



# READ FOR LIFE

Winter 2011

Volume 17 Number 1

# UPDATE

## CHILD PSYCHOLOGIST ALISON GOPNIK SPEAKING IN VISALIA APRIL 26

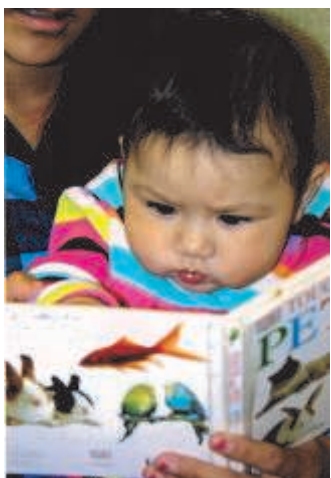
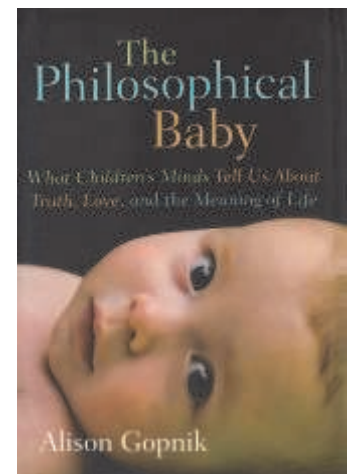
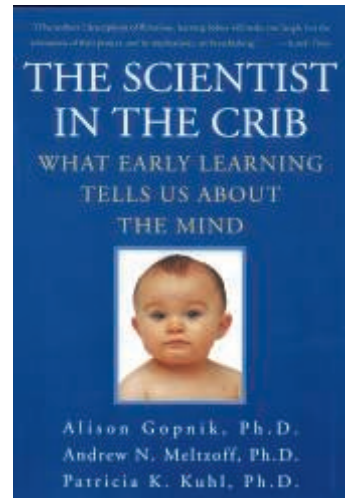


Kaweah Delta District Hospital, First Five of Tulare County, and The Visalia Times-Delta are sponsoring an evening with Dr. Alison Gopnik at the Fox Theatre on **Thursday, April 26, 2012**. Tickets go on sale in February.

Dr. Alison Gopnik is an internationally recognized expert on language development and learning in infants and children. A professor at the University of California, Berkeley, she is the author of over 100 journal articles and several books. The most well-known of these are *The Scientist in the Crib* and *The Philosophical Baby*, critically acclaimed books that are written for the public as well as for scientists.

Dr. Gopnik frequently appears on radio and television shows to talk about parenting and about how babies and toddlers learn. We are excited to bring this warm and exciting speaker to Tulare County.

If you or your business can help us by becoming a sponsor of this event, please contact Susan Graves (798-0126) or Deborah Lagomarsino (625-3433).



## TEEN-AGE PARENTING PROGRAM

The Teen-age Parenting Program (TAPP) continues to enlighten young parents about the joy of literacy with each book distribution. Read for Life helps establish strong reading habits by donating books to five teen parenting and ten Head Start programs in Tulare County. Read for Life volunteers enhance the literacy experience by teaching young parents how to read aloud to their children and why it is important. We encourage the young parents to take to heart the importance of reading aloud as a way to build educational readiness in their children.

In 2011 the large Head Start site in London, California became our tenth distribution location. The London Center has 73 children who will benefit from the three school-year book distributions.

Our very generous Tulare County community continues to support the operation of these programs in 2011-2012.

Read for Life would like to thank the City of Visalia Non-Profit Funding Program for their grant administered by the City of Visalia Citizens Advisory Committee. This generous grant will allow us to continue expanding the number of Head Start sites and young parents we serve in the teenage parenting programs throughout Tulare County in the 2012 school year.

Read for Life recognizes the importance of introducing quality literature to parents and children. Your support makes it possible for us to tell teen parents about the positive effect reading aloud can have in **their children's future**. Please pass the word!

— Deborah Lagomarsino, TAPP Chair



*My daughter is seven months old and she loves reading!*

*He laughs and likes to stare at the colorful pictures. He is really developing his language skills and I am thankful for that.*

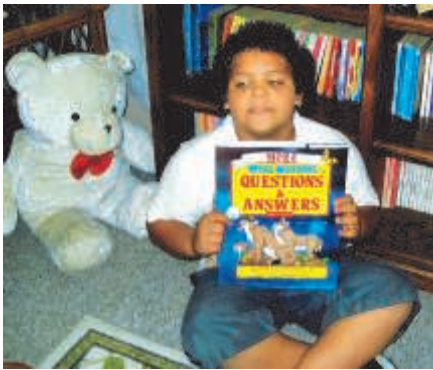


*I enjoy reading to her because I like the way she gets happy when she sees the book.*



## BOOKS FOR KIDS

The **Books for Kids** program continues to serve homeless shelters, health clinics, battered women's shelters and other crisis centers throughout Tulare County. Read for life places new or gently used books in places where kids need extra support and urges the children to take the books with them when they leave. Over 3200 books were given out this year.



