TALK: Text and Learn for Kindergarten

An IMLS/LSTA Pilot Project
Today’s Presentation

- Introductions
- LSTA/IMLS Grant Funding Process
- TALK: Why, How, & What
- Lessons Learned
- Families Reached
- Next Steps
Introductions

- Us
- Our library
- Our community
- Washtenaw County
How TALK Was Born

Research
Research, research, research

Goals
Setting goals

Funding
Applying for and receiving funding

Design
Service design and implementation
Research Phase

- Existing Library Programs
- Statewide Programs
- University Research
- Other Parent Education Models

TALK

Research
TALK Goals

1. To reach underserved populations of Washtenaw County with early literacy messages
2. To improve the school readiness of children ages 0-5 years old
3. Market free early literacy events to these groups
4. Use 3 years of pilot program to develop a service other libraries can and will use
Funding
How TALK works

TALK: As you feed baby, use words to describe what foods taste, feel and look like. "This yogurt is smooth and cool. That yellow banana is sweet."
The messages

- Written by library youth staff from 5 libraries
- www.texttolearn.com
- Fingerplays, videos, & more
Event Promotion

Thursday, Aug 8 • 11:01 AM

EVENT: Experience an interactive play with Theatre for Little Ones. Sat. Aug. 17, 10:30am at the Whittaker Branch. Click link for details: t.zipx.us/iqh4S

Theatre for Little Ones

Saturday, August 17 | 10:30 am - 11:30 am

Join Spinning Dot Theatre Troupe for an interactive play with joyful live music. Kids will be ready to continue playing and exploring all the way home.
Refining the messages

- Reviewed by literacy experts for readability
- Reviewed by under-resourced parents for accessibility and cultural sensitivity
- Reviewed by education experts for developmental appropriateness
2019 John Cotton Dana award-winning promotional materials

- Logo and brand design
- Bus ads, billboards, posters with in situ messages
- Social media and web campaigns
And more...

- Swag
- Postcard mass mailing and school backpack distribution
- Flyers can be customized
Face-to-Face Outreach: One family at a time

- Health Department food distribution days
- WIC
- Farmers’ Markets
- Community Storytimes
- School staff meetings
- Doctors’ offices
- Childcare Network
- WISD in-services
- Anywhere, everywhere
Families Reached

1,273 total households reached since the program launched

*Data collected from 319 responses to our demographic survey*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Setbacks</th>
<th>Unexpected Setbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Low survey response rate</td>
<td>● Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Changing phone numbers</td>
<td>● Shifting Legal Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Non-English speakers</td>
<td>● Opt out rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unexpected Benefits

- Teaching through marketing
- New and improved partnerships
- Community leaders in early literacy
Parent messaging is key

- Parents are a child’s first and best teacher
- Research-based, parent-approved content impacts parent behaviors for early intervention leading to school success
- Text messages reach parents anywhere
- Messages demonstrate early learning is easy and fun
- Need to improve school readiness and school success in Michigan
Other early literacy text message services now available in Michigan

**Ready4K**  [https://ready4k.parentpowered.com/](https://ready4k.parentpowered.com/) currently available in Detroit area with funding from United Way for Southeast Michigan

**Bright By Text**  [https://brightbytext.org/](https://brightbytext.org/) currently available in the Detroit area, promoted by Detroit PBS with funding from the Bezos Family Foundation, includes Sesame Street and Vroom content

**Talking is Teaching**  [https://talkingisteaching.org/](https://talkingisteaching.org/) currently available in Wayne and Livingston Counties as well as Northern Michigan, but is working in partnership with the Michigan Department of Education and Great Start Collaborative on a statewide rollout
What makes TALK unique? It’s all about libraries!

- Activities tailored to ECRR 2.0 so it aligns with storytime
- Libraries are trusted community institutions
- Reviewed by the very parents libraries struggle to reach
- Making non-users aware of the library through TALK will benefit the entire family
- Libraries bring people and organizations together
- ALSC stamp of approval
Vision for TALK expansion

Applying for IMLS funding to take TALK statewide

New Partners
- Library of Michigan
- Midwest Collaborative for Library Services
- HighScope Educational Research Foundation

New Features
- Improved messaging platform to accommodate more users
- Anyone can sign up, but libraries who opt in will be able to reach users in their area with customized event and service information
- Potential Spanish expansion
- Statewide training for library staff and access to a toolkit of materials to use for advertising and outreach
Questions?
Would your library be interested in signing up?
Resources and contact information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Stanford Early Literacy text message project</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://cepa.stanford.edu/content/one-step-time-effects-early-literacy-text-messaging-program-parents-preschoolers">https://cepa.stanford.edu/content/one-step-time-effects-early-literacy-text-messaging-program-parents-preschoolers</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>University of Minnesota text message trial with Minnesota Children’s Museum and two county library systems</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Recent trends in income, racial and ethnic school readiness gaps at kindergarten entry.</strong> (2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858416657343">http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858416657343</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Kids Count 2019 Michigan Data</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Claire Myers:</strong> <a href="mailto:talk@ypslibrary.org">talk@ypslibrary.org</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UMSI TALK intern</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Lisa Hoenig:</strong> <a href="mailto:lisa@ypslibrary.org">lisa@ypslibrary.org</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YDL Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Jodi Krahnke:</strong> <a href="mailto:jodi@ypslibrary.org">jodi@ypslibrary.org</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YDL Head of Youth Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Kristel Sexton:</strong> <a href="mailto:kristel.sexton@farmlib.org">kristel.sexton@farmlib.org</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FCL Head of Children’s Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **TALK Website:** www.texttolearn.com |

Thank you to Claire Myers for designing the charts and working on the layout of this presentation.