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FEATURED

Literacy Council Receives Grant for Family Reading Program

Laura Douglass, Staff Writer
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The Moore County Literacy Council (MCLC), based in The Read Moore Center in Southern Pines, conducts Motherread programs across the county.

The Moore County Literacy Council has received a grant of \$1,000 from Moore Women - A Giving Circle Fund to support its expanding Motherread/Fatheread program. Motherread is an award-winning family literacy program known for the excellence of its teaching approach.

Research has shown that reading to young children can offer profound, lifelong positive impacts. Hearing stories, looking at pictures and new vocabulary words are known to strengthen brain development, studies have shown, but the act of reading to a child also encourages their social and emotional growth.

The Moore County Literacy Council (MCLC), based in The Read Moore Center in Southern Pines, conducts Motherread programs across the county, usually in collaboration with partners such as The Hope Academy and Head Start programs.

“We are thrilled to receive this support from the women of Moore County. This grant, in combination with funds provided by Smart Start and Partners for Children and Families, will enable us to improve the literacy of more than 60 families in Moore County this year,” said Stuart Mills, MCLC executive director. “I know that our grant is just one of a group of grants made by the Moore Women – A Giving Circle Gift Fund this year. We feel very fortunate that our project was chosen.”

The Moore Women – A Giving Circle Fund is administered by the North Carolina Community Foundation. Grants are awarded to charitable organizations serving women, children and families in Moore County.

Mills said the grant funds will be used for books, and to pay the tuition for Moore County women to attend the intensive three day Motherread Institute for training in this cutting edge family literacy program.

The Motherread/Fatheread program was established locally by MCLC in January 2018. Participants meet weekly with trained facilitators for two hours, in a group setting, over the course of a 10-week session.

“The program is styled as a book club,” said Heather Lussier, MCLC family literacy specialist.

During each “club meeting,” the adults learn with a children’s board book they keep and take home, while children are provided with refreshments, or a meal, and engaged in an age-appropriate activity. In addition, MCLC usually has more books on-hand that the children may select from to take home.

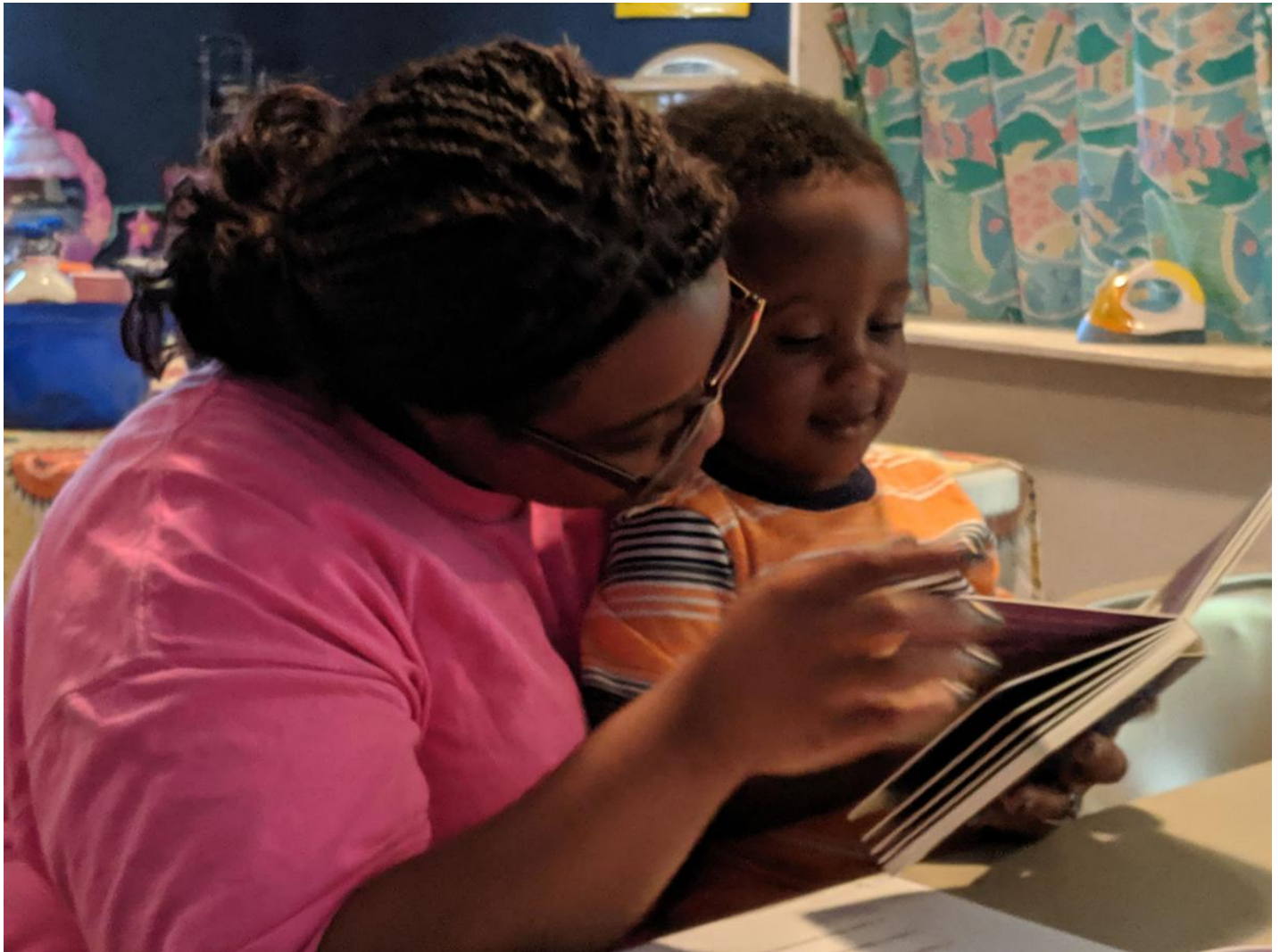
“My favorite thing is watching the parents actually embody the characters in the story and do some of the things we’ve taught them,” Lussier said. “And when they have fun and are reading regularly to their child.”

MCLC has traditionally focused on providing free basic literacy education and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Instruction areas include life skills, citizenship, GED preparation, career readiness, computer skills and family literacy. The majority of MCLC's adult students enter at a third grade level or less.

An estimated 10 percent of Moore County's adult population is functionally illiterate.

In recent years through grant programs and partnerships with Moore County Schools and other local nonprofits, including the United Way of Moore County, MCLC has grown its outreach programming to serve more families and children's literacy needs.

Importantly, the Motherread program is appropriate for all adults, regardless of their reading ability or prior educational experience.



Participants meet weekly with trained facilitators for two hours, in a group setting, over the course of a 10-week session

The weekly “club meetings” focus on teaching the “why” of reading rather than just experiencing the “how.” The ultimate goal is to encourage the parent to become a reading role model for their child.

“It is a lovely curriculum,” Mills said. “The parents learn so much about how to read to keep kids interested and it is a great way for everyone to learn to read.”

For more information, visit the Moore County Literacy Council online at mcliteracy.com, call (910) 692-5954, or visit the Read Moore Center at Ice House Square, 575 SE Broad Street in Southern Pines.

Laura Douglass