



TALK: Text and Learn for Kindergarten

An IMLS/LSTA Pilot Project

Today's Presentation

- Introductions
- LSTA/IMLS Grant Funding Process
- TALK: Why, How, & What
- Lessons Learned
- Families Reached
- Next Steps

Introductions

- Us
- Our library
- Our community
- Washtenaw County



YPSILANTI
DISTRICT
LIBRARY

How TALK Was Born



Research

Research,
research, research

Goals

Setting goals

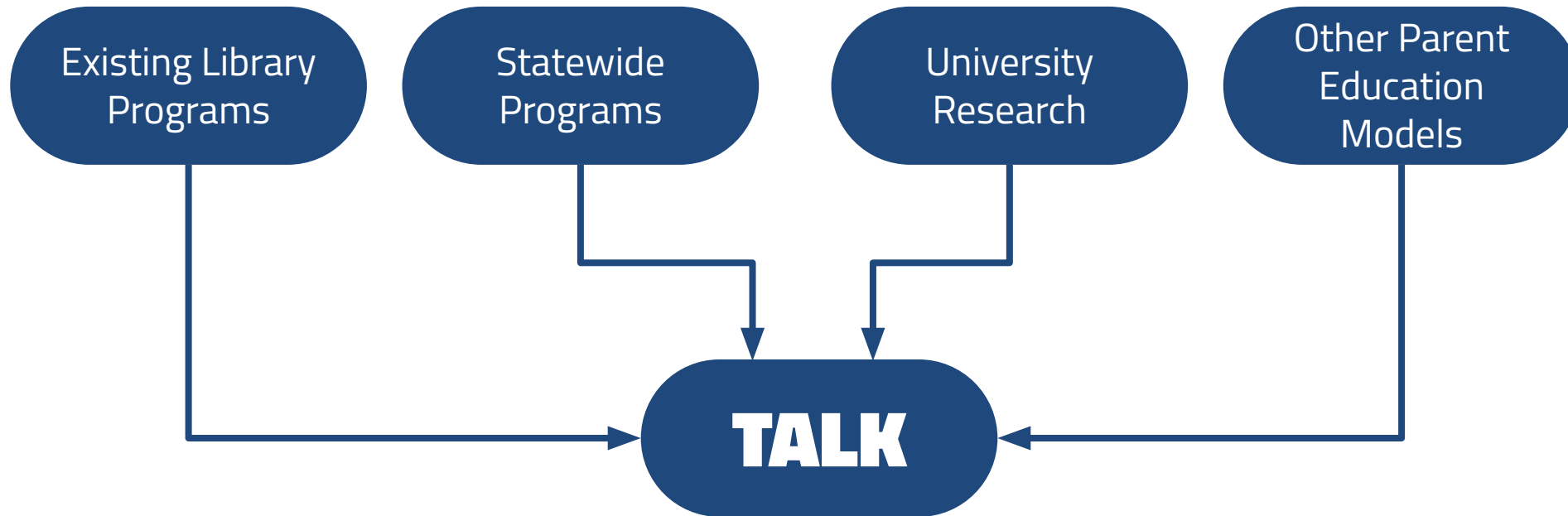
Funding

Applying for and
receiving funding

Design

Service design and
implementation

Research Phase



Research

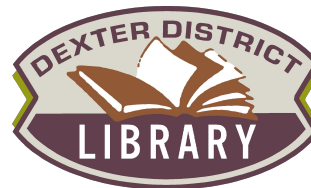
TALK Goals

1. To reach underserved populations of Washtenaw County with early literacy messages
2. To improve the school readiness of children ages 0-5 years old
3. Market free early literacy events to these groups
4. Use 3 years of pilot program to develop a service other libraries can and will use



Goals

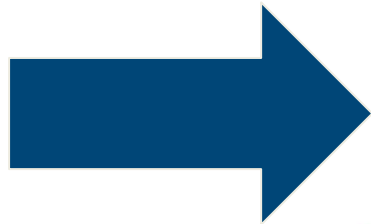
Funding



Funding

How TALK works

Thursday, Jun 13 • 4:00 PM



TALK: As you feed baby, use words to describe what foods taste, feel and look like. "This yogurt is smooth and cool. That yellow banana is sweet."



