacy and School Readiness Newsletter for Professionals

University of California Cooperative Extension Launches New Program

Ready to Succeed, funded in part by Placer County Children and Families Commission, is an early literacy and school readiness program designed for parents of children from birth to five years old and early childhood educators. The program is comprised of two components: "Let's Read Together" and "Off to a Good Start." Both series are available in English and Spanish. Our major goal with both programs is that everyone involved with the development of young children will value and embrace their role in fostering early literacy and school readiness. It is our mission to provide the knowledge, skills, support, and enthusiasm necessary to achieve this goal.

The "Let's Read Together" workshop series is available to parents and early childhood educators at no cost. This literature-based curriculum uses the following popular children's books: *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle, *Frog On His Own* by Mercer Mayer, and *Red Riding Hood* by James Marshall. Additional units are under development. At the end of each workshop, participants



will receive a new copy of the book featured to take home. See page 3 for "Let's Read Together" objectives.

The "Off to a Good Start" workshops are designed to help parents of four year olds interact and guide their children in ways that promote their development and their social and intellectual readiness for kindergarten. It is also designed to help parents become willing and effective partners with school personnel in promoting their children's educational achievement. Workshop topics include: Kindergarten Expectations, Language and Learning, Getting Ready to Read, Social and Emotional Preparation, Problem Solving and Inquiry, Health and Well-Being, and Home - School Connection. See page 3 for "Off to a Good Start" objectives.

Through this program, we strive to foster a strong sense that reading is meaningful and pleasurable, and that kindergarten readiness is crucial for a child's success. We want all children in our community to be...READY TO SUCCEED!

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Why Am I Receiving This Newsletter?

The Ready to Succeed Program utilizes many methods to disseminate information in the community. If you choose not to participate in our workshop series, perhaps you will benefit from the articles published in this newsletter. We have carefully selected early childhood programs within Placer County to be the first recipients of our premier edition.

Since this is the program's inaugural newsletter, we would appreciate any feedback you have to offer. Tell us what you want more or less of, and how we can get you the information you want and need. Keep in mind this edition has more information about who we are than will be printed in future issues.

The Art and Literacy Connection

Literature-based art activities help children connect their reading experiences to another form of expression. Encouraging children to make art that relates to a book enables them to express their experiences with reading, which helps them further explore the meaning of what they read. Meaningful art experiences provide children with freedom of choice, thought, and feeling.

Children's art can be made using inexpensive materials found around the house or child care center, such as egg cartons, paper bags, paper towel tubes, magazines, cereal boxes, buttons, dried beans, beads, wrapping paper, newspaper, dried grass clippings, yarn, fabric, socks (especially the one without

the mate☺), twigs, shoe laces, leaves, cotton balls, rocks, plastic soda or water bottles, etc. The possibilities are endless...

Here are a few activities to try after reading Lois Ehlert's *Snowballs*:

✂ Glue or staple together different size paper plates to make snow people to represent the people in your family or center. Glue on many different items as they did in the book to personalize your creation. Tip: flattening the paper plates first allow for better crafting.



✂ Smear peanut butter on a pinecone and roll it in bird

seed to create a yummy treat for the birds that stay around during the winter months. Use a sturdy piece of string to hang it from a tree. Be sure to place it where you can watch the birds feed.



✂ Create a snowy winter scene by gluing cotton balls on a piece of blue or black paper. Children can draw any additions to make their picture unique. Extend the activity by having the child make up a story about their picture. On a separate sheet of paper, write their story (or assist) and display it with their picture.



Activities That Promote Literacy

Incorporating the following activities into your daily schedule will promote literacy for the children in your care.

Read to children EVERY day ~

Books should be placed in all areas of the center. A soft space (bean bags, pillows, rocking chairs) creates an area where individuals or small groups can read or be read to.

Sing songs and say rhymes ~

These are fun and are important in developing the child's language skills. Walls can be adorned with poems, chants, finger plays, songs, etc. Be sure to place them low enough for children to interact with them.

Encourage children to write ~

Prepare a writing center where a variety of materials can be added to or changed. For example: markers,

stencils, alphabet stamps, paper, small books and pads, labels for common objects, chalk and chalkboard, manipulative letters, etc.

Write what children say ~

Comments from children should be written down so they can see that writing has a purpose. Make signs, write notes to parents or other children, make books, and record daily experiences on paper.

"Let's Read Together" Objectives

"Let's Read Together" uses interactive, hands-on activities to teach simple, effective techniques to foster literacy development in young children.

The workshop series is designed to:

B Promote knowledge about and enjoyment of books for young children.

B Reinforce the idea that reading primarily involves creating meaning and en-



joyment.

B Share and model good reading strategies.

B Promote discussion of ways to deal with important issues and concerns.

B Provide materials and model activities designed to promote positive interaction.

Workshops for both "Let's Read Together" and "Off to a Good Start" can be implemented in a variety of ways. Contact

"Off to a Good Start" Objectives

This program is appropriate for all parents of pre-kindergarten children, it is especially useful for parents who may need additional help in preparing their child for kindergarten success.

The workshop series will help parents:

A Learn about kindergarten expectations and the skills and knowledge their children need to help them get off to a good start.

A Learn simple activities to do with their children which promote the learning needed

for kindergarten .

A Learn how to interact with their children in ways that promote enjoyment, self-confidence, and social skills necessary for kindergarten success.

A Learn the importance of good health and well-being and their contribution to school success.

A Learn how to connect with their chil-



Proud of Our Community Involvement

The Ready to Succeed Program is proud to make a contribution in community events. Since our fall beginning, we have been involved with:

- Gold Country Fair
- PCOE Child Care Services' Health and Safety Faire
- Head Start Celebration
- Auburn Community Festival
- 13th Annual Children's Faire

Participating in these rewarding events allows us the opportunity to interact with a wide cross-section of the



county which enables us to focus on the issues important to the people who live and work in this community.

If you know of other community events in which we should participate, give us a call!

This young boy recently enjoyed making his Christmas Light Necklace at the 13th Annual Children's Faire.

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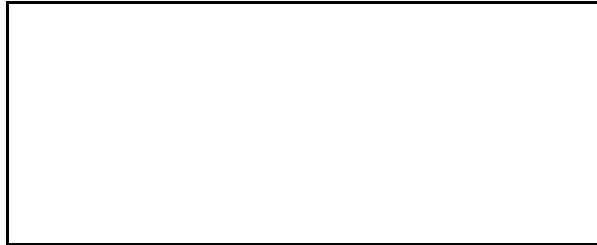
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Placer County's Best Kept Secret: UCCE

The University of California's Cooperative Extension offices are local problem-solving centers. More than 400 campus-based specialists and county-based farm, home, and youth advisors work as teams to bring the University's research-based information to Californians. Cooperative Extension (CE) is a full partnership of federal, state, county, and private resources linked in applied research and educational outreach. CE's many teaching tools include: meetings, conferences, workshops, demonstrations, field days,

video programs, newsletters, and manuals. Thousands of volunteers assist in extending CE's outreach.

Placer County's Cooperative Extension office offers the following services and programs: Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor, Horticulturalist and Small Farm Advisor, Master Gardeners, Master Composters, 4-H Youth Development, Adult Food Stamp Nutrition Education,



Youth Food Stamp Nutrition Education - featuring "Let's Eat Healthy," **Nutrition**

BEST - another Placer County Children and Families Commission funded program, and Ready to Succeed.

Contact our office today for more details about this wonderful community service or check out our useful and informative website: ceplacer.ucdavis.edu.