Used books are collected in our book boxes, which are in churches, community centers, and other places throughout Tulare County. If you know of a good spot to put a collection box for gently used children's books or one that needs some of our books, please let us know.

Call Rosalie Powell at 734-7251 or Angie Rizzo at 798-0887.

The children in these photos are relaxing with a book at **Grandma's House in Tulare**, an after school program for at-risk children.

**Books for Babies** provides a new book, our development cards, and our *Baby's First Song Book* to new babies whose parents are in prenatal programs throughout the county. We have added several new books in English to be distributed in the packets in addition to Spanish titles. Our packets, which encourage reading aloud to children at all stages

## BOOKS FOR BABIES

of development, are well-received at the many places that distribute them.

Read for Life appreciates the cooperation of all our recipients in helping with the collating of their packets. We are always looking for new programs that will benefit from these packets and welcome requests and referrals. Please contact Tricia Smith at 733-1979.



# PRESCHOOL PROJECTS

Read for Life provides books and support for parents in many alternative pre-school programs in Tulare County.



## HOME BASE

The **Home Base** program provides an option for Head Start parents who prefer to have an educator come to their home to work one-on-one with parent and child. During weekly home visits, the home educator and parent team up to help develop a love for reading and learning, a positive self image, and social skills in the child. RFL provides age appropriate books to 156 Home Base children in Visalia and Tulare.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

Read for Life is now involved in this program that targets fifty 3 to 5 year olds who are identified under VUSD as requiring special education resources. Read for Life will distribute two books to each student and the director of this program will introduce the book to each child and his/her family. Shaunee Arreola, a VUSD school nurse, commented that the children are always happy when they received their new picture books.



Pre- school children read together

## MIGRANT EDUCATION

Read for Life is excited to collaborate with this unique educational program. Fifteen teachers are each assigned to work with twenty-four Tulare County migrant families. Each teacher visits six families per day. Read for Life gives each child three books throughout the year, and these are often the only books the child owns. Families with newborns receive our Books for Babies packets.



School Nurse Shaunee Aureola reads to children during their school health tests.

## HOUSTON ELEMENTARY READ-TO-ME PROGRAM

These are Houston preschoolers sitting on their squares to read their books. Read for Life gives a book to 100 pre-school children and provides a speaker at parent meetings. Read for Life also works with the school nurse to distribute books to children in the upper grades.



**Mimi Boyd** is Read for Life's Pre-school chair. Contact her if you would like to help with these programs. 625-1341

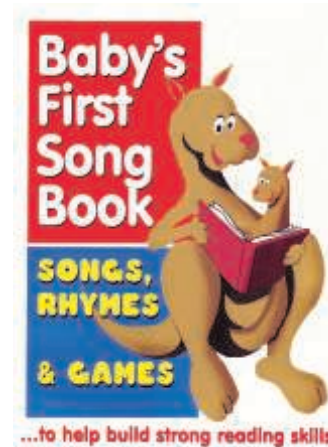
The Seattle-based Talaris Institute ([www.talaris.com](http://www.talaris.com)) donated \$1,000 worth of Spanish parenting research pamphlets to all of our preschool programs. Their premise is that learning begins at birth and the parent/caregiver-child relationship is the most essential factor in a child's healthy development.



The Read for Life Board appreciates the **g** for Kids Foundation for their generous gift of \$5,000. This grant allows us to purchase our new "Please Read to Me" bibs and to upgrade our website.

[www.readforlife.org](http://www.readforlife.org)

New parents in Tulare County receive our *Baby's First Song Book* as part of their information packet. This book is full of songs and games to share with babies in English and Spanish. If you would like a copy, call any board member. The cost is \$5.00.



## READ FOR LIFE THANKS OUR 2010-2011 DONORS

### \$1000 and more

AGSOURCE Services  
(Lagomarsino Group)  
g for kids foundation  
J. D. Heiskell & Company  
Tulare County Pennies  
for Peace Drive  
The Sence Foundation

### \$250 and more:

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Susan and Jody Graves  
Harvey and Tracy May  
Joy and Rich Sakai  
Sroptimist International of  
Visalia  
Jay te Velde  
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Joellen Wilson

### \$100 and more:

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Michael and Mimi Boyd  
Howard Broadman  
Marguerite Brown  
Phyllis Coring  
Joanne Carter Dudley  
Patty Fiormonte  
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Mike and Vickie Torres  
Ginny and Jim Wilson

If you gave and we omitted your name, we apologize, and please tell us about it!



