

**NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY *READY TO READ AT NEW YORK LIBRARIES*  
RESEARCH PHASE:  
NATIONAL MODELS AND BEST PRACTICES**

The task of creating *Ready to Read at New York Libraries: an Early Childhood Public Library Staff Development Program* began with research in three domains—national early literacy models that have informed state library practices, state libraries with early literacy initiatives, and an analysis of best initiatives in early literacy.

**National Early Literacy Models**

Research was done into the practices of these models for library-based early literacy programs: *Every Child Ready to Read*, *Family Place Libraries*, and *Mother Goose on the Loose*. These three models have been mentioned most frequently in trainings used by state and local libraries and are distinct in their approaches. *Every Child Ready to Read @ your library* is based on parent/caregiver education; *Family Place* uses library space, coaching and play for early literacy outcomes; and *Mother Goose on the Loose* applies research and learning principles to preschool story times. All programs rely on partnerships, have training that can be purchased, are grounded in research, and provide models and practices useful in evaluating training for New York State Libraries.

The full program findings are included in **Attachment A** and a summary of each program is listed below.

**1. Parent and Caregiver Education with *Every Child Ready to Read @ your library***

*Every Child Ready to Read @ your library (ECRR)* is a partnership between two divisions of the American Library Association- the Public Library Association(PLA) and Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) that advocates a shift in practice from programs for children to parent/caregiver education. This initiative began in 2000 in response to national educational findings that many children were entering kindergarten without the early literacy skills needed to learn to read. Public libraries are strategically located in all communities and have unique access to preschool children and their families.

As the conversation between PLA and ALSC grew, it became apparent that the greatest impact on early literacy outcomes could be achieved through parent and caregiver education. If the primary adult in a child's life could learn more about the importance of early literacy and how to nurture pre-reading skills at home, the effect of library efforts could be multiplied many times. It was also determined that the parent education must be based on the most current research and evaluated for impact.

The first edition of *ECRR* was created by national researchers Dr. G.C. Whitehurst and Dr. C.J. Lonigan, was tested and evaluated in pilot sites across the country, and was made available for purchase and national distribution in 2004. In 2008, a joint ALSC/PLA Task Force to measure the impact of *ECRR* conducted a literature review to determine if *ECRR* materials needed modifications based on new research and to make recommendations about updating materials.

Dr. Susan B. Neuman and Dr. Donna Celano conducted the research and created the second edition of ECRR that debuted in 2011. The second edition is framed by five practices (talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing) and is based on the following principles:

- Reading is an essential life skill.
- Learning to read begins at birth.
- Parents and caregivers are a child's first and best teachers.
- Lifelong learning is a primary role of the public library; public libraries need to support parents and caregivers as they develop early literacy skills in children from birth to age five.
- Every Child Ready to Read is a parent education initiative that provides skills and strategies parents and caregivers can use to help children get ready to read.

The second edition expanded the librarian-led workshops for parents and caregivers to include four workshops designed for parents and children to attend together. The manual also provides staff training on early literacy research, development of partnerships, and design and use of public space for early literacy education.

## **2. Public Space, Coaching and Play with *Family Place Libraries***

*Family Place Libraries* began as an experiment in 1979 at the Middle Country Public Library, Centereach, NY, as a *Parent/Child Workshop*. The innovation in this pilot was opening the library to very young children and a focus on the parent and child interacting in a comfortable community setting. The pilot program has expanded to a national model with a franchise retained by the Middle Country Public Library.

*Family Place Libraries* aims to position the public library as a center for early childhood information, parent education, emergent literacy, socialization, and family support with a focus on children from age 0 to 3. A key message is that play is essential learning for young children. *Parent/Child Workshops* are given as five sessions that include an orientation and introduction to early literacy; a session on speech, hearing and language development; a session on child development; a session on nutrition; and a fifth session on music, play and physical fitness. Library staff are trained to reach out to parents and build community coalitions.

*Family Place* is a quality program that has been implemented in 250 libraries in 25 states. It focuses on children from age 0 to 3. *Family Place* requires a commitment from the library to devote significant staff time and public space to the program. *Family Place* also requires a significant initial monetary investment followed by ongoing infusions of resources to keep the toys, equipment, and furniture fresh.

