

# The Parent-Child Home Program

## An Early Childhood Literacy, School Readiness, and Parenting Program

**Description:** The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) is a research-based and validated early childhood literacy, school readiness, and parenting program that strengthens families and prepares children for academic success through intensive home-visiting. Home visits take place twice a week for thirty minutes each visit with two- and three-year-olds over a two-year period, for a total of 92 visits. A book or toy which becomes a gift to the family is the focus of the visit. The rich verbal interaction and construction of a nurturing, positive



environment that gives parents confidence and gives children the motivation to learn are at the heart of PCHP. PCHP was designed for families who may not have access to books or preschool, or who face challenges in preparing their young children for school. In Rockland, the newly-immigrated, foreign-born, and economically challenged populations make up the majority of families enrolled in the program. Many challenged families find it difficult to provide the time, material, and educational focus that young children need, but PCHP makes it possible.



**Operating in Rockland County:** Since 2002, three school districts (North Rockland, East Ramapo, and Nyack) and a nonprofit Family Resource Center (Nanuet) have collaborated with Rockland 21C to bring Parent-Child Home to Rockland County, with funding support from United Way, the County of Rockland, and individual and corporate donations. Many home visitors are provided by Rockland County's AmeriCorps program. Rockland 21C brought the model to Rockland and has maintained its support of the districts' implementation ever since, offering professional development, support for certification and assessment, and contractual management. Since 2003, an average of 49 families have participated each year.

**Playgroups, an addition to the traditional program:** School Family Resource Center coordinators often also serve as coordinators of PCHP and are therefore able to seamlessly link families to additional supports, thanks too to their connection to the large Rockland 21C initiative. Rockland 21C supports the implementation of FRC-based playgroup sessions for graduates of PCHP; they act as a "bridge" that transfers the connection built with the home visitor to the school, its FRC coordinator, and one another as a social support group. These connections aid the families as their children enter school. Recent PCHP playgroup data demonstrates high gains in *parent comfort in school*, and an understanding that *parents are their child's advocate*. Children reported that they felt *comfortable in school*, and were *better able to share and to focus*.<sup>1</sup>



Nanuet Playgroup

**It works:** PCHP is rated a "Bright Spot" by the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Campaign for Grade Level Reading and a "promising practice" in RAND's Promising Practices Network. Because PCHP is over forty years old, it has had the opportunity to examine its home visitation results. Research shows that participants graduate from high school at a 20% higher rate than other students from low-income families. In a South Carolina study, ninety-three percent of free-lunch-eligible students Program graduates passed the state's first grade skills assessment, compared to only seventy-four percent of free-lunch-eligible students statewide. When Rockland's East Ramapo school district looked at test scores of its PCHP graduates, then in first and second grades, ninety-three percent of students were reading at or above grade level, the same data results as national research demonstrates should be achieved. More studies that demonstrate its success can be found at [www.parent-child.org](http://www.parent-child.org).

A video about Parent-Child Home in Rockland, which has been recognized by the National Center of Parent-Child Home, can be found at 21C's website, [www.rockland21c.org](http://www.rockland21c.org).

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<sup>1</sup> Measures do not capture the facts that the families get to know the school FRC coordinators and other families, which helps with school engagement.