

Sparking Literacy



TOPLINE NEWS FROM READ TO ME PROJECT NOVEMBER 9 2023

NOMINATED for EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARD

The Monterey County School Board Association promotes an *Excellence in Education* annual award for nonprofit organizations that contribute to school districts. The Read to Me Project has been nominated to receive this prestigious honor. Excellence in Education Award Criteria: A program that is available and accessible to students countywide, has a transformative and significant impact on students' quality of life, and demonstrates a commitment to exceeding expectations in pursuit of addressing significant, unmet student needs.

Monterey County educators from 24 school districts will vote and the winner will be announced in February 2024.

Request for Volunteers: Being with children during Read to Me Project's Holiday Gift Wrap Event is a heart-warming way to launch the holiday season. Their eyes sparkle with excitement at the prospect of selecting a special book to give to their baby brother or sister.

Our program coordinators need a little help with the event with Read to Me Project students. Can you spare a few hours? You would be traveling to one of the participating schools to help set out new books, hand out pre-cut sheets of wrapping paper, and help students as needed to wrap their book as a holiday present. Students share that they love having a gift to give to the little one at home.

Please contact Kam@readtomeproject.org for details and to sign up. Thank you!



Research reveals that the impacts of childhood literacy extend beyond academic, social, and economic achievements to physical and mental health outcomes. (Johnson et al., 2022)

In aging adults, reading and literacy are proven to impact long-term cognitive health. In their

Seriously! We Can Fix the Literacy Crisis!

Despite debates over varying methods for teaching children how to read, let's get them ready to learn in the first place.

The ongoing discussion concerning reading instruction methods in schools often fails to recognize a fundamental, unchanging reality: 90 percent of a child's brain development occurs during the first five years of life, before they even set foot in a classroom.

It's disheartening that, by the fourth grade, two out of three American children fall short of meeting essential literacy standards. Regardless of which methods are used to teach reading - whether phonics-

extensive research on aging, Galit Weinstein, Ella Cohn-Schwartz, and Noam Damri, posit that “early-life book-oriented environment may be important in shaping cognitive aging and to slower cognitive decline, independently of education and life-course factors such as health, lifestyle, and socioeconomic indices.” (2021)

The connection between early literacy, success in school, equitable opportunity for achieving one’s dreams, and ultimately healthy aging is a profound relationship that for local under-served children begins with the Read to Me Project.



based or balanced literacy approaches - students will struggle with learning how to read if they started school without foundational literacy skills.

How do we address the issue of low literacy among 70% of children in Monterey County while policymakers and educators continue their prolonged deliberations about how to teach children to read?

The solution begins at birth. Read to Me Project primarily reaches families through the older children in the family who are coached to mentor and regularly read to the preschoolers at home. We also empower parents with consistent support and resources that foster and encourage their child’s early literacy development.

Furthermore, we guide and assist both students and parents to create a nurturing and literature-rich home environment, complete with the provision of books to help create an in-home library.

Only by recognizing the critical significance of the first five years can we truly engage in a meaningful discussion about effective reading instruction methods.

The Read to Me Project is focused on providing preschoolers with the essential building blocks of early literacy knowledge that prepare them for learning how to read regardless of the reading instruction method employed by their future teachers.

One teacher says:

“From the start, I was so excited about Read to Me Project and how it can change lives one child, family, school, and community at a time. Literacy is the heartbeat of any elementary school. I continue to be thrilled with the results I am seeing with my fourth graders. It will be wonderful through the years to have the little ones coming to kindergarten not only excited about reading, but with some of the foundational skills already!!”

“This is such a worthwhile program, and it makes no sense to me why every teacher and school doesn’t promote it. The research is there.”

It's Time to Ask

Will you please support Monterey County's solution for closing the literacy gap among disadvantaged children in low literate families?

MONTEREY COUNTY GIVES!
Joining Together for Big Ideas

Our only fundraiser of the year!

Donate

Donations received now through December 31st will be increased by a percentage match from Monterey County Gives! Campaign Partners

Monterey County Weekly
Community Foundation for Monterey County
Monterey Peninsula Foundation, Host of the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro Am
Gunde & Ernie Posey Family Foundation
Taylor Farms
Neumeier Poma Investment Counsel
Colburn and Alana Jones Foundation of the CFMC
David and Lucile Packard Foundation
Cannery Row Company
Harden Foundation
Nancy Eccles and Homer M. Hayward Family Foundation

Website

Every child entering kindergarten prepared to succeed.

