Enhancing Impacts of Pediatric Primary Care Based Preventive Interventions Through Linkages with Community Programs

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City's First Readers — An initiative of the New York City Council

Background

- Poverty-related disparities in language development / school readiness begin very early in infancy (Hart & Risley, 1995).

- Early disparities persist: 48% of poor children experience reading difficulties in 4th grade compared to 18% of non-poor children (US Dept of Education, NCES, 2012).

- Need for effective interventions prior to school entry
  Pediatric primary care is an ideal platform for reaching families prior to school entry **(Box 1)**

Box 1: Pediatric primary care – Universal platform for promoting parenting and school readiness

High engagement
- Build on existing relationships with healthcare professionals; medical home

Low cost
- Build on existing staff, infrastructure and visits

→ **Early, population-scalable interventions**

Population-level accessibility
- ~90% of children now covered for primary care
- ~100% receive immunizations prior to school entry
- 13 to 15 visits from birth to 5 years

- AAP recommends that pediatricians provide anticipatory guidance about reading aloud to *all* families beginning at birth
- Documented impacts of pediatric-based programs **(Box 2)**
- In addition, pediatric primary care is uniquely poised to connect families with existing resources in their communities

Goals

Enhance potential of pediatric primary care for promoting early literacy and school readiness by:

- Reinforcing literacy messages from pediatric providers through
  - linkages between programs in pediatric care (ROR, VIP; **Box 2**)
  - synergies with programs in other platforms
- Maximize utilization and impacts of early literacy resources in the community through referrals from pediatric primary care

Approach

- City-wide early literacy initiative: **City's First Readers**
- Initiated and funded by the **New York City Council**
- Connect evidence-based programs promoting early literacy across multiple platforms: Pediatric primary care **(Box 2)**, Home visiting, Community, Early Childhood Education.
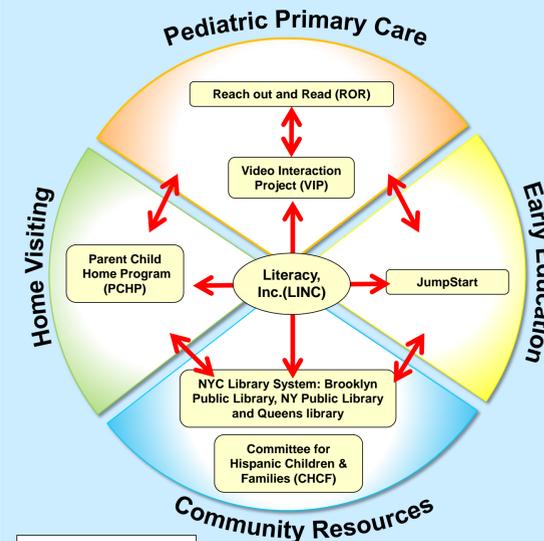
Box 2: Evidence-based programs promoting school readiness in pediatric primary care

Reach Out and Read (ROR)
- ❖ Healthcare providers counsel families about the importance of reading aloud; provide children's books at each visit
- ❖ Waiting room volunteers and staff model reading activities
- ❖ *Documented impacts on parent reading aloud and child language (High et al, 1999; Mendelsohn et al., 2001)*
- ❖ *Wide dissemination to 25% low income children 6m-5yrs*

Video Interaction Project (VIP)
- ❖ Builds on Reach Out and Read.
- ❖ Promotes enhanced parent-child interactions in reading aloud and play.
- ❖ Families meet with interventionist at each well-child visit.
- ❖ *Documented impacts on parenting, child development and school readiness (Mendelsohn, Cates, Weisleder, Canfield, et al., 2005, 2007, 2011, 2015)*

Evaluation Questions

1) Is CFR successful in linking different platforms?
   - Can pediatric-based programs (ROR, VIP) link families to community-level programs (e.g., libraries)?
   - Are library participation rates higher in communities with referrals from pediatric care than in communities without these linkages?

2) Does linking programs provide added value?
   - Do families who are touched by more than one program show enhanced engagement in early literacy activities compared to families touched by a single program?
   - Does participation in community-level programs provide enhanced benefits to child development compared to participation in pediatric programs alone?

City's First Readers

- **City's First Readers (CFR; citysfirstreaders.com)** brings together nine partner programs, across four platforms
- Each independently-operating program provides services to high-need NYC families using a unique set of strategies
- Through CFR, these programs are connected, with increased cross-platform linkages and referrals

Links strengthened through CFR = ▬

Platform	Individual Programs							City-wide partnership
	Pediatric primary care	Home Visiting	Community			Early childhood education	Multiple
Program	ROR	VIP	PCHP	Library	LINC	CHCF	JumpStart	City's First Readers
Estimated number of children reached by program through CFR (current year)	tens of thousands	hundreds	hundreds	hundreds of thousands	thousands	hundreds	thousands	City-wide
Strategies to enhance early literacy								
1. Access to literacy materials and resources	X	X	X	X	X		X	XXX
2. Family & parent workshops to support early literacy at home				X	X	X		XXX
3. Individual support for parents about reading, talking & playing with their child	X	X	X					XXX
4. Opportunities for children to engage in shared reading with early literacy experts	X			X			X	XXX
5. Support for early childhood educators					X	X	X	XXX
6. Build networks of support for early literacy					X	X		XXX

Added value expected from combining these strategies

	Enhanced Strategy	Expected outcome
Resources	Access to literacy materials in the home, community, and clinic, including books and toys	Increased opportunities for reading aloud and play
Knowledge	Parents hear messages about early literacy from trusted sources in clinic, home, school, and community	Internalization of messages about importance of shared reading
Skills	Parents observe modeling, practice, & receive feedback from peers and experts in individual and group settings	Development of parenting skills, generalization of behaviors
Social Networks	Opportunity for parents to develop relationships with early literacy experts as well as with peers	Social support network with goals around early literacy
Motivation/Values	Families and children are **immersed** in an environment that values and supports early literacy	Normative change leading to population-level impacts

Acknowledgements