

WORDS

An Infant/Toddler Language and Literacy Project

A partnership project of the



and the

United Way of Greater New Haven's Success By 6 Initiative



The WORDS project identifies the language gaps that confound achievement for at risk children ...

- Children hear fewer spoken words.
- Words children hear are not rich and descriptive.
- Children are read fewer books.
- Children have fewer enriching experiences.

WORDS sets language & literacy goals.

Every child is read at least 5 books every day between childcare and home.

Children have a home library. Childcare center and family childcare home libraries have at least 10 books per child.

Parents and early childhood educators learn techniques for reading to young children.

Children's families are invested in reading at home.

Grownups foster a love of books by modeling reading and provide rich language with conversation!

Grownups learn how to 'play' with books by connecting them to activities.

Children live and play in literacy-rich environments.

Children hear books in their home language.

First, WORDS creates literacy-based environments.

A toy shelf at a family childcare home invites play and reading together – a mini-library.

- Libraries expanded in classrooms and family childcare homes.



WORDS then directly addresses the language gaps ...

- Children hear more spoken words.
- Words children hear are rich and descriptive.
- Children are read more books.
- Children have more enriching experiences.



WORDS increases the number of words children hear.

Hearing 2,000 words per hour versus 600 words per hour equals a high 'oracy-to-literacy' transfer effect.

In other words, a child's internal dictionary is bigger, helping them to de-code print.



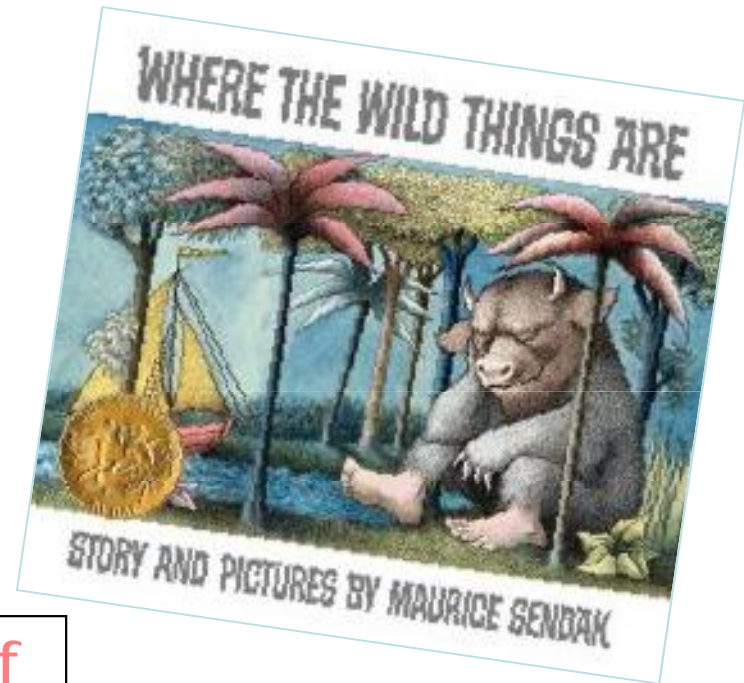
Children whose parents are college-educated hear 2,153 words per hour.

Children whose parents have a high school diploma or less hear 1,251 words per hour.

Children of families living in poverty hear 616 words per hour.

WORDS increases the number of new words children hear.

Fact: Children's picture books provide more rich, complex and descriptive language, and "50% more rare words, than adult primetime TV or the conversation of college graduates."



"The night Max wore his **wolf** suit and made **mischief** of one kind or another."

"And now," cried Max, "let the wild **rumpus** start!"

WORDS increases the number of interesting words children hear.



Reading The Very Hungry Caterpillar provided the words 'cocoon' and 'nibbled', interesting and unusual words now added to her vocabulary by a book.

WORDS increases the quality of talking time.

Fact: Studies that show that children hear 70% directive words and only 30% conversational words.

- 83% of WORDS providers report that they talk and tell more stories to their children.



WORDS increases reading time.

Fact: Percent of children read to everyday nationwide:

White: 67%

Asian: 60%

Hispanic: 37%

Black: 35%

ChildStats.gov – America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2011



- 100% of participating teachers and family childcare providers in WORDS report they now read every day.

