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Healthy Children, Bright Futures



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NOVEMBER 19

INMED-MotherNet, Loudoun Literacy Council Help Strengthen Parenting Skills Through "Baby Book Bundles"

Expanded Partnership Promotes Parent-Infant Bonding, Early Literacy Among Low-Income Families

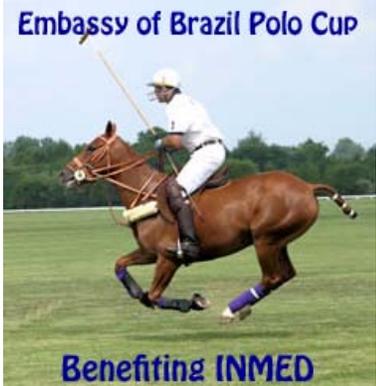
Ashburn, Virginia, November 19, 2008—One hundred new parents in Loudoun will get a head start in bonding with their babies and encouraging early literacy through a partnership between INMED Partnerships for Children's MotherNet/Healthy Families Loudoun program and the Loudoun Literacy Council (LLC).

The Baby Book Bundles program provides families with a package of two baby books, a brochure about the importance of reading to your child, and an article of baby clothing such as a bib or a hat. Also included as supplementary materials are a booklet about babies' oral health, and a 911 emergency calls informational brochure. Each of these bundles is assembled and donated to the MotherNet/Healthy Families Loudoun program by LLC.

The MotherNet/Healthy Families Loudoun program, which works to strengthen families and build parenting skills, will utilize the Baby Book Bundles to promote parent-child bonding and attachment through reading and looking at picture books together. These shared activities will also encourage an early love of reading among children and help build a foundation for school readiness. At the same time, parents who may struggle with reading gain confidence as they build their own literacy skills through the act of reading simple stories to their children.

"We are thrilled with this new partnership because it is helping us accomplish one of our most important goals: to promote early literacy and school readiness," says MotherNet/Healthy Families Loudoun Director Maria Elena Vásquez-Alvarez. "The Baby Book Bundles will also provide parents with a wonderful opportunity to enjoy reading to their children while taking time out from their busy daily routines. We are very thankful to LLC for having chosen us as partners on this unique project."

Before collaborating on the Baby Books Bundle program, INMED and LLC partnered on other programs, including All Ages Reading Together, and a series of English as a Second Language classes



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delivered through INMED's Center for Healthy Families, which provides a range of services to help low-income families build self-sufficiency. "We always appreciate opportunities to partner with INMED-MotherNet/Healthy Families Loudoun," says Candace Kroehl, LLC Executive Director. "We share a common vision, and it helps us reach out to those who are in need of our services."

Community donations can help bring the Baby Book Bundles program to more local families. Checks may be sent to Loudoun Literacy Council/Baby Book Bundles, P.O. Box 1932, Leesburg, VA 20177. For more information, contact Michele Hawes at (703) 777-2205 or mhawes@loudounliteracy.org.

To contribute to INMED Partnerships for Children or its MotherNet/Healthy Families Loudoun program, donate online at www.inmed.org or mail checks to INMED Partnerships for Children, 20110 Ashbrook Place, Suite 260, Ashburn, VA 20147. For more information, contact Maria Elena Vásquez-Alvarez at (703) 729-4951 ext. 218 or mvasquez@inmed.org.

About INMED Partnerships for Children - INMED Partnerships for Children (www.inmed.org) is an international non-profit humanitarian development organization dedicated to strengthening the ability of families and communities to support the development of healthy, educated children who have increased opportunities for the future. Since 1986, INMED has built partnerships locally and in more than 100 countries to carry out a wide range of health, nutrition, education, violence prevention and community development projects that create a continuum of care from the prenatal period through adulthood. Its Loudoun County programs have educated and strengthened local families since 1994.

About Loudoun Literacy Council - The Loudoun Literacy Council (www.loudounliteracy.org) is a community-based, nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to improving literacy throughout Loudoun County. LLC recruits and trains volunteers to teach adults, both native-speakers and speakers of other languages, to read, speak, write, and understand English. For children, they provide early literacy enrichment for at-risk preschool children and children who reside in local homeless shelters, while supporting their parents as their child's first teacher. Their classes and programs are available to all who reside or work in Loudoun County.

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