

**Promotion of Parenting, Early Child Development and  
School Readiness in Pediatric Practice:**

*The Bellevue Project for Early Language, Literacy and  
Education Success (BELLE)*

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# **Systemic Change in Education Through Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

- **Those in education work amongst themselves for the most part**
- **Each content area does research and creates programs independently or in collaboration with other educators**
- **Collaboration beyond our field into the community, with families, and other related professions needs to be incorporated into systemic change**
- **Cross fertilization and interdisciplinary projects are the way we can do the best job possible**

# Collaboration with the Medical Profession

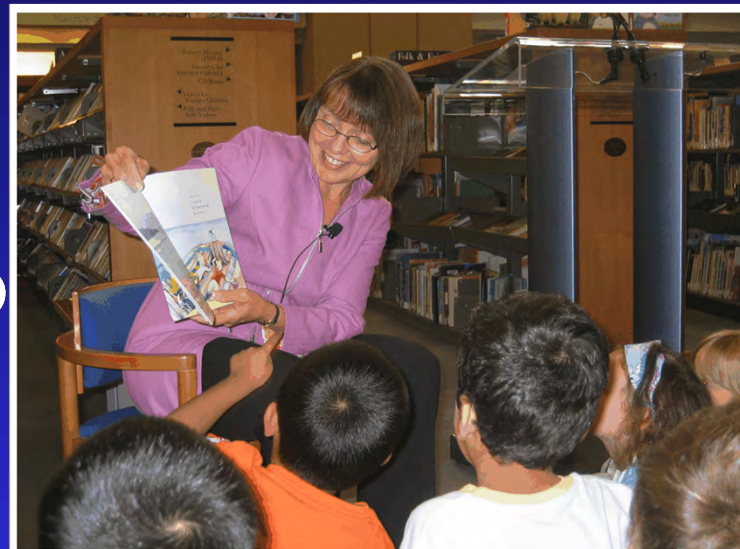
- ❖ 10 years ago I spoke at ROR and met Alan Mendelsohn
- ❖ Alan is a pediatrician, convinced that the only way to help children from disadvantaged homes is to work with their parents when the child is first born on language, literacy and school readiness through the pediatric clinic.
- ❖ Alan invited me to work with his team as a reading consultant and now a co-investigator.
- ❖ My goal after working with this project is to initiate the Belle/VIP program used with great significant success at Belleview Hospital Clinic in a preschool setting.
- ❖ I have presented our work at reading conference  
Alan presents it at medical conference
- ❖ The work has been published in both medical journals, and in reading publications as well

# Early Development and the Transition to Kindergarten: A Serious Issue

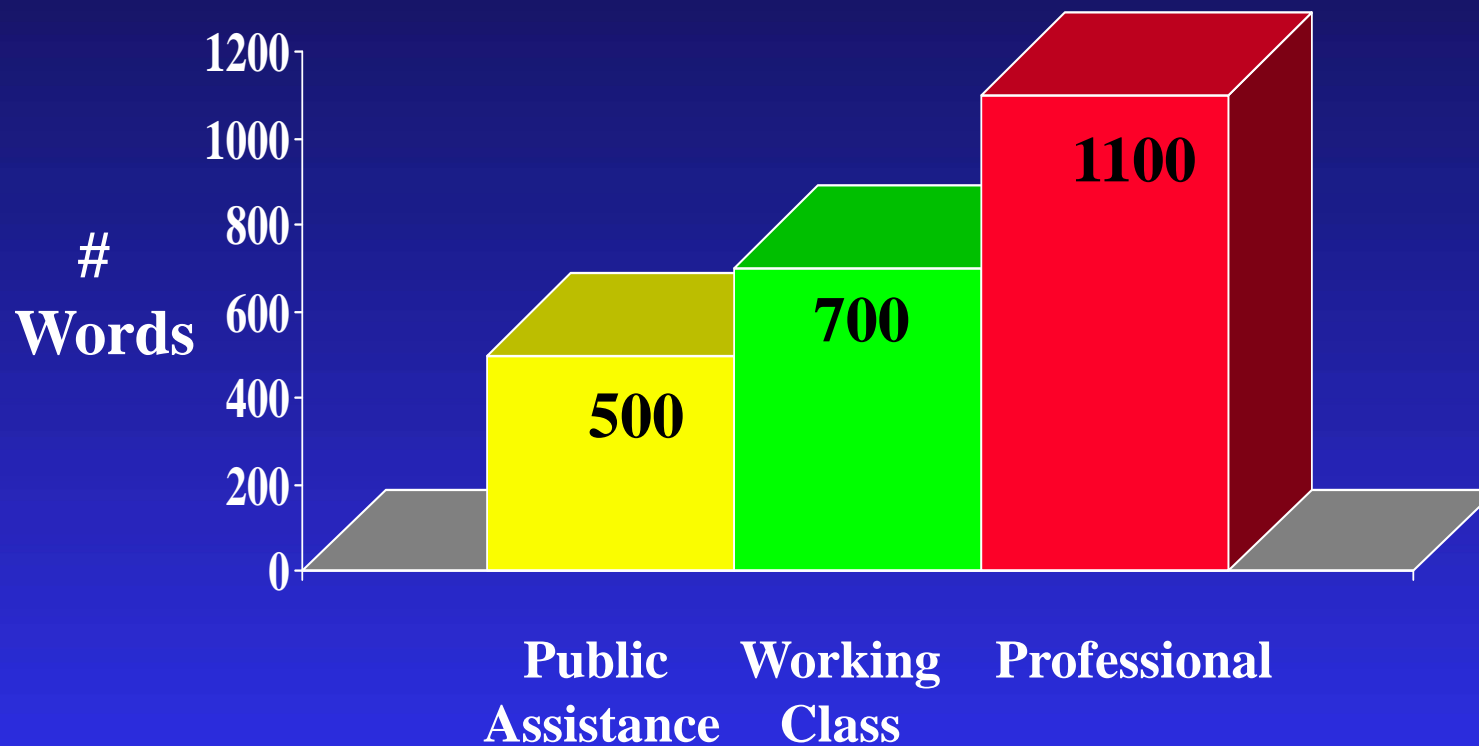
**88% of kindergartners with early reading problems are poor readers in 4th grade (Juel, 1988)**

