



Little by Little: Proven Success

- The Little By Little School Readiness Program is an evidence-based program developed by Public Health Foundation Enterprises (PHFE). PHFE leads the largest nonprofit network of WIC centers in the country, reaching approximately 300,000 low-income pregnant women and children ages 0 to 5 each month.
- Little by Little (LBL) builds on the existing WIC infrastructure by reaching families already coming in for nutrition services.
- LBL is designed to help parents do what they can do best – foster a culture of learning and literacy at home by providing simple developmental guidance, brief counseling on the importance of reading to your children and books to low-income families.
- The statistically significant, successful results showing that kids who receive Little By Little services are more school ready than those who do not, have been recently published in the medical journal *Pediatrics*.

WIC: Using Existing Infrastructure to Deliver a Successful Program

- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, also known as WIC, provides supplemental foods, health care referrals and nutrition education for low-income pregnant and postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age 5 who are found to be at nutritional risk.
- Because WIC serves families with parents earning below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, it is an ideal setting for early literacy intervention. In Los Angeles County, for example, WIC serves 69 percent of all infants and 60 percent of all children under 5.

How Little By Little Works

Little by Little is an evidence-based, early literacy program that strives to create a stimulating home environment, foster literacy and improve school readiness for underserved children living in low-income families. Little by Little delivers a cost-efficient, high-impact program through WIC centers.

The intervention begins in the third trimester of pregnancy and continues up to the child's fifth birthday.

During their visit to WIC, Little by Little program participants receive the following:

- Age-level handouts for parents on reading, development, household safety and family engagement.
- Age-level, high quality children's books and safety items.
- Parental guidance tied to child development milestones.
- Connections to important community services—childcare, preschool and others.

Each family has four Little by Little contacts per year. In its first year of operation, Little by Little has served 62,462 children and parents.

Through Little by Little:

- The whole family engages in literacy. This is especially important as **more than half** of children in CA do not attend preschool.
- Children enter school with more basic literacy and language skills.
- Schools have a reduced burden to provide remedial learning.
- Children are better prepared to become productive members of society.

What makes Little by Little different than other programs?

- WIC sites are one of the few places that young families visit regularly from prenatal to age 5. WIC centers are particularly well positioned to offer programs promoting early literacy in the home.
- LBL reaches our youngest children at the most critical period in their cognitive development: age 0-5.
- LBL provides all of these benefits at a very low cost per child--\$62 per year, on average.

Little By Little has received generous initial support from First 5 LA and private philanthropists. To build sustainability and scale, the program seeks additional funders who share our vision of providing a strong and healthy beginning for all children in the United States.