



LINC

LiteracyINC

25TH

ANNIVERSARY

2021
ANNUAL
REPORT

When a child reads, a community succeeds!

25



REFLECT RESOLVE REAFFIRM

UNIVERSAL LITERACY IS POSSIBLE

MIMI LEVIN LIEBER

NY1 "New Yorker of the Week"



Mimi Levin Lieber (3/22/28-10/16/21) founded Literacy Inc. to harness the power of community and make reading a reality for all children. She understood that early literacy is essential now, and in the future, for an equitable society and a thriving democracy. She created an innovative model that values people for the culture and creativity they bring to their neighborhoods. She placed parents and community at the center of our movement.

Mimi's steadfast resolve, leadership, and commitment guided LINC to advocate for education justice and develop a robust network of support for families across New York City. She worked with us until her last breath.

As New York emerges from the pandemic and begins the task of rebuilding a more equitable city, this work is more important than it has ever been in LINC's 25-year history.



"I have known all my life that building and strengthening communities is one of the best ways to help children, my own and everyone else's. The effect of community on children is now borne out by all kinds of current research." - Mimi Levin Lieber



UNIVERSAL LITERACY IS POSSIBLE

As we REFLECT on the hardships and the loss we experienced this past year, we find comfort in our families' resilience and Mimi's RESOLVE. Her love of children, and her belief that early literacy is the foundation for all learning, continues to guide the urgency of our work. Quality early learning ensures better social, educational, health, and economic outcomes, making it a moral imperative to ensure all children share in the benefits of early literacy. The time, energy, and resources we invest in our children now, when it matters most, will prevent future inequities.

Any milestone anniversary is a combination of celebration and reassessment. LINC's 25th anniversary prompted us to look back at our beginnings and reference our Certificate of Incorporation. Mimi's vision is as valid today as it was prescient then. She envisioned LINC as a network, building systems among community literacy resources at the neighborhood level and engaging people to make literacy visible and accessible for all children.

Despite the unprecedented challenges of the past few years, LINC remains committed to this vision day in and day out. In 2021, we completed the first year of our Strategic Plan, which renews and reinvigorates our emphasis on public awareness and collaboration, tenets that are so central to our purpose.

Our board and staff alike have devoted considerable energy to renewing the essence of LINC, thoughtfully considering what we will look like moving forward and how the lessons of the pandemic can be incorporated into our model. We've REAFFIRMED our commitment to creating a world that guarantees universal early literacy, just as Mimi would want us to do.

We are so grateful you stand with us and share our RESOLVE. Our children deserve nothing less.



Shari Levine
Executive Director



Carlos Rodriguez
Chair, Board of Directors

OUR MISSION

LINC works at the intersection of early education and community development. Our mission is to equip children with foundational literacy skills essential for academic achievement by empowering families and mobilizing the community.



New York City Councilmember Eric Dinowitz reads to LINC families at a community garden in Kingsbridge.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Mimi Levin Lieber
(In Memoriam)

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Stephanie Young

Executive Director

Shari Levine

** Joined the Board in 2022*

OUR MODEL DRIVES IMPACT

Our two-generational Community Literacy Model connects families with each other and with resources that already exist in the community to surround children with literacy-rich environments inside and outside of home. We engage and train parents, caregivers, and community members in early literacy, and foster a mutually-reinforcing system that reaches the same child multiple times with effective literacy support during the first five years of life.

(1)

Engage Children When it Matters Most

A child's developmental trajectory is shaped during the early years, long before starting school. Little brains grow an amazing 90% and are nearly fully developed by age five. Early literacy and the bonds that are created during this critical period matter!

(2)

Empower Parents to Unlock Children's Potential

Parents are key players and our most valuable partners. By focusing on developing their skills, competencies, and leadership, parents become advocates for their own children and claim their place as changemakers in the community.

(3)

Leverage the Power of Community

LINC fosters relationships among parents and builds a literacy-rich ecosystem within communities. This infrastructure is sustained by staff that is representative of our communities.



FAMILY PROGRAMS

Parent Workshops Parents and caregivers are introduced to early literacy and learn how to make reading a valued part of a family's daily routine. We share strategies on how to incorporate early literacy practices in fun and engaging ways for children. Parents learn to recognize age-appropriate books and get connected to other families, community resources, and public libraries. Workshops strengthen parent-child bonds and cover a variety of topics related to early learning: basics of early literacy, social and emotional learning, transitions to kindergarten, and more.