**Correlation between 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade reading: 0.58 (Cunningham, (1997)**

**If a child's vocabulary at 3 is below about 1000 words they are at risk**

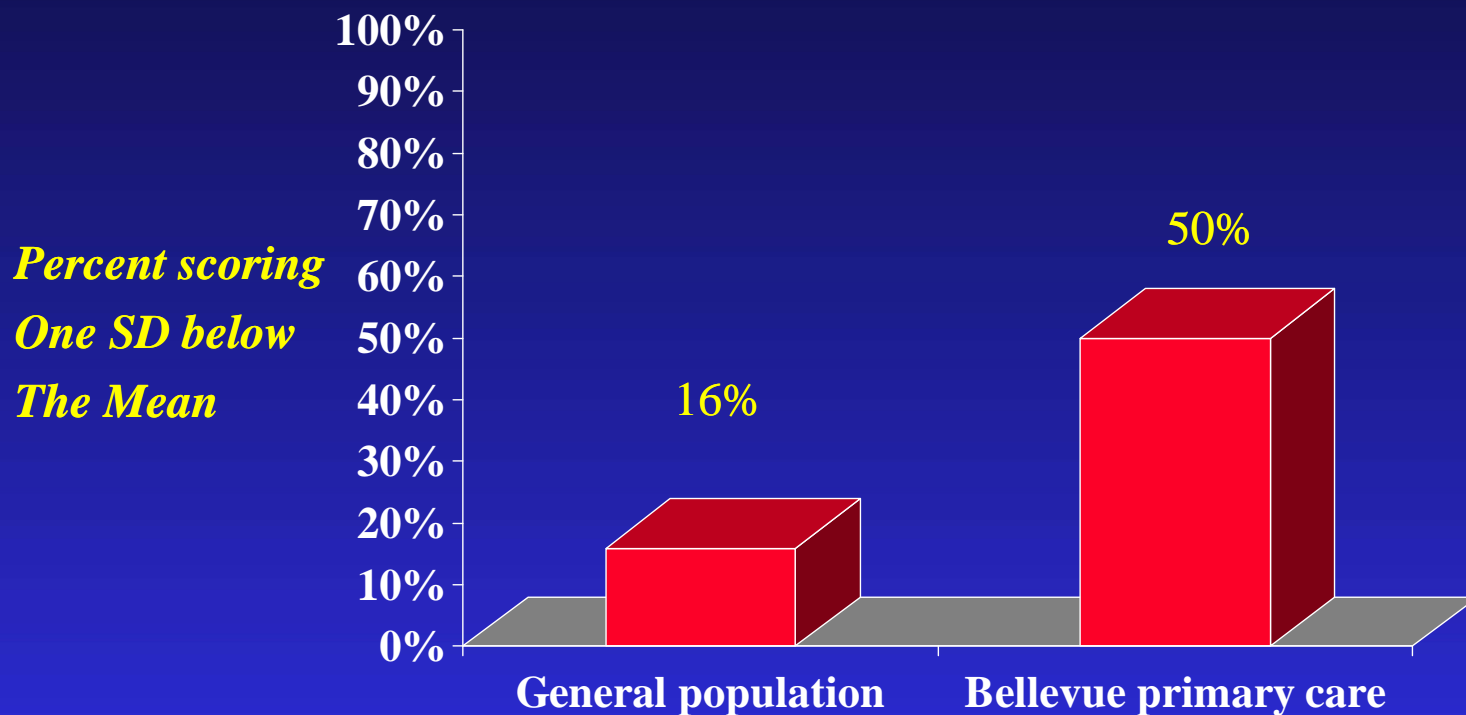


# Cumulative Vocabulary at Age 3 by Socioeconomic Status (SES)



**Hart & Risley, 1995**

## Bellevue: Low Socioeconomic Status (SES) High Risk Families



# *Bellevue Project for Early Language