

Turning Pages



In FY2012

Read to Grow...

Welcomed Anthony DiLauro

Anthony joined Read to Grow in August 2011 bringing a strong background in nonprofit administration and development, and a long history of commitment to children. He is the former Executive Director of the Futures in Education in New York City. Prior to that, he was President/Executive Director of Boys Town New York, Inc., an affiliate of Father Flanagan's Boys Town in Omaha, Nebraska. He also served as a member of the expert panel of the Governor's Task Force on Child Welfare in New York.



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Mission

To improve early literacy for all Connecticut children by providing books, by helping families share books with their babies starting at birth, by encouraging language development, and by promoting awareness of literacy services.

Expanded Books for Babies

Thanks to the continued support of our Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and community, Read to Grow expanded its Books for Babies program to three new partner hospitals in its last fiscal year.

In October, 2011, Middlesex Hospital in Middletown began providing our Books for Babies program as part of their Pregnancy & Birth Center services. The program is funded in part by Middlesex Hospital and is serving approximately 1,100 newborns at the hospital's birthing center.



Books for Babies began delivering at Sharon Hospital in January 2012, thanks to a partnership between RTG, the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon and Sharon Hospital. Now the 250 babies born there will head home with a brand new book provided by The Hotchkiss Library of Sharon and written by local author Sandra Boynton, as well as our literacy packet for parents.

Day Kimball Hospital in Putnam joined the Read to Grow family in April 2012 and now the 550 babies born at the Burdick Family Birthing Center will go home with a brand new book and the RTG literacy packet. Funding for the first year of the program was provided by an anonymous donor.

A Year for the Record Books

A Message from Board Chair, Roxanne J. Coady

I'm delighted to report that 2012 was a year of enormous progress. Your support helped us reach more than 20,000 Connecticut families and continue in our mission to promote early literacy for all Connecticut children. Education reform is on the top of the Governor's agenda and is making national headlines. This education reform bill includes important reforms in early reading. In order to maximize those efforts, we need to make sure our children start school ready to learn.

One of the best ways to ensure a child's future success in learning is to expose them to vocabulary and language beginning at birth -- to start reading to them right at birth. Our focus, since 1998 has been to educate parents and reinforce their understanding that they are truly their child's first and most important teachers, and that reading to their children, starting at birth will not only improve their readiness for kindergarten, but enhance their academic lives and increase their chances for a lifetime of success.

Read to Grow is providing parents with the tools and information they need to foster language development and reading readiness in their children. Right now we're reaching 53% of Connecticut newborns and their parents. Our goal is to reach **all** Connecticut families and your continued support is helping us get there.

In the last fiscal year, thanks to the continued dedication of its supporters, staff and volunteers, Read to Grow was able to add three new partner hospitals to the Books for Babies program, but our work is not done. There are still a number of hospitals and 47% of the state's newborns to reach. While we've made significant strides over the last 15 years, Connecticut's achievement gap is still the highest in the nation and now is the time to close that gap.

Your support is helping to distribute more than 147,000 books to children across the state. You are providing parents with critical information on their role in their child's literacy and language development. You are building home libraries, and encouraging a love of reading in our future generation.

2013 is full of promise, and with your help we will continue to reach more families, inspire more reading, and will close that achievement gap and give every child in Connecticut the opportunity to succeed. I thank you so much for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Roxanne J. Coady
Chair, Board of Directors

Books Distributed

1998
3,200 books

2003
est. 7,000 books

2008
104,807 books

Today
147,000 books



In FY2012

Read to Grow...

Vision

Every child in Connecticut will own books and will take an active interest in reading.

Every family will understand the critical importance of early literacy efforts and take an active role in their child's literacy development.

Values

Children are born with the ability to learn and the skills to embrace language.

Parents are their child's first and most important teacher.

When books are provided to families (parents or adult caregivers), along with appropriate developmental guidance, they will be more likely to read to their children.

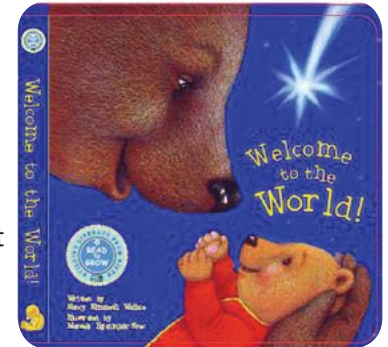
The moment of birth is a key teachable moment for parents.

