



University of Nevada
Cooperative Extension

Community Programs for Improving Early Literacy

The University of Nevada Cooperative Extension has several educational programs targeting parents and families with children 0-7 years old. These programs may be of benefit for Striving Readers efforts in Nevada. The following programs stand alone but also can be integrated or used in conjunction with other efforts, such as home visiting.

Family Storyteller is a multifaceted family literacy program aimed at increasing the amount and quality of time parents and young children spend together in literacy enriching activities. The program targets those families with preschoolers and beginning readers (ages 3-7) who may have limited language skills and few children's books at home.

Purpose: Preschool children will gain foundational language and literacy skills; low educational level parents will read books and engage in language- enhancing activities with their children; parents will be involved in schools to support children's education.

Ages: 0 – 7 year olds and parents (Infant-Toddler version in development)

Language/Culture: Separate programs available for: 1) low-literacy English-speakers, 2) Spanish-only speakers, 3) English Language Learners, and 4) Native American families

Format: Weekly parent-child workshops (6 sessions per program)

Cost: \$50 - \$60 per family for books and materials; manuals; facilitators or travel to train local facilitators

Evaluation: All parents significantly increased use of book-reading skills, read to children more often; children gained in enjoyment of reading. ELL children and parents made significant gains in English (PPVT scores).

Just In Time Parenting is an age-paced newsletter series that provides practical parenting information for parents with children from birth to five years. Parents have the option of accessing the newsletter online (<http://www.extension.org/parenting>) or receiving it in the mail. Spanish versions also are available.

Purpose: Every child will start school emotionally and physically healthy and ready to learn (emphasis on language/literacy) with involved, caring parents. Every parent will have developmental information to determine if child is reaching developmental milestones

Ages: Prenatal – 5 years

Language/Culture: English, Spanish

Format: 3 prenatal issues, monthly issues from birth to 13 months, then issues every other month to age 5, mailed or sent electronically

Cost: If mailed, \$15 per family per year printing/postage plus clerical help; no cost for electronic delivery. Outreach worker to enroll families.

Evaluation: Compared to parents who do not receive the newsletter, parents who get booklets gain parenting knowledge and skills, use learning activities with children, are less likely to slap/abuse children.

Fun To Play is a series of weekly parent/child sessions aimed at improving the parenting skills of young parents by increasing the amount of learning activities and interaction they provide their children. *Fun To Play* targets families where young children are placed at risk for developmental delays and later school difficulties due to the young age, inexperience, or limited resources of parents.

Purpose: Young, low income parents will understand and stimulate baby's development through learning activities.

Ages: 0 – 3 year olds (Preschool version in development)

Language/Culture: English and Spanish

Format: Weekly parent-child workshops

Cost: Materials and facilitators

Evaluation: Parents increase understanding of importance of play, feel more confident, use activities, play and enjoy interactions more with their children.

In Tune With Kids is a series of do-at-home activity sheets, fact sheets and brochures written for parents with young children.

Purpose: All parents will stimulate children's development through learning activities, preparing children for school success.

Ages: 0 – 6 year olds

Language/Culture: English, some Spanish (can be translated)

Format: Parent tip sheets distributed through places parents gather (e.g, child care, schools, libraries, or home visitors)

Cost: Parenting pamphlets and activity guides; outreach worker to recruit and distribute to programs

Evaluation: Parents use activities, spend more time and interact more positively with children. Child care providers who distributed materials also used activities.

Professional Development for Early Childhood Educators has long been a focus of UNR Cooperative Extension. We have developed a number of curricula and provided training, self-study courses, coaching, and mentoring programs for early childhood educators. Many of these programs have been designed to help providers create more enriching literacy and language environments.

Purpose: Early childhood educators will have the skills to provide stimulating, developmentally appropriate learning environments for young children so that they, in turn, start school ready to learn. They will promote family engagement, use of Early Learning Guidelines and Pre-Kindergarten Standards, support literacy, social-emotional development and other skills.

Ages: 0 – 8 year olds, their early childhood teachers, directors, and parents

Language/Culture: English, some Spanish (can be translated)

Format: Training, self-study courses, coaching, mentoring

Cost: Variable, materials and trainers needed

Evaluation: Early childhood teachers and family caregivers are learning new developmentally appropriate information designed to increase school readiness and using that information in their child care programs.

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