The Maine Family Literacy Initiative and Raising Readers are pleased to present the 2011 “Literacy Explorer Kits”

Each Literacy Explorer Kit provides theme activities for the 2011 Raising Readers Collection, and the kits include the following:

- General Reading Tips and Developmental Information for the different age groups.
- A Playgroup Map that contains: discussion activities, literacy extensions, craft and snack ideas, and parent education tips. Some include science and math ideas that relate to the book.
- Parent and Child Together Time Idea Sheets that assist parents in extending the learning from the playgroup. The PACT sheet provides simple ideas for families to do together around the book, such as craft ideas and songs to sing together.
- An Explorer Bag Information Sheet lists items that can be placed in a take home “Explorer Bag” for families.
- A Journal Sheet for the parent. They can reflect on the activities they did with their child. A portion of the journal sheet is for the Family Literacy Provider to “write back” to the parent.
- Reference and Resource List

Family Literacy Providers can determine which activities will work best with their families. *All activities should be supervised by a parent or caregiver*. Most Playgroup Maps have activities for more than one playgroup. Each Playgroup Map has activities that match the Age Milestone listed by the book on the Raising Readers’ Book List. Groups Newborn through 18 Months also have ideas for the general preschool age.

Happy Reading and Playing!

A Collaboration of the Maine Family Literacy Initiative
& Raising Readers
Pamela Cote 2012
### Raising Readers Book List 2011

Celebrating 11 years and over 1.5 million books given to children in Maine. For more information call 1-800-397-3263 or visit www.raisingreaders.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Books</th>
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| **Newborn** | Baby Bear’s Books (Melissa Sweet)  
What Does Baby See? (Begin Smart) |
|       | Vroom Vroom Maisy (Lucy Cousins) |
| **2 months** | Look at That! (Guido Van Genechten) |
| **4 months** | I Love Colors (Margaret Miller) |
| **6 months** | All About Me (DK Publishing) |
| **9 months** | Peek-a-Boo What? (Begin Smart) |
| **12 months** | Look at You! (Kathy Henderson) |
| **15 months** | Knees and Toes (Rookie Toddler) |
| **18 months** | Meeow and the Little Chairs (Sebastien Braun) |
| **2 years** | Pouch! (David Ezra Stein) |
| **3 years** | The Seals on the Bus (Lenny Hort) |
| **4 years** | Kiss the Cow! (Phyllis Root) |
| **5 years** | Raising Readers: A Treasury of Tales from Maine |
Create a bridge between the literacy materials in your program and the books children have in their homes.
Purchase a copy of each of the RR books for your program. Experiencing the same book in the home and in your family literacy program multiplies its impact. Teach parents why they should read to their children daily and model how to engage their children with books. Provide parents with supplemental activities that they can do at home with each of the books. You may also find some of these books at your local library.

Use information from the Early Literacy Calendar in your parenting classes.
Many of the children in your program will have these books at home and this information will help parents understand how to enjoy the books with their kids.

Incorporate the books and related activities into your Interactive Literacy Activities.
Many RR books include activities linked to the book that you can use in the program. These are located in the back of the book. Developed with the staff at Maine Roads to Quality, the activities support Maine’s Infant Toddler and Preschool Learning Guidelines. Activities for additional books used in the program are available on the website.

Use the RR Topics Brochure for recommendations on books that deal with common childhood issues.
Available on the website, the Topics Brochure provides lists of children’s books on sibling rivalry, loss/grief, toilet training, etc. These books might be helpful as a reference for parents in your program or as an introduction on how parents can use literacy materials to address common childhood issues.

Use the RR website for read aloud tips, parent handouts, and as a resource for early literacy skills.
This kit includes the following:

**General Reading Tips & Developmental Information**
(Place a copy in "Explorer Bags")

**Playgroup Map - Theme Related Activities**

**Parent and Child Together Time Ideas**
(Place a copy in "Explorer Bags" with needed supplies)

**Explorer Bag Information Sheet**
(Place a copy in "Explorer Bags")
General Reading Tips & Developmental Information

General Reading Tips:
✓ It’s never too early to read to your baby. It is a great time to cuddle and bond.
✓ Reading helps build vocabulary and stimulates a child’s imagination. It also helps improve his/her communication skills.
✓ Infants should be exposed to language rich environments. Language skills are related to how many words a baby hears each day.
✓ Babies love to “mouth” books, so heavy duty board books are best for babies.
✓ Babies love to hear singing, so look for books with rhythm and nursery rhymes.

