



Marketing Every Child Ready to Read® @ your library®

Every Child Ready to Read® has three primary target markets:

1. Your community
2. Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers
3. Community partners

In marketing to these audiences, the following goals can guide your efforts.

Using Every Child Ready to Read®, your library can:

- Establish or reinforce its position as an advocate for early literacy and learning and a source for information, materials, programs, and services that support early literacy and learning.
- Raise awareness about the need to develop early literacy skills in children beginning at birth so they are ready to learn to read once they begin school.
- Explain that parents and other significant caregivers are in the best position to help children from birth to age five develop early literacy skills.
- Reach parents and other caregivers and help them learn to use ECRR's five early literacy practices so they understand how to help their children get ready to read.
- Collaborate with community partners to deliver ECRR workshops and other information about early literacy to parents and caregivers, raise awareness about the importance of developing early literacy skills, and increase the visibility of the library and its partners.
- Contribute and provide leadership during community conversations about how to help children reach their full potential.

Marketing to the Community

About this Audience

The community includes the general population in your service area, elected officials, preschool and K-12 teachers and administrators, members of PTOs and other parent organizations, business owners, clergy, members of civic and service organizations, foundations, and others that have an interest in helping children in your community become successful readers and reach their full potential.

Core Messages

- Learning to read begins at birth.
- Parents and caregivers are a child's first and best teachers.
- Every Child Ready to Read® is a parent education initiative that provides strategies parents and caregivers can use to help children from birth to age five develop essential early literacy skills and get ready to read.
- Everyone has a stake in helping children become fluent readers, lifelong learners, and productive citizens.

Communication Channels

Consistently communicate messages about the importance of developing early literacy skills in children from birth to age five. Repeat messages at regular intervals for the greatest impact.

(Marketing to the Community continued)

Use the templates for news releases, newsletter articles, letters to community members, and an “elevator speech” included on the CD in the Every Child Ready to Read® 2nd Edition Kit. Include information about early literacy and the Every Child Ready to Read® initiative in:

- Library newsletters (print and digital)
- The library website
- Letters to community leaders
- Articles that can be included in the newsletters of community organizations
- Newspaper articles and guest columns

Talk about early literacy and Every Child Ready to Read® as you attend meetings and events in your community.

Ask community organizations that serve families to help promote ECRR workshops and other early literacy services.

Marketing to Parents, Grandparents, and other Caregivers

About this Audience

Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers who now visit the library and bring children to programs are a natural audience for ECRR workshops. They already view the library as an information resource and a place to learn.

Core Messages

- Children need to develop certain skills before they can learn to read.
- Parents and other significant caregivers are a child’s first and best teachers. They can help children develop early literacy skills beginning at birth so that children are ready to learn to read once they begin school.
- Every Child Ready to Read® provides strategies parents and caregivers can use to help children from birth to age five develop essential early literacy skills and get ready to read.

Communication Channels

Publicize the workshops as you do other programs (newsletters, website, program flyers, posters, etc.). The CD in the Every Child Ready to Read® 2nd Edition Kit includes descriptions of the workshops that you can use for promotion.

Promote the five early literacy practices and the ECRR workshops during library storytimes and other programs. Pick a practice that is especially relevant to the program you’re presenting. Introduce it as an easy-to-use but powerful way to help children learn skills they will need when they start school. Briefly demonstrate how to use the practice. Invite parents to learn more; hand out information about upcoming workshops.

Display the Every Child Ready to Read® brochure, bookmark, and poster at places around your library where parents will see them.

Promote the workshops to childcare providers and preschool teachers who can encourage parents to attend.

Contact school districts, social services agencies, United Way agencies, and other community organizations that serve families and explain the benefits of ECRR workshops.

Offer to write guest columns about early literacy for local newspapers or blogs. Time columns to coincide with a related event such as “Read Across America” or the celebration each April of the “Week of the Young Child” (see www.naeyc.org).

Marketing to Partners (and reaching more parents and other caregivers)

About this Audience

Helping every child get ready to read has community-wide benefits. To sustain your library's effort and have the broadest possible impact, partner with community organizations and agencies that have common or complementary early literacy goals.

Core Messages

- The library has research-based early literacy workshops and supporting materials to help parents and caregivers get children ready to read.
- The workshops can be offered at sites around the community.
- By working together, the library and partnering organizations can reach more parents and caregivers. This will increase their access to literacy information and resources.
- Workshops can be combined into a half-day learning experience that may qualify for Continuing Education Units* (CEUs) from certification boards or accrediting agencies.

