

FACT SHEET

Mother Goose on the Loose

BACKGROUND

The MBLC will offer Mother Goose on the Loose (*MGOL*), an early childhood literacy program for babies, young children and their caregivers pioneered at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. The program evolved from a library nursery rhyme program into a 30 minute structured program based on the learning theories of educator Barbara Cass-Beggs. This innovative, emergent literacy program builds on the most recent findings in brain research. Studies show that children learn best through routine and repetition in a nurturing atmosphere. When children are immersed in pleasurable language experiences on a regular basis there is a heightened brain capacity which affects their preparation for reading and writing at a later stage. MGOL is appropriate for children from birth to age five and their parents/caregivers.

MGOL has the following program goals:

- Increase the use of the public library by families with young children by fostering emergent literacy skills in young children
- Provide an educational model to parents, increasing their understanding/skills as a child's first and most important teacher
- Increase the skill level of youth services staff to work with the community about the developmental needs of children
- Develop young children's familiarity and comfort with libraries, books, words, and music

Youth services staff will work with parents in a highly structured program which teaches them to use a variety of musical activities including rhymes, songs, finger plays, puppets, musical instruments and colored scarves. Patterns of music (fast/slow, high/low, loud/soft) and phonemic awareness are taught to the very youngest children. The program promotes appropriate responses to verbal cues, as well as fostering motor coordination and speech development.

Libraries chosen to participate in this program will attend an all-day training session conducted in Fall 2006. LSTA funds will be used to purchase high quality developmental toys, musical instruments, furniture, and accessories and puppets to be used with the young children. Funds will also be used for appropriate library materials including board books, picture books, and support material for parents. Additional programs for parents could be offered on topics such as "Recent developments in the field of baby brain research", "The importance of music for children", "The importance of movement for young children", or "Age appropriate crafts to do with a young child". Libraries would conduct program publicity and evaluation.

MASSACHUSETTS LONG RANGE PROGRAM GOAL/OBJECTIVE

Goal 4: Strengthen the role libraries play in children's and young adults' learning and their success in life.

Objective 5: Promote the development of family literacy programs that provide for both the emerging literacy skills of children and the parenting skills of low-literate adults.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Up to six public libraries will be selected to receive grants of \$10,000 to plan and implement a project using the material developed for *Mother Goose on the Loose*. Grant funds may be used to support a limited number of staff hours as well as program materials and outreach to communities.

Components of the project will include the following:

- Agreement to utilize the *MGOL* program model and to participate in the training sessions

- Agreement to offer family programs to a minimum of fifteen families
- Agreement to publicize the program using brochures, posters, pamphlets and non-print media, as appropriate
- Commitment to working in concert with local schools, museums and other agencies to extend the reading experience
- Agreement to participate in a statewide evaluation of *MGOL* to determine the usefulness/effectiveness of the current delivery models of the program.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to public libraries that:

- Have identified a focus on early childhood/preschoolers or family literacy in their long-range plans
- Will agree to send at least one library staff member to a full day of training to be offered by the MBLC staff in Fall 2006
- Have a long-range plan on file at the MBLC by October 1, 2005 that meets the requirements of the *Massachusetts Long-Range Plan, 2003-2007* (see Appendix B). If a plan **is** already on file, an updated Action Plan for FY2007 must be on file by December 1, 2005.
- Are members of a regional library system and are certified in the State Aid program throughout the application and award process.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit a **Letter of Intent** (form enclosed) by **December 8, 2005** with the “Mother Goose on the Loose” option checked off under **TYPE**. Applicants should refer to the enclosed calendar for due dates in this year’s round. An informational workshop to assist applicants in completing an application for this program will be held in late January/early February 2006. For additional information about this program, please contact Shelley Quezada at the MBLC at 800-952-7403, ext. 235, or e-mail at shelley.quezada@state.ma.us.