

## OUTREACH INCENTIVE GRANT FUNDING: END-OF-YEAR PROJECT REPORT

Title of Proposal: A Smart Start for Knox County Babies: A Partnership Between the UT College of Social Work And the Knox County Health Department

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Project Date: January 12, 2014 - ongoing

Additional project support received from other university or external sources:

Source	Amount	Title
Freshman Seminar Compensation	\$1500	
Grant from College of Social Work	\$500	

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**Please use this sheet to answer each of the following questions about your project (1-2 pp total)**

1. **ASSESSMENT:** How did this project document or assess its engagement with the community?

We solicited feedback from participants in the program, both at the conclusion of the class and at follow-up. We are continuing the program (using materials purchased with this grant, and then materials purchased from an additional grant received from another source) and continuing to receive feedback and "tweaking" the content and format of the program in response.

Overall, feedback from the 127 participants who have completed the program so far was very positive. [comments here]

2. **PARTNERSHIP/RECIPROCITY:** How did the university and community work together?

The university supplied funds to purchase the tool kits, which included books, developmental toys, and a number of resources for mothers to use in activities with their infants. UTK also reviewed the material that was taught and advised on content of the lessons regarding early brain development. The Department of Health is recruiting participants, teaching the classes, and helping to collect and analyze data (which is ongoing).

3. **BENEFITS:** What were the benefits (University/community) of this partnership?

The university benefited by being able to share expertise in the community, as well as being more visible to the community (in the materials, logos on the backpacks, etc.), as well as learning more about the needs of Knox County mothers and children. That knowledge will be useful in the social work courses I teach. In addition, the university established a new partnership in the community that we will use again as we look at other community needs and university resources. Two UT students also participated and benefited from both the content and the interaction with Department of Health personnel and program participants.

The community benefited from the expertise of the university faculty member, as well as from a new partnership to work on other community needs. Certainly the mothers benefited from the content and the materials provided, as well as the opportunities to interact with other new mothers around these issues.

4. **SHARED DECISION-MAKING:** Did the community have a "voice" or role for input into this project?

Department of Health personnel were instrumental in determining how the neuroscience content was delivered and in what format. This was critical, given their familiarity with the disadvantaged and poorly served population.

Several changes were made to the classes in response to mothers' feedback about the program and Department of Health personnel's observations of participants.

5. **SCHOLARSHIP:** Are there any examples of faculty scholarship that will be informed by this project?

It is early yet to know this, as we are continuing to "tweak" the class in response to feedback. We hope to present material about the class and the outcomes to several public health organizations, including the American Public Health Association.

The PI has conducted similar classes in Memphis with disadvantaged African-American mothers, and we hope to explore the differences and similarities between these populations in how they responded to the materials.

6. **CONCLUSIONS:** What conclusions and best practices can be drawn from the partnership?

Perhaps the biggest thing I have learned is that even though participants may be disadvantaged and have low levels of education, they are enthusiastic about learning about their babies' early brain development, and they do understand the material. It is important not to "talk down" to participants and to respond to their questions comprehensively; they will communicate their levels of understanding. We have adjusted the material to reflect the participants' higher-than-expected levels of understanding.

7. **FUTURE PLANS:** What are the future plans for this partnership?

We are continuing the classes. This grant provided data that enabled Department of Health personnel to submit and win another grant to expand the classes and to recruit participants in other Department of Health programs.