

SAMPLE LETTER TO COMMUNITY GROUPS (Longer Version)

(DATE)

(NAME)

(COMPANY OR ORGANIZATION)

(ADDRESS)

(CITY, STATE, ZIP)

Dear (use a personalized greeting whenever possible),

The (NAME OF LIBRARY) has joined the Family Place Libraries™ network offering an array of free programs and services for babies, toddlers, preschoolers, parents and caregivers. As you know, the research is clear---foundations for learning are built during the earliest years of life. Our Family Place programs and services offer our community families valuable resources for early literacy and learning, healthy child development and family support.

We cordially invite you and your colleagues (USE SUITABLE TERM FOR EACH GROUP, i.e. MEMBERS, EMPLOYEES, ETC.) to get involved and help spread the word about Family Place programs and services that support early brain development and the role of parents as first teachers. We may also enlist your help in identifying and providing resource professionals in the areas of child development, speech and language, nutrition, movement and play.

The centerpiece of Family Place Libraries is the Parent-Child Workshop. At our library, this program is called: (INSERT THE SPECIFIC NAME FOR YOUR WORKSHOP IF DIFFERENT). This is a five-week program series targeted at toddlers (ages 1-3 years) and their parents/caregivers. Family units come to a room filled with toys that encourage creative play and art exploration. For one hour, participants explore these learning stations followed by a short circle time of singing songs and reciting rhymes.

One of the goals of Family Place is to connect families to the array of services and supports within our community. A central feature of the Workshop is the participation of professionals who specialize in one of these areas: child development, nutrition, speech and language, play and movement, child health and parenting. Each week features one specialist who gets to talk one-on-one with parents, and discuss any questions or concerns they may have. In this relaxed, play-based atmosphere, parents are more apt to ask questions and be open to suggestions made by the specialist.

Other features of the Family Place Library include:

- A specially designed space in the children's room for families with young children filled with books, toys, DVDs, parenting materials and early childhood computers.

- Developing partnerships and collaborations between the library and other community agencies serving families and young children.
- Reaching out to new and non-traditional library users, especially parents and caregivers.
- Additional age-appropriate programming for very young children and their parents and caregivers.
- Library staff trained in family support, child development, early literacy, parent education and best practice.

The Family Place Libraries™ model is now in over 400 libraries in 29 states serving thousands of young children and their parents/caregivers. (NAME OF LIBRARY) is proud to be among them. In our library, this expanded public library role is made possible with support from (INSERT FUNDER NAME HERE if applicable).

The enclosed materials (ARTICLES, FLIER, BROCHURE, etc.) provide additional information about Family Place Libraries and you can visit www.familyplacelibraries.org. We invite you to visit and acquaint yourself with our spaces, programs and resources. Please contact (CONTACT NAME, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL ADDRESS) to discuss how we can partner to make this new program the best possible opportunity for parents and toddlers in (NAME OF COMMUNITY) – helping to ensure that all children enter school ready and able to learn.

Sincerely,

(NAME AND TITLE OF LIBRARIAN, COORDINATOR, PROJECT DIRECTOR, etc)