Being read to and owning books are critical features of every child's development.

Literacy is important to all families in Connecticut regardless of economic means.

Published "Welcome to the World!"

"Welcome to the World!" was written expressly for Read to Grow by renowned children's author Nancy Elizabeth Wallace of Branford and was illustrated by Marsela Hajadinijak-Krec from Croatia. The book offers a simple message celebrating families and babies: that learning starts at birth, that the parent is the child's first teacher and that it is never too early to begin reading to a baby.



Recognized Patrons

Against the backdrop of Long Island Sound on a summer evening, Read to Grow thanked our patrons at an intimate gathering of friends and supporters at the Branford home of board treasurer Stacy Ruwe and husband Patrick. The event also honored Jennifer Aniskovich, Susan Katz and Donna Lechner-Gruskay, who recently retired from our board after many years of extraordinary service and leadership.



Board chair Roxanne Coady introduced our new executive director Anthony DiLauro, gave a warm thank you to Chet Brodnicki, who stepped in as interim director in May, and welcomed new board members Alva Greenberg of Old Saybrook, Bonnie Patten of Killingworth, and Belinda Bralver of Westport.

Thank you to Kenneth Pugh, PhD, director of research at Haskins Laboratory, who was the evening's guest speaker. He talked about early literacy development and Read to Grow's work to "light up the left side of a baby's brain" with language and books, which is essential to building a solid foundation for later learning.

Participated in Read Across America

Read to Grow staffers participated in "Read Across America." Anthony read at Island Ave School in Madison; Tina at Momauguin School in East Haven; and Myra at Stratford Library. Book drives in celebration of the day were held at: Andover School; Middlebrook Middle School in Wilton; Korn School in Durham; and Killingworth Elementary School.

Donor Dollars at Work

A few notes of thanks from our participants

Dou have really blessed our family with these books, and we really appreciate it. You have helped encourage a love of learning in my children. Thank you!
~ Kerry H., New Haven



I wanted to thank you so very much for all the many wonderful books you sent to us! I was so surprised to open the box and find so many books, how extremely generous! My girls were so excited. We truly find reading valuable and spend at least 30 minutes a day reading with them. My daughter Lily who turned 5 in April is already reading at a 1st grade level. It definitely shows and proves that reading is so important. I wanted to just take the time to tell you how great this program really is.
~ Elizabeth G., Enfield

Thank you so much for all the books. We love reading and appreciate each and every one of them.
~ Ava & Chloe (ages 5 and 7)

Thank you so very much. You have provided us with books that we couldn't have afforded. We will cherish them until he out grows them, and then will pass them along to others. What a blessing!" ~ Dawn & John, Pawcatuck



I can't thank you enough for providing our children with an opportunity to own and read books. So many of our families can't afford the daily staples of life, extra money for books doesn't exist. These books are a tremendous treat for our students, thank you.
~ Momauguin School, East Haven

I just want to thank you for the generous book donation that you gave to Pulaski Elementary School. These books truly make a difference in our students' lives. We hold events like Family Literacy Night where students can earn books to take home for the home libraries. We wouldn't be able to offer these special events without your support. Thank you. ~ Christine W., Meriden



Programs

Books for Babies

Partner Hospitals

Bridgeport Hospital
Day Kimball Hospital
Griffin Hospital
Hartford Hospital
Lawrence & Memorial Hospital
Manchester Memorial Hospital
Middlesex Hospital
Sharon Hospital
St. Francis Hospital & Medical Center
St. Vincent's Medical Center
Yale-New Haven Hospital
Yale-New Haven Hospital – St. Raphael Campus

Books for Kids

Statistics

- 127,000 Books Distributed
- 866 Families Participating
- 111 Towns served
- Families in all Connecticut Counties are Participating

Books for Babies

Provides parents of newborns with a new children's book, a literacy packet and a visit from a trained volunteer on the maternity unit of partner hospitals. Books for Babies promotes early literacy by ensuring parents of every newborn in our partner hospitals understand that reading to their infants positively impacts brain and language development. Additional new books and literacy information are sent at three and 12 months at no cost to families who sign up to receive the follow-up materials. Gently used books are also available on the maternity units for brothers and sisters of newborns at our partner hospitals.



