

## BookStart Guidelines

BookStart is a campaign dedicated to supporting early literacy in southern Minnesota communities. Developed by the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) and Capstone Publishers, BookStart encourages children to develop a life-long love of reading and promotes parents to read aloud to their children.

Through partnerships with local organizations, BookStart's mission is to ensure that every child has a book of his or her own at home to read and be read to. Children's informational picture books and easy readers are available to organizations with projects that involve parental involvement and distribute books to children.

### I. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- A. Typed applications must be received by Tuesday, **April 19, 2011**.
- B. Applicants must be a tax-exempt nonprofit, a local unit of government, or a public school district serving SMIF's 20-county region.
- C. Priority will be given to first time applicants or new and creative project/program ideas. *Applicants cannot be a BookStart recipient if they have received a grant for both of the last two years.*
- D. Books must be distributed to children to take home to keep, to read and be read to.

### II. DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- A. Creatively engage parents and caregivers in your BookStart programming. For example, provide opportunities during events and classes to teach/model to caregivers how to read with children in fun and interactive ways.
- B. Collaborate with other organizations or programs in your community.
- C. Target populations that may not be receiving books thru any other avenues in the community. (Place a book in the hands of every child in your community)
- D. Promote early childhood learning and literacy with families.

### III. EXCLUSIONS

- A. Projects not in the scope of this program include:
  - a. Books used as library and/or school books
  - b. Books used for Early Childhood Screening
  - c. Books for resale
  - d. Books not given directly to children
  - e. Books for summer reading incentive programs
  - f. Books as a pass-through from one organization to another

#### **IV. SMIF WILL:**

- A. Distribute approximately **5,000** books to organizations within 20 counties. Please keep this total in mind when making your request.
- B. Have books available for pick up in summer 2011 at the Celebration Event. Please keep this timing in mind when planning your program.
- C. Provide public announcements highlighting the project on behalf of the recipient. Other recognition events may also be planned.

#### **V. GRANTEE WILL:**

- A. Participate in an informational session and celebration scheduled for Summer 2011 (date to be determined) to meet with a representative of Capstone Publishers, share information about their BookStart program and promising strategies, and network with other recipients.
- B. Provide a report on activities and outcomes of the completed project 30 days after the project is completed, but no later than March 31, 2012.
- C. Participate in scheduled site visits prior to, during, and following the project period as deemed necessary by SMIF.
- D. Participate in planned public announcements and recognition events highlighting the project.
- E. Seek ongoing local media coverage and visibility for their program and its sponsor.

#### **VI. APPLICATION PROCESS:**

- A. The application process is not intended to be tedious; however, it is important that you carefully read and follow instructions precisely. If you do not understand any part of the application, please contact Teri Steckelberg at 507-455-3215 or email at [teris@smifoundation.org](mailto:teris@smifoundation.org)
- B. For grant award consideration, submit a completed application by **Tuesday, April 19, 2011** via email to [jenniferh@smifoundation.org](mailto:jenniferh@smifoundation.org) or mail to:

Grants Associate  
Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation  
PO Box 695  
Owatonna, MN 55060

Incomplete grant applications or applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

For those submitted electronically, a hard copy of the signature page must be received within 7 days of the grant deadline.

All applicants will be contacted via email or telephone to confirm receipt of their application.

**Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation** invests for economic growth through key interest areas including early childhood programs, workforce readiness, and economic development with a focus on emerging bioscience and renewable energy businesses. To learn more about our work and mission, visit [www.smifoundation.org](http://www.smifoundation.org).

**Capstone Publishers** is an organization that provides human resources, financial administration, and information services for locally owned and operated companies. Some of these companies include: Capstone Press, Picture Window Books, Red Brick Learning, and Compass Point Books. To learn more about Capstone Publishers and to check out the books available through this grant, visit [www.coughlancompanies.com](http://www.coughlancompanies.com).