PBS KIDS

Photo courtesy of Rhode Island PBS – Providence, RI

The Ready To Learn Initiative

2022-2023 PROJECT UPDATE

LEARN TOGETHER: CONNECTING CHILDREN'S MEDIA AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO BUILD KEY SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

cpb Corporation for Public Broadcasting

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION · UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Meeting a Need

Every child deserves to thrive. Access to educational resources and tools in the early years of life is critical to children's long-term well-being and success. Yet, for many children, access to these resources is limited.[1]

Through a 2020-2025 Ready To Learn grant, CPB and PBS continue to build on the initiative's 30-year legacy and the trust of families and educators to meet the needs of our nation's children by providing research-driven content and tools to help them succeed in school, work, and life. These resources support intergenerational learning and skills-development for children in literacy, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving, while providing opportunities to explore career and job interests in age-appropriate ways.

Photo courtesy of Arizona PBS – Phoenix, AZ

Reach & Accessibility

PBS KIDS content created through this Ready To Learn Initiative is available for free digitally on the PBS KIDS Video and PBS KIDS Games apps, pbskids.org, and on-air via more than 330 PBS member stations across the country.

More than 36 million games are played on the PBS KIDS Games app on average each month.[2]

PBS KIDS averages **15.4 million monthly users and over 371 million monthly streams** across digital platforms.[3]

Photo courtesy of PBS Wisconsin – Madison, WI

PBS stations reach more children, and more parents of young children, than any other children's TV network in one year.[4]

Learning Neighborhoods

Learning Neighborhoods is an innovative model of community engagement led by local PBS stations and community partners that work together to focus on the early learning needs of children and their families. Building upon the extensive reach of PBS KIDS content across digital platforms, these Learning Neighborhoods foster a community-wide culture of learning anytime, anywhere—at home, in the neighborhood, and within local systems and spaces. These collaborations build awareness of and provide access to PBS KIDS learning resources through direct engagement to encourage the sustained use and measurable impact of the Ready To Learn Initiative.

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Groundbreaking Educational Content

WORK IT OUT WOMBATS!

WORK IT OUT WOMBATS! is a new animated series for kids ages 3-6 produced by **GBH Kids** and **Pipeline Studios**, starring a playful trio of marsupial siblings—Malik, Zadie, and Zeke—who live with their grandmother, Super, in their treehouse apartment complex.

Full of boundless energy, Malik, Zadie, and Zeke are always on the lookout for interesting problems to solve. The playful trio demonstrates critical thinking and creative problem-solving using computational thinking for preschoolers. These concepts will help young viewers express themselves and collaboratively solve meaningful problems in new and creative ways.

WORK IT OUT WOMBATS! takes place in the Treeborhood, a massive treehouse where the residents bring varied skills and abilities, assorted ways of thinking, and different family structures and traditions to their diverse and vibrant community, where even the adults join in the play.

This multiplatform series is available for free in both English and Spanish. It also includes forthcoming audio content and games, including "Road Repair" and "Step It Out," which focus on problem decomposition and sequencing, available on pbskids.org and the PBS KIDS Games app.

WHAT CAN YOU BECOME?

WHAT CAN YOU BECOME? is a series of shorts that focus on career-readiness skills for kids while demonstrating how their interests and hobbies can lead to future job options and opportunities. A variety of professions are explored in the series including a service dog trainer, meteorologist, a robotics engineer, and more.

Photo courtesy of Alaska Public Media – Anchorage, AK

Photo courtesy of Louisiana Public Broadcasting – Baton Rouge, LA

MOLLY OF DENALI

In November 2022, new shorts from the award-winning animated series **MOLLY OF DENALI** premiered on PBS KIDS. "Molly of Denali: The Big Gathering" follows Molly and the community of Qyah as they prepare for "The Big Gathering," a convention inspired by the real-life annual Alaska Federation of Natives Convention. All stories support literacy skills through the use and creation of functional texts that help the characters meet their needs, accomplish goals, and complete everyday tasks, such as learning to repair a traditional Alaska Native drum or figuring out how far each friend will have to travel to get to the gathering in Anchorage.

