

Rally to Read Community Coalition Implementation Guide



*Mobilizing Minnesota's communities
so every child is "wired" to read proficiently*



Mobilizing Minnesota's communities so every child is wired to read proficiently

Minnesota's Rally to Read BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal):

Transform Minnesota into the state with the highest reading proficiency with the fewest inequities and accomplish it with a “fierce urgency of now.”

Benchmarks of Success:

Every child is “wired” to read by age 3 and reads proficiently at grade level.



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IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

TO MOBILIZE COMMUNITY ACTION TO ACHIEVE THE BHAG

Depending on the level of community engagement and existing partnerships for early childhood brain and literacy development each community will assess the need to conduct these tasks for the first time or refresh and build on what already exists. Minnesota's Rally to Read will facilitate these action steps in conjunction with community leaders and partners to:

STEP 1

Identify community champions to act as trusted leaders within a community, leveraging their connections and influence to raise awareness, promote participation, and drive positive improvement in early childhood brain development and reading proficiency. These champions advocate to elevate the voices of those most impacted and ensure the measures of success are tied to concrete ways they have positively impacted these families. A community champion will often bridge the gap between services and the community they represent advocating for the needs and access to resources.

STEP 2

Map the local ecosystem of early childhood learning / brain development programs, tutoring, library resources, child care providers, maternal and infant healthcare (including Ob/Gyns/Pediatricians/Doulas/home visitors/public health nurses, etc.).

STEP 3

Gather data on community demographics, reading proficiency, early childhood screening, pockets of poverty, neighborhoods and communities where the literacy opportunity gaps exist.

STEP 4

Tap the expertise and authentically engage children and families that have been under supported by current systems that result in reading proficiency inequities. through focus groups and interviews to tap their wisdom and focus the actions of the Community Rally to Read Coalition on measurable positive impact the Coalition intends to produce with these families.

STEP 5

Engage and tap the local expertise of teachers, early childhood care and education providers, pediatricians, medical professionals and those with keen insight into what works and what is needed to reach the goal.

STEP 6

Mobilize a Rally to Read Coalition by mapping the social capital and assets of the community and identifying the individuals who can leverage the social capital, have positions of authority and influence in the community. Invite them to a facilitated Community Innovation Forum.

STEP 7

Facilitate Community Innovation Forums to launch the Rally to Read Coalition and establish the action plan to reach the BHAG.



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Community Innovation Action Planning

Community Innovation is a facilitated action planning process designed to leverage a community's social capital to mobilize a multi-sector coalition to achieve a specific measurable goal. In this case the BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal) is to transform Minnesota to the state with the highest reading proficiency with the fewest inequities and achieve it with a fierce urgency of now. The benchmarks of success: every child is "wired" to read by age 3 and reads proficiently at grade level.

Community Innovation flows from a disciplined way of thinking and acting to improve entrenched and complex social problems. Communities use it to improve the lives of children, youth, adults and families. Community Innovation is informed in part by the "Results Based Accountability (RBA)" methodology Mark Friedman described in his book "Trying Hard is Not Good Enough." For more than 4 decades, Community Innovation has been used in all 50 United States and in more than a dozen countries around the world to create measurable change in people's lives, communities and organizations.

Community Innovation:

- Gets from talk to action quickly;
- Is a simple, common-sense process that everyone can understand;
- Starts with ends and works backward towards means;
- Helps groups to surface and challenge assumptions that can be barriers to innovation;
- Builds collaboration and consensus;
- Uses data and transparency to ensure a community's accountability for both the well-being of people and the performance of programs;
- Focuses on actions that will have the greatest impact on the children, youth and families that face the greatest opportunity inequities.

What's different about Community Innovation?

It starts with ends and works backward towards means. The "end" or difference a community is trying to make looks different if you are working on a broad community level vs focusing on a specific program or organization. The population versus performance distinction is what separates Community Innovation from other frame works. Population accountability organizes work with co-equal partners to promote community well-being. It isn't a "program" approach to solving social problems. Community Innovation determines who is responsible for what. It measures and monitors progress on benchmarks quarterly to determine if the chosen strategies are producing the results they are intended to achieve. When they aren't the Rally to Read Coalition will divest from poor performing initiatives and invest in ones that are achieving results.

Organizations and programs can only be held accountable for the customers they serve. Community Innovation helps organizations identify the role they play as part of a community-wide collective impact. Identifying specific targeted children and families who experience the largest opportunity inequity benefit allows Rally to Read Coalitions to focus resources. Programs performance measures focus on whether children and families are better off as a result of their services. These performance measures also look at the quality and efficiency of these services. Three simple questions get at the most important performance measures:

How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?

