

# *Book Report from The BookStart Fund*

*Newsletter Number Six, September 2016*

## *BookStart Advisors Join the Program*

We are delighted to announce that we now have five excellent people serving as our Advisors. They will promote the mission of the BookStart program by giving us input and recommendations based on their knowledge and experience of best practices in early education, parenting, and the struggles of families in poverty.

**Dr. Terri Jo Swim**, Associate Dean, College of Education & Public Policy, IPFW; author of *Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Caregiving and Responsive Curriculum Development*

**John Peirce**, Consultant to the Big Goal Collaboration for early childhood learning

**Madeleine Baker**, CEO Early Childhood Alliance

**Odelet Nance**, PhD Assistant Dean of Instruction-Early College Programs for Northeast Indiana, Vincennes University

**Greta McKinney**, MS Edu., Executive Director, MLK Montessori School

## *The BookStart Fund: Why and How*

### **Why? Because...**

- Today in Fort Wayne several thousand children start school not ready to read, especially those from low socio-economic levels.
- Research shows the importance of language and brain development in children from birth to three, but little is being done to reach that age group in poverty-level families. To reach children *before age three*, the best place is in the home.
- When parents use a variety of words, play with rhyming words, interact with their children verbally, follow the children's interest while looking together at illustrations, and enjoy pleasurable book-sharing routines, the children develop the emergent literacy skills they need.
- The most effective way to insure that parents start such practices is to give them good board books, preferably in their home, in repeated visits by a mentor who demonstrates how to use the books. This kind of interaction encourages parents to be regular readers with their youngsters.

## How? Like this...

- The BookStart Fund gives the partnering agencies a steady supply of new, appealing board books for children from birth through three years old. Staff members from the agencies (listed below) present the books to the parent and children together on repeated visits, modeling best practices for age-appropriate, effective, and fun book sharing.
- Since we started in 2014, 87 donors have entrusted us with almost \$28,500 to pursue this goal. (Thirty-five of those donors have given at least twice.) So far we have purchased 10,250 carefully selected board books, all of
- which have been or are being taken into homes where children and parents are enjoying them, by staff from the following five partnering agencies:
  - ❖ SCAN's **Healthy Families** (and a few other SCAN programs)
  - ❖ FW Urban League's **Read & Rise**
  - ❖ Early Child Alliance's **Parents As Partners** (in Allen County)
  - ❖ **Healthier Moms & Babies**
  - ❖ Allen Superior Court's **Bright Steps**

*“...a single powerful idea: that the first few years of a child’s life are the most consequential for cognitive development.”*

*“The Good News About Educational Inequality,” New York Times, August 28, 2016*

*Through these partners we are reaching well over 600 families and 1,000 children each year, not once but multiple times, with books presented as gifts on each visit.*

## We could use some new donations now! It's time to order more books...

### ***How To Donate***

*Write a check to the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne (put BookStart on the memo line).*

*Mail it to CFGFW*

*555 East Wayne Street*

*Fort Wayne IN 46802*

*Or donate right here:*

*<http://cfgfw.org/donate/>*

*Check “Other” and write “BookStart” as the fund name.*

*Questions?*

*Ginny Clark: 625-3837*

*Dana Wichern: 755-3543*

**BookStart** is a special fund at the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne. Donors can make a tax-deductible contribution to this fund, which the BookStart directors use to purchase books to be given to non-profit agencies serving families in poverty in Allen County.

### ***Donations are used only for books!***

The costs for this newsletter and postage are not covered by donations. If you would like to receive it on line please email us now at: [ginnybclark@gmail.com](mailto:ginnybclark@gmail.com) Thank you!

### ***Help Is Needed, Too...***

We need a website! We have lots to put on it, but need someone to help who knows how to develop a website.