## **3. Story times with *Mother Goose on the Loose***

*Mother Goose on the Loose* is a trademarked thirty-minute nursery rhyme program for children from birth to three. The program was developed by Dr. Betsy Diamant-Cohen combining principles of library programming with Barbara Case-Beggs' "Listen, Like, Learn" method for teaching music to very young children. Diamant-Cohen ran the program on a weekly basis for years in the Ruth Youth Wing Library of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem before bringing the program to Baltimore in 1999. Although the program is most frequently offered in library settings, it can also be used in daycare centers or with groups that do not have a one-to-one ratio.

The stated mission of *Mother Goose on the Loose (MGOL)* is to engage and educate infants to three-year-olds, partnering with parents, caregivers, and the community, through an entertaining and creative strategic program designed to cultivate and foster early literacy and learning skills. The librarian is encouraged to be a facilitator, rather than a presenter or a teacher. *MGOL* programs are story times designed to engage the youngest children, using flannel board stories, rhymes, songs, finger and body plays, and repetition in a predictable pattern. Librarians are taught the 10-part framework (“repetition with variety”) in which each segment builds on the one before.

Dr. Diamant-Cohen does all licensed *Mother Goose on the Loose* training. Her full-day workshop includes current research on brain-development, attachment, and play, in addition to hands-on exercises in developing and presenting *MGOL* story times.

## **Issues Prompted by National Models**

A number of issues emerge from the national models that will be explored in discussion of statewide early literacy initiatives and best practices. These include:

***Audience:*** Who is the primary audience to be served in early literacy training—the parent, the caregiver, the parent-child as a unit, or the child? How does the adult learner that will be delivering the training, best learn the materials to be shared with the primary audience?

***Space:*** How does space inform delivery of content? Can the library environment be the only space used for delivery of information? Are community settings natural places for building relationships with families whose children are at the greatest risk of not being prepared for kindergarten success? Can well designed early literacy spaces inform parents and caregivers and change behaviors that lead to reading readiness? How do partners contribute to our understanding and design of early literacy spaces?

***Cultural Sensitivity:*** Are materials available in Spanish or other languages? Are materials culturally sensitive and appropriate?

***Training Models, Technology and Costs:*** What is the cost of training and how is training delivered? How is technology used to support or deliver training?

***Partnerships and Funding:*** Who are partners that can support the delivery of training, costs of programs, and infusion of skills and access to audiences? What funding streams are available for this work?

***Evaluation:*** What evaluation supports the effectiveness of the training? How has evaluation informed the content and revision of materials?

## **Statewide Early Literacy Initiatives and Best Practices**

State Youth Services Coordinators from across the country were contacted about their early literacy initiative and if they would be willing to provide information about their programs to the New York State Library. Twelve state libraries agreed to share their statewide early literacy programs: Colorado, Oregon, California, Utah, Virginia, Idaho, Vermont, Ohio, Indiana, Arizona, Pennsylvania, and Washington. These states provided an overview of the state's initiative, best practices, funding, training, benefits of the work, and advice in creating an early literacy initiative. A chart of the each state's overview can be viewed at : [http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/earlylit/state\\_library\\_programs.pdf](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/earlylit/state_library_programs.pdf)

The research into statewide early literacy training plans has led to a consensus on a number of best practices that can be found in most library-based early literacy programs. Summaries of each of these are listed below. The best practices chosen are those offered by state libraries as these are the most relevant to a New York State early literacy plan.

### ***Audience: Parent/caregiver education***

All effective library-based early literacy initiatives focus on parent or caregiver involvement and/or education. These can be as low-key as enhanced story times that model good literacy practices for adults attending with children or as formal as the *Family Place Parent/Child Workshops*. The national models of *Mother Goose on the Loose*, *Every Child Ready to Read @ your library*, and *Family Place* have been discussed above. Saroj Ghoting has been mentioned numerous times for her training in adapting story times using *ECRR* principals, *What's the Big Idea*, and other early literacy initiatives. She has provided additional resources on her website <http://www.earlylit.net/>.

