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LOVE IS BABY BOOK EDITED BY FIRST LADY MCCRAY AND PUBLISHED BY SCHOLASTIC, TRANSLATED INTO FIVE MORE LANGUAGES

Book encourages interaction for baby brain development, now in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Korean, Bengali, Chinese and Russian

NEW YORK—*Love Is*, an original baby book developed and edited in collaboration with Scholastic by First Lady Chirlane McCray for the NYC Children’s Cabinet is now available in five new languages: Korean, Haitian Creole, Bengali, Chinese and Russian. The book was already available in English and Spanish.

The book, which is intended for infants, features New York City parents and caregivers with their children and is part of the NYC Children’s Cabinet’s ongoing Talk to Your Baby campaign. The campaign materials, including posters and tip cards on how to support infants’ brain development, have also been translated into the five additional languages.

Babies’ brains grow rapidly between birth and age three. Research shows that reading, talking and singing to babies and toddlers is critical for their brain development. Studies have also found that by age four, children in middle and upper income families hear 30 million more words than lower-income peers. That difference translates directly into learning and knowing fewer words, leaving children with the fewest resources even farther behind.

“Reading, singing and talking with your children so often leads to treasured memories. There are many fond moments I remember of bedtime books, energetic songs and silly stories with Chiara and Dante. Now I know those interactions grew our love and their brains, too,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. “Reading, singing and talking to your children sets them on the path for lifelong success by firing up brain development and strengthening emotional bonds. I’m honored that more New Yorkers can use this book to create happy moments and strong foundations.”

Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Richard Buery said, “Studies have found that by age four, children in low-income families hear 30 million fewer words than their upper and middle-income peers. *Love Is*, First Lady McCray’s children’s book, is a great resource to help parents and caregivers read, talk and sing to their babies in their first language.”

“We’re grateful to Scholastic for not only working with the First Lady to create the beautiful *Love Is* book, but also ensuring that young families of different ethnicities across our city can enjoy this resource. These 200,000 book bundles are truly a toolkit, arming parents with the materials they need to build a strong foundation for mental and emotional growth in the next generation of New Yorkers,” said **Gabrielle Fialkoff, Senior Advisor to the Mayor and Director of the Mayor’s Office of Strategic Partnerships.**

“Scholastic is honored to work with First Lady Chirlane McCray and the NYC Children’s Cabinet who are partners in our mission to increase access to books that will open a world of possibilities for children of all ages and backgrounds,” said **Greg Worrell, President of Scholastic Education.** “By reflecting the multicultural households of New York City through language, we are able to bring *Love Is* to even more families and engage caretakers in the importance of reading aloud and laying the groundwork for strong literacy development.”

The Talk to Your Baby campaign promotes language acquisition, parent-child attachment and healthy brain development by encouraging parents to talk, read and sing to their babies from birth. Developed with support from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the campaign’s partners include Scholastic Inc., The Clinton Foundation and the Sesame Street Workshop. As a part of that campaign, Scholastic Inc. has donated 200,000 Baby Book Bundles that will be distributed across the city to low-income families with children ages zero to three. The bundles will be distributed through City Agencies and the Reach Out and Read program and will include the translated editions.

“Science proves that speaking and reading to our children as soon as they are born is crucial for their development. *Love Is* is a wonderful tool and its translation into Haitian Creole and other languages will help families throughout the city,” said **Council Member Mathieu Eugene.** “As Chairman of the Youth Services Committee, I’m devoted to making sure all our youth – including our youngest New Yorkers – have all the opportunities they need to succeed, and I’d like to commend First Lady Chirlane McCray for her dedication to our children and their parents. I’d also like to thank Scholastic for publishing this important baby book. This is going to have a positive impact on our city for generations to come.”

“Thank you to First Lady Chirlane McCray for her tremendous work to ensure our newest New Yorkers and their families are given equal access to early childhood education no matter their income level or language proficiency,” said **Council Member Peter Koo.**

“As a former educator, I believe strongly that the foundation for learning begins at an early age. Parents and primary caretakers have an important responsibility to spur cognitive development as early as possible, and there is no better way to do that than by reading to your child. I applaud this effort to bring the opportunity to get an educational head start to more families across the City, regardless of their ethnic, racial or linguistic background. I am extremely proud to be the first Russian-speaking member elected to the City Council, so I also want to express my appreciation to the First Lady for including the City’s vibrant and thriving Russian-speaking community in this initiative,” said **Council Member Mark Treyger.**

“Reading, in any language, is an integral part of a child’s intellectual development, their educational success and overall happiness,” said **Council Member Margaret Chin**. “I thank the First Lady, as well as the NYC Children’s Cabinet and Scholastic, for creating this important resource for parents and caregivers, which will now be available to even more New Yorkers.”

“As the child of Caribbean immigrants, when I think back about my childhood, fond memories of my mother reading to me come to mind,” said **Council Member and Deputy Leader Jumaane D. Williams**. “I applaud the First Lady for her leadership on this issue. Family bonding through shared reading are a fundamental key to successful childhood development. As the representative of the 45th Council District, which includes one of the nation’s largest Haitian American communities, I am happy this book will be made available to their families in their native language. As many of my constituents would say, ‘Sa Se’ Bon Bagay! Merci!”

The NYC Children’s Cabinet recently launched the next phase of Talk to Your Baby, announcing a series of baby showers that First Lady McCray kicked off last month. Future baby showers will include events tailored to fathers and male caregivers, young parents, Spanish-speaking parents and caregivers and LGBTQ families. Space is limited, so parents and caregivers must RSVP in advance upon receipt of an invitation. They can sign up for invitations to future baby showers [here](#). Parents and caregivers are eligible to attend if they are currently expecting a child or have a child under one-year-old.

The NYC Children’s Cabinet consists of 24 City agencies and Mayoral offices and is chaired by Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Richard Buery. Cabinet agencies work together to advance the administration’s commitment to increasing child safety and wellbeing in high-need communities.

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