

READY TO LEARN PROVIDENCE

Fall 2004 / Winter 2005

Director's Report: Great Things to Come

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As 2004 draws to a close it's a good time for each of us to reflect on the accomplishments of the R2LP community during the past year. So much good work has been done: *HeadsUp! Reading*, early learning grants, the *Play and Literacy Forum*, *Family Fun Day*, *Parents Night Out*, child and family literacy programs in partnership with the Providence Public Library, the Elementary School Fair and Open Schools Week sponsored by the Providence School Department, surveys of curriculum instruction and center capacity for children ineligible for kindergarten this year, our neighborhood-level indicator report - the list could go on. As varied as these efforts have been, they all have a common base - the dedicated work of members of the R2LP community and the R2LP staff. I am deeply grateful to all who have participated and supported our collective vision. We've experienced the challenge and satisfaction of working together on behalf of the children and families of Providence.

Much remains to be done and I am delighted to report that R2LP's future has been secured for the next several years. This fall we learned of our success in securing three major federal grants: AmeriCorps, Early Reading First, and a renewal of the Early Learning Opportunities Act. In the short-term, we are gearing up for this new challenge at R2LP by hiring new staff and fine-tuning our local council, board and committee structures. In preparation for the arrival of 30 AmeriCorps volunteers next spring, we will move our offices to 945 Westminster Street. Please visit us at this new location after the New Year - it is not only accessible by both car and bus -



We're Moving!

Look for us at 945 Westminster Street beginning in January.

there is ample on street parking! Even as we move offsite, we remain firmly anchored by our parent agency, The Providence Plan, which has both nurtured and grounded R2LP's work.

Going forward, R2LP will maintain its vision that *all children in Providence enter kindergarten healthy and ready to learn*. Our new grants will allow us to "put legs on" our work. AmeriCorps volunteers will serve at all 10 library branches and at early care and education settings throughout the city. Parents will join R2LP's ranks as certified School Readiness Ambassadors. And Early Reading First will provide four early education programs in the city with the rich learning environments and the dynamic early literacy curriculum necessary to become "centers of educational excellence."

On behalf of the R2LP community, I invite you to continue partnering with us in 2005. Happy New Year! - *Joyce Butler*

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New Staff at R2LP

Stan Kuziel is now Director of Program Operations for R2LP. In this new role, Stan will be managing and overseeing the administrative functions of R2LP. Stan is a graduate of Tufts and Harvard School of Ed and has a rich professional history. He is also very familiar with the work of R2LP having helped us over the past two years as a member of several committees and as former chair of the Governing Board.

And, on December 14, Gail Wing joined the staff as Executive Assistant. For 16 years she worked at GTECH Corporation, most recently as a Traffic Coordinator where she organized extraordinarily complex lottery bids for the company. She is a published poet and is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in English Literature.

Welcome Stan and Gail!

Play and Literacy Forum Debuts!

R2LP

Governing Board

Bill Allen
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Kim Pettaway
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Gail Washington
Rev. Jeffrey Williams

R2LP Staff

Joyce Butler,
Executive Director
Stan Kuziel,
Director of Program Operations
Marcia Moon,
Director of Professional Development
Katie Murray,
Special Projects Coordinator
Kevin Novell,
Systems Coordinator Intern
Tania Quezada,
HeadsUp! Reading Coordinator
Judy Victor,
Parent Engagement Coordinator
Gail Wing,
Executive Assistant

On the cold, overcast Saturday morning of November 20th, over 170 child care educators arrived at the URI/Feinstein Providence Campus to learn about using play and literacy in early child care settings at the **R2LP Play and Literacy Forum**. This opportunity was provided by R2LP and the work of its Professional Development Committee.

The Forum's focus on play and literacy was the result of citywide conversations with child care educators about their professional development needs around curriculum. The committee found a need for more conversation around play in both early child care and kindergarten settings through its alignment activities around the RI Early Learning Standards. A curriculum survey of child care centers in Providence found that the majority of centers were using *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* by Diane Trister Dodge. Dodge was one of two nationally known educational authors who taught at the Forum.

