

# The Ready To Learn Initiative



**Improving Early Learning Outcomes  
in Communities Across the Nation  
Through the Power of Public Media**



Corporation  
for Public  
Broadcasting



# Essential Early Learning Resources

High-quality early childhood educational content has been shown to have an impact not only on immediate school readiness, but also on high school graduation, higher education and employment rates.<sup>1</sup> And while some gains have been made in recent years, a learning disparity remains: kids from lower-income families often enter kindergarten less prepared to learn than their peers from higher-income households.

In an effort to bridge this achievement gap and improve the educational outcomes for all of America's children, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), PBS KIDS and local stations are developing innovative educational content and services for kids ages 2-8, both inside and outside the classroom. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Ready To Learn (RTL) grant, these resources are focused to help children in low-income communities build the math and literacy skills they need for success in school and in life.

**Public Media**  
is often one of the only sources of  
high-quality learning resources for the  
**54% of 3-4-year-olds**  
in the U.S. who do not attend preschool.<sup>1</sup>



Children in Champaign County, Illinois Head Start classes use mobile devices to play PBS KIDS math and literacy learning games. Illinois Public Media provided two PBS KIDS Mobile Media Labs to the classrooms.

Since 2010, Ready To Learn funds have supported the development of:

**2 math TV series**  
featuring 80 episodes

**135+**  
educational  
online games

**10+ apps**  
distributed in low-income  
communities through the  
Mobile Learning Program

**100+** at-home  
educational  
activities

## Proven Educational Impact

Research consistently validates the positive impact of PBS KIDS' on-air programming, digital content and hands-on resources developed through the Ready To Learn Initiative.

### Recent studies have shown gains in the following areas:

- **Mathematical knowledge, especially among children from low-income backgrounds** <sup>ii, iii, iv</sup>
- **Children's recognition of basic and advanced geometric shapes** <sup>ii, iv</sup>
- **Children's collaborative learning and discussion around math within the classroom** <sup>iii</sup>
- **Parents' awareness of their children's math learning, as well as use of activities and strategies to support their children's learning at home** <sup>iv</sup>
- **Parents' motivation to set aside time each day to perform math activities with their children** <sup>iv</sup>
- **Teachers' knowledge of individual student's learning and mathematical development** <sup>iii</sup>



WHUT Howard University Television works with KIPP DC schools for a 100th Day of School event that gave local children access to PBS KIDS RTL resources.

## Partnerships in Local Communities

Local public television stations partner with schools, libraries and organizations to support children's math and literacy skills in communities throughout the U.S. These efforts in the classroom, at home and in out-of-school settings offer children from low-income families access to free PBS KIDS educational materials, apps, games and more.



Nashville Public Television (NPT) works with the Nashville Promise Neighborhood initiative to hold workshops that provide educational digital content to families.

## New Educational Math Series

### Peg + Cat

Winner of **3**  
**EMMY®**  
**AWARDS**



**3.6 million children** have  
tuned in to *Peg + Cat* every month

Streamed over **317 million times** to date

Proven to increase children's  
understanding of **math concepts**<sup>ii</sup>

### Odd Squad



PBS KIDS' newest series, *Odd Squad*, helps  
kids build math and problem-solving skills  
through on-air episodes and digital content,  
including streaming video and a mobile app.

Among the **top 10 shows**  
for kids 2-8 in December 2014

Streamed more than **54 million times**  
during first six weeks of digital launch

## Upcoming Highlights from the CPB-PBS Ready To Learn Initiative

- **Innovative tools** that provide parents and educators insight into their children's learning, including identifying problem areas and offering recommendations for educational games, video and offline activities that may help
- **Distribution of educational mobile apps** accompanied by hands-on learning resources in English and Spanish in low-income communities, where mobile device access continues to increase<sup>v</sup>
- **New episodes of *Peg + Cat***, a series that evaluations have shown helps preschool-aged children develop basic math skills
- **New episodes of *Odd Squad***, a math series aimed at children ages 5-8
- **Partnerships** between PBS stations and more than 1,500 community organizations
- **Extensive ongoing research** and cumulative evaluation to measure the CPB-PBS Ready To Learn Initiative's educational impact

[i] The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014 Kids Count Data Book.

[ii] Llorente, C., & Pasnik, S. (2014). *Peg + Cat Content Study. A Report to the CPB-PBS Ready To Learn Initiative.* New York and Menlo Park, CA: EDC-SRI.

[iii] Li, L., McCarthy, B., Tui, M. (2014). *Learning Math with Curious George: PBS KIDS Transmedia and Digital Learning Games in the Pre-School Classroom.* A report to the CPB-PBS Ready To Learn Initiative. Redwood City, CA; WestEd.

[iv] WestEd. (2014). *Engaging Families in Early Mathematics Learning: A Study of a Preschool Family Engagement Model.* A report to the CPB-PBS Ready To Learn Initiative. Redwood City, CA.

[v] Common Sense Media, 2013. *Zero to Eight: Children's Media Use in America 2013.* San Francisco, CA.