

***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.

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

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

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