The Forum was the first of its kind in Rhode Island and attracted child care educators primarily from Providence who spent the day learning from Diane Trister Dodge and Candy Jones. Dodge, who gave the keynote speech, is the founder and president of Teaching Strategies, Inc., a company that seeks to improve the quality of early childhood programs by offering developmentally appropriate curriculum materials, practical assessment tools, training programs, parenting resources, and staff development services. She has 40 years of experience in the field and is the author of many books including *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*. Jones is a Senior Associate for Teaching Strategies, Inc. and has been in the field of early childhood education for 26 years. She authored *Literacy: The Creative Curriculum Approach* and several other books.

Two workshops, facilitated by both Dodge and Jones, provided additional learning opportunities

for participants. They covered the use of "interest areas" and strategies" (*see descriptions on next page*). There was a translator who provided simultaneous translation for 28 Spanish-speaking attendees.

Forum registration charges were \$30 for Providence early care educators and \$45 for other participants. Keeping the event this affordable was no small task – discounting volunteer support and in-kind donations, conference real costs per participant were \$95.

Steve Aveson, anchor newscaster for WPRI TV Channel 12 surprised everyone by speaking about his background in early education. He regaled the audience with a performance of "hand" puppets. He acquired a new fan club in Providence!

The first 100 Providence early care educators to register for the forum received the newest Teaching Strategies book *Literacy: The Creative Curriculum Approach*, courtesy of the Rhode Island Parent Information Network. Additional books were available for sale. Professional development credits were available for attendees.



Diane Trister Dodge, top, delivering the keynote address and Candy Jones, bottom, leads a workshop

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United Way of Rhode Island

HeadsUp! Reading Trainings Continue

Forty child care providers received training in early childhood literacy through HeadsUp! Reading over the past several months. During the summer, from June 21 to August 12, R2LP held a 15 week session of at Casey Family Services. Tania Quezada, Coordinator of *HeadsUp! Reading*, facilitated the class which was offered entirely in Spanish. Fifteen family home day care providers completed the session. For the first time since R2LP began offering *HeadsUp! Reading* last year, a representative from the Providence Public Library attended a class to share information about resources that the libraries have to offer. Participants found this so helpful that we will make this standard for all future *HeadsUp! Reading* classes. At the end-of-session celebration participants were commended for their hard work and commitment. Participants received certificates, stipends, two professional books and several children's books.

From September 20 through November 30 Tania Quezada facilitated two additional courses at the Genesis Center. Twenty-four child care providers attended the courses, which were conducted in Spanish. A well-attended celebration was held on December 13, 2004 at Casey Family Services.

Los Entrenamientos de HeadsUp! Reading Continua

La sección de verano del programa HeadsUp! Reading fueron ofrecidas durante el mes de Junio hasta el 12 de Agosto. La clase del verano fue ofrecida en español. La clase tomo lugar en Casey Family Services en la ciudad de Providence. En la sección de verano tuvimos el placer de trabajar con 15 proveedoras de cuidado de niños. Todas las proveedoras que se inscribieron para el programa, terminaron la sección de las 15 semanas. Durante la clase estuvimos un representate de las librerías publicas de la ciudad Providence. La representante pudo infórmale a las proveedoras de los beneficios y recursos que las librerías le puede ofrecer. La visita del representante se va a integrar al programa de HeadsUp! Reading. Para finalizar el curso de HeadsUp! Reading el programa les brinda una celebración a los participantes. Y durante la celebración que se le brindo a los participantes de la clase de verano tuvimos la participación de todas las proveedoras. La celebración fue en Casey Family Services donde las proveedoras recibieron certificados, estipendios, dos libros profesionales y varios libros de cuentos para los niños.

En Septiembre 20, 2004 las clases de otoño comenzaron y terminaron el 30 de Noviembre. En la sección de otoño estuvimos 24 participantes que se inscribieron al programa. Las clases fueron ofrecidas en español. El lugar donde ofrecimos las clases de otoño fue en el Genesis Center en la ciudad de Providence.

Our *HeadsUp! Reading* spring course will start January 10, 2005. The classes will be held in our training space at our new office on Westminster Street. Three classes will be conducted this semester; two of which will be in Spanish. We expect 45 participants.