Family Academies engage caregivers and children at the same time, helping families to create reading routines and literacy-rich environments. Parents celebrate reading and practice new literacy strategies with their children, while children enjoy engaging read-alouds, movement activities, songs, and crafts. The Read to Me Little Bee (Virtual Bees during COVID) program is a six-part Family Academy designed specifically for parents with children birth to 3.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Very Involved Parent (VIP) Academy trains parents to become literacy advocates in their community. Graduates are equipped to deliver community reading programs, recruit new families, spread LINC's mission, and promote positive reading habits with other families. VIP Academy fosters the growth of parents who, after realizing the significant influence they have on their child's academic achievement, are eager to do the same for other children in their neighborhood.

"They continue to have a really strong impact in the Spanish-speaking community. Here in New York, that is always going to be an ongoing process ... they've had a phenomenal impact and will continue to have an even greater impact." – LINC Very Involved Parent

Reading Everywhere brings reading to playgrounds, clinics, laundromats, and virtually everywhere in a LINC neighborhood. From the Bronx to Staten Island, our reading celebrations build community and make reading irresistible and visible across NYC. Held throughout the year, these events create additional opportunities to read in the community and incorporate multilingual and multi-cultural activities that often feature local authors.

Literacy Zones feature educational materials to connect families with programs and make children's books available in pharmacies, stores, restaurants, and in other community spaces where families can pick up free books to start a home library.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT



City's First Readers (CFR), the New York City Council's Early Literacy Initiative coordinated by Literacy Inc., surrounds families with comprehensive programming and support from 17 active partner organizations. Together, we reach close to one million families annually, and increase the children's access to a strong literacy foundation so that they are prepared to start school, ready to thrive academically, and succeed beyond their school years.

With support from The Pinkerton Foundation and The Carmel Hill Fund, the **Reads Initiative in South Jamaica, East New York, and East Harlem** enhances literacy culture and supports children's academic achievement so that they can reach their highest aspirations. At the heart of **Reads** is the belief that literacy is the key to all future learning. The **Reads Initiative**, coordinated by LINC, brings the shared commitment of 11 partners to successfully increase access to and use of literacy resources, improve children's literacy skills, and deepen relationships between literacy partners to increase efficiency, coordination, and effectiveness of services.

A MULTIGENERATIONAL APPROACH TO LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

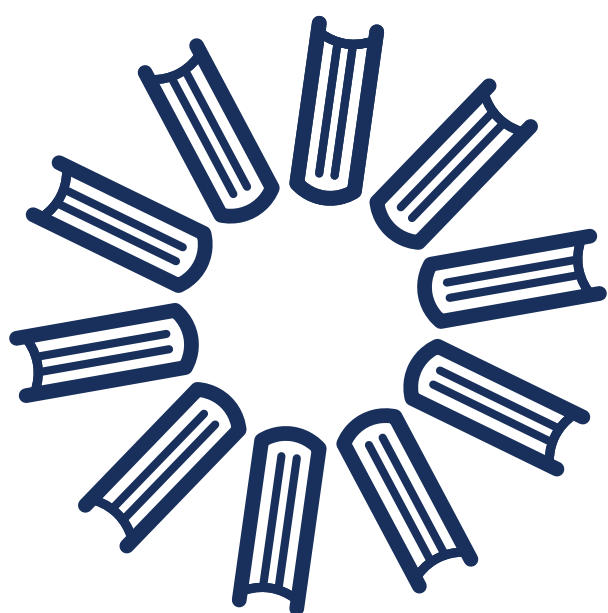
"At LINC, I truly found my life's purpose. I started as a VIP and then became a part-time Program Assistant; then a Program Coordinator; and now, I'm the South Jamaica Neighborhood Manager. It is amazing that a part-time opportunity turned into my purpose. Through LINC, Reads, and many other partnerships, with the Zoo, the Aquarium, I get to experience so many opportunities with my entire family and with other families and friends. All of us connected in a full circle."

Demelza, the book lady!