Best practices include:

- **SPELL: Supporting Parents in Early Literacy through Libraries.** The pilot program was run by a coalition of public libraries and partners in a five-county area of rural Eastern Oregon. Funded by an IMLS National Leadership grant, *SPELL* will incentivize and improve pre-kindergarten readiness while establishing planning for college as a fundamental part of early learning. It will provide measureable data on the impact that public library visitation along with borrowing and children's program attendance has on a child's early literacy development.
- **Routes to Reading: Idaho Paves the Way with Access to Print:** The goal of the new Routes to Reading Program is to significantly increase the amount of reading done in Idaho homes and early childhood education settings. Two aspects of this initiative are:
  - *Books to Go Program:* By partnering with Head Start, developmental preschools, child care centers, and home-based child care providers to place *Books to Go* at these locations, parents and caregivers will have convenient, continuous access to pre-packaged books.
  - *Storytime Online* and *TumbleBooks™*: Many families and child care providers are not able to attend library story times. This brings story times to them through a parent-friendly website with access to *TumbleBooks™* in English and Spanish, daily activities to develop early literacy skills including fingerplays and songs modeled in video clips, and other educational information.
- **What's the Big Idea:** A product of the Vermont Center for the Book supported by the Vermont Department of Libraries that focuses on math, science and literacy for babies and toddlers.
- **Utah Kids Ready to Read website:** Parent-friendly site at <http://utahkidsreadytoread.org>
- **South Carolina Day by Day Literacy Calendar:** Another example of a parent-friendly site at <http://www.daybydaysc.org/>

- **Ohio Ready to Read Kits for Libraries:** Each kit has everything you need to present a Ready to Read workshop in your library or community. No more scrambling to collect books, toys, CDs, and flannels from your library collection or personal stash, or to make materials from scratch. Kits are available for free loan to any Ohio public library staff member.

### ***Space: Comfortable Public Spaces and Community Visits***

Effective early literacy programs include an effort to make the library a comfortable and welcoming destination for families with young children. The goal is to create an environment in which families feel comfortable spending time and are encouraged to interact with their young children. In general, early literacy areas include comfortable seating for adult caregivers, availability of appropriate educational toys, interactive elements such as magnet boards and manipulatives, and games as well as books. *Family Place Libraries* is a national best practice in this area and the *Every Child Ready to Read @ your library* has a workshop on “Learning Spaces” in the “Staff and Community Workshops” section.

Best practices include:

- **Arizona State Library** has a long standing commitment to early literacy spaces supported by IMLS competitive grants. The range of trainings included *Family Place*, *ECRR 2<sup>nd</sup>* edition spaces webinar, grants that included work by Burgeon Group, *AWE* learning stations and use of e-readers.
- **Early Literacy Activity Center** is used by the Library of Virginia and based on Baltimore County Public Library’s “Storyville” developed by Marissa Conner. Information about “Storyville” can be found at: this program is available at <http://www.bcpl.info/kids-teens-parents-teachers/birth-to-five-about-storyville>
- **California’s Play and Learn Islands:** Began with pilot at Rancho Cucamonga Library to incorporate educational play into library space. Units now on loan to other California libraries.
- **Washington State’s Vancouver Public Library** opened their early learning center designed by the Burgeon Group by inviting 30 community partners to see the center and brain storm on how their organization could use the space for parent education, special events, and field trips.
- **Idaho’s Routes to Reading** is based on three principles and one is outreach.

### ***Cultural Sensitivity***

The need to begin with materials in both English and Spanish is a primary concern for all training materials.

Best practices include:

- **Mother Goose on the Loose Author Betsy Diamant-Cohen’s *Early Literacy Programming en Espanol: Mother Goose on the Loose Programs for Bilingual Learners*** assumed that an English-speaking librarian is working with a Spanish-speaking partner. There is one chapter devoted to working with the Latino community and many tips for building effective working relationships throughout the book.
- **Every Child Ready to Read® for Spanish Speaking Communities** contains everything needed to offer Every Child Read to Read programming for Spanish-Speaking patrons. This digital download is a turnkey product that includes Spanish-language activities and booklists.

- **Virginia's** online webinar, "Connecting with the Spanish Speaking Community" and "Offering a Bilingual Storytime at your library"
- **Washington and Arizona** have both adapted training in working with native tribes

## ***Training, Technology and Costs***

Effective statewide early literacy initiatives offer both initial and ongoing training for library staff. Some are based on a train-the-trainer model that empowers librarians to train other staff members. Ongoing support and opportunities for librarians to network with each other is particularly valuable. Face-to-face training is still the optimum way to jump-start adult learning and motivate participants, but webinars and well-designed online resources are good ways to help librarians stay current. There is also evidence that training in early childhood development and literacy should be offered to the entire staff, where possible.

