

***A Framework For Action – What Libraries Can Do to Improve Early Literacy
Oregon Statewide Early Literacy Initiative***

Libraries serve an important role in promoting early literacy skills in babies, toddlers, and preschool children. Already, libraries promote these skills through access to books, storytimes, parenting information, knowledgeable staff, and much more. Below are several concrete ways you can encourage children, parents, and caregivers to develop reading and language proficiency in four different areas: Early Literacy Materials/Collections, Atmosphere/Children’s Environments, Programming, and Training & Staff Development.

Some libraries may have more defined early literacy programs than others. You may be starting a program (First Steps) or be improving an already great program (Giant Steps). *Check off the activities that you’re already doing.* Even if you don’t have an early literacy program, you may be surprised by how much you’re already doing to prepare children to read in all three areas. And even if you’ve been working with early literacy for a long time, you may find ideas in First, Next, or Giant Steps that may help you enhance your activities. Regardless as to where you’re at in your program, we hope that this document inspires you to further help the children in your communities.

INPUT: Early Literacy Materials/Collections To ensure that all libraries have high quality and adequate quantity of materials that support early literacy...		
FIRST STEPS	NEXT STEPS	GIANT STEPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have collections of materials for children ages 0-5 <input type="checkbox"/> Board books, toddler books, picture books <input type="checkbox"/> Make these collections easy to find <input type="checkbox"/> CDs, DVDs <input type="checkbox"/> Have materials for parents and caregivers including books, parenting magazines, and videos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Buy more picture books and board books <input type="checkbox"/> Have collections of materials for parents and caregivers <input type="checkbox"/> Have handouts for parents and caregivers <input type="checkbox"/> Brochures, booklists, and booklets of children’s rhymes <input type="checkbox"/> Bookmarks, brochures, and booklists <input type="checkbox"/> Start with Public Library Association website (www.pla.org) and the Department of Education literacy site (www.ed.gov) for free booklets and downloads <input type="checkbox"/> Offer picture books and board books in languages other than English <input type="checkbox"/> Circulate tubs of books to early education sites and child care facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Circulate toys (like puppets, puzzles, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Create simple theme kits, bags, totes, etc. (Something simple, like one book, one cassette, and one puppet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create more detailed Theme Bags <input type="checkbox"/> Create and circulate bags for parents and caregivers of babies <input type="checkbox"/> Offer more picture books and board books in more languages other than English <input type="checkbox"/> Offer resources for parents and caregivers in languages other than English <input type="checkbox"/> Provide resources and materials for parents and caregivers about early literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Create Baby Bags (not themed) for children from birth to 18 months, including resources for parents in languages other than English <input type="checkbox"/> Create Preschool Theme Bags in languages other than English <input type="checkbox"/> Create an early literacy website for parents and caregivers with information about early literacy research and brain development, activities to foster literacy development, booklists, and children’s rhymes <input type="checkbox"/> Circulate tubs of books to early education sites and child care facilities

VISION: All children ready to learn to read when they begin kindergarten

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create DVD or VHS of best ways for adults to share books with children <input type="checkbox"/> Create “Crayons” of activities that foster early literacy skill development for parents <input type="checkbox"/> Find funding for a Parenting Collection in every library

INPUT: Atmosphere/Children’s Environments To ensure that all libraries offer welcoming environments that support early literacy...		
FIRST STEPS	NEXT STEPS	GIANT STEPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Greet children with a smile <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome parents and caregivers who come into the library with babies <input type="checkbox"/> Create a child-friendly and attractive area for kids <input type="checkbox"/> Offer play things: stuffed animals, play things (puzzles, a doll house, puppets), pillows, and carpeted spot for children to sit <input type="checkbox"/> Post “Staff Picks of the week” to feature titles of interest to young children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have child-sized furniture and parent/child furniture <input type="checkbox"/> Offer a family bathroom with diaper changing facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Provide interactive activities at the child’s eye level (like a magnet board with letters or busy beads) <input type="checkbox"/> Have a puppet theatre for dramatic play or a box for imaginary play <input type="checkbox"/> Visit another library, children’s museum, or accredited child care for inspiration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create a writing area and materials for children; display their work <input type="checkbox"/> Create an Early Literacy Committee composed of staff to inspire and motivate staff to incorporate the latest research into their storytimes

INPUT: Programming To ensure that all libraries provide high quality early literacy programs...		
FIRST STEPS	NEXT STEPS	GIANT STEPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Offer storytimes for preschoolers <input type="checkbox"/> Offer the Statewide Summer Reading Program with “Read To Me” component <input type="checkbox"/> Add a preschooler’s component to your Summer Reading Program 	<u>Storytimes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Offer baby storytimes <input type="checkbox"/> Offer toddler storytimes <input type="checkbox"/> Offer storytimes in the library for visiting groups from early education sites and child care facilities 	<u>Storytimes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Offer developmentally appropriate storytimes for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Babies 0-12 months <input type="checkbox"/> Tiny Tots 12-24 months <input type="checkbox"/> Toddlers 24-36 months