For your Baby:
✓ Babies listen to the rhythm of language (your voice), not the content. Read them anything: a children’s book, a magazine, your novel.
✓ Read aloud for a few minutes at a time.
✓ Board books with different, bright colors will be interesting to them.
✓ Sing to your baby! They love to hear your voice rhyming a nursery rhyme or lullaby.
✓ Reading to your baby makes a connection between being close to you and your voice – two things your baby loves.

Developmental Milestones You May Notice - Newborn:
✓ Your newborn’s brain is developing quickly. You promote healthy brain growth when you cuddle, sing, and care for your baby.
✓ Babies express how they feel through facial expressions and sound to tell you their needs.
✓ Newborns have all five senses. They quickly learn to recognize your face, how you sound, and your smell.
✓ Muscles start to strengthen and hands fist when your baby is very alert.
✓ Help your baby grow and develop by using a high pitched voice, gentle touch, hugs, and kisses.

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Read the Book:
- At first glance, *I Love Colors* looks like a simple book about colors. It is so much more! Babies will get to look at other babies and most of them are smiling and being silly. Every two pages introduces a new color, and the baby wears something that shows the color of the page. The print is in black, so it stands out to babies. (Babies like contrasting colors and this is referred to as “high contrast”)
- Get silly with this book. Read it slowly, point to the babies and make funny faces like they make.
- Sometimes being silly is hard for parents. You may want to provide them with baby safe mirrors, so they can practice being silly.

Literacy Extensions:
- Gather parents with older children for story time and sing this song:

  **The Color I See**
  Red, red is the color I see. If you are wearing RED, then show it to me.
  Stand up, turn around. Show me your red then sit back down.

  Yellow, Yellow is the color I see. If you are wearing YELLOW, then show it to me. Stand up, turn around. Show me your yellow then sit back down.

  Go through as many colors as you wish.
  (This Extension was featured in the 2010 *Little Scholastic Colors* Kit)

- Color Scavenger Hunt: Cut out colored shapes. Give one color to each family. Allow a certain amount of time for parents to explore the child care center and gather items (you may want to set a number) for their color. Bring the items back to circle time to share.
- Tell the parents in advance that you are going to be exploring colors at the next playgroup. Assign a color to each family, so that the baby wears something of that color. Have items available for parents. You can purchase inexpensive items at the Dollar Store: bows, glasses, flowers. Check out the book for more suggestions.
- Take a picture of each baby wearing the color (don’t tell parents about the book you will be making at playgroup – that is a surprise!)

Literacy Craft:
- Before playgroup, print the baby face pictures that you took on heavy paper. One copy for each family. (Make sure you have permission from the families to share their pictures. You can also do this with magazine cut outs). If possible, laminate the pictures.
- Have parents assemble the pictures into a book. Now, they each have their own book of baby friends!
- Finger Paint: Provide large sheets of paper and finger paint from the
Science section. Have families create their own masterpieces!

| Science & Math:                  | Make your own Finger Paint:                                                                 |
|                                 | o Measure 2 cups of water into a bowl. Slowly add 2 cups of white flour and mix thoroughly. Separate into portions and add food coloring. |
|                                 | o Older children can help with measuring, counting, and separating the portions.            |
|                                 | o Experiment making different colors by mixing them together.                             |
|                                 | Colorful Bubbles!                                                                          |
|                                 | o Purchase bubbles and wands at your local dollar store. Add food coloring to bubble containers. Blow the bubbles for families and call out the colors! |

