



National Child Care Information Center

A service of the Child Care Bureau

NCCIC

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TELEVISION PROGRAMMING to SUPPORT LITERACY

Much of what parents learn about emerging and early literacy is absorbed informally while they watch television programming with their children that is targeted specifically to young children. Some programs explicitly teach early literacy skills. Many other programs can be used as tools for encouraging early literacy skills. The following television programs intentionally address helping young children develop literacy skills.

■ **Between the Lions**

World Wide Web: <http://pbskids.org/lions/index.html>

Between the Lions is produced by WGBH Boston and Sirius Thing, Ltd. It combines innovative puppetry, animation, live action, and music to achieve its educational mission of helping young children learn to read. The main goals are to model reading, writing, speaking, and listening behaviors; motivate children to read and write; introduce viewers to the foundational skills that enable literacy acquisition—phonemic awareness, letter-sound knowledge, and basic concepts about print; and acquaint children with a wide variety of discourse styles and texts. The Web site provides stories and games for children, as well as resources on literacy for parents and suggested booklists.

■ **PBS Parents**

World Wide Web: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/>

PBS Parents includes suggestions for activities for parents to do with their children using PBS Kids TV shows. Its multimedia resources include print materials, slideshows that summarize information on a page, and video clips. The PBS Parents site is funded in part by a Ready To Learn cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Education.

■ **Reading Rockets: Launching Young Readers**

World Wide Web: <http://www.pbs.org/launchingreaders/>

This is a five-part public television series on reading. It was created for parents, grandparents, teachers, caregivers, and anyone else who touches children's lives. Each half-hour program examines a stage young children go through in developing their reading skills. The five program titles are: *The Roots of Reading*, *Sounds and Symbols*, *Fluent Reading*, *Writing and Spelling*, and *Reading for Meaning*. The accompanying Web site features easy-to-do parent tips, video clips and transcripts from interviews with some of the nation's foremost reading experts, motivational e-cards that grandparents and teachers can send to children, booklists, a forum for sharing suggestions, parent tips, and articles on promoting literacy. The Web site includes an easy-to-use search feature to enable parents to find PBS stations that serve their community.

■ **Ready to Learn**

World Wide Web: <http://pbskids.org/readytolearn>

This initiative promotes literacy and school readiness by teaching parents and caregivers how to use public television as an educational tool. The Ready To Learn coordinator at each station is responsible for conducting 20 outreach workshops per year, distributing 300 children's books per month to low-income families, distributing a biannual magazine, and engaging in professional development training. PBS Ready To Learn is supported by a cooperative agreement from the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education in the U.S. Department of Education through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The Web site includes links for caregivers and parents to educational philosophies, educator guides, and at-home activities related to these programs. The following PBS KIDS programs that have received production funding from Ready To Learn have a specific early literacy focus: *Between the Lions*, *Reading Rainbow*, and *Sesame Street*.

■ **Sesame Street Caregivers: Learn and Grow**

World Wide Web: http://pbskids.org/sesame/caregivers/learn_screen.html

This Web site is designed to extend children's learning of concepts introduced in episodes of *Sesame Street* and provides caregivers with information in three areas. The section called Making the Most of Media Time offers guidelines on helping children form appropriate habits regarding media use; the From Language to Literacy section highlights ways that caregivers can help children transition from language to literacy skills; and the Music and Art Together section suggests ways that caregivers can use the arts to promote children's cognitive, physical, and social-emotional development.

The National Child Care Information Center does not endorse any organization, publication, or resource.

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