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!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Books</th>
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</table>
| 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.
Knees and Toes Scholastic

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”)

A Collaboration of the Maine Family Literacy Initiative
& Raising Readers
Pamela Cote 2012
General Reading Tips & Developmental Information

General Reading Tips:

✓ Read to your toddler every day. Make it part of your routine and have a set time to read: before bed or naptime, after a bath.
✓ Cuddle while you read - make your toddler feel safe and loved.
✓ Reading helps build vocabulary and stimulates a child’s imagination. It also helps improve his/her communication skills.
✓ Read with expression - use different voices and make faces that match what is going on in the story.
✓ Store books in your diaper bag - they are great to have while stuck in traffic or waiting for an appointment.

For your 15 Month Old:

✓ Don’t be surprised if your toddler walks off while you are reading or wants to stand or sit next to you. (Since learning to walk, who wants to sit still?)
✓ Story time may end abruptly or last for only a few minutes. That’s okay - grab a few minutes to read when your toddler shows interest and keep your set reading time.
✓ Interactive books work best, touch and feel, turning dials, lift the flap, stories that move quickly.
✓ Let them read at their own pace, looking at pictures and asking questions for as long as they want to.
✓ Encourage play that allows them to use their imagination and creativity. Start acting out stories!
✓ Simple games are fun to play! Try puzzles and shape sorting.

Developmental Milestones You May Notice:

✓ Toddlers begin to understand that objects have purpose, such as we use a hairbrush to brush hair, and a cup for drinking.
✓ Language is developing - let your child know you are listening - make eye contact and talk back to your child even if you are not sure what he/she is saying.
✓ Be silly - they begin to realize when you are goofing around and will laugh and giggle at your actions.
Read the Book:

- *Knees and Toes* is part of Scholastic’s “Rookie Toddler” series. Check out the back of the book to learn more about these books!
- The “Knees and Toes” song is very popular for circle times. Families can sing, move, and help their children learn their body parts. This book shares the song with cute teddy bears doing the movements.
- Show the children the front cover of the book and ask them, “What is this bear doing?” Tell them you are going to read a book that might remind them of a song you have song.
- Read the book once and on the second reading have families stand and move like the bears.

Literacy Extensions:

- Invite children to bring their teddy bears or stuffed animals to circle time. Have them act out the song with their bears just like in the story. This is a fun song to sing fast and s-l-o-w!
- Sing other songs about body parts. This is a fun one!

Hokey Pokey
You put left leg in
You take left leg out
You put left leg in and shake it all about
You do the hokey pokey and turn yourself around
That's what its all about!

- Play “Simon Says”. Have everyone stand up. The leader will make a request, such as, “Simon says, touch your nose”. If the leader says “Simon Says”, you touch your nose. If the leader does not say “Simon Says”, you do not touch your nose. The leader gives a series of requests and tries to trick the group by sometimes leaving “Simon Says” out of the request. If a family completes a movement without a “Simon Says”, they must sit down and are out for that round of the game. Request ideas: touch nose, knee, hop in place, say your name, etc.
- Sing this song with families.

Teddy Bear
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground
Teddy bear, teddy bear, reach up high
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the sky
Teddy bear, teddy bear, bend down low
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch your toes
Teddy bear, teddy bear, go upstairs
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the light
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say goodnight
**Literacy Craft:**
- **Teddy Bear T-shirts:**
  - Pick up t-shirts for stuffed animals at your local dollar or craft store. You will also need fabric markers.
  - Have the families decorate the t-shirt for their teddy bear or stuffed animal.
- **Footprint Art:**
  - "Paint" your child’s foot and press it gently on a large piece of paper (you may want to do make multiple prints).
  - Let the prints dry and have your child decorate their prints. What can they be? A fish, snowman, tree…be creative!

