

2006 GreenLight Gala Spotlights and Benefits Raising A Reader



Raising A Reader Named One of the “Top 25 Groups that Are Changing the World.”

How Raising a Reader works to increase at-home read-aloud time

Raising A Reader is the second social innovation the GreenLight Fund has helped establish in the Boston area, and the 2006 GreenLight Gala will benefit this powerful program. Founded at the Center for Venture Philanthropy in Palo Alto, California, Raising A Reader was recently named by Fast Company magazine as one of the “Top 25 Groups that Are Changing the World.”

Launched locally in Chelsea in early 2006, Raising A Reader is a powerful answer to critical needs in the Boston area:

- Raising A Reader focuses on a population not easily reached and served – children ages 0-5 in low-income families where parents have poor literacy skills and/or are non-English speakers.
- The average middle class child has spent 1,700 of picture book reading by 1st grade compared with 25 hours for the average low-income child. RAR has an impressive record of narrowing this gap by engaging low-income parents in regular at-home book-time with their children during the early developmental years.
- RAR strengthens the capacity of childcare providers in low-income communities, as well as parents, to ensure that children show up for kindergarten ready to read and learn.
- Raising A Reader has significantly increased library use by low-income, particularly immigrant, families in California with potential to do the same in the Boston area.
- With 85 locations around the country, Raising A Reader has the proven ability to scale quickly and cost effectively in new sites.

Raising A Reader works with a variety of childcare providers to rotate bright red bags filled with award-winning children's books into the homes of low-income families. Every week, children take home a book bag with a new selection of excellent, age-appropriate books. RAR works with childcare providers and visiting home programs to help them support parents in establishing and maintaining regular book time at home. Books are culturally and linguistically appropriate, and a "Read Aloud" video is produced in nine languages to give all parents the know-how and comfort they need to make the shared book experience successful.



The GreenLight Fund identifies innovative, ground-breaking and results-oriented nonprofits in cities around the country and helps bring those programs to Boston that can address critical needs here.

The GreenLight Fund looks for organizations with potential to have significant impact on urban issues affecting primarily low-income families and children in key areas such as education, youth development, workforce development, and healthcare.

Each year the GreenLight Fund hosts the GreenLight Gala to showcase and benefit the most recent program whose expansion to Boston it has supported. In addition to the Gala, during the first three years of a program's life in Boston, the GreenLight Fund provides start-up funding, helps build a strong Board of Directors and recruit staff leadership, and provides operational and management support. GreenLight is an on-the-ground partner in Boston invested in the early and long-term success of the new program.

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