

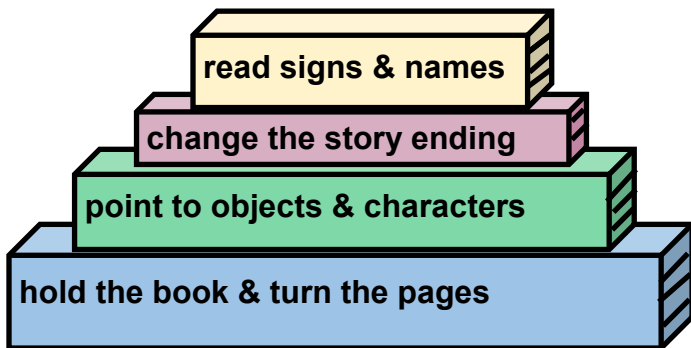
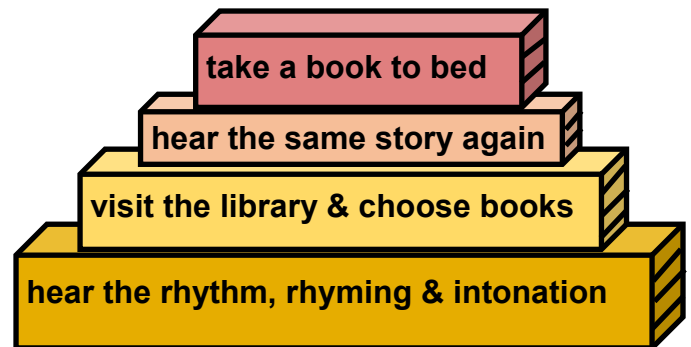
Budding Readers Update

A NEWSLETTER OF BUDDING READERS, INC. - OCTOBER 2025

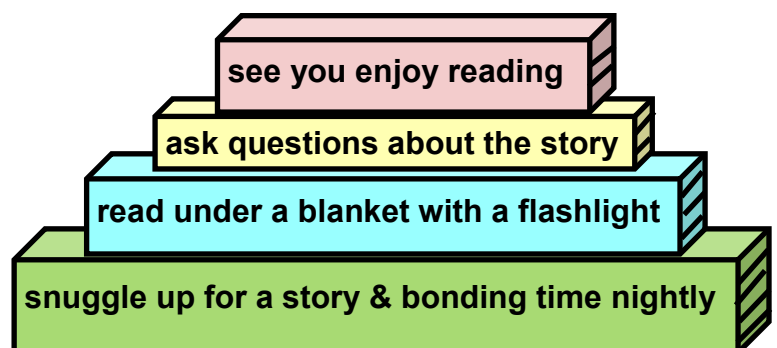
PROMOTING READING TO BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN IN ONTARIO COUNTY, NY AND BEYOND

Over 114,500 Books Gifted Since 2007

Let them...



Let them...



Let them...

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING ISSUE — DONATION ENVELOPE INSIDE
OR DONATE SECURELY ONLINE AT: WWW.BUDDINGREADERS.ORG

MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER



Budding Readers welcomes Lisa Bork as our newest Board member and as our current Fundraising Coordinator. Lisa diligently processes donations as they arrive at our P.O. Box. Her computer skills are impressive! She has a working knowledge of our "Access" database and we are very lucky to have her on board!

Lisa and her husband live in Victor. They have been married for 32 years. They have two grown children ... a son and daughter ... as well as a "grandbaby" cavapoo. Lisa's background and interests are an excellent fit for our program and mission. Reading is her number one hobby! While she was in the PTA, she chaired a birthday book program in her children's elementary school in Fairport. As a volunteer in the Rochester City School District, she bought books and read one-on-one to the children. When she and her husband moved to Victor, she hoped to do volunteer work in her new community. She found that Budding Readers aligned with her values. She hopes that all children will develop a love for reading! We greatly appreciate Lisa's contribution to Budding Readers!

MEET OUR GRANT-WRITING VOLUNTEER



Michael Bay-Borelli began volunteering with Budding Readers after hearing we give books to young children and encourage families to read to their babies. Michael and his wife both recognize the value of reading. Michael has degrees in chemistry, mathematics, and school administration. He taught mathematics for 10 years and was an administrator for 20

years. The last 10 years of his career, he was the Senior Mathematics content specialist for a major publishing company in Texas.

When asked why he volunteered for Budding Readers, Michael said, "I'm retired, I have to help do something to save the world". On his first project he worked with Jan Murphy to encourage Mennonite families to receive our books and read to their children. Secondly, he worked closely with Tam Spitzer and Lynn Johnson to identify grant possibilities that align with our mission and write grant proposals. We are very thankful that Michael joined Budding Readers!

Michael and his wife, Dr. Debra Bay-Borelli, have been married more than 40 years. She also taught at public schools and at the University of Texas. She is an avid horsewoman. Michael has many hobbies including biking, hiking, reading, stained glass, and gardening.