In FY12 more than 20,000 families participated in Books for Babies, an 11 percent increase from FY11; of those, 27% signed up for the follow up program and are receiving books and literacy information throughout their infant's first year of life.

Books for Kids

Books for Kids encourages family literacy and provides free new and gently used books to children in need and to programs that serve them. The goal is to increase children's access to books and to build home libraries.

In keeping with our mission to partner with existing services that promote literacy, we gather strength from a team approach that includes a network of collaborative relationships with more than 300 organizations. These include the community-based health care, educational, social service and child care programs that interact with infants, toddlers, school-aged children and their families.

In FY12, Books for Kids provided more than 120,000 books to children, families, community programs and schools across Connecticut, a 9.5 percent increase from last year.

Research Shows

Expanding on Early Literacy

Promoting Emerging Language and Literacy during Storytime

Julia R. Irwin, Dina L. Moore, Lauren A. Tornatore, and Anne E. Fowler

Please note this piece contains excerpts from the original article, to view and read the entire article please visit <http://www.haskins.yale.edu/Reprints/HL1695.pdf>

One of the most important academic achievements for a young child is learning to read. Unfortunately, many children are already behind when they enter kindergarten. Sobering evidence from multiple sources indicates that children who fall behind in reading acquisition do not catch up. For example, Francis et al. demonstrated that children who fall behind in reading at seven years of age continued to lag behind at age twelve and beyond. In the classic model known as the Matthew effect, Stanovich indicates that early lags in literacy become magnified with reading development. Specifically, the Matthew effect shows the rich get richer (in this case, good readers become more fluent and effective) and the poor get poorer. This phenomenon has been observed in research examining how new readers acquire the skills to read: early success in acquiring reading skills typically leads to later successes in reading as the learner grows. Failing to learn to read before the third or fourth year of schooling may be indicative of life-long problems in skills central to literacy. Children who fall behind in reading read less, increasing the gap between them and their peers. As children advance in school, text becomes increasingly difficult and students must “read to learn” (where before they were learning to read). Their reading difficulties then create deficits in most other subjects. Thus research-to-practice efforts for a number of intervention programs focus on preliteracy skills.

Preliteracy Skills to Prepare Children for Reading Success

Converging evidence suggests the skills that best prepare children for later reading success include alphabet knowledge, concepts about print, phonological awareness, and expressive vocabulary. Alphabet knowledge is simply the ability to recognize and name letters. Young children who know letters are likely to be those with the greatest exposure to books. While it is important to teach children these labels, the research is clear that teaching letters alone will not make a child a reader.

Similarly, “knowing” about books, such as knowing the difference between words and pictures, the front and back of the book, and tracking from left to right tell us about children’s exposure to books. These concepts about print can be taught rapidly through shared book reading. However, similar to alphabet knowledge, concepts about print are not sufficient to make a child a reader. For children to begin to learn to read they first need to understand that the spoken word comprises different sounds. This knowledge, referred to as phonological awareness, is a very strong predictor of later reading success.

Effective Literacy Instruction during Storytime: Research to Practice

First, effective literacy instruction is intentional. That is, activities and books are planned in advance to meet a specific goal, such as choosing vocabulary words to focus upon when reading stories. To be effective, it is important to decide explicitly what the information is the child should learn, to model the desired activity or skill, and to provide the opportunity for the child to try it out and give feedback.

Additionally, effective literacy instruction is both systematic and sequential. Together these terms refer to the fact that instruction must build from what is known to what is new, presenting developmentally appropriate concepts. For example, an emphasis on book handling is more appropriate for a group of two- and three-year-olds, while working on alliteration might be better suited to four- and five-year-olds. The activities and books chosen should be interesting and developmentally appropriate to fully engage children so they enjoy learning. Concepts also should be reinforced with ample practice.

