

CARE TO READ®

With a grant from Park Foundation, RIF developed and piloted Care to Read®, a series of early language and literacy training workshops for center staff, family child care (FCC) providers and professionals in the early literacy community. The workshops model effective and appropriate practices for supporting the language and literacy explorations and discoveries for children ages 18 months to five years. There are six, 2 to 2-1/2 hour workshops, as follows:

- I. **Understanding Early Language and Literacy Development** gives an overview of Care to Read® and early language and literacy development.
- II. **Creating Literacy-Rich Environments** provides tips for arranging and outfitting a classroom, children's space or home that invites children to listen, talk, read, and write.
- III. **Where Conversation Leads** presents techniques for engaging children in conversation and encouraging them to build oral language skills.
- IV. **Reading Aloud** addresses strategies for reading aloud with children from selecting appropriate books to planning activities that extend children's understanding and enjoyment of books.
- V. **Making My Mark** covers practices for encouraging children's scribbling, drawing, painting, and writing efforts.
- VI. **Supporting Language and Literacy Development Every Day** allows participants to apply the lessons from the first five workshops to incorporate language and literacy throughout their everyday lives.

Although each workshop has a specific focus: the topics are interrelated. For example, trainers model and discuss read-aloud strategies in every workshop. The content is based on early literacy research and developmentally appropriate practices and supports the following recommended strategies from the Committee on Preventive Reading Difficulties¹:

1. *Adult-child shared book reading times that involve talking about the book and other topics and promote children's language and vocabulary development and knowledge of print concepts.*
2. *Activities such as signing rhyming songs, reciting rhyming poems, and playing word games that help children pay attention to the sounds and structures of spoken words.*
3. *Activities that help children understand the connections between print and speech and allow children to gradually build their understanding of the alphabetic principle.*

¹ Catherine E. Snow, M. Susan Burns, and Peg Griffin, Eds., Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children, *Prevention Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1998, p.321.