

Why BABIES? Why NOW?

1. **Children are born ready to learn. They cultivate 85% of their intellect, personality, and skills by age five. The first months and years of life set the stage for life-long development."**

Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, 2007

2. **The moment of a baby's birth is one of great opportunity and optimism, when no achievement gap exists, and families are motivated to create a bright future for their babies.**

"Every Baby! Every Day!" Vision Statement

3. **Children who are poor readers at the end of first grade almost never acquire average-level reading skills by the end of elementary school.**

Torgesen, 2004, "Catch Them Before they Fall"

4. **Parents who have not been read to as children themselves may not realize the value of reading to their own children. Additionally, many parents do not have the skills to read to their children.**

Judith Schickedanz, "So Much More than the ABCs," 2012

5. **By age 4, children in language-rich households have heard, on average, 45 million spoken words, while children in low-language households have heard, on average, 13 million, a difference of over 30 million words.**

Hart, Risley study

6. **When children enter school without literacy experiences they enter already far behind their peers. The difference isn't in intelligence; it is in early language and literacy experiences.**

"Every Baby! Every Day!" Vision Statement

7. **The nurturing and one-on-one attention from parents during reading aloud encourages children to form a positive association with books and reading later in life.**

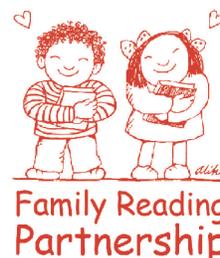
Reach Out and Read, 2012

8. **Speech is no doubt the most important form of stimulation a baby receives. When parents talk to their babies, they are activating hearing, social, emotional, and linguistic centers in the brain all at once, but their influence on language development is especially profound.**

"What's Going On in There?" Lise Eliot



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