Best practices include:

- **Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy (CLEL)** includes a training website, *StoryBlocks* (videos to use in training), trainings and presentations, annual meetings, a blog, listserv, and an IMLS grant to develop service learning opportunities for graduate students in the library school at University of Denver. Currently *CLEL* has 160 members.
- **Oregon's Reading for Healthy Families** paired librarians and Healthy Start/Healthy Families home visitors to implement *ECRR* 1<sup>st</sup> edition. The training protocol began with two days of training, followed by participants agreeing to present training to 15 families, and ended with a two day follow-up session where participants shared experiences and modified materials to fit their community or clientele.
- **Virginia** has moved from face-to-face training to a wide array of webinars for supporting early literacy training. Costs are at the heart of this change.
- **Family Place's** \$10,000 fee can be prohibitive for many libraries without special funding support.
- **Everyone Serves Youth (ESY)** was developed by the three New York City library systems (Tri-Li), Brooklyn Public Library, New York Public Library and Queens Library, as part of a three-year grant from the Wallace foundation, which mandated that Tri-Li work collaboratively on three outcomes: staff development, summer reading, and homework help. The ESY workshop was designed by a Tri-Li Task Force and used a train-the-trainer delivery method. The objective of training all staff members, including part-time pages, staff in non-public service positions such as human resources, public service staff and librarians, and senior managers, was largely met with each system reaching over 80% of their staff by the end of the grant in November 2006.

## ***Partnerships and Funding***

Effective statewide initiatives are based on strategic partnerships at a statewide level. They also emphasize the importance of each local and regional library's development of partnerships in their own communities.

Best practices include partnering with:

- **State Departments of Education with Early Learning Divisions:** Arizona State Library, Washington
- **Childcare Associations and Accreditation:** Oregon

- **Local Foundations:** Paul G. Allen/Oregon Community Foundation, Arizona's First Things First, Gates Foundation
- **IMLS Leadership Grants:** Oregon, Washington
- **Children's Museums:** California
- **Humanities Councils and Center for the Book:** Utah, Vermont
- **Training Organizations:** Utah Education Network provides infrastructure and serves public education, higher education, applied technology, libraries, government and other public entities.
- **Outreach with Head Start, Tribes, Spanish Speaking Community, Reach Out and Read and other medical and public health programs:** Arizona, Washington

## ***Evaluation***

Most statewide early literacy programs that were funded by the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) include evaluations. Some of these evaluations are posted on the state websites. However, there appears to be little effort to get libraries to evaluate their own early literacy initiatives beyond using the basic surveys provided in the *Family Place* and *ECRR* manuals. There are some very promising evaluation plans to monitor:

- **Oregon's** new *SPELL* has a universal library card that will track library interactions, create a college fund, and be used to correlate library use and kindergarten readiness
- **Utah** features a Humanities Council Website that offers a free book for completing activities and taking a survey after completing activities based on *ECRR* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Five Practices
- **Washington** is currently evaluating the effectiveness of tools and training to enhance story times with experimental and control groups that will look at behaviors of children attending story times.

The New York State Library hopes to work with the PLA/ALSC early literacy evaluation project "Bringing Home Early Literacy: Determining the Impact of Library Programming on Parent Behavior."

## **Summation**

### **Clarity of purpose and strategic alliances**

The goal of an early literacy plan is to prepare children to arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed in learning and reading. State libraries convene public libraries that are doing this work and motivate libraries to begin. They allocate resources for the work and most importantly make connections within the state with agencies that share the goal. Examples of these natural collaborations are state education departments, childcare licensing agencies, foundations or funders that support this work, academic and private research companies. State libraries need to assure a place at the table for public libraries in any discussion of young families and school readiness.

