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
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<tr>
<th>Newborn</th>
<th>9 months</th>
<th>2 years</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Baby Bear’s Books</em></td>
<td><em>Peek-a-Boo What?</em></td>
<td><em>Pouch!</em></td>
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<td>Melissa Sweet</td>
<td>Begin Smart</td>
<td>David Ezra Stein</td>
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<td><em>What Does Baby See?</em></td>
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<td><em>Vroom Vroom Maisy</em></td>
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<td>Lucy Cousins</td>
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<td><em>Look at That!</em></td>
<td><em>Look at You!</em></td>
<td><em>Pouch!</em></td>
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<td>Guido Van Genechten</td>
<td>Kathy Henderson</td>
<td>David Ezra Stein</td>
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<td><strong>4 months</strong></td>
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<td><em>I Love Colors</em></td>
<td><em>Knees and Toes</em></td>
<td><em>The Seals on the Bus</em></td>
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<td>Margaret Miller</td>
<td>Rookie Toddler</td>
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<td><strong>6 months</strong></td>
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<td><em>All About Me</em></td>
<td><em>Meeow and the Little Chairs</em></td>
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<td>Phyllis Root</td>
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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.
Peek-a-BOO What? Begin Smart (Sterling Publishing)

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:

✓ 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 Nine Month Old:

✓ Read aloud for a few minutes at a time. It’s okay to stop when your baby wants to stop reading.
✓ Board books with different, bright colors will be interesting to them. Choose books with different designs and patterns.
✓ Sing to your baby! They love to hear your voice rhyming a nursery rhyme or lullaby.
✓ Babies start to understand that pictures are objects. They will start to have favorite pictures, pages, and, as they approach 12 months, favorite books!
✓ Don’t worry about reading the story perfectly. Stop and ask questions or point out pictures.
✓ Encourage your baby to hold the book. He/she may be turning pages by the time he/she is 12 months old!

Developmental Milestones You May Notice:

✓ Enjoys imitating people, prefers certain toys and people. (Your baby may be shy and anxious with strangers).
✓ Imitates gestures and likes interactive games, like peek a boo and patty cake.
✓ Explores objects in different ways: mouthing, banging, dropping.
✓ Starts to develop depth perception and knows objects exist even when out of sight.
Read the Book:
- Get Ready! This is not your ordinary Peek-a-Boo book! This book will have children of all ages exploring numbers, colors, animals, and much more! The sturdy pages and cut out circles make it perfect to hold to the face for a game of “Peek-a-Boo” or “I Spy”.
- After you read the first page, you are expecting a game of counting numbers. You will be surprised when you lift the second flap to talk about the color blue. The illustrations are bold and colorful, so you could take a color walk with this story.
- The first time you read the book have children guess what is under the flap. Take turns during circle time allowing different children to lift the flap for the group.

Literacy Extensions:
- Gather families by playing this clue game:
  - Pick an item such as an apple. Describe the apple in simple phrases. Write ONE phrase on a strip of paper. You will want about 5-8 phrases. For example:
    - This item is round.
    - This item is red.
    - You can eat it.
    - It grows on a tree.
    - Some people like to make desserts with this.
    - Some are sweet, some are tart.
  - Give each family a clue. Have them read the clue and try to guess what it is (they should whisper the answer to you). Then, have them pair up with another family and share their clues. Again, they try to guess the object. Have the group continue to share their clues until you are one large group. Have them guess the item. Did anyone guess the correct answer early in the game?
    - This is great activity to do with families as it models working together and helps new families get to know everyone.
- Model for parents how to play Peek-a-Boo with their baby or toddler. Have them hold their baby or toddler on their lap so they are face to face. Playing peek-a-boo helps children understand that items and people can go away and come back. This is explored more in the Parent Education section.

Literacy Craft:
- Create Sock Puppets for a game of Peek-a-Boo. Their puppet can hide behind your back or a larger object. Sock puppet ideas: horse, lion, bird, puppy, kitty. Decorate socks with buttons, googly eyes, yarn, feathers, and felt
- Create a Peek-a-Boo mask with a paper plate or heavy cardstock. Cut
out two eye holes and decorate as an animal or make a pattern with colors!

| Math: | Playing Peek-a-Boo is a great way to add numeracy to play time! Gather some building blocks (different colors if possible) and a small blanket or towel.  
|       | o Place one block under the blanket and cover it. Ask baby, “Where did the red block go? Let’s see.” Uncover the block and act surprised. Babies are developing a sense of humor and you will soon have them giggling!  
|       | o Add more blocks and blocks of different colors. Expand the game by counting the blocks and naming the colors. Sort the blocks by colors.  
|       | o Continue to play Peek-a-Boo while you expand with counting and sorting. |

| Parent Education: | Take a book walk with your families. If possible, give each family a copy of Peek-a-Boo What? Give them time to quietly read the book and write down ideas about the book. How will they read the book to their child? What questions could they ask about colors, numbers, animals, etc.?  
|                  | Does their child have a favorite stuffed animal or doll? Toddlers will usually become attached to one item and begin to talk, sing, and play with it. Role play with the animal a game of Peek-a-Boo and help the toddler learn about saying goodbye and returning. This also helps them understand object permanence.  
|                  | Peek-a-Boo can be played when dressing baby, putting shoes on, or picking up toys. The activity can provide a nice transition to the next part of the day. |

| Snack: | 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

Peek-a-BOO What? Begin Smart

READ THE BOOK:

- You will be surprised when you read Peek-a-Boo What? The book jumps around from numbers, colors, and animals!
- It's a sturdy book. Let your child help you turn the pages.
- Playing a guessing game each time you read it. Your older baby and toddler will understand that you are trying to be funny.

PEEK-A-BOO BOARD:

- Create a Peek-a-Boo board for your baby.
  - Take a piece of cardboard and place large pictures (about 4 to 6) on different parts of the board. Choose pictures of common items, animals, hairbrush, dog, etc. (This is also fun to do with pictures of family members)
  - Cut different pieces of colored felt (in primary colors) and cover the pictures, so that you can "lift the flap". Attach one end of felt with colored duct tape.
  - Ask your child questions, such as, “I wonder what is under the yellow flap. Let's see.” or “This felt is black and white, and I think what is under it says 'moo'. Let's see.”

SING THESE SONGS:

Baby’s gone,
Where is she?
(Cover your eyes with hands.)
Peek-a-boo!
Now I see.
(Take hands away and 'find' baby.)
Gone again,
Where did she go?
(Cover your eyes with hands.)
Peek-a-boo!
I found her toe!
(Tickle baby's toes.)
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:
  - One piece of flat cardboard
  - Magazines or pictures of common objects
  - Different colored felt
  - Colored Duct Tape
- Journal Activity Sheet

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Pamela Cote 2012
### JOURNAL - *Peek-a-BOO What? Begin Smart*

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<tr>
<th>What did you like about the book <em>Peek-a-BOO What?</em>? Do you think your child had a favorite page?</th>
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<th>Does your child have a hard time when you say good-bye? What have you tried to make the transition easier?</th>
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<th>What PACT activity did you do with your child? What went well? What didn’t go so well?</th>
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I'll write back to you here...
LITERACY EXPLORER KITS 2011

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Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.healthychildren.org

Baby Center
www.babycenter.com

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

Medline Plus
www.nlm.nih.gov

Scholastic
www.scholastic.com

The Perpetual Preschool
www.perpetualpreschool.com

What To Expect
www.whattoeexpect.com