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The Reading Connection Opens Reading Program at Alexandria's Ruby Tucker Family Center

The Reading Connection (TRC) announces the opening of its 12th Read-Aloud site at the Ruby Tucker Family Center. The Ruby Tucker Center is an education and community center in Old Town Alexandria located at the Hopkins-Tancil Apartments of the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA).

TRC's Read-Aloud program is designed to bring together volunteer readers and at-risk children with the aim of providing the children free, new books and positive book experiences. It has been instrumental in encouraging at-risk children to spend more time reading in shelters and affordable housing apartments for 22 years.

The Ruby Tucker Family Center is a facility of ARHA's, which is TRC's partner in this reading promotion program. Alexandria nonprofit Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria will also partner in this effort. In the past year, ARHA, The Partnership, and Achieve Alexandria inaugurated a children's "I Can Shine" garden on the grounds of the Hopkins-Tancil Apartments and Ruby Tucker Center.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to be able to bring our Read-Aloud program to the children at Ruby Tucker," said Courtney Kissell, TRC's Executive Director. "What fun to add reading activities to gardening activities!" One Read-Aloud session each month will be devoted to the topics of gardening and healthy lifestyles.

"The Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing Authority (ARHA) is very excited about the partnership with The Reading Connection (TRC) at The Ruby Tucker Center. Studies have shown that children who participate in reading programs maintain or improve their reading skills. At ARHA we believe that everyone must do their part to provide safe and positive alternatives for our children. The reading program is definitely a positive alternative that will elevate their desire to read and improve school performance", said ARHA CEO, Roy Priest.

The Reading Connection (TRC) was founded in 1989. The Reading Connection's four literacy programs, The Read-Aloud Program, The Book Club, Parent Workshops and Staff Trainings, offer a continuum of services to encourage at-risk families to promote reading. In Fiscal Year 2009, TRC gave away a total of 9,000 books, reached more than 450 children in read-alouds, enrolled more than 1,000 children in the Book Club and held more than 80 workshops and trainings. www.thereadingconnection.org