Children love to do things over and over (including reading a favorite book). Hands-on practice with concrete materials, such as an easel for writing, manipulatives for youngsters (for example, foam models of the alphabet) and access to previously read books facilitates this practice. Finally, in every activity, it is important to involve all of the child’s modes of interacting. During storytime, children should be not just listening, but speaking and “reading.” Continue reading at: <http://www.haskins.yale.edu/Reprints/HL1695.pdf>



Volunteers

Make our mission possible

Thank You

Read to Grow volunteers generously donated more than 10,000 hours in the last year.

Volunteers bring a wealth of skills and expertise to our organization and help with everything from administrative tasks and clerical duties to visiting with families in our partner hospitals.

Volunteers help with answering the phones, data entry, preparing packets, sorting, labeling and packing books. Volunteers make deliveries and help out at special events and fundraisers.

The talents, dedication and passion of our volunteers are the heart and soul of Read to Grow. We are so grateful for all that they do to support our mission and to help families all across Connecticut.

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Unselfish and noble actions are the most radiant pages in the biography of souls.
~ David Thomas

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in honor of Mr. Michael Sinclair

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in honor of Mr. Connor Haskell

Mr. James R Bellar

in memory of Ms. Gaye Ann Love

Ms. Celia Blauser

in honor of Ms. Robin Baker

Ms. Mary Ellen Bushnell

in honor of Ms. Stacy Ruwe

Ms. Melanie Cameron

in memory of Muriel Sussman

Ms. Patricia Capozziello

Mrs. Carol Ghinazzi

Dr. & Mrs. Gordan Gondos

Ms. Anita Griffith

Ms. Susan Henry

Mrs. Barbara S. Schwartz

*in honor of James & Nicholas
Vigliotti*

Mr. & Mrs. Stu Comen

in honor of Lia & Joey Vigliotti

Mr. & Mrs. Stu Comen

in honor of Nancy & Hobie Truesdell

Johnston P. Connelly

in honor of Ms. Joan Devlin

Ms. Cathleen M. Devlin

in memory of Mr. Alfred Berkowitz

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

in memory of Ms. Betty Carrion

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

*in honor of Mr. & Mrs. Kyle & Kim
Diamond*

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

in memory of Susan Henry's mother

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

in memory of Mrs. Robert Jeffery

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

in memory of Ms. Theresa Kennedy

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

in memory of Ms. Ellie Levin

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

in memory of Rhoda Loft's mother

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

in memory of Mr. Rosario Marraro

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

*in memory of Ms. Sue Sutherland's
father*

Mr. & Mrs. Howard Diamond

in honor of Shiren Vijiasingam

Ms. Deborah L Eide

in honor of Ms. Jennifer Aniskovich

Mrs. Jody Ellant

Mr. & Mrs. Eric Hanson

Ms. Wendy Kravitz

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Marsland

Mrs. Karen Seligson

Mrs. Katherine Stone

in honor of Ms. Harriet Rashba

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Engelhardt

in memory of Ms. Shirley Finette

Deborah Finette

Mr. Dan Newsholme & Ms. Deborah
Finette

Mrs. Helen R Rabinowitz

Mr. Brian Samela

in memory of Mrs. Penny Simmers

Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Goodin

in memory of Mr. Walter Bialo

Mr. & Mrs. Barry Gray

*In honor of the marriage of Stanley
Katz's grandchildren*

Mr. & Mrs. Barry Gray

*in honor of Deer Run Elementary School
Staff*

Mr. & Mrs. William Grimm

in honor of Ms. Susan C. Guernsey

Mr. David T Guernsey, Jr.

