



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

READ, EDUCATE AND DEVELOP YOUTH (R.E.A.D.Y.) PROGRAM

In Michigan and throughout the nation, an alarming number (over 30 percent) of children enter kindergarten without the language and pre-reading skills necessary to succeed in reading and in school. Many children — from all socioeconomic backgrounds — do not know how to hold a book, identify a word or recognize a letter. These children enter school already behind. A large percentage of students who enter school unprepared encounter learning difficulties throughout their school and work careers. Many require substantial remedial education, drop out of school or become involved in violence or other illegal activities.

Brain development research reveals that from birth to age four, a child's ability to learn is greater than at any other time in his or her life. These studies show that almost all children have the ability to learn to read if they are *routinely* exposed to basic language and pre-reading activities at an early age. Research also shows by routinely exposing young children to these activities the number of children requiring special education programs or classified with one or more learning disabilities may be substantially reduced.

While this research and information is compelling, few parents, especially those of economically disadvantaged children, know about it. Therefore, there is a tremendous need to increase parent and public awareness of this issue so that children's learning abilities can be developed to their fullest potential.

Both Michigan Governor's Jennifer Granholm and John Engler have made early childhood education a key component of their administrations.

History of R.E.A.D.Y.

In 1998, the Michigan Department of Education, in coordination with early childhood and early literacy experts throughout the state, developed the national award-winning Read, Educate, and Develop Youth (R.E.A.D.Y.) program. This program was developed to provide parents and caregivers with engaging early childhood materials and activities to enhance a child's lifelong capacity to learn. Since the program's inception, R.E.A.D.Y. has become one of the most effective, cost-efficient early childhood parent information efforts in Michigan's history. In addition, the program has served as a model for numerous states early childhood parent information efforts across America and has been shipped internationally to Australia, Canada, Asia, the United Arab Emirates and other countries around the world.



The main component of the R.E.A.D.Y. program is the R.E.A.D.Y. kit. This "How-To Kit" for parents contains over a dozen high-quality educational and early childhood development materials including a child development video, a children's book, music, parent/child learning activities, and much more.

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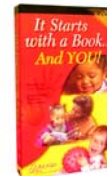
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In 2003 the R.E.A.D.Y. infant kit was expanded to include important health, safety, and nutrition information. As of September 2010, more than 1.5 million parents of young children have been briefed on the importance of early learning, their role as their child's first and most important teacher and have received an infant, toddler or preschool age kit.

The R.E.A.D.Y. program has also developed several additional products including:

- The *R.E.A.D.Y. for School Literacy Pack* to provide parents of preschool and early elementary children with over thirty easy to use **literacy-building activities** centered on *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* book. The response to this "for sale" pack has been outstanding, resulting in orders for over 50,000 packets. Pack Cost \$5.00.
- The award-winning "It Starts with a Book ... And You" video illustrating model early childhood parent/child activities. This product is also for sale for \$6.50.
- The R.E.A.D.Y. Lending Library that includes a collection of 150 (3 copies of 50 titles) Scholastic books, lending bags, a message to parents and a display unit for \$300.00
- All R.E.A.D.Y. materials may now be ordered online or by downloading a faxable order form by clicking <http://www.emc.cmich.edu/READY>. This is a secure site managed by CMU's Educational Materials Center.



Program Results – R.E.A.D.Y. WORKS!

Program research shows:

- R.E.A.D.Y. is one of the most popular and successful parent information efforts in Michigan history stressing the importance of early learning and reading.
- Over 1.5 million kits have been distributed with over 1 million provided free of charge.
- Over 95 percent of families receiving the program's R.E.A.D.Y. kit remembered, valued, and used its materials.
- Parent comments included:
 - "I couldn't wait to get it open."*
 - "It was like a gift."*
 - "It offered a lot of information."*
 - "It provided something educational for me and my child."*
- Most parents used all or most of the kit components.
- Each kit component was rated very useful by an overwhelming majority (70-90%) of parents.
- Two thirds of parents and caregivers were motivated to read and interact more with their young child -- critical factors in ensuring children enter school READY.
- R.E.A.D.Y. has become a national model and was awarded the prestigious Council of State Governments (CSG) Innovations Award in 1999.
- Parents valued the kit at \$20-\$50.
- Parents, educators, communities, legislators, the State Board of Education, state and local agencies, and associations such as the Michigan Ready to Succeed Partnership, Michigan Business Leaders for Education Excellence (MBLEE), and others support the program.