<p>| Parent Education:               | It is very important for parents to talk, smile, and make eye contact with their babies. By three months old, babies are tracking movement with their eyes. They are fascinated with facial expressions and begin to watch their parents’ faces closely. |
|                                 | Talk with parents about what conversations they have with their child. Do they talk with their child while they are dressing them? Feeding them? Pushing them in the stroller? The tone of the voice and facial expression will start making connections for baby for when their parent is happy or concerned. |
|                                 | With older parents, explore pictures showing different emotions. You may want to have a parent and child together time for the older children and parents to talk about emotions and expressions when they feel happy, sad, worried, or angry. |
|                                 | Here is a song to share with families:                                                     |
|                                 | <strong>Happy Feeling</strong>                                                                         |
|                                 | I've got that happy feeling, here in my heart,                                            |
|                                 |   Here in my heart, here in my heart.                                                     |
|                                 | I've got that happy feeling here in my heart,                                              |
|                                 |   Here in my heart to stay.                                                               |
|                                 | I've got that happy feeling down in my feet,                                               |
|                                 |   Down in my feet, down in my feet.                                                       |
|                                 | I've got that happy feeling down in my feet,                                               |
|                                 |   Down in my feet to stay.                                                                |
|                                 | I've got that happy feeling here in my hands,                                              |
|                                 |   Here in my hands, here in my hands.                                                     |
|                                 | I've got that happy feeling here in my hands,                                              |
|                                 |   Here in my hands to stay.                                                               |
|                                 | I've got that happy feeling all over me,                                                   |
|                                 |   All over me, all over me.                                                               |
|                                 | I've got that happy feeling all over me,                                                   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Snack:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Choose a variety of healthy snacks for all ages of the playgroup. Model healthy snack choices and talk about options for different ages.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gather round – have a spot for everyone. Parents with newborns can be a part of snack time, too!</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Simple snack ideas: cut up bananas, soft crackers and yogurt.</td>
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Parent and Child Together Time Ideas
*I Love Colors* by Margaret Miller

**READ THE BOOK:**
- This book will be loved by your baby, toddler and preschooler!
- Read the story and talk about the baby faces, colors and words. Point to the color on left page. Find the color on the baby on the right page.
- Make silly expressions back to your baby while you read the book.

**COLOR PRINTS:**
- With your child, fold a piece of heavy white paper in half.
- Open the paper and place a few drops of different colored food coloring on to the paper.
- Fold the paper again and then open it.
- What do the colors look like? Is there a pattern?

**COLOR WALK:**
- Colors are everywhere! Take a color walk in your home with your baby. Choose a color to explore. For example, yellow. Walk around the room and point out everything you see that is yellow.
- Talk with your baby. For example, “Look, I see a yellow book and look this is a yellow duck. I am going to pull out some yellow blocks and put them in the yellow bus.”
- This is fun to do with older children and have a color “day” or afternoon...just focus on one color and watch how quickly they learn their colors!
This Explorer Bag Contains the Following:

- Reading Tips & Developmental Information For Your Baby & Toddler
- Parent and Child Together Time (PACT) Idea Sheet
- Supplies You Will Need For PACT Ideas:
  - Heavy white paper
  - Different colored food coloring
- Journal Activity Sheet

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JOURNAL - *I Love Colors* by Margaret Miller

What did you like about the book *I Love Colors*? Do you think your baby had a favorite baby face?

What is your favorite color? Do you think your child has a favorite color?

What PACT activity did you do with your child? What went well? What didn’t go so well?
I'll write back to you here...
LITERACY EXPLORER KITS 2011

References

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Kuffner, Trish (1999), *The Toddler Busy Book*, Meadow Brook Press, Minnetonka, Minnesota


Manoloson, Ward, and Dodington (2007), *You Make The Difference*, The Hanen Centre Toronto, ON Canada


National Center for Family Literacy and Snuggle (2002), *Reading Through The Years*, Gruner+Jahr Publishing, USA

National Center for Family Literacy (2009), *What Works – An Introductory Teacher Guide for Early Language and Emergent Literacy Instruction*, Based on the National Early Literacy Panel Report, Louisville, KY

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Springvale Public Library, *Baby Rhyme Time* (2011), Springvale, Maine


Your 4-Month-Old’s Development: Week 1 (n.d.), from babycenter.com retrieved August 4, 2011 from [http://www.babycenter.com/0_your-4-month-olds-development-week-1_1477216.bc#articlesection3](http://www.babycenter.com/0_your-4-month-olds-development-week-1_1477216.bc#articlesection3)

Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.healthychildren.org

Baby Center
www.babycenter.com

Candlewick Press, Raising Readers
Publisher Activity Sheets for *A Visitor for Bear* by Bonny Becker and *Bob* by Tracey Campbell Pearson

Everything Preschool – Early Childhood Education Made Easy
www.everythingpreschool.com

Medline Plus
www.nlm.nih.gov

Scholastic
www.scholastic.com

Songs for Teaching
www.songsforteaching.com

The Perpetual Preschool
www.perpetualpreschool.com

What To Expect
www.whatttoexpect.com