The newly-formed *HeadsUp! Reading* Club held its first official meeting on December 6, 2004 at Knight Memorial Library. R2LP organized this club with 25 members who already completed training. Club members will participate in six interactive workshops over the next several months to reinforce the importance of literacy, writing, and phonological awareness with children. The club will also provide an opportunity for participants to share their successes and challenges of providers. Tania Quezada and Marcia Moon, Director of Professional Development, are facilitating the Club's activities. We are very excited about this new activity as *HeadsUp! Reading* graduates continue growing their educational knowledge.

Estuvimos dos secciones durante el otoño. Tendremos la celebración para los participantes de otoño el 13 de Diciembre en Casey Family Services.

Ready to Learn Providence ha organizado un club para los participantes que han completado el curso de HeadsUp! Reading. El club tuvo su primera reunión oficial el 6 de Diciembre en la librería Knight Memorial en el ciudad de Providence. Habrá un total de 6 talleres interactivos para los miembros del club. Los talleres van a reesforzar la importancia que tiene la lectura, escritura y los conocimientos fonológicos en la educación de los niños. Las facilitadoras del club son Tania M. Quezada, Coordinadora del programa HeadsUp! Reading y Marcia Moon, Directora de Desarrollo Profesional para Ready to Learn Providence. Estamos muy contentos de saber que continuaremos trabajando con los participantes vía este club. Queremos que este club y las actividades nuevas que van a ser integrada puedan estimular a los miembros presente a poder educar a otros miembros en un futuro no muy lejano.

El programa de HeadsUp! Reading va a comenzar la sección de primavera el 10 de Enero. Las clases serán en la oficina de Ready to Learn Providence. Esta sección ofrecerá tres cursos individuales, dos de los cursos serán en español y el tercer curso será en ingles.

R2LP Congratulates all the Graduates of *HeadsUp! Reading*

R2LP Felicita a todos los graduados de *HeadsUp! Reading*

Class of December 2003 Clase de Diciembre 2003

Xiomarra Aguirre	Felicia Espinal	Georgina Ortiz
Magalis Alvarado	Rosa Florimon	Minerva Osorio
Alenzo Arevalo	Mirna Fuentes	Lourdes Pichardo
Maria Batista	Reina Garcia	Rosemary Raygada
Maria Belen	Rosa Garcia	Brunilda Rivera
Deuni Benzant	Bartola Garido	Maritza Rivera
Maria Billard	Gloria Gonzalez	Petra Rodriquez
Elsa Brito	Ramona Gonzalez	Raquel Rodriquez
Grace Brown	Chuck Hampton	Rebecca Salcedo
Abigael Bucio	Thelma Jimenez	Elvira Saldano
Sofia Bucio	Margarita Ledesma	Nelsa Sanchez
Maria Cardenas	Josefina Lopez	Hilda Serrano
Mary Cipriano	Rosa Martinez	Joyce Sylvia
Milagros Collazo	Angela Morales	Roma Tavares
Gladys Colon	Lucila Morelos	Somalis Urena
Monica Cosme	Olga Moreno	Nilda Vega
Lydia De Jesus	Rosa Moyano	Wendy Villatoro
Erick De La O	Virginia Navarro	Caligna Viñas
Gregoria De La Rosa	Feta Norris	Maria Whatts
Grace Diaz	Sandra Novejil	Piedad Ypiña
Maritza Done	Zully Ortega	

Class of August 2004 Clase de Agosto 2004

Colasita Alcala
Dany Asencio
Grecia Damaso
Migdalia Duran
Maria Fajardo
Miladys Gomez
Deisy Hernandez
Lucila Mora
Lilia Peña
Mendrid Peralta
Estela Rodriquez
Olga Rubio
Nilda Tejada
Maria Vargas
Juana Woodward