in honor of Judy & Greg Bugbee

Ms. Maryanne Hall

in honor of Doug & Carolyn Hall

Ms. Maryanne Hall

in honor of Peter & Patti Hall

Ms. Maryanne Hall

in honor of Ms. Susan Jacobson

Ms. Maryanne Hall

in honor of Jean & Harry Miller

Ms. Maryanne Hall

in honor of Ms. Ann Schroeder

Ms. Maryanne Hall

in honor of Loyola Welsh

Ms. Maryanne Hall

in honor of Annie Reuter

Ms. Mary Heery

in honor of Dr. Jeffery Gruskay

Dick & Judy Hahn

in honor of Ms. Maureen Gilroy

Ms. Beth Kinter

in honor of Dr. Joanne Cunard

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Krasow Greenblatt

Ms. Deborah Rostowsky

in honor of Ms. Nina Cooperman

Mr. & Mrs. Donald Kulberg

in honor of Mr. Jonathan Eric Sherman

Mr. & Mrs. Donald Kulberg

*in honor of Mr. & Mrs. Ron & Bette
Zollshan*

Mr. & Mrs. David & Yvonne Mancini

*in honor of Mr. & Mrs. Matthew
Cairns*

Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Murphy

*in honor of Mr. & Mrs. Stephen
Keating*

Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Murphy

*in honor of Mr. & Mrs. F. Tyler
Morrison*

Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Murphy

in honor of Dr. George Bacall

Ms. Lynne Nathan

in honor of Ms. Samantha Madnick

Ms. Lynne Nathan

in honor of Andy Robbin

Ms. Lynne Nathan

in honor of Ms. Emma Samson

Ms. Lynne Nathan

in memory of Marjorie C Shapiro

Ms. Janet Perkes

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Polke

Ms. Pamela Reichelt

in honor of Ms. Mary Claire Reidy

Mr. & Mrs. James Reidy

in honor of Ms. Donna Grubka

Ms. April M Roscow

in honor of Ms. Marilyn F Rothberg

Ms. Janice Rothberg

*in honor of Miss Johanna & Nina
Schwachter*

Ms. Nancy Schwachter

in honor of Ms. Roxanne Coady

Michael Vlock & Karen Pritzker

in memory of Earlene Seelig

Ms. Melanie Seelig

in honor of Mr. Roger Scheiber

Joel & Tina Silidker

in honor of Ms. Naomi Horowitz

Mr. Richard Sussman & Dr. Nina Horowitz

*in honor of Mrs. Lorraine & Mr.
Michael Conway*

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Tokarski

in memory of Mr. Robert Pritzker

Ms. Marian Wexler

in honor of Alexis

Ms. Jenn Willis

in honor of Ms. Stacey Buffone

Mr. & Mrs. Jeffery Youngquist

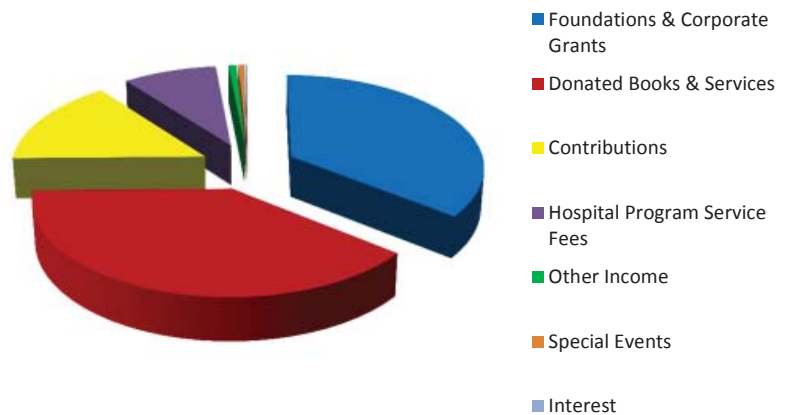
in honor of Ms. Kim Cody

Mr. & Mrs. Jeffery Youngquist

Treasurer's Report

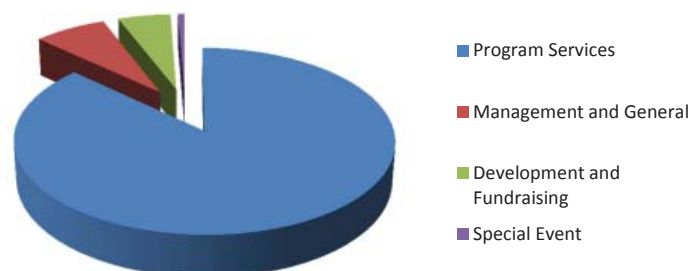
Public Support & Revenues

Foundations/Corporations	\$284,653
Donated books/services	311,100
Contributions	119,146
Hospital Program Service Fees	70,140
Other Income	5,991
Special Events	4,865
Interest	1,569
TOTAL PUBLIC SUPPORT & REVENUES	797,464



Expenses

Program	\$833,712
Management & General	69,008
Development & Fundraising	49,991
Special Event	6,159
TOTAL EXPENSES	958,870
NET	(161,406)
BEGINNING	783,391
END BALANCE	621,985



A Message

From Stacy Ruwe, Treasurer

Our last fiscal year was one of transition. We recruited a new Executive Director and embarked on a path of growth and reorganization.