<https://clearimpact.com/results-based-accountability/>

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For information contact: [Tim Reardon](#) / mnrrallytoread@gmail.com / mnrrallytoread.org / 763-370-9927



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Community Innovation Forums

The Community Innovation Forums are *typically* two – 3 hour long facilitated action planning sessions.

Invitation List

- Parents, guardians and extended family members who represent the children and families that have been under supported by current systems that result in reading proficiency inequities.
- Individuals and organizations identified while mapping the social capital of the community who can leverage the social capital, have positions of authority and influence in the community.
- Organizational representatives from: early childhood care providers, teachers, literacy experts, libraries, OB-GYNs, pediatricians, health care providers, public health home visitors, county social services (WIC/Economic Assistance/Public Health) faith communities, civic organizations, business leaders, sports teams, nonprofit organizations, elected officials, higher education institutional leaders and other influencers.

The First Community Innovation Forum

Agenda:

1. How is the community doing with reading proficiency?
 - Examine reading proficiency data trends for the entire community and subgroups who experience inequities.
2. Explore “what is the story behind the data?”
 - How does the community interpret / understand what is going on?
 - What is contributing to these statistics?
 - What might this data say about our community’s future?
3. Who are the partners who have a role to play in achieving the goal?

The Second Community Innovation Forum

Agenda:

4. What works to have children “wired” to read by age 3 and read proficiently at grade level?
 - How does empirical evidence inform our community strategies?
 - What strategies would work best in this community? What communities within the community will want unique strategies?
5. Determine an action plan to: (*a model action plan is on page 5.*)
 - increase education and awareness
 - optimize community connections
 - surround children with support
 - support families
 - be culturally responsive
 - Identify some low cost / no cost ideas that can be implemented immediately. .
 - Determine who will lead these efforts in the community.
6. Establish how the community will measure progress. What are the benchmarks of success?
7. Meet a minimum of quarterly to monitor progress and adjust strategies to optimize impact and return on investment.

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Model Rally to Read Coalition Action Plan

Increase education and awareness of the importance of literacy/brain development for children 0–3.

Ensure every parent during pregnancy and all parents and guardians of infants, toddlers and children are provided a child development guide / tool kit and resources such as:

- Parent Powered Texts
- Little Moments Count public service announcements
- Parent Aware
- Help Me Grow

Optimize Community Connections

Optimize each touchpoint with parents/guardians and children. Enhance opportunities to engage and influence parents, guardians and families at child care centers, pediatricians/other medical professionals offices, parks and recreation facilities, faith communities, business and restaurants, food shelves and places that interact with children and their families.

- Provide awareness, education, resources, concrete techniques and reading / brain development material at every opportunity
- Provide adequate resources, expertise, literacy development best practices,
- Reduce barriers for accessing resources by going where families frequently go
- Create incentives for parents and guardians to engage in child development activities

Surround Children with Support

Determine at every touch point encounter where there is an indicator that parents or guardians may need support offer nurturing relationships and opportunities and when a child is assessed as falling behind appropriate interventions are initiated

- Right Time
- Right Intensity
- Right Resources

Support Families

Every child deserves an equity of opportunity to develop their brain by age 3. Every parent wants life to be better for their child. If, for whatever reason, a parent or guardian isn't able to provide adequate opportunities to develop their child's brain, it is an opportunity for a community to support that parent with authentic culturally-responsive peer support to ensure every child does.

Be Culturally-Responsive

The litmus test for crafting, implementing and evaluating community action is how authentically the voices and needs of families most negatively impacted by current approaches to literacy development are at the forefront. Rally to Read Coalitions work to create authentic, culturally-responsive strategies to implement each of the action plans.

Collect measures of success on a quarterly basis from Rally to Read Coalitions, share best practices emerging from Rally to Read Coalitions and assure the resources necessary to accelerate achievement of the goal that every Minnesota child reads proficiently.

The Coalition can choose to invest to scale up efforts demonstrating success and/or re-allocate resources to strategies that are.