A State Library can develop a vision, in collaboration with librarians from the field. They can provide resources and support to achieve the vision -- which INCLUDES but is not limited to -- training. Ultimately, the responsibility for any library service, from early childhood literacy programs to provision of large type materials, rests with the local jurisdiction. *Every Child Ready to Read* has always enlisted library directors and administrators in the process and Washington State's initiatives were spearheaded

by public library directors. To quote Martha Shinnors from Washington, “In training, realize that change is always a process—expect incremental movement rather than immediate success.”

## **Training Considerations and Cohorts**

The national early literacy models (*ECRR*, *Family Place*, and *Mother Goose on the Loose*) drove much of the initial training in the states interviewed. Many states had all three of the major programs in their training offerings. As the state initiatives grew, it became clear that relying on national trainers could not supply the number of trainers needed and states had to build a local cohort of trainers. This cohort could provide training, support, coaching, and a sounding board for refining the programs. States have used a number of strategies to build on initial training in early childhood literacy services. Some states, like Oregon and Ohio, have developed cadres of experienced children’s librarians who help to spread the word and provide ongoing training. Indiana holds regional workshops each fall to allow librarians to share experiences.

The need to provide training in virtual formats, such as webinars and training videos, surfaced as state budgets and library staff were cut. The majority of youth consultants identified face-to-face training as the most effective training method for changes in knowledge, skills, and behaviors and for building networks of trainers and other support systems.

Any kind of training for adults must be based on sound principles of andragogy, adult learning. This means that the trainer must assume that the learners bring a wealth of experience and background knowledge to the learning environment. Good trainers take advantage of this insight and build on those experiences.

It is important to understand that children’s librarians almost universally want to provide the best possible service to the families in their communities. Many pride themselves on the story times they have been offering with great success. The new focus on early literacy practices that emphasize parent and caregiver education can make many feel uncomfortable. Some do not see themselves as teachers and feel uncomfortable in that role. It is important to recognize that for many librarians the current approach to best practices in early childhood library services represent a big change in doing business.

Change is difficult for many people, especially change that is imposed from the outside. A librarian who has heard about *ECRR2* or *Family Place* at a conference or read about it in a journal probably has a preconceived notion about whether it is an approach he or she would like to try. Most are enthusiastic and eager to attend a training to learn more about it. Others, however, are going to resist doing anything different and will need to be coaxed into trying something new. Sometimes it is enough to reassure them that after the training they will have the knowledge and skills to implement an *ECRR* parent workshop or a *Mother Goose on the Loose* program. Martha Shinnors from Washington stated that good training should have the “why” of change. She used as an example that including brain development research in the training was very motivating to many in her state. Ms. Shinnors also advises that training should never present participants with workshop materials or resources that the state is not willing to provide. The most motivated staff want to begin training implementation and are frustrated if they have to wait or find funding for needed materials. An additional resource provided by some states that libraries have been

able to feature in their parent education is state library sponsored early childhood websites that provided resources directly to parents and caregivers.

Pennsylvania's *Preschool Connections* is an excellent case study to conclude this discussion. *Preschool Connections* was intended to enable under-resourced libraries to create welcoming family spaces and better quality early childhood programming. The State Library required libraries to send two people to four trainings over the course of the year. These were held regionally so people only needed to be away from their work site for one day. At each training participants received materials to bring back to their libraries: puppets, musical instruments, educational games, etc. The State Library learned after the first year that these little libraries did not have the capacity to order materials like sand tables, rugs, etc., even though the State provided funding. In the second year, the State Library ordered the needed materials for the libraries and had it all shipped to them. The training covered collection development, programming, outreach and public relations, and early childhood development. The final evaluation showed that the desired change/outcomes happened in most cases with libraries creating welcoming, comfortable destination places for families.

## **Recognition of Wide Range of Capacities within a State**

There is a wide range of capacities within each state—from highly resourced urban and suburban systems that frequently initiate early literacy programs because of directors and staff active in national library organizations or divisions, to small under-resourced rural libraries with part-time, non-degreed staff. The ability to attend training, the need for on-line support because of travel restrictions, the sophistication of staff, and resources within the library and library system are all factors in creating a statewide plan. A multi-tiered approach rather than a “one size fits all” plan is essential. It is also recommended that strong libraries and library systems be encouraged to innovate and provide leadership in statewide efforts and that small, less resourced libraries and library systems be recognized for innovation as well as progress.

