

# THE CHALLENGE

## LACK OF BASIC LITERACY SKILLS IS LINKED WITH



ACADEMIC  
FAILURE



SUBSTANCE  
ABUSE



TEEN  
PREGNANCY



DELINQUENCY



WELFARE  
DEPENDENCY

## LITERACY CHALLENGES BEGIN AT BIRTH



13:1 RATIO OF BOOKS PER CHILD IN  
MIDDLE-INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS  
1:300 RATIO OF BOOKS PER CHILD IN  
LOW-INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS



50% OF CHILDREN FROM LOW-INCOME  
COMMUNITIES START FIRST GRADE  
UP TO 2 YEARS BEHIND THEIR PEERS

## ACADEMIC SUCCESS DEPENDS ON READING

2 MOST IMPORTANT INDICATORS  
OF FUTURE ACADEMIC SUCCESS:



BOOKS IN THE HOME  
AND  
BEING READ TO AS A CHILD

LOW ACHIEVEMENT IN  
**4TH GRADE**  
IS A POWERFUL PREDICTOR  
OF LIFETIME EARNINGS



STUDENTS WHO DON'T  
READ PROFICIENTLY BY  
3RD GRADE ARE

**4X**

MORE LIKELY TO DROP  
OUT OF SCHOOL

## DROPPING OUT LEADS TO DECREASED QUALITY OF LIFE



**90%**

OF DROPOUTS ARE ON WELFARE

**85%**

OF JUVENILES ON  
TRIAL ARE ILLITERATE



LOW LITERACY IN PRE-TEEN GIRLS  
NEARLY DOUBLES THE RATE OF  
TEEN PREGNANCY

## BOOKS EMPOWER CHILDREN TO EXPLORE NEW IDEAS



**Bernie's Book Bank is empowering children 8 books at a time.  
The organization sources, processes and distributes quality children's books to  
increase book ownership among children throughout Chicagoland.**