

# Brain Time and Storytime: How the Lake County Public Library is Supporting Parents in Early Literacy



The SPELL blueprint ([s.lrs.org/blueprint](http://s.lrs.org/blueprint)) was created to assist library staff in their effort to support caregivers in practicing early literacy techniques with their children. In November 2014, eight libraries in Colorado were selected to implement the blueprint in their communities. Each library created a programming prototype that guided the library in collaborating with community partners, and providing outreach to low income and high need communities. One of the SPELL libraries was Lake County Public Library, located in the mountain town of Leadville, Colorado. Read on to learn about its prototype.

## Community Profile - Lake County, Colorado

*Population (Lake County): 7,485*  
*Racial Makeup: 59% White, 38% Latino/a, 4% Two or More Races*  
*K-12 % Minority: 71%*  
*Median Income: \$36,714*  
*% Below Poverty Line: 13%*

## Partner

Lake County Schools, including the preschool, elementary school, and high school parent support group for pregnant teens and teen mothers.

## Prototype

**Partnership with the local school district:** The library funded buses so preschools and elementary schools could bring their students to the library once a week for storytime and a related craft. Library staff encouraged elementary students to promote reading and literacy strategies with their younger siblings. The library also gave an early literacy presentation to the high school parent support group.

**Early literacy programming:** The library offered Brain Time, a curriculum designed for parents of babies aged 6-18 months that focuses on brain development and early literacy.

This class has given me lots of great ideas for play & learning w/ my child. I have a better understanding of how she is learning.  
– Parent

I learned just how important reading is for my child.  
– Parent

My biggest success was getting to know the little children and watching their parents change their habits.  
– Children's Librarian

## Project Resources

Funding: \$8,244 (61% federal grant, 39% Lake County Public Library)

Purchases included:

- 327 children's books
- 800 early literacy informational materials
- 400 promotional materials
- 22 bus trips to bring students to the library

## Activities

- 18 Brain Time sessions  
-34 children participated
- 11 preschool storytimes
- 11 elementary school storytimes
- 380 children and 43 caregivers attended storytime
- 28 parent consultations on early literacy

## Outcomes

After participating in SPELL,

- more than 9 in 10 parent survey respondents know more everyday activities to help their child(ren) be ready to learn to read in kindergarten, and
- more than 4 in 5 parent survey respondents are more committed to maintaining a regular reading routine with their child(ren).

More details about this prototype are available at [spellproject.weebly.com/research](http://spellproject.weebly.com/research).