Complementing the shorts is **"The Big Gathering Game,"** in which players utilize functional texts in a variety of everyday activities to help Molly prepare for the Big Gathering. Players keep track of all their tasks in a handy to-do list, use labels to sort tea, decorate festival banners, and use a map to help learn bird calls. This game is available for free on pbskids.org and the PBS KIDS Games app.

MOLLY OF DENALI STREAMED
3.2 million+ times
NOVEMBER 2022 [5]

THE BIG GATHERING GAME
**1 million+ plays**
NOVEMBER 2022 [6]

KSPS - Spokane, WA

The **KSPS** Learning Neighborhood is using PBS KIDS programs to reach local children in Northeast and East Central Spokane through personalized learning experiences adapted to celebrate and honor cultural values and heritages, deepen ties to local communities, and teach key academic and world of work skills.

Featured Partners: Spokane Public Schools, The ZoNe Project

Nine PBS - St. Louis, MO

The **Nine PBS** Learning Neighborhood is taking a responsive community approach to supporting parents and caregivers by deepening and expanding learning initiatives to prioritize representative educational resources that improve the overall health, well-being, and learning outcomes of the most overlooked families in the St. Louis area.
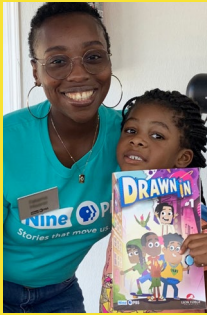
Featured Partners: Turn the Page STL (Campaign for Grade-Level Reading local affiliate), St. Louis Public Library

PBS39 - Lehigh Valley, PA

PBS39 connects local neighborhood partners and the world of work through family engagement opportunities, including the World of Work Pop Up Series with LV Rising and collaborative STEM family engagement in partnership with the DaVinci Science Center. These programs build awareness and confidence in families' abilities to grow their child's literacy skills and career exploration.

Featured Partners: DaVinci Science Center, Museum of Indian Culture

Arkansas PBS - Conway, AR

Arkansas PBS is working with local partners to provide resources and support for afterschool programs and in-home educators, as well as engaging families in Family & Community Learning workshops. They are also establishing an advisory panel consisting of PBS KIDS Early Learning Champions, local families, and educators to help guide their work.

Featured Partners: Jonesboro Housing Authority's Parents as Teachers Program, El Centro Hispano

Ball State PBS - Muncie, IN

Ball State PBS is building a strong network of support for childcare providers, including Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) providers, and the children and families they serve, putting its Learning Neighborhood children on a path to success. In 2022, Ball State PBS also debuted "Daycare Detectives" as a part of the RTL Podcast Accelerator program.

Featured Partners: BY5, Ross Community Center

East Tennessee PBS - Knoxville, TN

East TN PBS is utilizing RTL-funded resources to serve local families. The Learning Neighborhood will facilitate workshops with previously incarcerated parents or caregivers, helping to deliver PBS KIDS content as opportunities for caregiver education and family relationship-building. In 2022, East TN PBS also debuted "Parenting in Progress" as a part of the RTL Podcast Accelerator program.

Featured Partners: Amachi Knoxville, Knox Education Foundation

WXXI - Rochester, NY

WXXI works with new and existing partners to forge tighter community connections, expand the use of developmentally appropriate resources and support families with young learners. The WXXI Learning Neighborhood engages families in out-of-school programs, childcare, early learning programs, and community spaces.

Featured Partners: Rochester City School District's Early Childhood Department, Greater Rochester Summer Learning Alliance (GRSLA)

KERA - Dallas, TX

With help from Learning Neighborhood partners, **KERA** is conducting Family & Community Learning workshops in Dallas. One parent, who has attended 12 consecutive family workshops, thanked the station for teaching "the power of being engineers or scientists" in a post-workshop survey. In 2022, KERA also debuted "¿Cuál es tu sueño?" as a part of the RTL Podcast Accelerator program.