Facilitate team meetings of Coalition partners to coordinate and guide the work

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Role of a Rally to Read Coalition

Develop and sustain a stable backbone of cross-sector collaboration to achieve the BHAG:

- build on community engagement/partnership efforts that are already underway
- mobilize and inspire community action and infuse urgency to solving the problem
- increase awareness and educate communities about the transformative impact of reading proficiently on a child's success and consequences of not teaching every child to read
- make the case for focusing on pre- birth to age 3
- foster "it takes the village" mentality - what schools can and can not do/what some families can and the community can do
- facilitate community engagement and network building
- cultivate community leadership and implementation of localized strategies
- partnership coordination and communication
- resource alignment and fund development
- measure community-level impact / foster accountability and joint ownership of results
- build partner capacity
- organize and advocate for public policy and systems change

Role of Minnesota's Rally to Read

- Champion the BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal).
- Educate and raise awareness of the importance of brain and literacy development in children prenatal to age 3 through: presentations, compiling research on best practices, Opinion Exchange Articles and articles in other publications and the website
- Coach and train community champions
 - Facilitate completion of the Action Steps (listed above)
 - Train local facilitators to conduct the Community Innovation Forum
 - Provide model invitations / press releases and communication pieces
 - Assist the community to design the Action Plans to foster grassroots, community-grown solutions.
 - Engage parents, guardians, teachers and early childhood educators and practitioners in the community to identify effective community support for their work.
 - Provide guidance and access to expertise and best practice
 - Bridge the gap between research and community intervention and to support efficacy and return on investment of a Coalition's action plans
 - Ensure Action Plans are grounded in empirical research informed by the science of reading, brain development, early childhood development, school readiness, health, crime patterns, juvenile detention and workplace readiness.
 - Provide access to experts who are "on tap but not on top" to guide the community.
 - Share best practices among Rally to Read coalitions.
 - Ensure targeted universal strategies are implemented at the local level to support the children and families that need it most.
 - Advocate for public policy and systems change.



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A Rally to Read Coalition benefits to a school district

- aligns the community behind what the schools are doing to achieve reading proficiency
- builds community capacity and mobilizes social capital
- supports schools with targeted efforts to address opportunity gaps preventing all children from reading proficiently
- focuses on pre-birth to age 3 brain and literacy development so children are better equipped to learn once they cross the threshold of a classroom
- accelerates achievement of reading proficiency
- enhances family engagement

Potential Roles of a School District

A Rally to Read Coalition will confer with their school district to determine which of the roles and functions the district has the capacity to provide and participate in.

- endorse participating in achieving Minnesota's Rally to Read's BHAG and benchmarks
- help identify supportive community members and partners
- provide vocal support and cheerlead the effort
- guide community members with early childhood brain development and literacy expertise
- assist in designing community interventions based on research best practices
- share relevant data
- facilitate community engagement in classroom reading activities
- align resources to achieve the BHAG
- provide liaison with authority to represent the district in Coalition partnership meetings
- contribute to the cost of facilitating the launch of the Coalition



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Rally to Read Community Coalition Action Teams Evidence-Based Best Practices Options

During Rally to Read Community Innovation Action Plan Forums, communities are asked to identify objectives and strategies to achieve the RtoR BHAG and Benchmarks within their community. Communities have asked for guidance on what initiatives have evidence-based best practice and research informed results so they can maximize their impact and return on their investment.

**Rally to Read Coalition Action Teams
will be initiated to:**

Increase education and awareness

Provide every parent or guardian of a newborn a “child development tool kit”

Optimize community connections

Surround parents and children with support

Be culturally-responsive in every action



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Increase Education and Awareness

Provide every parent or guardian of a newborn with a "child development toolkit"
(Newborn Owner's Manual/Baby Brain Building Kit)