Additional Messages

By collaborating, library and community partners can:

- Accomplish more together
- Reach larger and new audiences
- Share and maximize resources and reduce costs
- Learn from each other
- Create new opportunities for those they serve
- Increase each organization's profile and visibility
- Establish relationships that lead to further partnerships

* In many states, Continuing Education Units are required for a childcare provider or preschool teacher to maintain licensure or meet other state requirements. Educational experiences like the ECRR workshops may qualify for Continuing Education Units. Check for organizations in your area that offer training for early childhood workers; they may be potential partners who can approve ECRR workshops for Continuing Education Units.

Where to Find Partners

No matter what the size of your community, you can find potential partners. Look for organizations that serve parents and young children, such as the following:

- Preschools, including school-run, faith-based, commercial, those available from community organizations like the YMCA, and those located at community colleges, universities, and private employers
- Local school districts and community education departments
- Head Start, Early Head Start, and other early childhood programs. Find local information on the National Head Start Association website: <http://www.nhsa.org>.
- Healthcare providers such as pediatricians and family physicians who participate in Reach Out and Read (www.reachoutandread.org)
- Public health services, county public health agencies, clinics, and hospitals
- Local chapters and affiliates of associations for early childhood professionals and childcare providers such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (www.naeyc.org)
- Licensing agencies or accreditation organizations that offer training so childcare providers and early childhood workers can fulfill continuing education requirements

(Marketing to Partners continued)

- Social services or human services agencies and shelters
- Local members of the National League of Cities' Early Childhood Initiative, which helps municipal leaders take action on behalf of the children, youth, and families in their communities (http://www.nlc.org/iyef/early_childhood/index.aspx)
- Retailers supporting early literacy, including Target (<http://sites.target.com/site/en/company/page.jsp?contentId=WCMP04-031821>) and Kohl's (http://www.kohlscorporation.com/community_relations/community01.htm)
- Correctional institutions
- Regional or state-wide early literacy coalitions and initiatives, such as United Way's Success by 6®; the Family Reading Partnership Ithaca, New York; Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy; Great Start Collaboratives Michigan; the Parent-Child Home Program; and Thrive by Five Washington.
- Affiliations serving special populations:
 - Native American (contact your local tribal council)
 - National Council of La Raza (see <http://www.nclr.org> for local affiliates)
 - Service to Immigrants (see National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (http://www.nnirr.org/immigration/immigration_links.html for local information or groups))

Ways to Partner

Partnerships can entail different degrees of involvement.

Coordination

- Informal relationship
- Usually limited in scope
- Requires little joint planning or action

Example: Your library offers the "Fun with Science and Math" ECRR workshop, and the local parks and recreation department offers nature walks for preschoolers. You cross-promote the programs—the library and parks and recreation promote both programs to their individual target audiences.

Cooperation

- May occur over a longer period of time
- Requires more time as partners combine resources or expertise to deliver programs or services.
- Partners share planning, decision-making, and problem-solving.

Example: Your library and the local parks and recreation department plan a summer science series for parents and children. This might include the Fun with Science and Math ECRR workshop, other library programs related to science and early literacy, nature walks and other outdoor experiences through parks and recreation, and a final culminating event presented by both organizations.

Collaboration

- A more formal relationship designed to accomplish a common goal that partners might not be able to achieve individually
- Usually extends over a longer period of time
- Involves more advance planning in order to develop new approaches or solutions to address an issue
- Information, resources, responsibility, accountability, and costs are shared.

(Marketing to Partners continued)

Example: Through past programming experiences, your library and the local parks and recreation department note that many parents feel they do not have adequate background knowledge to talk about science with their children. The library, parks and recreation, and the local school district collaborate on programs for parents that focus on the science concepts and related cognitive skills that students will encounter in the first several years of school. The partners create opportunities for parents to learn about science—and early literacy—along with their children.

How to Approach Potential Partners

Start close to home. Talk to organizations that use library meeting rooms. Speak to community organizations you belong to. Use your networks to connect to potential partners you do not know.

Meet with potential partners, discuss common goals, and talk about the mutual benefits of working together to accomplish similar objectives.

Build on the success of existing relationships you have with community organizations. Explore the idea of expanding your joint efforts through the Every Child Ready to Read® initiative.

Use the “Community Partners” PowerPoint to help potential partners learn about the Every Child Ready to Read® initiative.