



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: December 17, 2008

Contact: Nancy Leahy, Circle of Success; 509.469.9888, cell: 509.307.8561; nleahycofs@charter.net

Website: www.circleofsuccessinc.org

Good Deeds in Tough Times Improve Early Literacy!

60 Kindergartens are now filled with Imagination Library Graduates

Private dollars support 3,200 children in the *Let's Read ~Imagination Library* early literacy program in 2008

We have a story to tell! It is a great story about good deeds happening in tough times. It is a story about moving a community forward by preparing 3,200 children to be ready for school. It is a story about a generous public and committed service clubs who have filled sixty kindergartens with *Imagination Library* graduates in just three years. This story tells of book-magic for little kids and true support of young parents. The story is about a hidden population: families with young children whose schedules seldom allow them time to tell their story. The story recounts a program of promise - and a program with proof. It is a story happening here in the Yakima and Kittitas Valleys right now. It is also a story about never stopping.

Circle of Success manages the *Let's Read* program which is a community early literacy program that includes the *Imagination Library*, Newborn Baby Packets and a quarterly newsletter. The enrollment of one child, for one year, is an investment of **\$60** and it is available to every child in the Yakima and Kittitas Valleys Valley at no cost to the family. The Circle of Success, Inc.® *Let's Read* program includes the Dolly Parton *Imagination Library* in which an age-appropriate book is delivered every month. These programs were constructed using recent research on early child development and they support the position of parents as the primary teacher of their children. A child is sponsored for one year in Imagination Library for just \$5 per month! It is supported by generous contributions from Yakima Valley businesses and community champions of literacy.

LET'S READ Expands into Ephrata thanks to support from the Rotary Club of Ephrata!

Circle of Success, Inc.® is expanding their services into Ephrata starting in 2009! The Rotary Club of Ephrata is initiating this new project and will manage the support for *Let's Read ~Imagination*

Library enrollments for the children who live in Ephrata. *Let's Read* has been active three and a half years and the expansion into Ephrata is a terrific step of progress. Ephrata is located in Grant County. Informational flyers on enrollment and donations will be available from the Rotary Club of Ephrata.

“No one is rich enough to do without a neighbor.”

This Danish Proverb salutes partnerships. Support from businesses and community champions of literacy are vital in improving the school readiness of today's children in the Yakima and Kittitas Valleys and now in Ephrata. These funds support the *Let's Read* enrollment of children aged zero to 5 years who are mailed an age-appropriate book every month until the age of 5. Contributors include Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic, Foundation for Early Learning, Fred Meyer, Washington Apple Education Foundation, Yakima Sunrise Rotary Club, Target, Junior League of Yakima, US Bancorp Foundation, Prosser United Good Neighbors, Noel Corporation, Central Valley Bank, Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital, Sunnyside Community Hospital Foundation, and hundreds of other contributing community members who believe in the facts of early brain development and early education.

Meet the 2008 Let's Read children receiving a book every month! The children include:

- **575** of the children are 2008 babies.
- **90** of the children are foster children.
- **90** of the children live in the Kittitas Valley.
- **1,920** children live in English speaking homes and **1,280** children in Spanish speaking homes.
- **322** children live in Toppenish, **236** live in Sunnyside, **186** live in Grandview and **1,255** live in Yakima – and the list continues.
- **We have a wait list that grows daily of children eager to enroll in the program!**

We are thrilled with the 2008 Let's Read program outcomes!

- The program began in July 2005 with 115 children and there are currently **3,217** children enrolled in the program.
- There are **1,440** *Imagination Library* graduates for Let's Read. This means Circle of Success has filled 60 kindergarten classrooms with *Imagination Library* graduates!
- **15%** of the preschool children in the Yakima Valley are now enrolled in the Imagination Library.
- **It is a very Special Delivery!** A total of **130 styling salons** in the Yakima and Kittitas valleys are displaying the **Let's Read Special Delivery** flyer which asks parents, grandparents and everyone to read to young children and support program enrollment.
- **Local funds are supporting local children.** No state or federal funds have been received. Hundreds of community members in the Yakima and Kittitas Valleys have contributed to this local effort to improve the school readiness of our children.

We know these are tough times – and yet tough times can make room for new thinking. That new thinking is *Let's Read* and it is our earnest wish to enroll and sustain more children as they move to kindergarten. The best investment for the future of the Yakima Valley is the education of our children!

For *Let's Read* program information, or to make a donation to the Circle of Success *Let's Read* program, contact the Circle of Success® office at 469.9888 or 1.888.973.7323

#

#

#

Circle of Success, Inc is a private, nonprofit 501-c-3 organization that empowers parents to prepare their children to enter school ready to learn. Circle of Success manages the *Let's Read~ Imagination Library* program in the community in order to put children's books into the homes of young children.

"Empowering parents to prepare their child to enter school ready to learn"

P.O. Box 1291 15 North Naches Ave. Yakima, WA 98901 509.469.9888

www.circleofsuccessinc.org