

Think Small ParentPowered Texts



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LEARNING BY TEXT MESSAGING

Why Texts?

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LEARNING BY TEXT MESSAGING

As inexpensive intervention,
text messages have
shown promise in affecting
behavior change.

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Think Small Pilot

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- After reviewing 15 texting programs and reminder apps, narrowed to 3 for pilot with 150 parents
- Ready Rosie (text messages & videos), Vroom (smart phone app), and Ready4K (text messages)
- Parents liked all three, but when asked to choose one, they preferred Ready4K

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Ready4K/ParentPowered

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Originated from research at Stanford University

ONE STEP AT A TIME:
THE EFFECTS OF AN EARLY LITERACY TEXT MESSAGING PROGRAM
FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOLERS

Benjamin N. York
Susanna Loeb

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Results



- Parents more involved in home literacy activities
- Parents worked more with teachers
- Children had higher literacy scores entering kindergarten

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Home Literacy Activities



- Telling stories
- Pointed out words beginning with same sound
- Pointed out rhyming words
- Looked at pictures in books
- Showed different parts of book
- Played games/worked on puzzles

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Parent/Teacher Partnership



- More likely to ask questions about child's learning
 - How child got along with others
 - What child is doing in school
- Asked teacher how learning can be supported at home

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Child's Literacy Development



- Higher literacy test scores (PALS)

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Sponsored Adaptations



- Added Content Areas
 - Social/Emotional
 - Health
- Added Content for 0, 1, & 2 yr-olds
- Texts being translated and adapted for Somali parents (adding to English and Spanish). Other languages being considered

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Format of Texts



- Three texts/week
- Fact, Tip, Growth
- Examples

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Sample Texts



Fact <i>Monday</i>	Tip <i>Wednesday</i>	Growth <i>Friday</i>
Words open up a world of learning. They help children communicate with others, discover new things, and learn all about the world around them.	At bedtime, introduce words that name objects. Get silly and say goodnight to things in your child's room: Goodnight comforter, good night lampshade.	Keep naming objects to prepare 4K! Now add descriptive words as you say a silly good morning to things in your child's room: Good morning SHAGGY carpet!

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Sample Texts



Fact <i>Monday</i>	Tip <i>Wednesday</i>	Growth <i>Friday</i>
Little kids have big emotions. When you help your child name his/her feelings, s/he'll be better able to understand them ... and manage them too!	Little kids have big emotions. When you help your child name his/her feelings, s/he'll be better able to understand them ... and manage them too!	Keep naming emotions! At points in the day, describe your child's expression: You are smiling. Then ask about his/her feeling: Are you feeling happy?

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Sample Texts



Fact <i>Monday</i>	Tip <i>Wednesday</i>	Growth <i>Friday</i>
When you encourage your baby to keep trying when things are hard, you're building his/her persistence, resilience, and willingness to try new things.	As your baby plays, place a favorite object just out of his/her reach. As s/he tries different ways to get it, encourage his/her efforts: You can get it!	Keep encouraging your baby to try. Now say what your baby does as s/he tries: You are reaching for the ball, you almost have it. You are working so hard!

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Seeking Wide Variety of Community Partners



- Childcare Providers
- Public School Districts
- Libraries
- Health Organizations
- Community Organizations

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Nuts and Bolts



- Parenting adults can only sign up for one child per phone (research shows people start disregarding texts when they get more than 5/week)
- When enrollment code is texted in, adult asked for a child's date of birth
- Messages begin the following Monday

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Ways EC Professionals Can Participate



- Partner with Think Small on program level
 - With larger districts/programs we can track your enrollments to let you know how outreach efforts are working
 - We have some unique codes already created for districts
- Independently share with parents you work with as a free resource

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Support from Think Small



- For larger districts/organizations – tracking of enrollments
- Materials and meetings to share with other staff members
- Customized materials

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Customized Flyer Sample



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Ways Parents Can Enroll*



- Text in generic or district/organization-specific code
- Use individual or group paper enrollment forms
- Opt-in as part of existing program forms (paper or electronic)

*Enrollment rates get higher as go down list

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Suggestions for Making Outreach Plans



- Share info with staff/colleagues to get suggestions
- Set goal for number or percentage of parents signed up (optional)
- Get materials needed for outreach
- Review progress and make changes as appropriate

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Reaching Out to Parents



- Strength-based approach
- Low-key “pitch” with ability to answer questions
- Timing can be important

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For More Information



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