



What's New

United Way Continues Funding of Books for Kids

7/12/2012

Read to Grow has received a \$38,600 award from United Way of Coastal Fairfield County to fund year three of the "Books for Kids Read at Home Initiative." The initiative is a partnership between Read to Grow and United Way of Coastal Fairfield County developed to ensure that children in United Way's 12-town region have age-appropriate books to read at home. This project is part of the UWCFC's Early Literacy Initiative, whose goal is to have all children reading at grade level by grade three. The grant supports Read to Grow's mission to improve children's early literacy.

Myra Healy will continue as project coordinator. She is responsible for recruiting book drive sponsors, developing community collaborations and building awareness of literacy resources available to families in the Greater Bridgeport and Greater Norwalk areas.

During the partnership's first two years, more than 50,000 new and gently used books were provided to area children at no cost to families through collaborations with hundreds of child care programs, health care facilities, schools and community organizations. Among sites receiving books were United Way's Schools of Hope: Geraldine Johnson in Bridgeport, Franklin School in Stratford, McKinley School in Fairfield and Cooperative Educational Services in Trumbull; Bridgeport's Southwest Community Health Center, ABCD, Cesar Batalla Elementary School, and the Hunger Outreach Program, a network of over 30 agencies that serve food banks, soup kitchens, and shelters; and the Norwalk Early Childhood Council, for its summer pre-school program and its city-wide Week of the Young Child events in April.

Thousands of free books also were given directly to families who made requests through Read to Grow's online application procedure.

Most of the books distributed by the "Read at Home" program are donated by individuals, schools, scout troops, businesses and organizations that run book drives. More than 100,000 books have been collected so far. Recent participants include the Kiwanis Club of Fairfield, Sikorsky Aircraft, Fairfield Preparatory School, Stratford Academy, Junior League of Eastern Fairfield County, and Westport Country Playhouse.

The partnership is always looking for individuals and groups interested in supporting its early literacy work to hold book drives. To learn more, please call Myra Healy at Read to Grow at 203-488-6800 or visit the Books for Kids Read at Home page at www.readtogrow.org.

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