

READING AND COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS

Thirty-seven years ago, Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development started making home visits around Marvell to teach small children the alphabet and reading, and to instill the love of reading. This was the key to all hope, the best chance to give the children an opportunity and a chance for lifetime success.

Research began to prove this connection. When children in Michigan received intensive early-childhood reading instruction, it was found that these children excelled in education, at work and in life thirty years later. They had better jobs, higher incomes and happier families.



BGACDC eventually would incorporate and expand the literacy aspect of the home visits into every youth program offered by the organization. The home reading program grew into Summer Day Camp, a recreational day camp with a reading component that then became a "Freedom School" site, a historical literary day camp with a recreational component.

BGACDC also participates in the Arkansas Grade Level Reading Program in conjunction with the Marvell-Elaine School District and other state, regional and community organizations. The goal of this program is to have all children reading at or above grade level by third grade. Summer day camps concentrating on tutoring and reading have now become part of a more encompassing year-round literacy campaign.

Collaborating with the schools and community groups became part of BGACDC's vision: to create a healthy and safe community by working together with schools, churches, parents, the government and civic groups to meet the needs of children from toddlers to young adulthood. Grade-level reading was the foundation for also addressing other pressing issues such as health and recreational, housing and social opportunities.



Moral and financial help from the community and from those who have moved away has been essential to the success of BGACDC. The goal has not wavered and the needs have not lessened. Help us continue to make a difference in the future of our children.