**Parent Education:**
- Toddlers love interactive books like *Knees and Toes*. Interactive books allow children to move while listening. They also encourage the parent to be silly – something that is hard for some parents.
- How can parents build and encourage their child’s imagination? According to www.whattoexpect.com “It may not seem like a milestone, but if your toddler snaps your photo with a wooden block (it’s a camera, silly!) or bundles her bear into a blanket, she’s made an important development leap. Engaging in pretend play (also called symbolic play, imaginative play, dramatic play, or good old make-believe) means your toddler understands that she can choose one object (the block) to represent another (a camera just like Mommy’s). That’s a big concept…” Pretend play teaches a child empathy, language skills, problem solving, and how to be brave!
- Have parents share moments when they use their imagination with their child. What objects do they use in their house for the pretend play? Kitchen items: pots and pans Clothing: hats, work clothes Recyclables: boxes large and small. Have parents brainstorm a list of pretend play scenarios. (you will use these ideas at the next playgroup) Write each idea on an index card.
- Dedicate a portion of your next playgroup to pretend play. Set up different areas in the playroom with the items mentioned above. Shuffle the index card you made during the parent education class. Parents choose 2 cards and talk about them with their child (or make the choice). They choose one card and visit an area in the playroom for their pretend play!

**Snack:**
- Spread a rice cake with peanut butter. Add two small pretzels at the top for bear ears and raisins for eyes. Decorate with other fruit to make a bear face.
- In addition, choose a variety of healthy snacks for all ages of the playgroup. Model healthy snack choices and talk about options for different ages.
- Gather round – have a spot for everyone. Parents with newborns can be a part of snack time, too!
- Simple snack ideas: cut up bananas, soft crackers and yogurt.
Parent and Child Together Time Ideas
Knees and Toes Scholastic

READ THE BOOK:

- Knees and Toes is a song you might be familiar with. In this book, dressed up teddy bears imitate the movements.
- Read and “sing” the book to your child.
- Encourage them to make the movements while you read. They may also have a stuffed animal sit with them while you read and their animal can make the movements.

USE YOUR IMAGINATION:

- Gather the following items in a play area: hats, boxes, pots, spoons, bags, stuffed animals...what else?
- Let your child explore the items. Very quickly, your child’s imagination will come out and they will begin to play with these items.
- Follow their lead and let your imagination go with them!

CREATE A TEDDY BEAR:

- Draw an outline of a bear on a piece of heavy card stock or you may be provided with a print from your playgroup center. You can also do this activity with a paper plate and just make a bear “face”.
- Give your child a piece of brown construction paper. Let them rip and tear it into pieces. Dip the paper in white glue and stick it on to the outline. The pieces should overlap, so that the “bear” has a texture to it.
- Decorate with buttons, googly eyes, yarn, etc.
**SING THESE SONGS:**

**Hokey Pokey**
You put your left leg in
You take your left leg out
You put your left leg in and you shake it all about
You do the hokey pokey and you turn yourself around
That’s what its all about!

**Teddy Bear**
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground
Teddy bear, teddy bear, reach up high
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the sky
Teddy bear, teddy bear, bend down low
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch your toes
Teddy bear, teddy bear, go upstairs
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the light
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say goodnight
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:
  - Bear Outline
  - Brown Construction Paper
  - White Glue
  - Googly eyes, buttons, yarn, crayons
- Journal Activity Sheet

A Collaboration of the Maine Family Literacy Initiative & Raising Readers
Pamela Cote 2012
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOURNAL - <em>Knees and Toes</em> Scholastic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What did you like about the book <em>Knees and Toes</em>? Have you heard this song before?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your child’s favorite song to sing with you? What song do you like singing with your child?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What PACT activity did you do with your child? What went well? What didn’t go so well?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I'll write back to you here...
LITERACY EXPLORER KITS 2011

References

Armbruster, Lehr, and Osborn (2006), *A Child Becomes a Reader*, National Institute for Literacy, RMC Research Corporation, Portsmouth, NH


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


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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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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