Demelza first participated in a LINC program back in 2013 when her son was six years old. She quickly discovered that LINC was making a huge difference in her son's growth, so she joined as many LINC programs as possible, bringing other family members along the way. Unsurprisingly, Demelza and her cousin, Gem Callender, graduated from our Very Involved Parent Academy, Class of 2012. Her mother, Denise Wilson, is also a VIP, Class of 2015. Her sister, Deon Daniels, and her younger cousin, Ronella Callender, also became VIPs last year.

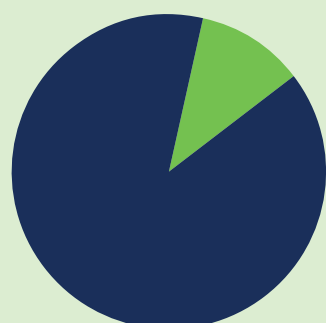
Known in South Jamaica as the book lady, Demelza was so passionate about her role as a Literacy Advocate, that LINC hired her. Since 2013, she has been spreading a love of reading and through the pandemic, Demelza's Reading Celebrations even reached children from across the globe. In fact, learning that a family joined our programs virtually from Guyana, Demelza connected with little Nathaniel and his family when she traveled there to visit her relatives. They shared all the books and arts and crafts created over the past year and of course, Demelza brought new books!





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LINC families read more often and with more intention:



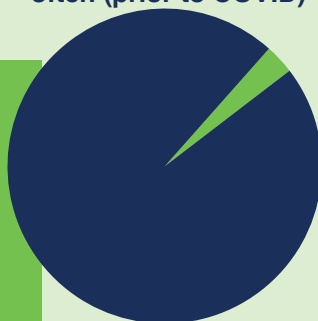
89%

talk, play, and sing more often with their children

VIPs
create literacy-rich homes:

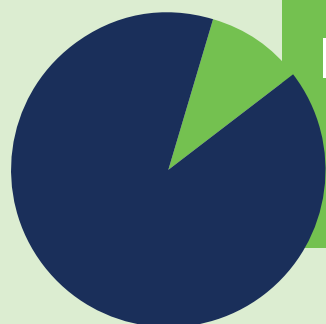
97%

go to the library more often (prior to COVID)



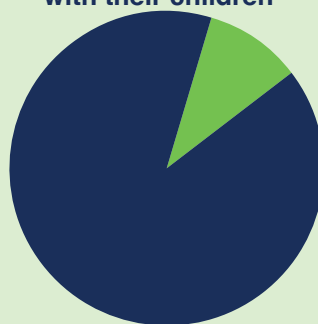
90%

read out loud more often with their children



90%

have 10 or more age-appropriate books at home, including library books



42%

75%

families read 5 or more days per week

59%

83%

match pictures to written words while reading to their children

42%

72%

have 10 or more age-appropriate books at home

26%

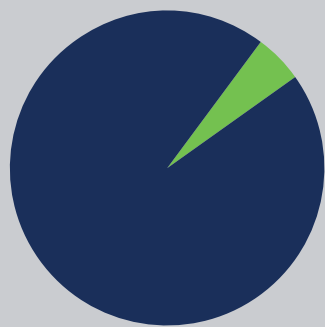
72%

have established a bedtime reading routine

YEARS of 

IMPACT

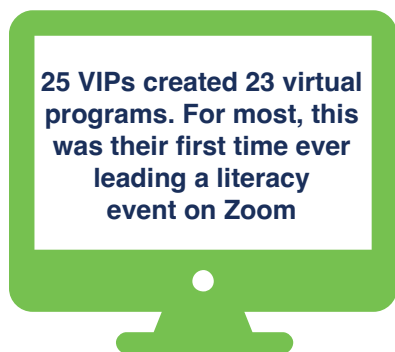
VIPs create literacy-rich communities:



95%
of VIPs

- Feel more confident talking to neighbors about the importance of reading to children.
- Demonstrate to other caregivers how to read out loud to children.
- Feel more knowledgeable about where to find and how to share literacy resources in their community.

VIPs understood the importance of maintaining healthy literacy habits through the pandemic:



25 VIPs created 23 virtual programs. For most, this was their first time ever leading a literacy event on Zoom

98%

continued to be literacy role models in the home and read by themselves the same amount or more often

88%

read to their children the same amount or more often



Despite the external hardships, VIPs understood the importance of continuing to promote reading at home

The habits that VIPs have taught their children are sustainable even after their children age out of LINC Programs:

VIPs whose children have aged out of the program continued to see impact with their child's reading during the pandemic

97%

of VIP children who are independent readers, read to themselves the same amount or more often

FINANCIALS

LINC Fiscal Years: 2021, 2020. All information is from our audited financial statements for fiscal years ending June 30th, 2020 and June 30th, 2021. A copy of our full audited financial statements can be obtained by emailing info@lincnyc.org or at www.lincnyc.org.

