Families in Poverty
Impacts on Early Learning, Summer Learning and Family Engagement

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Objectives

▪ Summer Learning + Grade-Level Reading
▪ Family Engagement
▪ Early Learning
▪ Additional Thoughts + Tips
▪ Questions + Resources
“For the more than 25 million low-income public school students in America, summer is often anything but a vacation. Instead of a relaxing break to explore new interests and places, it’s often a time when children, youth and families struggle to find and afford food to eat and a safe place to be.

Summer learning loss, the phenomenon where young people lose academic skills over the summer, is one of the most significant causes of the achievement gap between lower and higher income youth and one of the strongest contributors to the high school dropout rate.”

www.summerlearning.org
Summer Slide

What we know about it

- Income Driven
- Cumulative
- Easy to Overcome
62% of first-graders living below the poverty level did not have library cards, and only 36% of children with the lowest socioeconomic status visited libraries in their kindergarten year.

“Public Partners for Early Literacy: Library-School Partnerships Closing Opportunity Gaps”
By Urban Libraries Council (2017)

In middle-income neighborhoods the ratio of books per child is 13 to 1, in low-income neighborhoods, the ratio is 1 age-appropriate book for every 300 children.

Summer Slide

What we tried

- Break down barriers
- Access to Books
- Interactions
Learn Freely Bus
62 Programs
1,072 Attendance
23 Partners

Play Freely Van
62 Programs
2,350 Attendance
22 Partners

Summer 2017!

In Person
37 Programs
767 Attendance
11 Partners
“Children from families on welfare heard about 616 words per hour, while those from working class families heard around 1,251 words per hour, and those from professional families heard roughly 2,153 words per hour.”

Family Engagement

Why they Might Not Come to You...

- Working
- Transportation
- Depression

*Low income and minority women are disproportionately likely to be affected by maternal depression with rates as high as 40%.*

- Fear/judgment
- Personal history
Early Learning

“Brain development is the most significant from birth to age 3. The brain’s capacity develops 90% before a child reaches age 5.”¹

“1 in 4 children from low-income families enters kindergarten not ready to learn.”²

¹ Early Childhood Education Degrees, The Milestones of Your Littler Rocket Scientist’s Development, 2013
Synapse Density Over Time  

PERSISTENT STRESS CHANGES BRAIN ARCHITECTURE

Normal

Typical neuron—many connections

Toxic stress

Damaged neuron—fewer connections

Prefrontal cortex and hippocampus

Source: Harvard University Center for the Developing Child, Radley et al. (2004), Bock et al. (2005)
A Parent is a Child’s First and Best Teacher.

Young children need healthy environments in which to learn and grow.

What We Have Tried:

- Two generational learning
- Child Development Information
- Access
Additional Thoughts + Tips

FOCUS!
BE FLEXIBLE! TAILOR TO YOUR POPULATION!
GO WHERE THEY ARE!
USE WHAT YOU HAVE!
DON’T TAKE IT PERSONALLY!
Thank You!

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Resources

An interactive experience in poverty: www.playspent.org
Information about Early Childhood Education, Brain Development and more: Harvard Center on the Developing Child
All things Summer Learning: www.summerlearning.org
County by County Fact Sheets about Poverty: Children’s Trust of SC (KIDS COUNT South Carolina Data by County)
County by County Fact Sheets about Literacy: SC State Library Literacy 2030
Inexpensive Books and more: www.firstbook.org

LINKS TO THESE RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE SCLA APP:

PDF ARTICLES UPLOADED TO SCLA SITE
30 Million Word Gap Article
Harvard Center on the Developing Child: 8-Things-to-Remember-About-Child-Development
National Center for Children in Poverty: Child Poverty and Family Hardship
National Summer Learning Association: Achievement Gap Infographic
Reading is Fundamental: Literacy Facts Stats

PICTURES OF BRAIN DEVELOPMENT
Comparison of Developing Brain
Changes in Brain Architecture