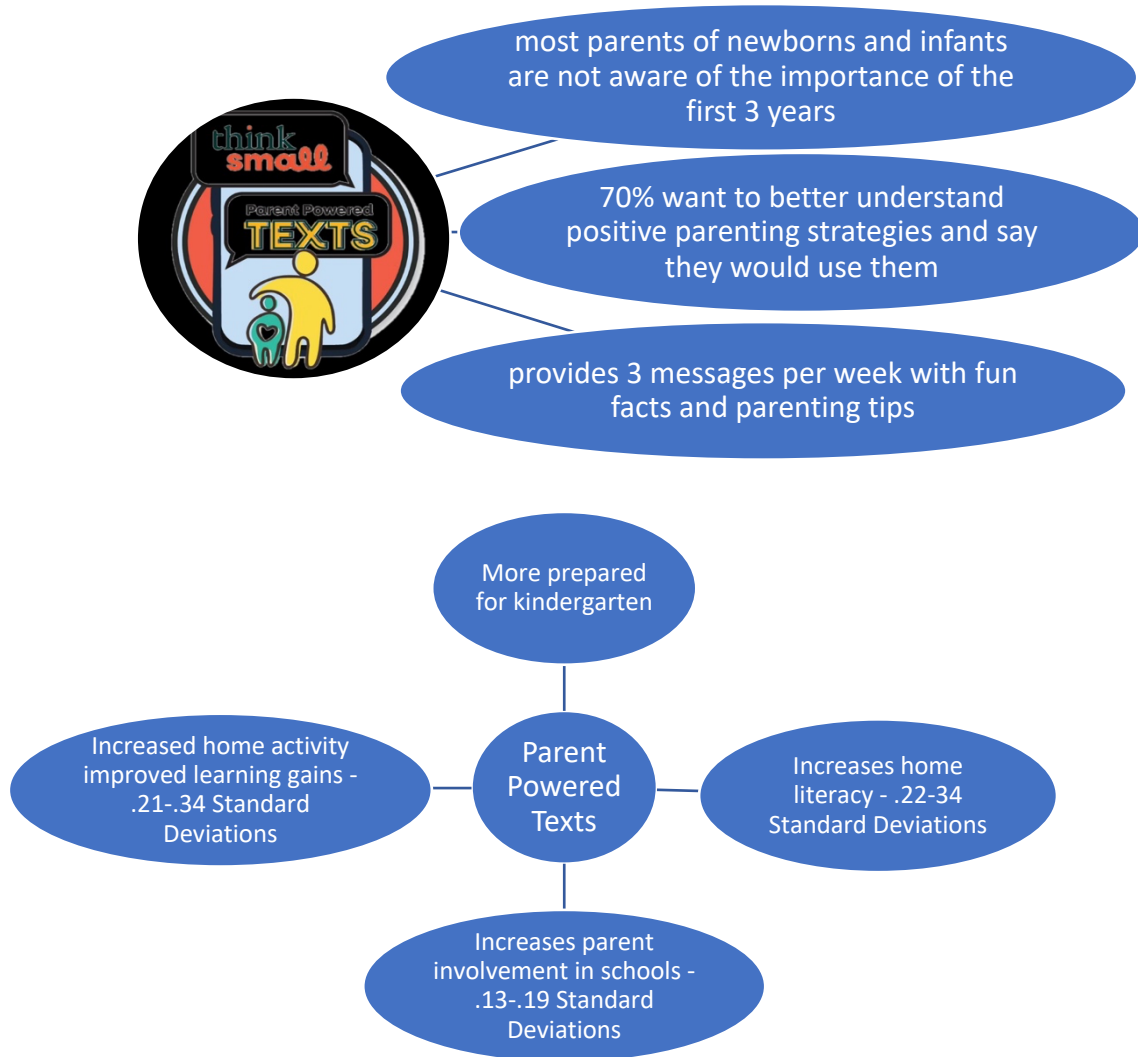
Newborn Owner's Manual Contents





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Research on Parent Powered Texts



Parent Powered Texts are brain and literacy development text messages for parents prenatal to age 5. These texts break down the complexity of parenting by providing weekly fun facts, easy tips, and ideas on how to promote your child's learning. Harvard and Stanford University research studies demonstrate that children of parents who participate in Parent Powered Texts are: The widespread use, low cost, and ease of scalability of text messaging make texting an attractive approach to supporting parenting practices. In comparison, parenting programs that have shown promise (such as ECFE Early Childhood Family Education) often are not widely accessible, either due to the demands they place on parents' time and effort or cost.

Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/>

Stanford Univ. Center for Education Policy Analysis <https://cepa.stanford.edu/content/one-step-time-effects-early-literacy-text-messaging-program-parents-preschoolers>

Journal of Development Economics <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0304387823001578>



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Broadcast and distribute Little Moments Count public service announcements across the community and target communities with the largest opportunity gaps.



little
moments
count

74% of parents who recalled seeing a talk-read-sing TV or radio ad said the ads led them to talk, read, and sing more with their children

Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University
<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/>

Tuning In – National Parent Survey Report”, ZERO TO THREE, 2016,
<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1425-national-parent-survey-report>



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Optimize Community Connections

A study by Kaiser Permanente published in the Bio Medical Central Journal of demonstrates the importance of showing up where families may feel more comfortable and trusting of services offered in familiar and welcoming environments. This builds trust and engagement. It reduces logistical difficulties by eliminating the need for separate trips and navigating unfamiliar locations, accessing resources becomes more convenient. Embedding resources within existing routines and locations can increase awareness and encourage families to utilize them. Therefore, by leveraging existing community spaces and family routines, service providers can effectively reduce barriers and enhance access to resources for families in need.

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-021-11981-5#:~:text=An%20assessment%20of%20programs%20designed,can%20help%20address%20identified%20needs>