The first year with our new director was a building year where we recruited a new development and communications director that should serve as a foundation for achieving financial equilibrium going forward.

Read to Grow supporters continued to step up to the plate to ensure that our mission carries forward and that more Connecticut infants, children, parents and organizations have access to books and literacy information.

We saw a significant increase in the number of donated books and services. Contributions also increased by more than 40%. Each dollar, book and service donated allows us to serve more Connecticut families.

In the coming year we will continue to focus on meeting the goals of our strategic plan and will work to reach 100% of newborns in Connecticut, give every parent the information they need to prepare their children for school, and ensure every child has access to books.

- We continue to run efficiently with 86% of revenue spent directly on program expenses.
- RTG received an unqualified, or clean audit opinion from our external auditors, Bailey, Murphy and Scarano, CPA.

2012 & Beyond

New Strategic Plan

Read to Grow implemented a new strategic plan in February 2012 designed to increase the number of families served and bring books and literacy information to every family in Connecticut.

Increase number of hospitals participating in Books for Babies program

- Established partnerships with Day Kimball Hospital and Sharon Hospital
- Reaching out to other hospitals throughout the state.

Develop ways to measure efficacy of Books for Babies program

- Our Program Committee established Expert Panel consisting of nine members: Ron Angoff, MD, president of Pediatric & Medical Associates of New Haven; Susan Cormier, Director and Children's Consultant, CT State Library; Jerry Davis, vice president, National Advocacy and Public Policy at Boys Town; Harriet Feldlaufer, chief of the Bureau of Teaching and Learning; Margie Gillis, project director, Haskins Literacy Initiative, Perri Klass, MD, professor of journalism and pediatrics at New York University; Jeanne Milstein, retired child advocate; Ken Pugh, president, Haskins Laboratories; and Jonathan Preston, Ph.D., senior scientist, Haskins Laboratories.
- Julia Irwin, senior scientist, Haskins Laboratories, Read to Grow board member, and head of the Program Committee will oversee a study and research on the impact of Books for Babies.

Maximize Read to Grow Talent

- We will continue to develop our team of employees and volunteers to best meet the needs of the community in the most effective and efficient manner.
- So far we have recruited a number of new board members, committee members and volunteers who offer a variety of expertise and talents, as well as having a passion for reading and literacy.
- We hired a development director who has expertise in fundraising and communications.
- We continue to seek new talent to join the Read to Grow team.

Implement Media Campaign to further and support the mission of Read to Grow

- We are working with corporate and media partners to reinforce the importance of reading to your child from birth and to encourage lifelong reading through a variety of media outlets.

Increase Revenue to support Read to Grow mission and goals

- We are working to increase revenue to ensure that 100% of babies born in Connecticut will receive books and literacy information, and that all children in Connecticut will have access to books at home, at school and in the community.
- "Welcome to the World!" released at kick-off event in September and available for purchase at RJ Julia Booksellers and RJJulia.com, with proceeds benefiting Read to Grow.
- Fundraising events were held in New Haven and Hartford.
- The Development Committee is working to secure corporate partnerships.

Read to Grow Staff

Robin Baker, Office Manager

Casey Charpentier, YNH BFB Site Coordinator

Anthony DiLauro, Executive Director

Gary Gavigan, Driver

Emily Granelli, Director of Development & Communications

Myra Healy, Project Coordinator, Early Literacy Initiative, BFK

Kim S. LaManna, Office Clerk

Christine Mace, Area Hospital Coordinator, BFB

Priscilla Russo, Hospital Coordinator, BFB

Tina Silidker, Development Associate

Linda Sylvester, Books for Kids Coordinator



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