

Local Service Initiatives

Name of Initiative: Pioneer Learning Readiness – Medi-sota partnership

Station: Pioneer Public Television – Appleton/Worthington, MN

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Briefly describe the initiative and be as specific as you can be about the products or services that the initiative includes.

In the continuing effort to expand outreach activities Pioneer Learning Readiness (Ready To Learn) jumped at the opportunity to include Parenting Counts in our workshop materials. With our large geographic coverage area the challenge was how to effectively deliver the information. Many small rural communities may only have two or three young families.

Medi-sota is an association of hospitals. Most hospitals are well within the Pioneer viewing area. They were in need of outreach programs that will instill confidence in their services and introduce families to the facilities.

The partnership resulted in giving Pioneer a natural setting to hold workshops while assisting the hospitals in creating a better awareness of their community services. Young families were given an opportunity to learn parenting skills and become acquainted with the local medical programs.

How does this initiative fit into your “portfolio” of other Local Service Initiatives? Is it one of many initiatives and projects, or does it take the bulk of your “Local” resources?

As the only television station headquartered in western Minnesota covering an area roughly the size of West Virginia, the Pioneer Learning Readiness – Medi-sota partnership was an important opportunity for Pioneer to fulfill our mission statement. Not only did the program enhance our existing learning program, but allowed Pioneer to reach a very elusive audience.

What station assets, competencies and/or relationships does the initiative build upon?

Levels of trust, relevancy and being perceived as a public asset were all enhanced by this project. Early education resources are a rare commodity in rural towns.

How would you describe the community benefit of this work? What needs are being addressed?

This outreach activity allowed us to deliver our program to young families that may not be involved with schools and daycare. It was a wonderful benefit. Assisting in the development of patients for the medical facilities will pay dividends in the clinics, families and communities for years to come.

Who is the “customer?”

All families with young children. However, the new families struggling with medical service questions and no relationship with early childhood education opportunities became the most important customer.

How do you know or measure if the customer's needs are being met?

There is a double edged sword in deciding how to measure the success of the partnership in relationship to the customer. The number of participants was lower than going through the schools or ECFE to arrange workshops. However, the feeling that a "different" family was in attendance countered the size limits.

Post workshop questionnaires do provide some information.

Who benefits from the initiative?

Three groups are hopefully gaining benefit from the collaboration:

Most important, the children and families receiving the Ready To Learn & Parenting Counts information.

Pioneer's visibility is increased by providing this program through the hospital.

Likewise, the hospitals are afforded not only publicity through Pioneer, but new potential patients, too.

How do you measure the benefits?

The post workshop questionnaires provide some antidotal information.

**Describe the financial model for the initiative, being as specific as possible. How much does it cost?
What are the sources and amount of revenue? How does it fit into your station's overall economic model?**

Hospitals were offered a sponsorship package to host an event. Pioneer provided on-air promotion, posters, media releases and materials. The hospital funding will assist us in matching the funds that were received in the CPB grant.

Pioneer Learning Readiness is a valuable resource that fits our mission and enhances the regional value of the stations.

Could other stations use this idea or model? Would it work for any size station or licensee type?

For a change, our "ruralness" was an advantage in creating this partnership. For operations that service a large area with few large cities the project could be easily replicated. In larger towns with more medical options striking the right chord may be more difficult.

***Please send this information to Brian Edstrom: bedstrom@tpt.org**