



12-15-23

Dear Friends,

As we approach the end of the year, I wanted to send a personal note to thank you again for your support of Daily Dose of Reading! Since our founding in 1999, DDR has been dedicated to improving childhood literacy in our community.

Our *Play & Learn* program is currently being delivered in 29 different locations throughout our community. In addition to 24 engaging sessions of evidence-based early literacy training, every child receives an average of 12 new, personalized books to take home as part of the program (over 6000 total books). Each book included a QR code encouraging parents and caregivers to access at-home early literacy activities on our website.

Play & Learn has consistently helped to reduce the emerging literacy skill deficiency among young children by over 50%. In 2023, objective data from a partner organization showed that children participating in the *Play & Learn* scored an average of 25% higher on five TS Gold literacy objectives compared to a control group. In addition, over 95% of the teachers anonymously surveyed stated that our program helped to achieve their goals.

As promising as that is, we know we can do even better. As such, 2023 marked a year of transformation for *Play & Learn*. Before expanding the program in 2024, we wanted to make sure we are providing the most effective program with the highest return on investment possible.

To do this, we brought in a team of early education experts to thoroughly review our 36 lesson plans. As a result, DDR has refocused on the Science of Reading, adding critical phonics and letter identification practice to each classroom session. We also reviewed the read-aloud selections to ensure that the chosen texts are engaging, prioritize diverse perspectives, and reinforce the SEL (social-emotional learning) components integrated into the weekly lessons.

But lesson plans are only half of the equation. In order to be effective, the program has to be delivered in the most engaging way possible. As such, we diversified by making sure our staff, books and content reflect and relate to the children we serve. In addition, we have forged partnerships with Great Lakes Theater and other dramatic arts organizations to increase our ability to engage children by training our teachers on core concepts in the dramatic arts. This training will take place in January 2024.



DAILY DOSE OF READING

DAILY DOSE OF READING SEEKS TO IMPROVE LITERACY IN CHILDREN
BY EMPOWERING FAMILIES THROUGH READING AND LANGUAGE.

Finally, DDR has begun researching ways that we can cost-effectively increase 1) awareness, 2) caregiver engagement, 3) in-home habit-forming reading cues, and 4) the perceived value of the books we distribute. In 2024, we will be working with volunteer marketing research experts to complete a formal research study with caregivers to this end.

With the advances above in place, DDR hopes to increase the impact we have on each individual child and family (as measured by the outcomes above), as well as increase the number of children we serve in 2024 by 50%.

We hope you will take a moment to reflect on the significant impact your interest and support has had with hundreds of underserved children in our area! You can also learn about more ways to help at www.dailydoseofreading.org.

Thank you again and we wish you a Happy New Year!

Best Regards,

Mike

Michael Armstrong
Executive Director