At their 2010 holiday party, the **Rotary Clubs in Visalia** collected books to donate to Read for Life. Almost 200 new books for children of all ages were donated to students at Houston School. Books were delivered by RFL members Susan Graves and Joy Sakai to Mary Ann Brensel's and Diane Mortenson's reading class. These older students unwrapped the books and sorted them out for kindergarten and first grade classes at Houston Elementary. For their efforts, each reading class student got to choose a book to keep. At this year's holiday party, Rotarians will once again be donating books to our organization. We thank the Rotary Clubs of Visalia for their long-running support of Read for Life.



Houston Elementary School students sort and wrap books for younger children with the help of teachers Mary Ann Brensel and Diane Mortenson. Mary Ann Brensel is a board member of RFL.



When siblings read together, the effects of reading aloud are multiplied.

"Reading aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will eventually require for learning to read." — Marilyn Jager Adams

**Find us, Friend us, and Fund us on Facebook**

Read for Life is now on Facebook! If you're a Facebook user, be sure to check out and "like" our new page. You can search for "Read for Life" and look for our logo. Posts are made weekly, so it's a great way to stay connected with us!

**SUPPORT Read for Life**

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer. Please have a member call me.

Read for Life is a 501C3 non-profit organization. Please send your tax-deductible donations to:  
 Read for Life  
 P.O.Box 3342  
 Visalia, CA 93278-3342



## “PLEASE READ TO ME” BIBS

Our new Please Read to Me bibs are available now. We give these to infants in the Kaweah Delta Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and we sell them as a fundraiser to other people interested in having the finest eating apparel for their children. The bibs are manufactured in the United States and embroidered by Thimble Town in Visalia. They are available for \$10.00 each from any Read for Life Board Member.



The Relief Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints gave Read for Life over 200 gently used books to give to needy children. Susan Graves (left) and Joy Sakai (right) are accepting the generous gift from Lorry Frost..

## NEONATE PROGRAM

Four hundred babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Kaweah Delta Hospital receive Books for Babies packets every year. Little Timothy DeNicola is the first of our babies to wear the new Read for Life bib. His mom started to read to him before he was born and has continued during his stay in our NICU. The new bibs were purchased with a grant from the G for Kids Foundation. — Rosemary Shelton



## SPIRIT OF PHILANTHROPY AWARD

On November 15, Read for Life was awarded a “Spirit of Philanthropy Award” from the California Valley Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. The awards luncheon was held at University Hotel in Fresno with Warren Armstrong from KFSN ABC30 as the event emcee. Read for Life board members were in attendance, and President Joy Sakai accepted the award on behalf of the organization. Grant Writer Erika Moore nominated Read for Life for this prestigious award. Here is a short excerpt from her nomination letter:

**Read for Life is truly deserving of an AFP “Spirit of Philanthropy” award.** *In my short time as a volunteer and grant writer for Read for Life, I have been extremely impressed with the dedication of the Board of Directors and Committee Chairpersons. Many of the board members are founders of Read for Life, and their commitment is evident in the countless hours they have given to the organization for over two decades.*

*As a mother of three small children, reading aloud is part of our daily routine. However, this is not the case with many families, and those children in turn have a very different starting point than those that are read to. Read for Life is helping to educate parents across Tulare County, reminding them to “Read to your child daily/ Lea a su hijo todos los días .” RFL volunteers are truly committed to breaking the cycle of illiteracy through early intervention, direct service projects, and community awareness.*



Warren Armstrong with Erika Chan Moore and Joy Sakai accepting award for Read for Life



## READ FOR LIFE BOARD MEMBERS

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SUSAN GRAVES, Secretary 798-0126  
ROSEMARY SHELTON, Co-treasurer  
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Read For Life  
P.O. Box 3342  
Visalia CA 93278

**“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.”~~ Emilie Buchwald**



Read for Life started in 1989.

Read for Life has given over 130,000 books to children along with information about the importance of reading aloud to young children.

Read for Life operates at 63 different locations in Tulare County.

Read for Life depends on your donations to purchase the books we give away.

Read for Life supports a special community event each year in Visalia.

[www.readforlife.org](http://www.readforlife.org)

Dear friends and supporters of Read for Life:

**This year the Read for Life Board recognized an increasing need for children’s books in our community, and is redoubling efforts to improve our capacity to meet it. Our commitment is to expand our programs to meet the growing need for children’s books during difficult economic times. With the tremendous support we receive from you, we are doing just that.**

Through this expansion we are serving additional preschool programs, we have added sites to our Books for Kids program, and we are working to grow the Books for Babies program. We continue to be excited about the mission of Read for Life. We are reaching out to young parents through Facebook and an improved web page. Please visit us there.

We are excited to be sponsoring a community event on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012, at the Fox Theater. It is wonderful to have a speaker of the caliber of Dr. Alison Gopnik in Visalia, and we hope to see you there!

My personal thanks go out to our board and to the hundreds of volunteers and donors like you who support Read for Life. Getting books into the hands of babies and toddlers is truly a labor of love for which we can all feel good. — Joy Sakai, President