Featured Partners: United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, Dallas Regional Chamber of Commerce

Rhode Island PBS - Providence, RI

By leveraging the strengths of its partners to serve families directly in some of the state's highest-need communities, **Rhode Island PBS** is implementing a Family & Community Learning series that strategically overlaps the participation of children, parents and caregivers, and educators. This approach will scale the resources through train-the-trainer and train-the-parent/caregiver models to maximize reach, sustainability, and impact.
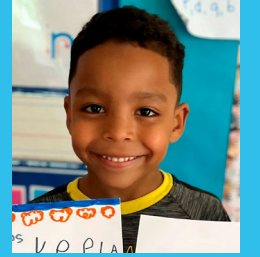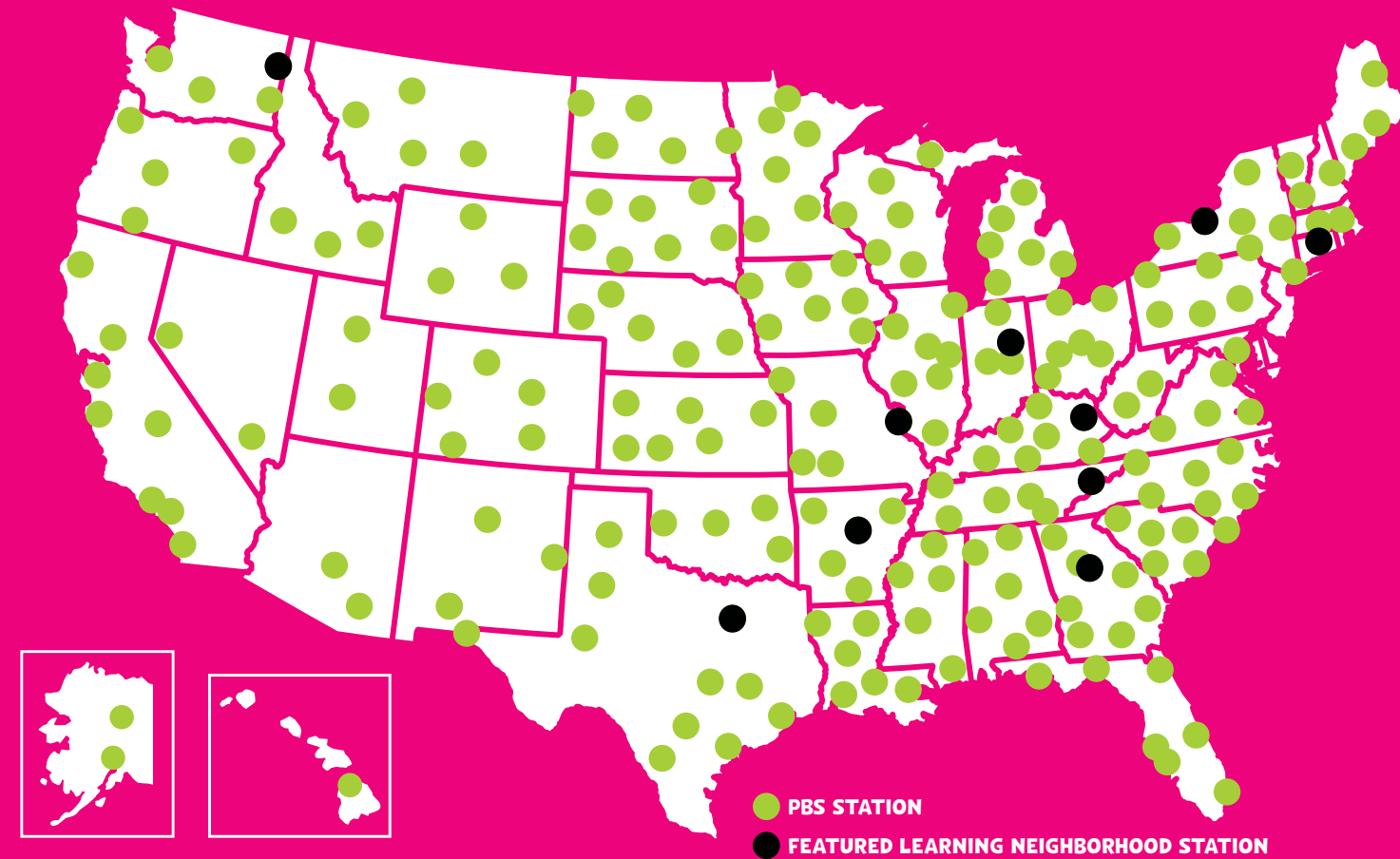
Featured Partners: Federal Hill House / Parents as Teachers; Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (RIAEYC)

