



# Introduction to **TALK**

An IMLS National Leadership Project

# What is TALK?

TALK: Text and Learn for Kindergarten is an early literacy text messaging service developed by 5 libraries in Washtenaw County

Sends developmentally appropriate texts to parents with children 5 and under with activity suggestions and library information they can use to help prepare their little one for school success



# How TALK works

Tue, May 4, 4:15 PM



PLAY: Practice math while coloring!  
Ask your tot to sort the crayons as  
you name colors. Then line them up  
from lightest to darkest within the  
color groups.

BIRTH

AGE 6

# Messages include...

## ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

- Tailored to a child's development level
- Only require materials available in most homes
- Often can be done during everyday routines
- Thoroughly reviewed by parents and community experts
- Links to videos, book lists, and songs on the [TALK website](#)

## LIBRARY NOTIFICATIONS

Thursday, Aug 8 • 11:01 AM

EVENT: Experience an interactive play with Theatre for Little Ones. Sat. Aug. 17, 10:30am at the Whittaker Branch. Click link for details: [t.zipx.us/iqh4S](https://t.zipx.us/iqh4S)



### Theatre for Little Ones

Saturday, August 17 | 10:30 am - 11:30 am

Join Spinning Dot Theatre Troupe for an interactive play with joyful live music. Kids will be ready to continue playing and exploring all the way home.

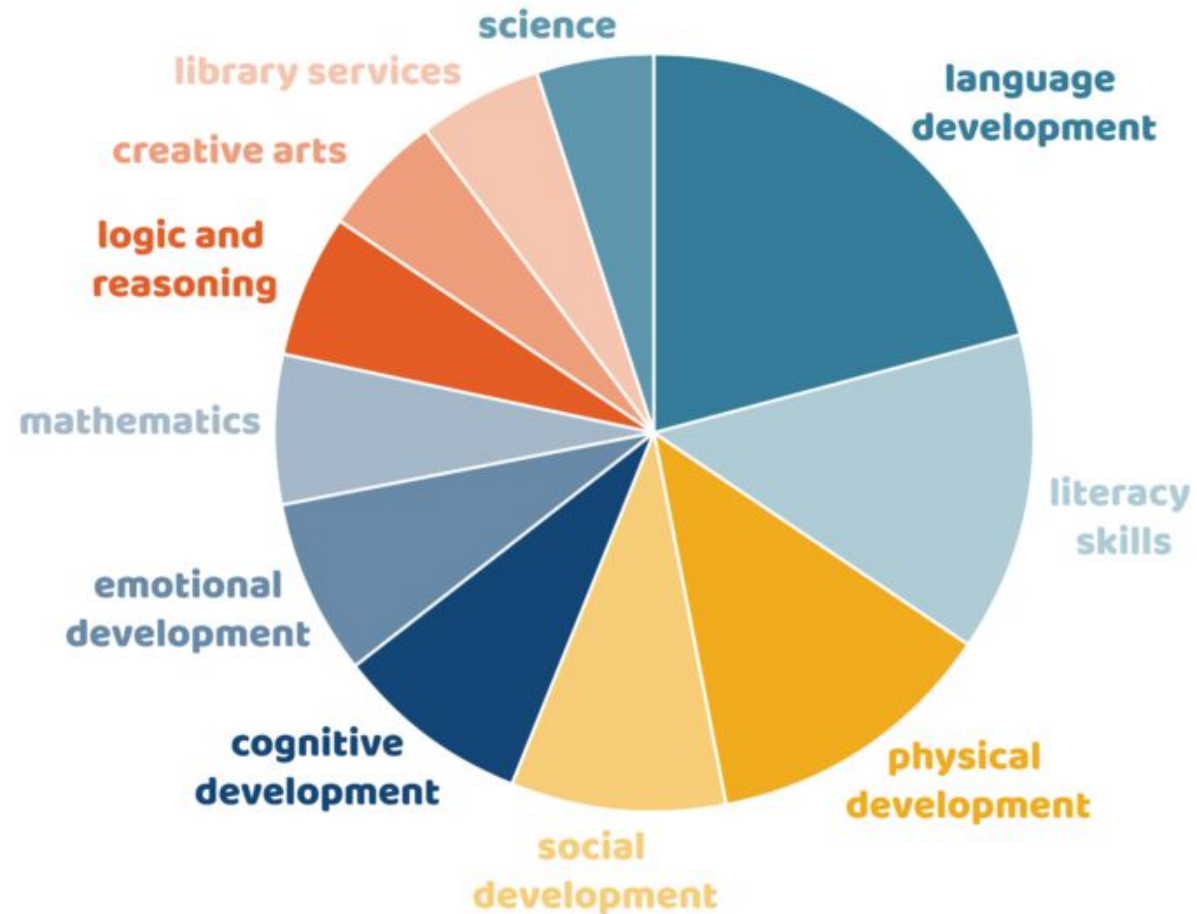


+ GOOGLE CALENDAR

+ ICAL EXPORT



# Messages go beyond early literacy to build all types of school readiness skills



# Who can use TALK?

Any parent or caregiver in Michigan can sign up to receive messages.

