

PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program Application

Mighty Beginnings: Early Literacy Resources for Every Parent and Child

1. One paragraph project summary.

Mighty Beginnings will be a bilingual English/Spanish kit containing tips and materials to educate parents/guardians on the value of early literacy and to facilitate their engagement in age-appropriate programming, shared learning and networking opportunities. It is designed to support new parents/guardians as they and their young child embark on their journey to develop a life-long love of reading and learning. These kits will be appropriate for children 0 to 2 years old and will include an abundant amount of early literacy tools. In addition to the physical *Mighty Beginnings Kit*, we will create a monthly “Family Play Date” component. “Family Play Date” will be a series of free, monthly meet-ups for parents/guardians and children within our targeted age group to engage in fun, interactive activities specially designed to meet the needs of our target age group. The meet-ups will create a friendly, conversational environment among parents/guardians to share best practices and learn from each other. A final component of the *Mighty Beginnings* project will be four presentations from experts on topics promoting literacy and health at “Family Play Dates.”

2. Explain how this project fits with the library’s strategic directions.

This project aligns with Sunnyvale Public Library’s overall goals and objectives.

“Providing educational support for Library users of all ages”: The Library strives to adapt its programs and offerings to be responsive to community needs. The Library currently offers a program called, “Tummy Time” for ages 0 to 1 year old that averages 45 babies and parents/guardians monthly. In addition, the 0 to 2-year-old storytime program averages 150 children and parents/guardians weekly. Sunnyvale has a large immigrant community. We have observed that our storytime program is often used by residents to create their own community and support system. Based on these experiences, we believe that the *Mighty Beginnings* program will be value added for our patrons and well-received at the Sunnyvale Public Library.

“Establish cooperative relationships to maximize the effectiveness of Library services”: To further the Library’s reach into the community, we will partner with [FIRST Five Santa Clara County](#) – an organization whose mission it is to “support the healthy development of children, from prenatal through age 5, and enrich the lives of their families and communities.” They will provide resources at our monthly “Family Play Dates” and assist in distributing the *Mighty Beginnings Kit*. To ensure that we reach the Sunnyvale Spanish-speaking community, we will partner with Columbia Neighborhood Center and the Mayview Clinic in Northern Sunnyvale. We have already established Spanish bilingual programming within that community, and adding the *Mighty Beginnings Kit* and some “Family Play Dates” in Northern Sunnyvale will strengthen our connection

with this demographic. We also intend to distribute these kits at the Teen Parent Group at Fremont High School and WIC. Should this grant be awarded, we already have the go-ahead to partner with the sign language teaching company [Touch Blue Sky](#) and will pursue other partnership opportunities.

3. A detailed description of the proposed project including the population served and the demographics of that population.

Mighty Beginnings will be a bilingual English/Spanish kit containing tips and materials to educate parents/guardians on the value of early literacy and to facilitate their engagement in age-appropriate programming, shared learning and networking opportunities. It is designed to support new parents/guardians as they and their young child embark on their journey to develop a life-long love of reading and learning. These kits will be appropriate for children from 0 to 2 years old and will include the following: a library tote bag, bib, board book, ongoing incentive card, activity guide and a literacy growth chart. A new baby means a new community member, new reader, new potential leader, a new Library customer. *Mighty Beginnings* can be a catalyst to encourage parents/guardians to help their children think of the Library as a resource from birth and build lifelong library users.

In addition to the physical *Mighty Beginnings Kit*, we will create a monthly “Family Play Date” component. Parents/guardians of children from 0 to 2 years old can visit the Library with their children and connect with other families. These monthly meet-ups will include four presentations from experts on the following topics: Early Literacy, Baby Sign Language, Nutrition, and Sensory Activities. Families who participate in these meet-ups will gain a sense of community and camaraderie among others going through this special life stage. Our goals for these sessions are to encourage regular Library visits and for Sunnyvale Public Library to be seen as a reliable destination for learning.

The City of Sunnyvale is the second largest city in Santa Clara County with a population of 153,656 residents. Throughout the years, it has maintained a notable reputation for being a highly diverse community in terms of economics, cultural and ethnic diversity, as well as in educational attainment.

Culturally, Silicon Valley’s population is growing rapidly as a whole. Growth rates have accelerated due to careers in the technology industry and have resulted in an increase in foreign immigration. Data from the 2017 Census Bureau show that 46.4% of Sunnyvale’s residents are foreign born and 55.7% speak a language other than English at home. Due to the increase in migration to Silicon Valley cities like Sunnyvale, many parents/guardians are adjusting to a new area. *Mighty Beginnings* can facilitate the ease of this adjustment by building a community amongst parents/guardians through the free “Family Play Date” component. By attending the monthly “Family Play Dates”, parents/guardians will gain knowledge of important topics for themselves with their child as well as meet others in the community that are going through the same stage in life.

Academically, the City of Sunnyvale is also a diverse environment. The school district is home to eight elementary schools and two middle schools. Although 61.6% of Sunnyvale adults 25 and over possess a Bachelor Degree or higher, children who

attend five of the ten Sunnyvale Schools have scored below the 60th percentile in both reading and math. Studies have shown the important role that early literacy programs can have on long-term educational attainment. The concept of *Mighty Beginnings Kits* is to compile several different, necessary tools into one complete package to support parents/guardians and their children as they embark on their journey towards literacy development. Mostly importantly, the *Mighty Beginnings Kit* can serve as a catalyst for convening parents/guardians, for building community and to position the Library as a vital and constructive resource that participants can rely on and grow with throughout their lives.

