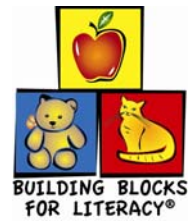


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Stern Center for Language and Learning's BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY® Launches Nationwide

Williston, VT – BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY®, a research-proven program for parents and early care/education providers to help prepare children for literacy success, launches today nationwide. This free on-line 12-hour course provides adults with a toolbox of enjoyable activities to build a solid foundation for children to succeed at reading once they enter school. Studies have shown that this kind of preparation can help decrease the number of children at-risk for reading failure.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY® began at the Stern Center for Language and Learning in Vermont in 1997 as a live course for child care providers. Dr. Belvin Williams from the Turrell Fund encouraged Dr. Blanche Podhajski, President and Founder of the Stern Center and creator of BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY®, to submit a proposal to help prepare preschool children for reading by teaching providers and parents how to promote pre-literacy skills. The BUILDING BLOCKS program resulted and was then endorsed as well as funded by both the Turrell Fund and the A.D. Henderson Foundation.

Dr. Podhajski commented, “It’s a thrill to share playful and engaging activities to develop sound awareness, shared book reading, and speech-to-print understanding with those spending time with our youngest learners. After ten years of positive results in terms of children’s preliteracy outcomes, it is exciting that the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation has chosen to bring the program to a national scale.”

Founded in 1983, the Stern Center team of professionals instruct and design programs for 1,500 educators each year, focusing on different kinds of learners and the most successful teaching strategies for them. The Stern Center also conducts research on best practices for students and educators to help all kinds of learners succeed.

In addition to the free 12-hour course, the BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY® to scale project will include a free interactive website for parents and a three-credit undergraduate course. “This was too good to just keep in Vermont,” comments Stewart Hudson, Executive Director of the Tremain Foundation.

[BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY®](#) is a program designed to promote pre-literacy skills for children in child care and preschool environments. Developed in 1997 at the [Stern Center for Language and Learning](#), this research-proven program teaches educators, child care providers, and parents nationwide how to foster pre-literacy skills in children by incorporating shared book reading, phonological awareness (breaking spoken language into its smallest parts), and speech-to-print relationships into playful preschool and child care activities. Based on research from the National Research Council, BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY® increases provider

knowledge which leads to early literacy success. BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY® has grown to include three current applications: an online 12-hour continuing education workshop for child care providers, a 3-credit undergraduate course, and an interactive activity and video website for parents. More information is available at www.buildingblocksforliteracy.org

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