



The Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative (AFC) developed the *Let's Talk!* campaign, which helps children enter school ready to learn how to read and write by educating and supporting their parents and caregivers. Key messages to parents and caregivers are:

- Learning begins at birth.
- Talk with children while doing everyday activities, and in the language you speak best.
- Read with children while encouraging them to talk, tell stories, and ask questions.

We work with parents from birth through their children's first years in school. Much of our work is carried out by Literacy Ambassadors – multilingual, multicultural, trained parents who serve as a primary link between the Agenda for Children and families throughout the Cambridge community. The *Let's Talk* campaign consists of the following activities:

#### For Parents:

- **Maternity Ward Visits** – we visit new moms and dads on the Cambridge Hospital maternity ward and give out books for newborns and educational materials for parents.
- **Literacy Home Visits** – we visit moms and dads at home (or another convenient location) to share information about literacy, child development, and community resources. Visits are available in many languages.
- **Parent Workshops** (Talking, Reading, Storytelling, Math and Managing Screen Time) - workshops are held around the community to talk with parents about why talking, reading, storytelling, early math or managing screen time with young children is important, and how they can support their children's early literacy development.
- **Weekly Literacy Tips via Text** – get a tip each week about activities and events around Cambridge as well as tips for supporting children's literacy development. Text "LetsTalk" to 313131. (Standard text messaging rates apply)
- **Especially for Dads** – AFC and the Center for Families jointly created **Cambridge Dads** project to connect with and support fathers. Follow *@CambDads* on Twitter. 'Like' *Cambridge Dads* on Facebook. Email [Cambdads@cambridgema.gov](mailto:Cambdads@cambridgema.gov).

#### For Parents and Children:

- **"Born to Read" Packets** – children's books and educational information are delivered to every family of a Cambridge newborn, in partnership with the Cambridge Public Library.
- **Community Playgroups** – families with children from 2 to 5 years old are invited to join parent-child playgroups in locations throughout Cambridge, in partnership with the Center for Families.

#### For the Community:

- **StoryWalks** – a popular family activity that promotes reading and walking. Pages from a children's book are posted throughout a neighborhood or park, and families walk from one posted page to the next to finish the story.



### For the Community: (continued)

- **Book Distribution at Fairs and Festivals** – over 7,000 books are distributed each year to Cambridge children to help build their home libraries.
- **Book Bike** – the Book Bike rides to parks each week in the summer to be part of the city’s “Let’s Move, Let’s Eat, Let’s Read!” campaign, in conjunction with DHSP’s Summer Food program. The Book Bike gives away free books to all children under 18. The Book Bike is a partnership of a number of agencies ([www.cambridgebookbike.org](http://www.cambridgebookbike.org)).
- **Family Literacy Fun Day** – held the first Saturday in November at City Hall to celebrate National Family Literacy Month. Hosted by a multi-agency collaborative.

### For Family Child Care Providers:

- **Story Kits** – we deliver themed “Story Kits” every other week to family child care providers to use with the children in their care, in partnership with the Cambridge Public Library.
- **Early Literacy Workshop Series** – we deliver a professional development workshop series about language and literacy development each spring, in partnership with the Center for Families.
- **Family Child Care Support Group** – support group meetings are held monthly on Monday nights at 119 Windsor Street.

**Keep up with the latest from Let’s Talk!**

**Website:** [letstalkcambridge.org](http://letstalkcambridge.org)

**Facebook:** [LetsTalkCambMA](https://www.facebook.com/LetsTalkCambMA)

**Twitter:** [@LetsTalkCambMA](https://twitter.com/LetsTalkCambMA)

*For more information, contact Jen Baily, 617-665-3812, [jbaily@challiance.org](mailto:jbaily@challiance.org) or Natalia Martinez, 617-665-3825, [nmartinez@challiance.org](mailto:nmartinez@challiance.org).*

**Let’s Talk!  
Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative  
Cambridge Public Health Department  
119 Windsor Street, Ground Floor  
Cambridge, MA 02139**