

Education NEWS & NOTES

Communities Encourage Children To Read

(NAPSA)—To become successful readers, students need positive reading role models both in and outside the classroom. Increasingly, community members are stepping in to fill that role and support the work parents and teachers are doing to encourage children to read.

“Children become successful readers when they have tremendous support—from their families, their teachers and even their whole community,” said Carol H. Rasco, president and CEO of Reading Is Fundamental (RIF®). “At RIF, our hope is that community members across the nation will work to encourage and challenge children to read every day.”

One way community members can get involved in promoting literacy is through Read With Me: The 2004 RIF Community Reading Challenge, presented by MetLife Foundation. The challenge, which takes place in 1,100 RIF sites across the country, seeks to motivate children to read by involving families, businesses and community members.

“Businesses have the opportunity to inspire children by connecting them with adults who love to read,” said Sibyl Jacobson, president and CEO of MetLife Foundation. “MetLife is pleased to partner with RIF in building a corps of community volunteers who are helping to create a nation of lifelong readers.”

Many communities are taking the challenge to heart. In the 2003 challenge, the Juan Linn Math and Science Magnet School in Victoria, Texas, found thousands of eager readers.

Even if there is no RIF site



The Community Reading Challenge is a fun and motivational approach to children's literacy.

nearby, a community can support reading using these tips:

For families:

- ✓ Read with your children for at least 10 minutes every day.
- ✓ Encourage older children to read whatever catches their interest—novels, comic books, magazines or anything else.
- ✓ Keep plenty of reading materials available in your home.

For businesses:

- ✓ Encourage your employees to volunteer with local literacy initiatives.
- ✓ Donate to RIF or other literacy programs in your area (www.rif.org).
- ✓ Participate in your school district's literacy activities and programming, such as the Community Reading Challenge.
- ✓ Promote local initiatives that support literacy.

For community groups:

- ✓ Volunteer with or support local after-school literacy sites. To volunteer at a RIF site near you, visit www.rif.org.