## **Evaluation and Refinement of Training and Partnerships**

The most impressive programs constantly evaluated their progress and were clear in the outcomes they wanted to see in staff. When outcomes were not met, training was refined, web resources and training was added, coaching mechanisms were put in place, and new partnerships made. One youth consultant pointed out that an initiative should not begin without having the evaluator in place and present at the first meeting where the program was discussed.

## **Conclusion**

This research forms the basis for the ongoing development of the New York State Library's early literacy initiative, ***Ready to Read at New York Libraries: an Early Childhood Public Library Staff Development Program***. Through lessons learned from this research, this program includes strategic statewide and local partners, a Training Cohort to ensure sustainability in a cost-effective manner, delivery of training in multiple formats, integrated evaluation tools, and five Foundation Training Components (community asset analysis, outreach and partnerships, Every Child Ready to Read 2®, early learning spaces, and early literacy customer service for all library staff.)

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## **Attachment A: Early Literacy Programs – Three Best Practices**

**Name:** Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR), second edition

**Sponsor/founder:** Public Library Association and Association for Library Service to Children

**Contact:** [www.everychildreadytoread.org/](http://www.everychildreadytoread.org/)

**Cost:** \$200 for ECRR toolkit which includes: Manual, CD with PowerPoint presentations for 8 workshops (3 for staff, 1 for parents, and 4 for groups of parents and children), bookmarks, takeaway brochures, and poster.

**Major principles/content:**

- Reading is an essential life skill.
- Learning to read begins at birth.
- Parents and caregivers are a child's first and best teachers.
- Lifelong learning is a primary role of the public library; public libraries need to support parents and caregivers as they develop early literacy skills in children from birth to age five.
- Every Child Ready to Read is a parent education initiative that provides skills and strategies parents and caregivers can use to help children get ready to read.

Focuses on five practices for developing early literacy: Talking, Singing, Reading, Writing, and Playing.

**Methods:** Librarian-led workshops for groups of parents/caregivers or parents/caregivers and children.

**Partnerships:** Manual includes a section on workshops for community partners. Suggestions are given for finding these partners as well as a curriculum to follow. The workshops are designed to give potential partners information about the importance of developing early literacy skills, to introduce them to the library's role in early literacy, and to encourage them to partner with the library in future early literacy outreach initiatives.

**Training:** Manual is designed to meet training needs. Some independent contractors also provide training. Neither ALSC nor PLA endorse or license any individual trainers. Workshops may be available at national or state library association conferences.

**Evaluation:** ECRR 1<sup>st</sup> edition was evaluated by Sara Laughlin and Associates. The second edition will be evaluated pending the results of an IMLS grant.

**Consultant assessment:** Based on an evaluation of the first edition of ECRR by Dr. Susan Neumann and Dr. Donna Celano, who also guided the development of this product, ECRR, second edition, was developed with the input of children's librarians and public library directors. It is research-based and designed to be practical for any public library. Color photographs in the PowerPoint presentations depict adults and children of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. However, the content itself is culturally neutral. Translations into other languages of handouts and PowerPoint presentations are not available in the Toolkit. More attention to the particular situations of non-English speaking families would be desirable. Beginning in 2014, a Spanish language version is available.

Large libraries who need multiple copies of the Toolkit may find the cost prohibitive. However, many systems have used the Toolkit to train their children's librarians and produced their own copies of additional materials.

## *Ready to Read at New York Libraries*

**Name:** Family Place Libraries

**Sponsor/founder:** Middle Country Public Library

**Contact:** [www.familyplacelibraries.org](http://www.familyplacelibraries.org), 631-585-9393

**Cost:** \$10,000 for an individual library to become a Family Place Library. Cost includes tuition for 3-day on-site Family Place Training Institute in Centereach, New York, plus one day on-line training. Training for each additional person is \$2,000. Cost includes lodging and meals; participants must pay for their own transportation. In addition, libraries must purchase toys and supplies for the Parent/Child Workshops and toys and furniture for the enhanced Family Space in the public area. Costs can run to an additional \$5,000 to \$10,000.

**Major principles/content:** Aims to position the public library as a center for early childhood information, parent education, emergent literacy, socialization, and family support. Focus is on children from 0 to 3. A key message is that play is essential learning for young children.