4. Goals and objectives of the project.

Goal 1: Educate parents/guardians of children ages 0 to 2 years about early literacy.

Objective: Sunnyvale Public Library will provide *Mighty Beginnings Kits* to 350 households with a child between the ages of 0 and 2 years old.

Objective: Parents/guardians will take home the *Kit* and use the tips and tricks and materials to read to their child from birth. We will administer a pre-survey to establish baseline knowledge of early literacy. At completion, we will administer a post-survey to measure any increase in knowledge.

Goal 2: Create free opportunities for families with children ages 0 to 2 years old to meet up regularly and develop relationships with other families.

Objective: Host 9 monthly “Family Play Dates” for families with children ages 0 to 2.

Objective: Host 2 monthly bilingual “Family Play Dates” at Columbia Neighborhood center for families with children ages 0 to 2.

Goal 3: Host experts at “Family Play Dates” to educate parents/guardians on topics important for their young child’s growth.

Objective: Partner with FIRST Five Santa Clara and other organizations and professionals to bring four sessions to the Library on the following topics: Early Literacy, Baby Sign Language, Nutrition, and Sensory Activities.

Objective: Minimum of 20 parents/guardians and their 0 to 2-year-old child to attend the monthly expert-led “Family Play Dates” as recorded by a sign-in sheet.

Objective: Minimum of 10 parents/guardians will report increased competency related to the four topics. This is measured by comparing pre- and post- survey results.

Goal 4: Create regular Library customers – parents/guardians and their children ages 0 to 2.

Objective: Create an “incentive card” for families to get stamped each time they attend a “Family Play Date.” After a minimum of 6 stamps (correlating to 6/11 “Family Play Dates”), those with a completed card may receive a free board book.

Objective: 50% of parents/guardians to turn in a completed incentive card, which is measured by comparing the registration list to the completion list.

5. Project timeline (activities).

Activity	2019											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Create program logo for “Mighty Beginnings”.	x											
Design promotional materials.	x											
Create marketing plan.	x											
Research materials for kits.	x											
Create survey instrument to assess participant experience of “Family Play Dates.”	x											
Create and purchase materials for kits.	x	x										
Collaborate with FIRST Five Partners		x										
Recruit volunteers to assemble kits.			x									
Assemble kits.			x	x	x	x	x	x				
Educate Library staff about kits and “Family Play Dates”			x									
Schedule four expert visitors			x									
Begin marketing.			x									
Hold monthly “Family Play Date”				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Hold 2 bilingual monthly “Family Play Dates”					x				x			
Experts visit “Family Play Date”				x		x			x		x	
Analyze surveys.											x	x

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6. Evaluation of the project.

The success of *Mighty Beginnings* will be evaluated by keeping statistics on different elements of the program.

- Number of households registered
- Number of *Mighty Beginnings Kits* distributed
- Number of attendees at “Family Play Dates” (based on sign-in sheet at each session)
- Pre- and post-surveys completed based on experience(s) at “Family Play Dates”
- Pre- and post-surveys completed based on *Mighty Beginnings Kit* use
- Incentive Card Completion (based on percentage completed versus registration)

We will create the surveys so that participants can express their personal experiences and share comments or suggestions regarding their satisfaction with the program. A survey will be included in every *Mighty Beginnings Kit* and at every “Family Play Date”. Participants can return a completed survey in person at the library or by accessing the survey online. Staff will evaluate comments and suggestions from participants on how to improve the service on a regular basis.

7. Project budget. (Indirect costs are not allowed).

350 Reusable Reader Tote Bags	\$2,100
350 Baby Reader Bibs	\$2,000
300 Welcome Board Books - "Brown Bear, Brown Bear" in English	\$2,000
50 Welcome Board Books – “Brown Bear, Brown Bear” in Spanish	\$450
210 Incentive Board Books – English	\$1,500
35 Incentive Board Books – Spanish	\$350
350 Storytime Schedule Magnets – English and Spanish	\$350
Printed Materials – Welcome Letter, Program Schedule, Library Card Applications, Activity Guide, Incentive Card	\$800
Custom Growth Chart – Outside company	\$1,500
Family Play Date Materials	\$1,000
Speaker honorarium (4 speakers)	\$1,000

Total requested: \$13,050

8. Sustainability analysis.

Mighty Beginnings is a program that can be sustained in several different ways and can also easily be replicated by other libraries. *The Friends of the Sunnyvale Public Library* has proven to be a reliable and generous source for financial support of our programs. We plan to ask their organization to help fund basic *Kit* materials and we would scale back on more costly items to sustain this program. We also hope to establish circulating versions of the *Mighty Beginnings Kit* to reach more families after the initial grant period.

“Family Play Dates” is a component of the project that is designed to survive with minimal funding. Meet-ups will continue to be held in the library program room, and experts will still be recruited to inform parents/guardians about education and health topics for their children between the ages of 0 to 2. If we need funding for experts, we also plan to seek financial help from our *Friends* organization. In addition to promoting *Mighty Beginnings* at the library, we will also rely on our partnerships to advertise our free “Family Play Dates” to their users.

Librarians and volunteers will both continue to contribute to the production and distribution of the kit at the library and through outreach efforts throughout the community. Library staff will also coordinate the monthly “Family Play Dates” on a rotating basis.