

Initiative:	Healthier Beginnings
Project Name:	Louisiana Tech University School of Human Ecology <i>Bulldog Book Club – Increasing Lincoln Parish Preschoolers’ Access to Books in the Home</i>
Funding Period:	July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014
Project Coordinator:	Julie M. Rutledge, PhD
Project Administration:	Louisiana Tech University School of Human Ecology
Total Funding Requested:	\$66,000.00

Program Summary

The purpose of the grant is to implement a Lincoln Parish-wide literacy outreach program open to all children who attend a non-profit, non-affiliated preschool. There are three pre-school programs that fit this description in Lincoln Parish which will reach approximately 560 children (based on 2012-2013 enrollment): Lincoln Parish Early Childhood Center, Head Start, and Louisiana Tech Early Childhood Education Center. The Louisiana Tech University School of Human Ecology Center for Children and Families grant is titled – *Bulldog Book Club – Increasing Lincoln Parish Preschoolers’ Access to Books in the Home*.

Grant Objectives

The primary objectives of the program are:

- (1) to increase preschoolers’ access to books in the home and
- (2) determine if increasing children’s access to books in the home increases their reading comprehension.

The secondary objectives are:

- (1) to encourage children’s interests in books by creating a fun and rewarding reading environment and
- (2) to encourage parents to include reading time with their children in daily activities.

To accomplish the program objectives, a Bulldog Book Club (BBC) will be created. Through the book club, preschoolers will receive a BBC bag each month. The first bag will include welcome information to the children and parents, information about the program, BBC gear, and the first book. Each subsequent month's bag will include a book, BBC gear, and, potentially, any information from the community that specifically focuses on services and opportunities available to children and families in the Lincoln Parish community. May's bags will include four books to cover May – August to encourage reading over the summer. The bags will be delivered each month to the three identified early childhood locations and sent home with the children. Each month, the books and information will have a theme. Example themes include: Diversity (Book – *Whoever You Are*), National Anti-Bullying Awareness Month (Book – *Claude and Callie Cat When We Get in a Spat*), Nutrition (Book – *Nanny Goat Nettie: I Don't Like Spaghetti*), Dental Health Month (Book – *Going to the Dentist*), Child Life Month (Book – *Going to the Hospital*), and Back to School (Book – *The Night Before Kindergarten*). Providing these books to Lincoln Parish preschoolers will fulfill the objective of increasing their access to books in the home.