Literacy Rates Are Falling

- ◆ The United States ranks 14th among 31 countries, with similar economies, in adult literacy rates, and our literacy rates are falling (National Center on Education Statistics).
- ◆ 54% of adults cannot read above the 6th grade level (Barbara Bush Foundation).
- ◆ 69% of 4th-grade students nationwide have basic or below basic reading skills. Only 31% are proficient or advanced (The National Assessment of Educational Progress).
- ◆ New York State ranks 42nd out of 50 in adult literacy rates (Visual Capitalist).
- ◆ 22% of adults in New York State have low literacy (World Population Review).
- ◆ New York State counties with the lowest literacy rates, have higher unemployment, lower average incomes, and lower access to healthcare.

**PLEASE HELP US FIND
MORE BUDDING
READERS**

If you know a family with a child **36 months of age or younger** in the **Bloomfield, Canandaigua, Honeoye, Marcus Whitman, Midlakes, Naples, Red Jacket or Victor** school districts, please encourage them to visit our website, www.buddingreaders.org, **contact us** by email: books@buddingreaders.org, phone: (585) 900 -1725, or scan the **QR code** to **request a free bundle of books**.



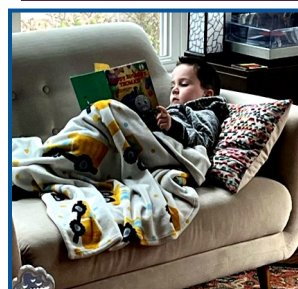
SCREENS AND MEDIA EVERYWHERE! WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

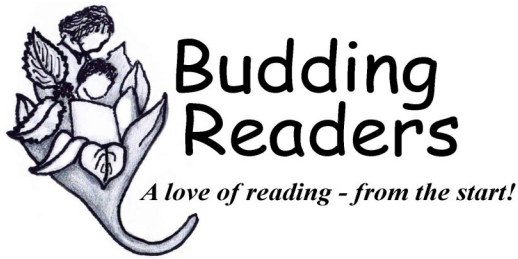
By Tam Spitzer and Janice Driscoll

Screens are everywhere: TVs, tablets, laptops, desktops, game consoles, and smartphones! Digital media has both risks and benefits. What can parents do to raise children and teach them the pros and cons of digital media?

- ♦ The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations have been updated recently to reflect research and the many uses of digital media. Emphasis is now on the quality of content rather than the quantity of time.
- ♦ *“There is evidence that rules focusing on balance, content, co-viewing and communication are associated with better well-being outcomes than rules focused on screen time”* (AAP). Media use is one activity in a developing child’s life. A **balance** is needed with other important activities, such as peer play, family time, outdoor time, or sports. **Content** must be age-appropriate and healthy. **Co-viewing** with a child is recommended. Parent participation leads to deeper discussions and evaluation of the media. **Communication** is critical to guide children in their media use.
- ♦ AAP and others strongly recommend creating a **Family Media Plan**. As children are able, they should participate in plan creation. The rules should also apply to parents. It’s your plan; it should fit your values! Examples:
 - Set screen-free zones:** The dinner table, to strengthen face-to-face connections. The child’s bedroom, to allow adequate sleep.
 - Set screen-free times:** Homework and bedtime to create healthy bedtime routines.
 - Set a “one screen at a time” rule:** Turn off devices not in use to minimize distractions. (www.healthychildren.org).
 - Set daily screen time limits:** The younger they are, the shorter the time with screens. Small sessions are better than extended times. Times can be flexible as needed.

- 📖 **Budding Readers is an early literacy program. Our focus is children ages 0 – 7.** Here are several important themes for our age group.
- 📖 **Babies 0 – 2 years** don’t understand media and use should be very limited. Facetime with a relative and parent co-viewing is ok. Babies in this age range are focused on motor skills, sitting, walking, and learning to understand language and speech. They need parents and caregivers to verbally engage with them often so they can figure out language. Talk, read, and sing to them every day.
- 📖 **Preschoolers 2 – 5** are still perfecting their language skills. They need to play and develop social skills, explore, and be read to daily. Some may be attending pre-school programs. Support pre-reading skills, pointing at letters and words in the books you read or the signs you drive by. Apps, games, movies, TV and online videos like YOUTUBE KIDS that are age-appropriate may be good for limited amounts of time. **Co-watching** is highly recommended.
- 📖 **School Age 5 +** Focus needs to be strongly on school to be sure they get a positive start. Engage them regarding their school day, what they learned and their friends. Spend time with homework. Continue to read with them nightly. Make sure there is **balance** with school, homework, playing with peers, sports, family time and screens. **Co-viewing** is still highly recommended.





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Email: books@buddingreaders.org
Web: www.buddingreaders.org

MISSION STATEMENT

To educate, encourage and equip parents to read with their infants and young children as a natural part of their daily routine. Ontario County, NY is our primary focus. However, when we have sufficient books and funds, we may support projects outside of Ontario County that align with our mission.

VISION STATEMENT

Children of all socioeconomic backgrounds will have a lifelong love of books and passion for reading.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

BY MAIL: Use the enclosed pre-addressed envelope, send your check payable to *Budding Readers, Inc.* to:

Fundraising Coordinator
Budding Readers, Inc.
P. O. Box 25024
Farmington, NY 14425

ONLINE: <https://buddingreaders.org/donate/>

Budding Readers, Inc. is an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Financial contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law and are gratefully accepted to perpetuate the work of our organization.

If you read just **one** book per day to your child, they will have been read **1825** books by their 5th birthday.

Every Day Counts — Every Book Counts

BUDDING READERS, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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