Any public library in Michigan can sign up to offer the service to parents in their community.



# Unique features of TALK

- Posters that advertise the service have activity suggestions that can be used in specific sites
- Based on Every Child Ready to Read--a library storytime curriculum
- Allows libraries to send 2 messages/month to let parents know about library programs and services
- Helps libraries partner with all types of community partners--including schools



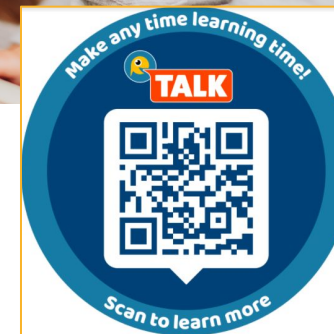




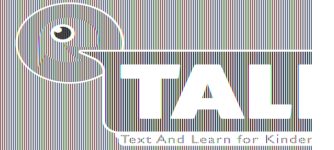
# Promotional and partnership toolkits for libraries

- English and Spanish
- Social media posts
- Promotional materials in multiple formats
- QR code designs
- Tips and resources to build community partnerships around early literacy

**READ:** aloud to baby from any book, magazine or newspaper. Hearing the sounds of spoken language will encourage babies to mimic sounds as they learn to speak!



Make any time  
learning time



Text TALK  
to 75547

Get messages with fun  
activities to help prepare  
your little one for school  
success.

**WRITE:** Draw a story  
with your child. It  
can have just 3  
pictures: beginning,  
middle, and end.  
This helps your child  
learn that stories  
have three parts.

Talk, read, sing,  
write and play  
every day.

# TALK AS A LIBRARY PROMOTIONAL TOOL

- A library resource for patrons
- Community connections with other agencies (schools, hospitals, etc)
- Community service
- Easy for patrons to use
- Use it to promote your library programs

Make any time learning time!

Text **TALK** to 75547

Text **TALK** to 75547

Talk, read, sing, write and play every day

Make any time learning

**TALK**

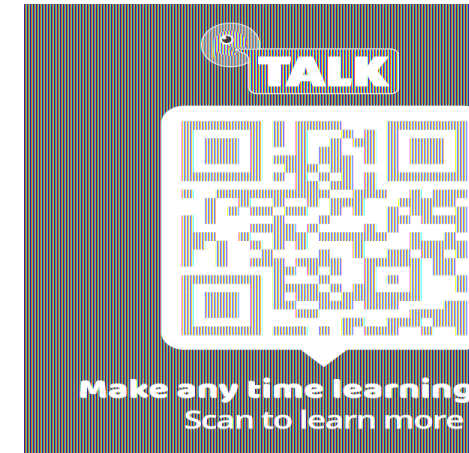
Scan to learn more

**TALK** Make any time learning time!

Sign up today!  
Text **TALK** to 75547

# Promoting TALK to your patrons - QR Codes

- **Make stickers:** Share them w/ community partners, stick them in books you're donating, let staff have fun with them!
- **Laminate QR codes:** Stick them in play kits or other items that circulate
- **Put them in little free libraries**
- Add the code regularly to library newsletters, signage, or monitor displays



# Promoting TALK to your patrons - Flyers

- Posters and flyers work well as evergreen materials in your library
- These are promotional tools to share and display at other community organizations to spread the library brand
- Promote along side your 1000 books before kindergarten to bolster both!



 **TALK** Make any time learning time!

**TALK:** The mail is full of fun learning opportunities. Look through a catalog or magazine with your tot. Can they find someone who looks happy? Sad? Excited?

**Text TALK to 75547**

Get messages with fun activities to help prepare your little one for school success. For more information visit [texttolearn.com](http://texttolearn.com).

Talk, read, sing, write and play every day.

[Place logo / information here]

This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services [IG-246434-01.5.20].

Summary Terms and Conditions: Our mobile text messages are intended for subscribers over the age of 13 and are delivered via U.S. short code 75547. You will receive 6-10 messages per month for TALK. Subscribers may opt into the service via the registration form on [www.texttolearn.com](http://www.texttolearn.com) or by texting the keywords 'START' or 'TALK' to 75547. Messages and data rates may apply. Carriers are not liable for delayed or undelivered messages. To view our terms of service and privacy policy, visit [www.texttolearn.com/privacy-policy](http://www.texttolearn.com/privacy-policy).