Statement of Activities

REVENUE	2021	2020
Foundations/Corporations	\$ 1,231,641	\$ 1,764,524
Individuals/Gala	\$ 940,586	\$ 792,228
Government	\$ 1,616,318	\$ 1,350,101
In-kind Goods & Services	\$ 104,593	\$ 163,054
Other	\$ 20,313	\$ 52,812
Total	\$ 3,913,451	\$ 4,122,719

EXPENSES

Program Services	\$ 2,841,415	\$ 2,892,554
Management & General	\$ 297,892	\$ 159,027
Fundraising	\$ 424,645	\$ 527,229
Total	\$ 3,563,952	\$ 3,578,810

Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS	2021	2020
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 3,672,704	\$ 3,073,848
Contributions, Grants & Accounts Receivable	\$ 878,382	\$ 1,155,841
Other Assets	\$ 44,244	\$ 43,708
Total Assets	\$ 4,595,330	\$ 4,273,397

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$ 211,625	\$ 144,453
Agency Funds	\$ 73,216	\$ 176,847

Total Current Liabilities	\$ 284,841	\$ 321,300
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PPP Loan Payable	\$ 500,000	\$ 491,107
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Total Liabilities	\$ 784,841	\$ 812,407
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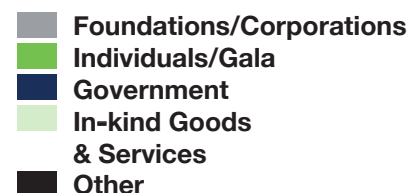
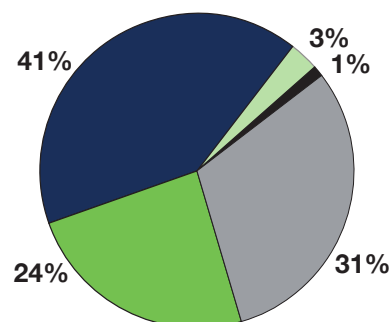
Net Assets

Without donor restrictions	\$ 2,357,778	\$ 1,893,694
With donor restrictions	\$ 1,452,711	\$ 1,567,296

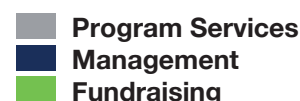
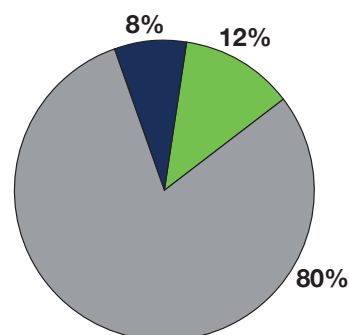
Total Net Assets	\$ 3,810,489	\$ 3,460,990
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TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$ 4,595,330	\$ 4,273,397
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FY 2021 REVENUE



FY 2021 EXPENSES



LINC is a proud recipient of
Nonprofit New York's Excellence Awards:
 2018 Excellence in Financial Management
 2019 Excellence in Fundraising
 and Resource Development
 2019 FINALIST FOR OVERALL EXCELLENCE



LITERACY IS ESSENTIAL



Social justice is not possible without education justice. Education justice depends on early literacy. LINC's work is critical to the health, well-being, and success of children and families. Because of help from donors like you, LINC will continue to meet the challenges and needs of our time.

The literacy crisis is solvable.

The answer lies within the community itself: when equipped with the right tools, parents and community partners have the power to disrupt the patterns of illiteracy. The benefits of LINC's approach go beyond literacy development. Our programs are two-generational and promote the engagement of both parent and child, establishing a strong social-emotional bond.

Instilling the practice of reading into a family's daily routine creates a positive association with books, and ensures comfort and cuddle time despite uncertainty in other parts of life. LINC provides books children love to read again and again, as well as effective tools that allow parents to easily share books with their children.

*Our programs transform families;
our families transform communities;
children become lifelong readers.*

*We could not do this work
without you. Thank you.*



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