

UPSTREAM RESOLUTION of ALIGNMENT
Aligning Kid Scoop News Practices and Activities
With the Upstream Investments Initiative

RESOLUTION of Kid Scoop News

WHEREAS, the County of Sonoma is sponsoring a community-wide strategic initiative called Upstream Investments with the following **mission**: To facilitate the implementation of prevention-focused policies and interventions that increase equality and reduce monetary and societal costs for all residents of Sonoma County.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments **vision** for all residents of Sonoma County is that poverty is eliminated and all people have an equal opportunity for quality education and good health in nurturing home and community environments.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Initiative is designed to target the following **factors**:

Social and economic factors

Poverty and racial/ethnic disparities

Community conditions

Public opinion, public policy, and laws

Family and individual factors

Family dysfunction

Negative peer influences

Early antisocial behavior

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Initiative seeks to promote four community **goals**:

1. The whole community is engaged in supporting the healthy development of children.
2. Community members have access to education and training and are adequately prepared for the challenges of the future.
3. All community members are well sheltered, safe, and socially supported.
4. Sonoma County has a thriving diverse economy that produces economic security for all.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Initiative seeks to expand **funding** for Model Upstream Programs and also seeks to promote **organizational practices** that support the Upstream Vision.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Strategic Initiative promotes the implementation of **outcomes-based practices** including Evidence-Based Practices, Promising Practices, and Emerging Practices.

WHEREAS, Twenty-two **indicators of success** will inform the community about the success of Upstream Investments.

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| 1. Reduced child maltreatment | 5. Reduced youth tobacco use |
| 2. Reduced youth binge drinking | 6. Reduced teen births |
| 3. Reduced youth drug use | 7. Reduced obesity |
| 4. Reduced youth depression | 8. Improved pre-school attendance |

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| 9. Improved 3 rd grade reading | 16. Reduced adult arrests |
| 10. Improved 3 rd grade math | 17. Reduced domestic violence |
| 11. Improved high school completion | 18. Reduced gang membership |
| 12. Improved higher education | 19. Improved youth connectedness |
| 13. Improved housing affordability | 20. Reduced poverty |
| 14. Reduced homelessness | 21. Reduced unemployment |
| 15. Reduced juvenile arrests | 22. Improved health insurance rates |

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that **Kid Scoop News** shares the Upstream Investments **mission, goals**, commitment to improving the **indicators of success**, and **vision** and has aligned its organizational practices with the Upstream Investments Initiative as follows:

Kid Scoop News is a monthly publication, circulated and distributed in most of Sonoma County's elementary schools. The mission of Kid Scoop is to enable children to become better readers and to enable them to express their basic desire to know about, and become active participants in their local community.

In order to help kids become proficient readers and writers, Kid Scoop enlists the active use of the community newspaper in the classroom to accomplish its mission. The program features an in-paper section for and by children, as well as a unique team approach that involves newspapers, schools, and community supporters.

This team approach provides children with the powerful message that their community is committed to helping each of them become an informed and involved citizens.

In addition to the monthly publication, Kid Scoop News has a non-profit foundation:

The Kid Scoop Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to developing engaged and literate citizens in a diverse society. Our programs are designed to enhance academic achievement and youth involvement in their local communities.

Why newspapers?

1. **Increase literacy levels** -

A recent University of Minnesota research study, *Measuring Success*, found that when newspapers are used as a teaching tool in the classroom at least once a week, academic achievement test scores go up an average of 10%. In high risk, minority populations the increase was more than 30%.

2. **Cost-effective** -

Because newspapers have a business interest in reaching young people, they have an incentive to invest in a program which is not only educationally effective, but also gives them access to future customers. Also, when newspapers become a partner with the local schools, they can provide educational materials at a greatly reduced cost, or even for free.

Newspapers, because they can provide valuable publicity, have the ability to obtain business partners to offset additional costs.

3. **Civic Participation** -

When students regularly read their local newspaper, they become exposed to democracy in action. They read about how people in a community contribute to the quality of life; they read about problems communities' face and the differing opinions on how to solve these problems. They have to become good readers; they have to learn to distinguish fact from opinion, understand points of view and become critical thinkers as well as readers. They also become exposed first-hand to the importance of free speech and a free press. They also learn how local government works, something that is nearly impossible to find in today's textbooks. Talk to any person actively involved in a community and they are readers of their local newspaper. Once people understand their communities, they find ways to get involved and serve.

A 2010, Third Grade Reading Report, commissioned by Celebrate Community and The Press Democrat, revealed that 54% of Sonoma County third graders are reading below proficient. Within this population, seventy-three percent of our economically disadvantaged children are below proficient. We know there is a very real correlation between elementary school test scores and crime rates. However, before becoming part of the criminal justice system, offenders spend years of frustration and failure in school. Integral to this situation is the inability to read. Thus begins a vicious circle that has a collective impact on all of us.

Adding the reduced tax revenues and increased public expenditures for crime, welfare, and health, economist Henry Levin and his colleagues estimated that the "average" 20-year-old dropout generates more than \$200,000 in economic losses over his or her working lifetime, while an entire cohort of 20-year-old dropouts generates a total economic loss of \$148 billion.

Dropouts are indeed costly. But the costs are not just economic.

The high rate of poverty among dropouts is transmitted from one generation to the next. Children raised in poor families are two to seven times more likely to be poor in early adulthood compared to children raised in non-poor families.

And the low voter and civic engagement of dropouts undermines our democratic way of life. As political scientist Larry Bartels points out, the growing economic inequality in our country produces inequality in political responsiveness and public policies that are increasingly detrimental to the interests of the poorest and least educated Americans.

President Obama recognized that every American has a stake in solving the nation's dropout crisis when he said: "So this is a problem we cannot afford to accept and we cannot afford to ignore. The stakes are too high – for our children, for our economy, and for our country."

Russell W. Rumberger is Vice Provost for Education Partnerships at the University of California Office of the President and Professor of Education at UC Santa Barbara. He also directs the California Dropout Research Project.

Kid Scoop News is strategically positioned for expanding Upstream Investments and we intend to submit Kid Scoop to the Upstream Investment Portfolio. The rich and attractive content in Kid Scoop News is embedded in an effective, California LA Standards Based Curriculum. Kid Scoop News is informed by a raft of research that understands the critical need to reach kids at an early age in order to assure reading proficiency by third grade.

- Children learn to read from kindergarten to third grade.
- From fourth grade on, children read to learn.
- High levels of literacy have a positive, collective impact on an individual's life.
- High rates of literacy have a positive, collective impact on a community.

Approved and adopted the **16th** day of **June**. I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the **Kid Scoop News** Board of Directors.

Following Roll Call Vote: Ayes: ___100%___

Nos: ___0___

Absent: ___0___



Vicki Whiting, President

Kid Scoop News

Board of Directors