# Promoting TALK to your patrons - Social Media

Use graphics from the kit to promote on your social media feeds

INCLUDE: Sample texts, and you can even ask folks to share pictures (if they're comfortable) of the activities they're doing.





# Promoting TALK to your patrons - Newsletters

Include links/QR codes regularly in your newsletters and emails.

INCLUDE: Sample activity/text

## SCHOOLS

### STRIVING FOR EQUITY IN EDUCATION

A return to in-person learning this fall has inspired Lincoln Community Schools and Ypsilanti Community Schools to focus their efforts on district-wide equity initiatives. Both school districts are working to incorporate more social justice and social-emotional learning topics into their curricula to inspire and assist students during this unprecedented time.

YCS is helping students create home libraries they can see themselves in, thanks to a Literacy Excellence Accelerates Performance (LEAP) grant from the United States Department of Education. This grant provides funding for diverse books that students get to keep, enhanced media centers, support for afterschool clubs and the Grizzly Learning Camp, and classroom-based coaching support.

At Lincoln, teachers and administrators are working to create welcoming environments for everyone. Through a grant to LCS, the Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA) has started an 18-month-long professional development series, "Beyond Equity: Creating

Social Justice Leaders for Change" in Michigan Schools." For this series, LCS teachers and administrators will take a course on social justice and education, participate in a district assessment, and develop a plan to support diversity, equity, and inclusion. After this plan is implemented, the district and MASA will assess the results.

Accessibility and early literacy are also key parts of the focus on equity. Groups from both districts are meeting regularly to discuss strategies for improving literacy, and at LCS early literacy coaching is available for teachers. Through classroom observation and collaboration, coaches will work with teachers to develop early literacy skills in their students. Coaches may also co-teach or provide resources to students and teachers.

Not only is early literacy a key skill, but biliteracy is a focus of the school districts as well. Seven accomplished YCS students—Jessica Bukasa,



Angie Nicole Hernandez-Euceda, Elliott Lucas Henderson, Mariela Esmerelda Pacay-Hernandez, Fanta Kaba, Jose Alberto Medina Ramirez, and Issa Kallou Yattassay—were recently awarded the Seal of Biliteracy by the Michigan Department of Education. This is the first time any YCS student has received this award, which recognizes high school graduates who have displayed proficiency in one or more languages other than English.

In tandem with these equity initiatives, the need for social-emotional learning has never been clearer. Both YCS and LCS have made efforts to incorporate this into their curricula. At YCS, part of the LEAP grant will go toward professional development and social-emotional lessons in the classroom. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has also issued a grant to LCS that provides professional development sessions about the five social-emotional learning competencies.

To ensure that social-emotional learning is integrated into the curriculum for students K-12, two lesson planning resources will be used—Second Step for elementary and middle school students and TRAILS for high school students. Students will take an assessment before and after these lessons, and mental health resources will be available.



### CELEBRATE LITERACY WITH THE FAMILY LEARNING INSTITUTE

Join the Family Learning Institute at YDL-Whittaker on December 9 at 7pm for their first annual Book and Poetry Reading Night. This event will feature Ypsilanti Mayor Lois Richardson, a youth poetry slam, and read-alouds by University of Michigan athletes.

"We are all aware how difficult the pandemic has been on our kids—and reading development has certainly been a challenge," said Collyer Smith, Engaged Community Member with The Family Learning Institute. "Mayor Richardson will spark enthusiasm as she shares her passion reading her favorite book. In addition, young Poetry Slam artists will perform, as well as a very special video done by the University of Michigan Cheerleaders, to support our kids in becoming excited and motivated, to seek out books that will inspire them."

Book and Poetry Reading Night is free, and families will receive a grab bag of food and a free book to take home.