Design

The messages

- Written by library youth staff from 5 libraries
- www.texttolearn.com
- Fingerplays, videos, & more



Event Promotion

Thursday, Aug 8 • 11:01 AM



EVENT: Experience an interactive play with Theatre for Little Ones. Sat. Aug. 17, 10:30am at the Whittaker Branch. Click link for details: t.zipx.us/iqh4S

Theatre for Little Ones

**Saturday, August 17 | 10:30
am - 11:30 am**

Join Spinning Dot Theatre Troupe for an interactive play with joyful live music. Kids will be ready to continue playing and exploring all the way home.



+ GOOGLE CALENDAR

+ ICAL EXPORT

Refining the messages

- Reviewed by literacy experts for readability
- Reviewed by under-resourced parents for accessibility and cultural sensitivity
- Reviewed by education experts for developmental appropriateness



2019 John Cotton Dana award-winning promotional materials

- Logo and brand design
- Bus ads, billboards, posters with in situ messages
- Social media and web campaigns



And more...

- Swag
- Postcard mass mailing and school backpack distribution
- Flyers can be customized



Face-to-Face Outreach: One family at a time

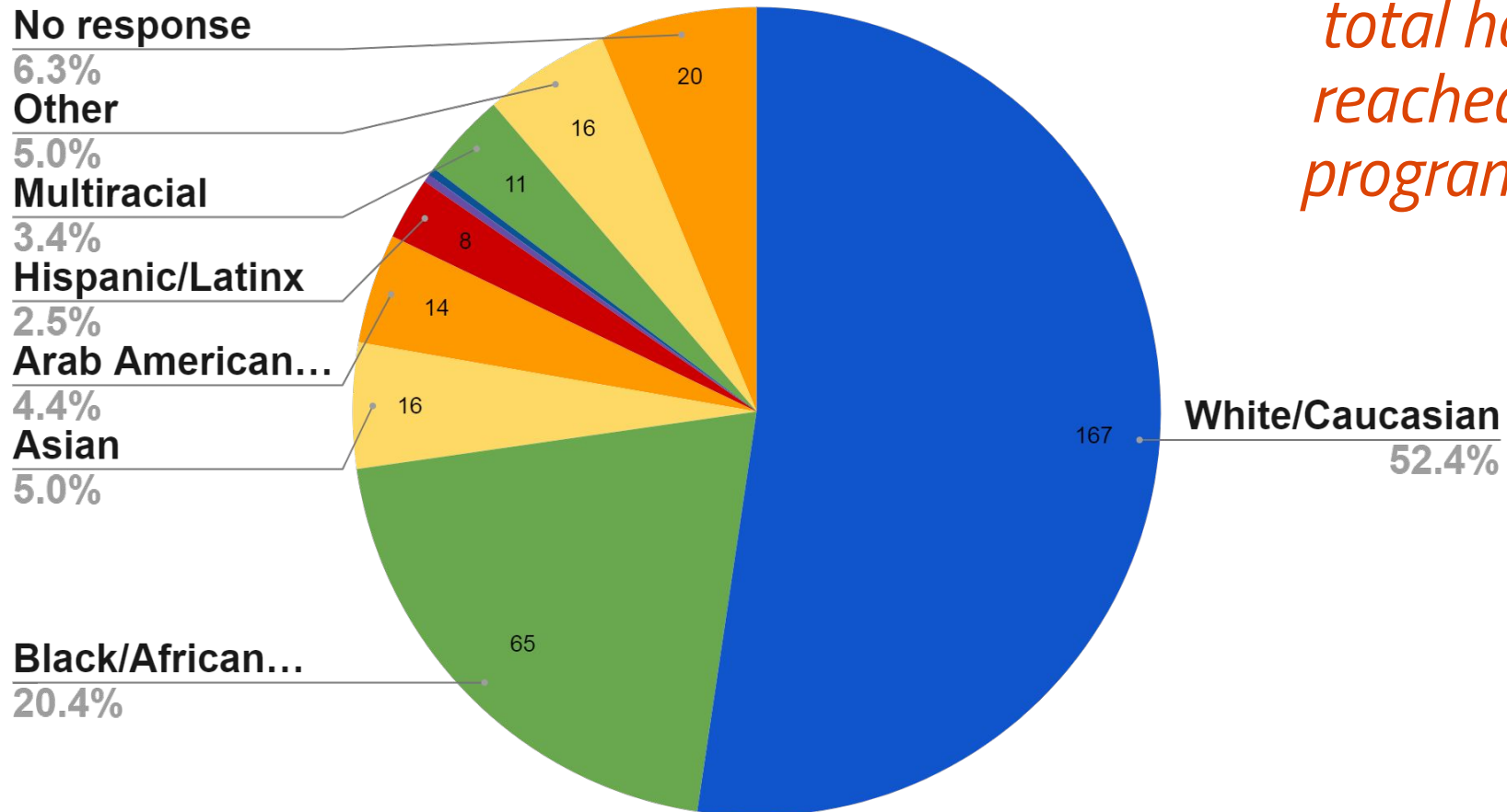
- Health Department food distribution days
- WIC
- Farmers' Markets
- Community Storytimes
- School staff meetings
- Doctors' offices
- Childcare Network
- WISD in-services
- Anywhere, everywhere