Class of December 2004 Clase de Diciembre 2004

Rafela Barinas	Australia Ramos
Rita Bisono	Maria Ramos
Merva Espinal	Edicta Rico
Rosa Fernandez	Ramona Rivera
George Garcia	Ana Rodriquez
Lidia Garcia	Pensilvania Rodriquez
Lisandra Mendez	Ivelisse Rosario
Sandra Morel	Mireya Santos
Luisa Nuñez	Ana Tejada
Isabel Ovalle	Giomery Tejada
Dilia Perez	Maria Tejada
Martha Ramirez	Raquel Tejada

Class of May 2004 Clase de Mayo 2004

Antonia Acevedo	Veronica Jeanniton	Ana Perez
Josefa Alvarez	Norga Jimenez	Benita Perez
Anabella Arnold	Caroline Johnson	Elsa Perez
Alma Benzant	Zeneida Lobera	Altagracia Polanco
Virginia Carrasco	Ann Lombard	Sarah Ramirez
Leonidas Castillo	Rosa Maldonado	Linda Reyro
Luisa Castillo	Teofila Maldonado	Glennys Reynoso
Maria Chacon	Johnnie Matthew	Francisco Rivera
Ybet Collado	Maria Melendez	Amarilis Rodriquez
Ines Colon	Miriam Melgar	Lizzie Rodriquez
Alexandra Correia	Ester Mercado	Marisol Rodriquez
Pamela De Cubellis	Raquel Mercado	Miguelina Rodriquez
Ysabel De Rosado	Rosemary Mercado	Sylvia Rodriquez
Ligia Diaz	Gina Molis	Carmen Rosado
Angela Duran	Maria Morales	Miriam Saldana
Ana Esquilin	Melida Morel	Elvira Sarit
Carmen Estrada	Carmen Navarro	Odalina Segura
Ana Ferreira	Delba Nuñez	Donna Tassoni
Juana Francisco	Maria Nuñez	Manuela Tol
Lourdes Fuentes	Shannon O'Neill	Cari Ann Tolson
Sandra Gamez	Maribel Padilla	Paulina Torres
Camelia Garcia	Miguelina Peguero	Ines Turbi
Lisa Gregoire	Erin Pellegrino	Flor Vargas
Anagilda Gutierrez	Melida Peña	Francisca Viñas
Delcy Hilario		



Photos from the HeadsUp! Reading celebration on December 13. Left, Jhoana Cortez writes her ABC's during the celebration. With her is her child care provider and HUR graduate Ivelissa Rosario. Below, graduates of the program receiving certificates, books and stipends.



May Early Learning Grantees Report Back

This year R2LP awarded 32 grants of teaching resources and professional development courses to family child care providers and child care centers. Reports are in and they are extremely enthusiastic. Here are two examples:

"... Being awarded this grant was such a great feeling. It made me know that some people truly know that we are not babysitters.

We provide a valuable service. We help shape little people... the children have been having so much fun with the buggy.* When I am not driving them, it is in the dining room and for some reason they all like to sit in it like they are on a ride. I have included the books in my program. The boys love the dinosaurs books. They all love the Spanish books... All of them love looking through "the glass" as they refer to the magnifying glasses. It has opened a whole new world for 18 month - 2 year olds. I think they are even saying their words better.

Thank you again for awarding me the grant. It has made me know that I have chosen the correct path."

- Julie Triggs, family home care provider

*** See pg.1 for a photo of a buggy in use!**



Time to read at Thelma Jimenez's Home Childcare.



Discovering rocks and patterns at the Miriam Y.

"The children have not only become excited to explore the new materials but they feel a sense of ownership with the 'Science Library' materials.

The introduction of the science and nature materials has met many of our desired outcomes. Children have become interested in learning new things and are increasingly demonstrating emergent literacy skills. Recently, the preschoolers excitedly looked at bugs under magnifying glasses and drew pictures of their discoveries. As they explored, the children spoke about the bugs and discussed their drawings. The children problem-solved sharing their work space and used inventive spelling to describe their drawings, then hung the pictures on the wall. Most importantly, the children were proud of themselves and their work, especially when their parents saw the display. This is only one small example of how the grant materials have assisted us in achieving our desired outcomes for our children."

- Charlene Walmsley, Smith Hill Early Childhood Learning Center/Capitol City Community Centers

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