### TEXT AND LEARN FOR KINDERGARTEN



#### FROM THE SCHOOL CALENDARS:

**December 10**  
Early release for LCS

**December 20–31**  
Holiday Break for LCS and YCS

**January 3**  
Classes resume for LCS and YCS

**January 17**  
No school, Martin Luther King Jr. Day for LCS and YCS

**January 19–21**  
Half day for LCS HS and MS students (Exams)

**January 24**  
No school  
Teacher Records Day for LCS

**February 09**  
Count Day for YCS

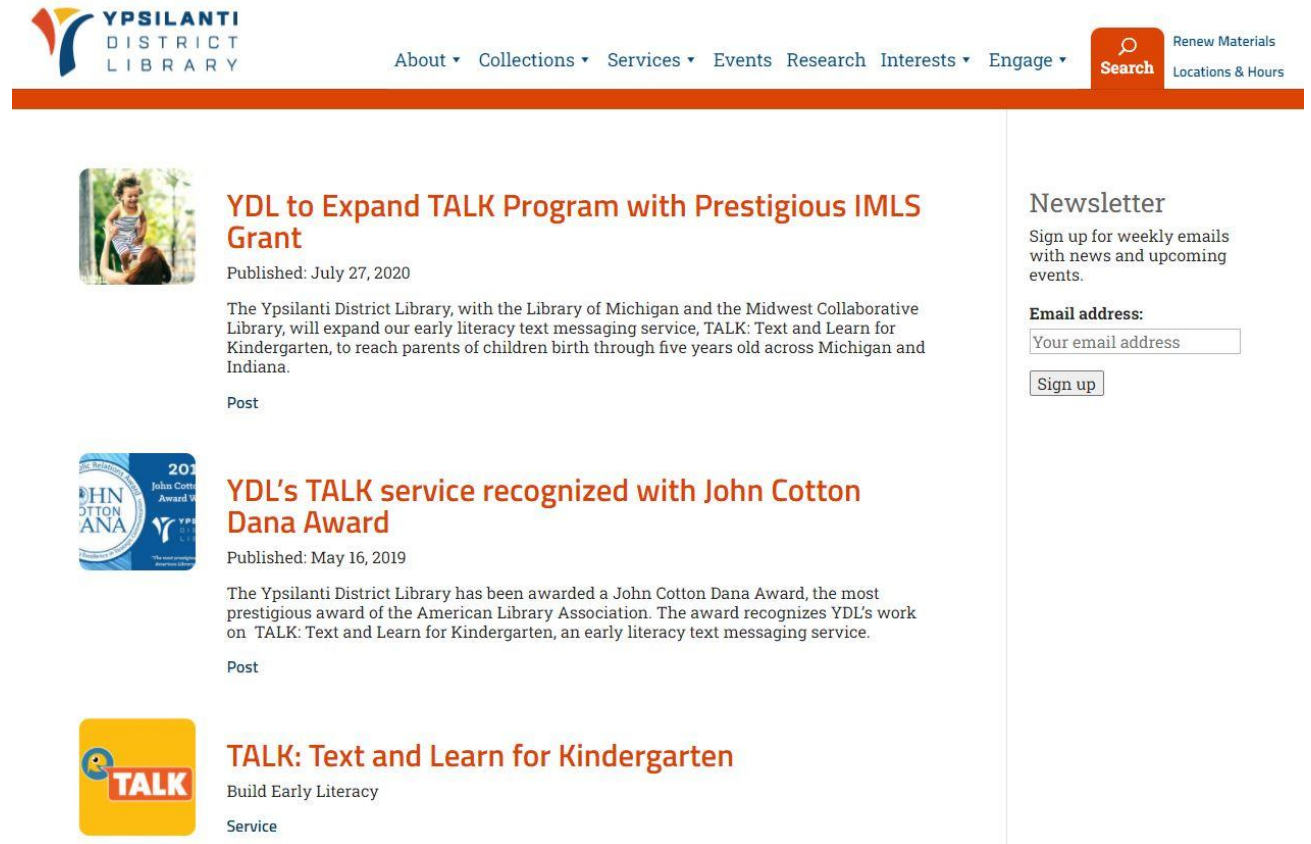
**February 11**  
Early release for LCS

**February 18**  
Early release for YCS

**February 21**  
Midwinter Break/Presidents Day for YCS and LCS

# Promoting TALK to your patrons - Website

- Add it to a banner on your home page or elsewhere on your library website
- Feature regular blog posts w/ literacy tips that promote the service



The screenshot displays the Ypsilanti District Library website. At the top left is the library's logo. A navigation menu includes links for About, Collections, Services, Events, Research, Interests, Engage, Search, Renew Materials, and Locations & Hours. The main content area features three blog posts:

- YDL to Expand TALK Program with Prestigious IMLS Grant**  
Published: July 27, 2020  
The Ypsilanti District Library, with the Library of Michigan and the Midwest Collaborative Library, will expand our early literacy text messaging service, TALK: Text and Learn for Kindergarten, to reach parents of children birth through five years old across Michigan and Indiana.  
Post
- YDL's TALK service recognized with John Cotton Dana Award**  
Published: May 16, 2019  
The Ypsilanti District Library has been awarded a John Cotton Dana Award, the most prestigious award of the American Library Association. The award recognizes YDL's work on TALK: Text and Learn for Kindergarten, an early literacy text messaging service.  
Post
- TALK: Text and Learn for Kindergarten**  
Build Early Literacy  
Service

On the right side of the page, there is a "Newsletter" section with the text: "Sign up for weekly emails with news and upcoming events." Below this is an "Email address:" label, a text input field containing "Your email address", and a "Sign up" button.