Families Reached

1273

total households reached since the program launched



*Data collected from 319 responses to our demographic survey

Expected Setbacks

- Low survey response rate
- Changing phone numbers
- Non-English speakers

Unexpected Setbacks

- Technology
- Shifting Legal Landscape
- Opt out rate

Unexpected Benefits

- Teaching through marketing
- New and improved partnerships
- Community leaders in early literacy

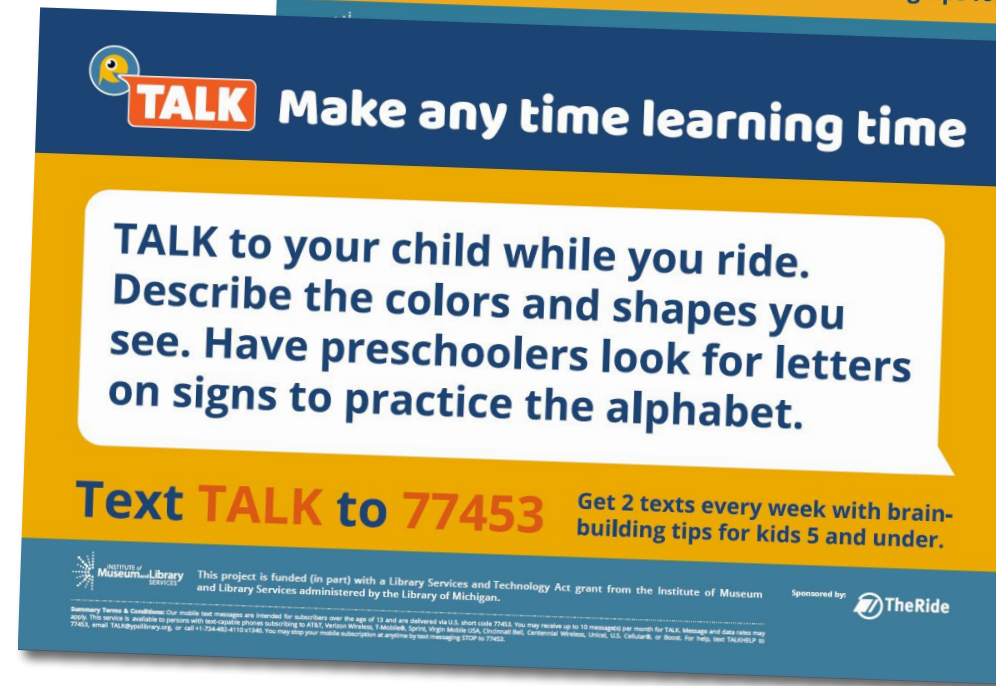


TALK Make any time learning time

READ signs aloud to your toddler while you walk. This will help them notice text all around them.