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	<p><u>Other Children’s Programs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Integrate a book giveaway component into a program <input type="checkbox"/> Offer the Teen Version of the Statewide Summer Reading Program in conjunction with the “Read To Me” component for teen parents and their children <input type="checkbox"/> Explore the use of trained volunteers in order to expand your children’s programming <p><u>Literacy Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Offer early literacy programs for parents and caregivers <p><u>Community Outreach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Offer storytimes at early education sites and child care facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Host a gathering of early literacy community partners (see sample agendas) <input type="checkbox"/> Explore local business and community support for giveaway books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Preschoolers 36-60 months <input type="checkbox"/> Family Time for children of all ages <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Offer storytimes in the library in languages other than English <input type="checkbox"/> Offer StoryStop – spontaneous opportunities to read aloud to children anytime during library’s open hours <input type="checkbox"/> Offer storytimes at social service agencies, early education sites and child care facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Offer programming (storytimes) at summer lunch sites <p><u>Other Children’s Programs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Offer sign language for babies workshops (Baby Sign) <input type="checkbox"/> Offer music workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Offer physical movement sessions (sessions that integrate language, literacy and movement) <input type="checkbox"/> Add a “Read to Me” component to your Summer Reading Program <input type="checkbox"/> Create a school readiness program or fair for parents of incoming kindergarteners <input type="checkbox"/> Train Foster Grandparents, Teens or other volunteers to expand your children’s programs <input type="checkbox"/> Create a <i>Read to the Dogs</i> program: reading encouragement for the reluctant reader <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate all of your programs to prove their effectiveness

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		<p><u>Literacy Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Offer teen parent programs <input type="checkbox"/> Offer Early Words sessions for parents and caregivers <input type="checkbox"/> Offer Every Child Ready To Read @ Your Library sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Offer a Book Group for parents to read and discuss parenting books <input type="checkbox"/> Offer Early Words or Every Child Ready to Read workshops for parents in the library or in social service and community agencies to reach highest need families <input type="checkbox"/> Partner with elementary schools to offer parent workshops in early literacy for families with kindergarten and first grade children and their younger siblings <input type="checkbox"/> Work with the Oregon Center for Career Development in Child Care and Education to get your workshops approved for educational credit hours to satisfy the Child Care Division requirements <p><u>Community Outreach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Explore outreach to more partners (like health care) <input type="checkbox"/> Convene a meeting of early childhood partners to discuss a collaborative project <input type="checkbox"/> Host an early childhood fair at your library or, if there is one in existence, set up a booth for the library <input type="checkbox"/> Propose a session at your local AEYC conference or other early childhood professional group to discuss early literacy partnerships with child care providers

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		in your community <input type="checkbox"/> Offer newborn gift packets to all first births, including a free book and Baby’s First Library Card <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach through food banks – provide books in bags of food <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach programs to Head Start <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach for Library card recruitment to low income housing developments and migrant worker camps <input type="checkbox"/> Partner with health care providers to provide books to children birth to 5 years and prescriptions for their parents to read with them 20 minutes a day <input type="checkbox"/> Work with all high schools to talk to teen parents about the importance of reading aloud with their children <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate for an early literacy component to the core curriculum of the Department of Education (to enhance Teen Parent programs) <input type="checkbox"/> Arrange for a speaker about early literacy research or the economic benefit of investing in early childhood programs; collaborate with other organizations to sponsor event

INPUT: Training & Staff Development To encourage library staff to actively seek out personal development opportunities and build upon their early literacy knowledge...		
FIRST STEPS	NEXT STEPS	GIANT STEPS
<input type="checkbox"/> Read a new children’s book every week <input type="checkbox"/> Join the kids-lib listserv (http://listsmart.osl.state.or.us/mailman/listinfo/kids-lib)	<u>Books & Literacy Development</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Join PUBYAC <input type="checkbox"/> Read a book about early literacy and/or child development (see appendix for ideas)	<u>Books & Literacy Development</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Keep abreast of early literacy research by reading new books and online <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to an early childhood newsletter online

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FIRST STEPS	NEXT STEPS	GIANT STEPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Practice talking with babies <input type="checkbox"/> Read an article about early literacy and/or child development (see appendix for suggestions) <input type="checkbox"/> Visit a website about early literacy (see appendix) <input type="checkbox"/> Call the youth services consultant at the state library (Katie Anderson, Youth Services Consultant, Oregon State Library, 503-387-2528) <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the Next Steps section and do one thing on that list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Check out a title from Oregon State Library’s collection <input type="checkbox"/> Sign up for an early childhood newsletter online (see appendix for ideas) <p><u>Training & Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Take advantage of an early literacy training opportunity (for instance OLA Services Division, OAEYC, State Library, your local community college, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Create a personal development plan to develop your early literacy skills <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the Giant Steps section and do one thing on that list <p><u>Reaching Out to Others</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Join a professional support organization (OLA’s Children Service’s Division, OAEYC, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to a youth librarian at a neighboring library <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to your director about early literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for time on your library board’s agenda to talk about early literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Attend meetings of your county’s Early Childhood Team (sponsored by the Commission on Children and Families) 	<p><u>Training & Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Attend a PLA or ALA workshop on Every Child Ready To Read @ Your Library <input type="checkbox"/> Attend national conferences about early literacy – Every Child Ready to Read @ your library and PLA Spring Symposium <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in local early literacy education and training opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Become an Early Words Trainer <p><u>Reaching Out to Others</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Join your county’s Early Childhood Team (sponsored by the Commission on Children and Families) <input type="checkbox"/> Offer early literacy training to other professionals, such as at OAEYC & OLA conferences <input type="checkbox"/> Gather youth librarians from neighboring libraries to discuss early literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Convene a meeting of community partners concerned about early literacy to discuss how to work together <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in OLA’s Children Service’s Division <input type="checkbox"/> Establish ongoing training and development opportunities for staff <input type="checkbox"/> Find and create more partnerships with others (e.g. Latino agencies) <input type="checkbox"/> Present to local authorities and city councils. Tell them that libraries are vital to the health of the community

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