Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
PolicyLab

Philadelphia's Baby Book Club in 200 Words

Health Equity

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As a researcher who has focused on early childhood development, it was exciting to learn about the City of Philadelphia's initiative to improve the health of Philadelphia's children by promoting the importance of early literacy, affectionately known as **Baby Book Club**. Through Baby Book Club—made possible by the combined efforts of Philadelphia's A Running Start Health and Read by 4th—parents of all newborns in Philadelphia will receive a book, as well as have the opportunity to sign up for a baby magazine subscription—for free!

Our research at PolicyLab, including the Digital Literacy and Early Literacy Promotion Studies (which we partnered with Reach Out and Read to conduct), is based on the importance of literacy for healthy developmental outcomes, and has demonstrated how impactful it can be when health care providers provide books and encourage parents to practice shared reading starting in infancy. Parent-child interaction through shared reading is helpful in fostering a child's overall language development, including the critical strengthening of literacy skills and vocabulary building.

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Reach Out and Read are enthusiastic about joining efforts with Philadelphia's Baby Book Club in providing books to families. We share the same mission to promote early literacy by providing families materials that may have been previously inaccessible. Moreover, we support the message that literacy and early shared parent-child reading is an integral thread in the fabric of healthy childhood development.

This post is part of our "____ in 200 Words" series. In this series, we tackle issues related to children's health policy and explain and connect you to resources to help understand them further, all in 200 words. If you have any suggestions for a topic in this series, please send a note to PolicyLab's Strategy & Communications Manager Lauren Walens.