Literacy and Educational Success (BELLE)*

- ❖ **The purpose of the research is to study the optimal level of intervention needed for at risk families involved in parenting programs to enhance language and literacy.**

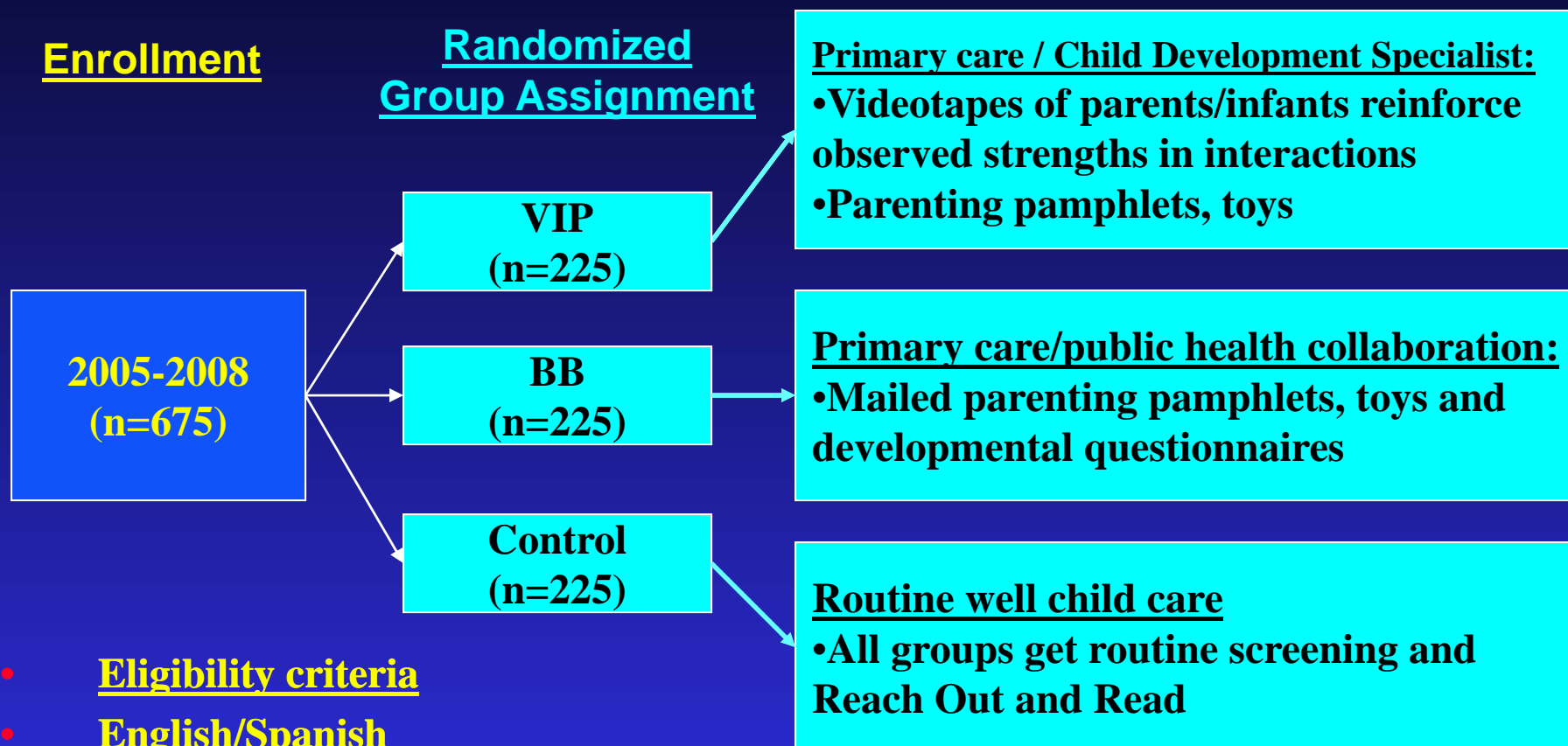
## Treatments

- ❖ **Control group: Reach Out and Read (ROR)**
- ❖ **Higher intensity: Video Interaction Project (VIP)**
- ❖ **Lower intensity: Building Blocks (BB)**

