

## THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY LITERACY

Educational research overwhelmingly supports the premise that “the single most important activity for building understanding and skills essential for reading success appears to be reading aloud to children” (Bus, van Ijzendoorn & Pellegrini, 1995). Reading aloud helps children to:

- Establish a love for books
- Increase vocabulary
- Understand concepts about print
- Increase phonological awareness
- Improve listening and speaking skills
- Improve problem solving skills
- Explore different worlds
- Use imagination

Families In Schools developed Read with Me/ Lea Connigo as a doorway for families to enter the world of literacy.

*“Read With Me has been really successful at our pre-school center. We can see that the families are spending more quality time together through the homework being submitted. Our children are very excited; they are always anxious to see what books they will be receiving each week!”*

Site Supervisor, Child Development Center



Start Read with Me/Lea Connigo at  
your school today!

**For more information, please contact:**

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# READ WITH ME/ LEA CONMIGO



### Awards and Recognition

#### **Ready by Five Partnership**

Recognized as a promising practice in What Works:  
Promising Practices in Improving the School Readiness  
of English language Learners (2004)

#### **John Hopkins University**

Partnership Organization Award from the National Network of  
Partnership Schools (2002, 2003, 2004,2005)

**Families  
In Schools**   
Building Partnerships for Student Success

## FAMILIES IN SCHOOLS

Families In Schools (FIS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to involving parents and communities in their children's education to achieve life long success. Recognizing the significant impact of the family on a child's learning, FIS has developed four primary program areas:

- *Early Education and Family Literacy*
- *College Preparation and Awareness*
- *Community Engagement and Advocacy*
- *School Partnerships*

Families In Schools provides schools and organizations with tools and training to effectively engage parents in their child's education.

## READ WITH ME/LEA CONMIGO

Read with Me/Lea Conmigo is a family involvement program designed to improve the early literacy skills of infants and toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergarten through first-grade students. This innovative program provides a weekly supply of quality books in the home, complemented by family literacy workshops. Since 2001, Read with Me has reached over 120,000 families at 200 locations throughout Southern California.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Every week, Read with Me families meet at their local school or community based organization to check-out a colorful purple backpack filled with 6 children's books. Parents first attend an orientation where they learn story sharing techniques and sign a pledge to read aloud to their child for 20 minutes every day.

Families then journey home and open their purple packs to discover story sharing tips along with a collection of books in English and Spanish. At the end of the week, they exchange the backpack for a new bag of books. Also, families attend literacy workshops provided by the agency/school. Through Read with Me, families experience an average of 120 different children's books annually.

## RESULTS

Results show that Read with Me/Lea Conmigo:

- Increases reading in the home -*Read with Me families increased the amount of time they read together by an average of 29 minutes a day.*
- Increases the number of times a week a family reads together -*75% of families share stories 4 or more times a week.*
- Increases parent-teacher communication-*Read with Me preschool parents were 14% more likely to contact teachers about their child's early reading ability.*

## START A PROGRAM

It is easy to get started! Families In Schools partners with preschools, elementary schools, and community based organizations to provide Read with Me/Lea Conmigo at their sites. The one-time cost to establish a Read with Me program is only \$100 per student.

To begin Read with Me at your site, call Families In Schools and schedule a training date. At this 2-hour workshop, staff will receive materials and training to successfully engage parents in their child's early literacy development. Every new Read with Me Partner School/Organization receives:

- *A set of Read with Me backpacks with quality children's books in both English and Spanish*
- *Step-by-step program manuals for staff*
- *Implementation templates for teachers*
- *Handouts for parents*
- *A teacher toolbox full of parent incentives including:*
  - *Children's books*
  - *Colorful magnets promoting reading*
  - *Read with Me pencils*

After the training, schools/agencies will be prepared to manage the weekly distribution of Read with Me backpacks to families, in addition to family literacy workshops for parents .