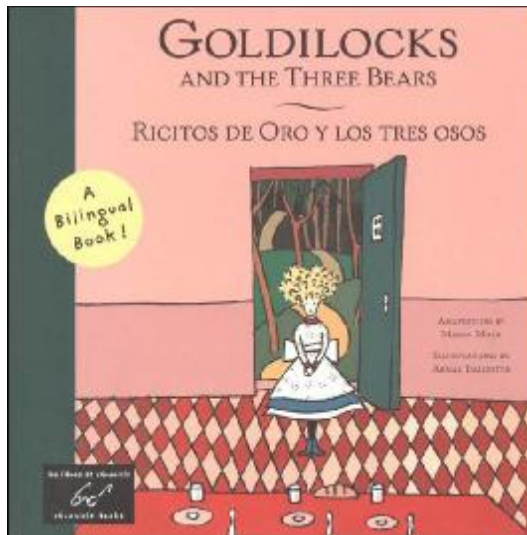
WORDS adds literacy props to expand the experience.

- Literacy props provide experiential and interactive reading.



WORDS provides context for stories.

- Literacy props enrich reading.



- Literacy props deepen understanding.



WORDS coaching changes practice.

Fact: A child has to hear a new word 28 times, in a familiar context, in order to 'own' it.

("Closing the Vocabulary Gap" Jane L. David Educational Leadership March 2010 Vol. 67 No. 6)

Fact: Children who hear at least 5 books each day from birth enter kindergarten with a vocabulary of 30,000 words.

Fact: Vocabulary size correlates with accumulated knowledge; a word is a proxy for what you know.

("A Wealth of Words" E.D. Hirsch, Jr. City Journal January 2013)



- 87% of participating teachers and family childcare providers report that after WORDS coaching they read at least 5 books/day.

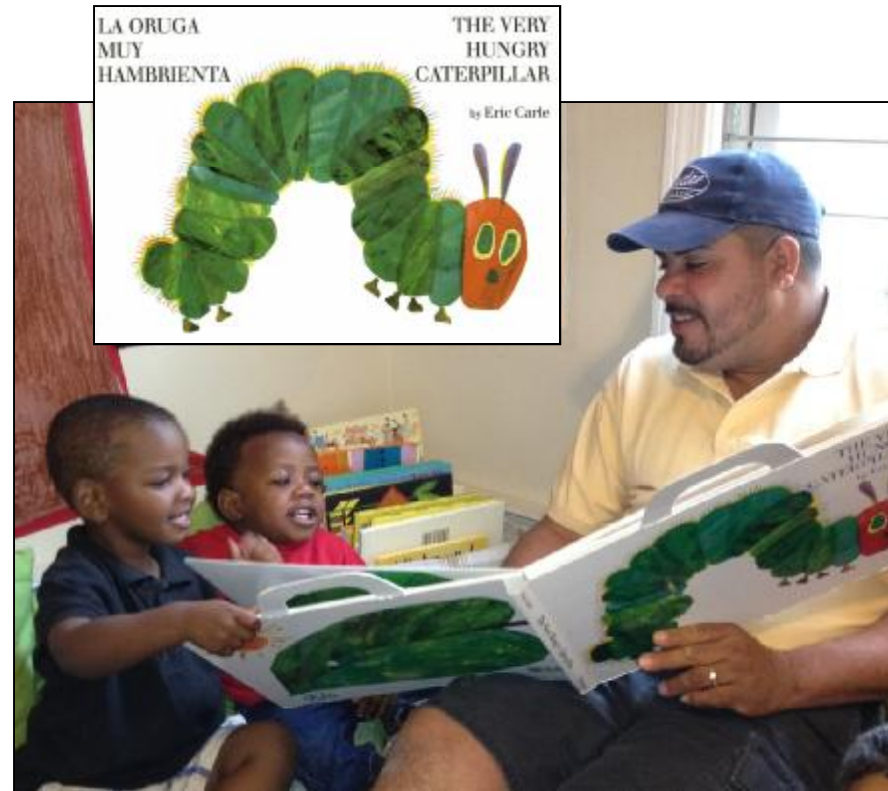
WORDS inspires teachers and providers to engage families.

- WORDS Family Lending Libraries are set up. Bookcases are provided.
- Providers share strategies to encourage families to take books home.



WORDS provides literacy opportunities for families.

- Teachers and providers talk with families often about reading.
- WORDS sites participate in family literacy events such as The Little Read.



3 years of WORDS at a glance ...

- 25 infant/toddler classrooms (54 teachers) received 4 hours of direct, on-site coaching.

200 center-based infants & toddlers participated

- 33 family childcare providers received 4 hours of direct, on-site coaching.

186 family childcare infants & toddlers participated

- 672 bi-lingual books added to classroom and family childcare home libraries

- 672 bi-lingual books provided for Family Lending Libraries

Through the WORDS project ...

- Children hear more spoken words.
- Words children hear are rich and descriptive.
- Children are read more books.
- Children have more enriching experiences.

