



LINCOLN HEALTH FOUNDATION

Improving Health Care and Outcomes for Residents of Lincoln Parish

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:	August 1, 2015 – July 31, 2016
Project Coordinator:	Julie M. Rutledge, PhD
Project Administration:	Louisiana Tech University School of Human Ecology
Total Funding Requested:	\$78,817.97 (<i>plus Year #2 Roll-Over of \$182.03</i>)

Program Summary

The purpose of the grant is to continue the successful implementation in 2013 of a Lincoln Parish-wide literacy outreach program open to all children who attend a non-profit, non-affiliated preschool. Three pre-school programs fitting this description in Lincoln Parish reached approximately 560 children in 2014-2015 at the Lincoln Parish Early Childhood Center (LPECC), Head Start, and Louisiana Tech Early Childhood Education Center.

This year, the *Bulldog Book Club* will continue service to a total of three pre-schools, with the addition of two classrooms associated with LPECC but housed at South Parkway Church. Total children who will be enrolled in the year #3 grant is expected to be 650.

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. Over the past two years approximately 13,500 books have been delivered to over 1,100 preschoolers and their families. The number of preschoolers in year two averaged 550 per month; and,

- (2) determine if increasing children's access to books in the home increases their reading comprehension. To measure this the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Fourth Edition (Dunn & Dunn, 2007) was used to evaluate students at the beginning and end of the school year.

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, preschooler participants in the Bulldog Book Club (BBC) receive a BBC bag each month. The first bag includes welcome information to the children and parents, information about the program, BBC gear, and the first book. Each subsequent month's bag includes 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 are delivered each month to the three identified early childhood locations and sent home with the children. Each month, the books and information have a particular theme. Books are translated for preschoolers who do not have English speaking parents. Themes covered in the books include health/nutrition, self-help skills/dressing appropriately); visiting the doctor, physical activity, and hygiene.