Text **TALK** to **77453** Get 2 texts every week with brain-building tips for kids 5 and under.


Sponsored by:  TheRide




TALK Make any time learning time

TALK to your child while you ride. Describe the colors and shapes you see. Have preschoolers look for letters on signs to practice the alphabet.

Text **TALK** to **77453** Get 2 texts every week with brain-building tips for kids 5 and under.

 This project is funded (in part) with a Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services administered by the Library of Michigan.

Sponsored by:  TheRide

Summary Terms & Conditions: Our mobile text messages are intended for subscribers over the age of 18 and are delivered via U.S. short code 77453. You may receive up to 10 messages per month for TALK. Messages and data rates may vary. This service is available to persons with landline phones subscribing to AT&T, Verizon Wireless, T-Mobile, Sprint, Next Issue USA, Optimum One, Cincinnati Wireless, Ufone, U.S. Cellular, or Boost. For help, text TALKHELP to 77453, email TALK@instituteofmuseum.org, or call 1-726-4621-1100-1048. You may stop your mobile subscription at any time by text messaging STOP to 77453.

Parent messaging is key

- Parents are a child's first and best teacher
- Research-based, parent-approved content impacts parent behaviors for early intervention leading to school success
- Text messages reach parents anywhere
- Messages demonstrate early learning is easy and fun
- Need to improve school readiness and school success in Michigan

Other early literacy text message services now available in Michigan

Ready4K <https://ready4k.parentpowered.com/> currently available in Detroit area with funding from United Way for Southeast Michigan

Bright By Text <https://brightbytext.org/> currently available in the Detroit area, promoted by Detroit PBS with funding from the Bezos Family Foundation, includes Sesame Street and Vroom content

Talking is Teaching <https://talkingisteaching.org/> currently available in Wayne and Livingston Counties as well as Northern Michigan, but is working in partnership with the Michigan Department of Education and Great Start Collaborative on a statewide rollout

What makes TALK unique?

It's all about libraries!

- Activities tailored to ECRR 2.0 so it aligns with storytime
- Libraries are trusted community institutions
- Reviewed by the very parents libraries struggle to reach
- Making non-users aware of the library through TALK will benefit the entire family
- Libraries bring people and organizations together
- ALSC stamp of approval



Vision for TALK expansion

Applying for IMLS funding to take TALK statewide

New Partners

- Library of Michigan
- Midwest Collaborative for Library Services
- HighScope Educational Research Foundation

New Features

- Improved messaging platform to accommodate more users
- Anyone can sign up, but libraries who opt in will be able to reach users in their area with customized event and service information
- Potential Spanish expansion
- Statewide training for library staff and access to a toolkit of materials to use for advertising and outreach

Questions?



**Would your library be
interested in signing up?**



Resources and contact information

Stanford Early Literacy text message project

<https://cepa.stanford.edu/content/one-step-time-effects-early-literacy-text-messaging-program-parents-preschoolers>

University of Minnesota text message trial with Minnesota Children's Museum and two county library systems

<http://www.cehd.umn.edu/ceed/projects/text2learn/Text2LearnPaper.pdf>

Recent trends in income, racial and ethnic school readiness gaps at kindergarten entry. (2016)

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858416657343>

Kids Count 2019 Michigan Data

<https://mlpp.org/kids-count/michigan-2019-data-book/>

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TALK Website: www.textttolearn.com

Thank you to Claire Myers for designing the charts and working on the layout of this presentation.