# Study Design

## Enrollment

## Randomized Group Assignment



- Eligibility criteria
- English/Spanish
- Singleton birth
- Uncomplicated
- No EI eligibility
- Stay in NYC for 3+ yrs

### Primary care / Child Development Specialist:

- Videotapes of parents/infants reinforce observed strengths in interactions
- Parenting pamphlets, toys

### Primary care/public health collaboration:

- Mailed parenting pamphlets, toys and developmental questionnaires

### Routine well child care

- All groups get routine screening and Reach Out and Read

# **BELLE Project Methods:** **Reach Out and Read (ROR) Control**

- **Waiting room  
volunteers & staff  
Model reading activities**



# Reach Out and Read (ROR)

- **Health care providers:**
  - **Counsel parents about the importance of reading**
  - **Distribute free children's books and an educational toy (9 - 10 books over 5 years)**



# The Building Blocks Project

- ***Building Blocks* Parenting Newsletters:**
  - Mailed to parents 4 times a year
  - Focus on a parent-child developmental activities
  - Includes stimulating toy and book
  - Back page for parent to complete a questionnaire designed about Ages & Stages (ASQ)

# BB front page:


- Activity for home



The BELLE Project A month-by-month newsletter for you and your child

## 2 Years Old - Happy Birthday!

Blocks are fun. Your child can stack them in towers, build a wall, or make a pretend train.

- Show her how to stack them one on top of the other.
- Let her do it. Can she make a tower of 4 blocks? 6 blocks? More? She'll enjoy knocking it over!
- Get a cereal bowl or a small plastic container. Ask her to put all the blocks into the bowl.
- Make a little train out of five blocks.  Push it. Say, "It's a train. Choo - choo!" Can she make one too?
- You can also name the letters. Or sort the blocks by their color.



Blocks help your child coordinate her hands and eyes. She will learn about letters. And colors. And she can be creative putting the blocks in other ways!

# Ages & Stages Questionnaires

3. Does your baby roll from his back to his tummy, getting both arms out from under him?

4. When you put her on the floor, does your baby lean on her hands while sitting? (If she already sits up straight without leaning on her hands, check "yes" for this item.)



5. If you hold both hands just to balance him, does your baby support his own weight while standing?



6. Does your baby get into a crawling position by getting up on her hands and knees?



**-Parent-completed**  
**-Age specific**  
**-Mailed every 4 months**

**Bricker, Squires, 1988**

# BB Learning Materials





# Video Interaction Project: VIP

- Families meet with a bilingual child development specialist (CDS) at each routine pediatric visit from 2 wks to 3 yrs
- Sessions follow a curriculum focusing on development, enhanced language and literacy, behavior and parenting
- Intervention is built on relationship between specialist and family



## Video Interaction Project (VIP) Four Month Visit

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**BELLE**  
Bellevue Project for Early Literacy,  
Language and Education Success

A project of the Department of Pediatrics of  
New York University School of Medicine and Bellevue Hospital Center.  
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and Children of Bellevue, Inc

### Reading books and talking to your baby:

♥ Looking at books together with your baby is an important way to help him develop language. This is a good age to start making a habit of showing your baby books every day.



♥ As babies learn to reach and grasp, you will notice them putting things in their mouth. Babies mouth things to learn about their environment.

♥ Do not be surprised if you see your baby put the books in his mouth as well as look at the pictures!

♥ It's important to talk to your baby *all* the time. As examples, talk to your baby while dressing, diapering, bathing and feeding.

Dear Dr. \_\_\_\_\_  
is enrolled in the Video Interaction Project (VIP).  
Please reinforce the points covered today:



- Even at this young age, sharing books with your baby is important.
- Allow baby to mouth books and objects so he can learn what things are.
- Talk to your baby at *all* times (e.g. when you're dressing, diapering, bathing and feeding.)

Please be reviewed if your whispertone was not right below.

Parent comments:

What I notice about my baby: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What I want my baby to learn by 6 months: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Questions for my baby's doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions, things to do at home: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Doctor's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Your child development specialist is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: 1 212 562 \_\_\_\_\_