Georgia Public Broadcasting - Atlanta, GA

GPB is supporting multiple Learning Neighborhood communities in Columbus and Atlanta by establishing learning corners in community libraries and elementary schools. GPB and their partners are providing book readings, learning resources, and access to PBS KIDS apps to improve children's functional literacy skills and kindergarten readiness.

Featured Partners: Dorothy Heights Elementary School, Harper-Archer Elementary School

ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEIGHBORHOOD STATIONS (22 TOTAL):

Alabama Public Television - Birmingham, AL

Alaska Public Media - Anchorage, AK

Austin PBS - Austin, TX

Detroit Public Television - Detroit, MI

Kentucky Educational Television - Lexington, KY

Maryland Public Television - Owings Mills, MD

PBS SoCal | **KCET** - Los Angeles, CA

PBS Wisconsin - Madison, WI

Vegas PBS - Las Vegas, NV

WFSU - Tallahassee, FL

WNET - New York, NY

WQED - Pittsburgh, PA

Photo courtesy of WQED – Pittsburgh,PA

PBS STATION

FEATURED LEARNING NEIGHBORHOOD STATION

Expanding Access in Local Communities

As of November 2022, 24 additional public media stations received grants to develop plans for Learning Neighborhoods in their communities. The stations that received funding include:

- **Arizona PBS** - Phoenix, AZ
- **Buffalo Toronto Public Media** - Buffalo, NY
- **Idaho PBS** - Boise, ID
- **Ideastream Public Media** - Cleveland, OH
- **Iowa PBS** - Johnston, IA
- **KBTC** - Tacoma, WA
- **KLRN** - San Antonio, TX
- **Louisiana Public Broadcasting** - Baton Rouge, LA
- **Nebraska Public Media** - Lincoln, NE
- **New England Public Media** - Springfield, MA
- **PBS Charlotte** - Charlotte, NC
- **Valley PBS** - Fresno, CA
- **Vermont Public** - Colchester, VT
- **Virginia Public Media** - Richmond, VA
- **WEDU** - Tampa, FL
- **WETA** - Washington, DC
- **WFYI** - Indianapolis, IN
- **WHUT** - Washington, DC
- **WIPR** - San Juan, Puerto Rico
- **WOSU** - Columbus, OH
- **WPSU** - University Park, PA
- **WQLN** - Erie, PA
- **WTCI** - Chattanooga, TN
- **WUCF** - Orlando, FL

National Partners

Learning Neighborhood stations are connected with national partners and their local affiliates to deepen local engagement and support children's learning. **Parents as Teachers National Center** (PAT), **National Association for the Education of Young Children** (NAEYC), and the **U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation** share expertise in family engagement, early childhood education, and world of work skills that are vital to the Ready To Learn Initiative's success in local communities, and extend the reach of PBS KIDS resources via their broad networks of state and local affiliates.

In addition, **PRX**, a non-profit media company specializing in audio journalism and storytelling, supported original podcast series producers in the generation of new content through this initiative, and led the RTL Podcast Accelerator in collaboration with PBS KIDS and CPB. This training program included four teams of public media producers from local stations across the country and resulted in new educational on-demand audio programming for children ages 2-8 and their caregivers. Participating Learning Neighborhood stations included Ball State PBS, East Tennessee PBS, KERA, and WNET.

pbslearningmedia.org/readytolearn