**Methods:** Parent/Child Workshop (given as a series of five sessions), specially designed space and collections, staff who are trained to reach out to parents and build community coalitions.

**Partnerships:** Libraries are encouraged to build coalitions with other community agencies and institutions that serve families with young children. Each session of the Parent/Child Workshop includes a different resource person who provides informal information and guidance to parents. Examples include dentists, speech therapists, nutritionists, social workers.

**Training:** Intensive training provided at the on-site Institute. Instructors are staff from the Family Place Libraries headquarters in New York. Content includes techniques for community assessment and outreach, child development, early learning, parent education, space design, marketing, and detailed instructions for conducting the Parent/Child Workshop.

**Evaluation:** Training manual includes materials for evaluating Parent/Child Workshops. Website includes full text of outside evaluations done for Family Place initiatives in California, Long Island, and Blair County, Pennsylvania. A 2012 IMLS Leadership Grant was awarded to the Middle Country Public Library to work with twenty-eight libraries across seven states to implement and evaluate Family Place Libraries™, a library-based early childhood and family support service model. This program will focus on parents/caregivers as first teachers, will be organized around the developmental needs of the child, and will link library services with other regional and local family support agencies. The program emphasizes libraries as key institutions within the early childhood and family support community, and partners in the promotion of healthy child and family development. Partner libraries were selected in Colorado, Kansas, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, Ohio, and Oklahoma to include communities in a variety of socio-economic and diverse urban, suburban, and rural settings.

**Consultant assessment:** Family Place is a quality program that has been implemented in 250 libraries in 25 states. It fills a unique niche with its focus on children from 0 to 3. It requires a commitment from the library to devote significant staff time and public space in order to implement it fully. In California, a survey of the libraries that had been funded in the past three years showed that only 62% had been able to offer two or more Parent/Child workshop series per year. 29% were only able to offer one series annually. 9% -- two libraries -- had been unable to offer even one series in the previous year. Family Place also requires a significant initial monetary investment followed by ongoing infusions of resources to keep the toys, equipment, and furniture fresh. IMLS has funded start-up initiatives in some states. Although the training emphasizes the need for identifying community assets and working with partners, there is little multicultural or multilingual content in the training. The parent education provided by the Parent/Child Workshops is so low-key as to be almost subliminal. The most recent evaluation of the State Library-funded Family Place initiative in nine libraries in California showed that fewer than 30% of parents who participated in the Parent/Child Workshops articulated the concept that play was the way their young child learned.

## *Ready to Read at New York Libraries*

**Name:** Mother Goose on the Loose

**Sponsor/Founder:** Dr. Betsy Diamant-Cohen

**Contact:** 443-928-3915, [betsydc@mgol.org](mailto:betsydc@mgol.org)

**Cost:** Full-day workshop is \$2300 plus expenses.

Training manuals include detailed instructions for conducting *Mother Goose on the Loose* programs. *Mother Goose on the Loose* (Neal-Schuman, 2006) is \$150. *Early Literacy Programming en Espanol* (Neal-Schuman, 2010) is \$90. Both manuals include CD-ROMS with music and additional graphics.

**Major Principles/Content:** The stated mission of Mother Goose on the Loose is to engage and educate infants to three-year-olds, partnering with parents, caregivers, and the community, through an entertaining and creative strategic program designed to cultivate and foster early literacy and learning skills. The librarian is encouraged to be a facilitator, rather than a presenter or a teacher.

**Methods:** MGOL programs are story times designed to engage the youngest children, using flannel board stories, rhymes, songs, finger and body plays, and repetition in a predictable pattern. Librarians are taught the 10-part framework in which each segment builds on the one before.

**Partnerships:** There is no explicit content about partnerships or collaboration in the basic MGOL training kit. However, *Early Literacy Programming en Espanol: Mother Goose on the Loose Programs for Bilingual Learners* assumed that an English-speaking librarian is working with a Spanish-speaking partner. There is one chapter devoted to working with the Latino community and many tips for building effective working relationships throughout the book.

**Training:** Dr. Diamant-Cohen does all licensed *Mother Goose on the Loose* training. Her full-day workshop includes current research on brain-development, attachment, and play, in addition to hands-on exercises in developing and presenting MGOL story times.

**Evaluation:** No evaluations have been conducted at this time.