



## Building a Parent Nation

A GLR Learning Tuesdays  
Learning Loss Recovery Challenge/Partner Webinar  
Co-Sponsored by TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health

November 2, 2021 | 12:30-2 pm ET/9:30-11 pm PT

### *Panelist Bios*

## PRESENTERS



### **Dr. Dana Suskind**

**Professor of Surgery & Pediatrics**

**Co-Director**

**TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health, University of Chicago**

**@DrDanaSuskind | @TMWCenter**

Dana Suskind, MD is Co-Director of the TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health at the University of Chicago. A Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics and Director of the Pediatric Cochlear Implant Program. Her clinical work focuses on pediatric cochlear implantation and her research focuses on optimizing children’s foundational brain development and preventing early cognitive disparities and their lifelong impact. She is the author of the book, *Thirty Million Words: Building a Child’s Brain* and of a forthcoming book, *Parent Nation*, which empowers parents to use developmental neuroscience to build a society that works for families, not against them.



### **Yolie Flores**

**National Campaign Director**

**TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health, University of Chicago**

**@itsyolie | @TMWCenter**

Yolie Flores is National Campaign Director for Parent Nation, also at the TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health. In this capacity, Yolie is leading the “on the ground” efforts, developing strategic and innovative efforts and tools to help activate parents and allies to join in building a parent nation. Previously, Yolie was Chief Learning Officer at the Campaign for Grade Level Reading, where she led the Successful Parents Initiatives, helped launch GLR Learning Tuesdays, and developed the Campaign’s Learning and Engagement Opportunities (LEO) framework. Yolie’s 30-year career advancing the well-being of children and families has earned her the distinction of being named Social Worker of the Year, twice, in her region.

## Commentators



**Beth Duda**

**Director, Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading  
The Patterson Foundation  
@duda\_beth | @suncoastcglr**

Since May of 2015, Beth Duda has been one of the driving forces of the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (SCGLR). SCGLR is a four-county effort in Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties to help children from birth through 3rd grade, especially those from asset-limited families, succeed in life by ensuring they read on grade level.

As the director of SCGLR, Beth works closely with local lead partners— Community Foundation of Sarasota County, United Way Suncoast, and United Way of Charlotte County—to drive progress in the region. To embed lasting change, the future-focused partners strive to collaborate with every sector: people, business, nonprofits, government, and the media.

Multiple Pacesetter Honors from the national Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (annually since 2014) affirm the success of SCGLR's collaborative effort and its work. Pacesetter Honors highlight communities that make measurable progress on key indicators of early school success, including early literacy and school readiness, chronic absenteeism and its effects on reading progress, and mitigating summer learning loss by connecting children with quality educational opportunities and programs.

Beth is a proud member of Leadership Florida's Education Class IV, a statewide community of leaders working for a better Florida. She has written, co-written, and created several one-act plays performed for thousands of school-aged children. Recently, she used her playwriting skills to write *Abraham Lincoln & Frederick Douglass, A Walk to Respect*, which The Patterson Foundation produced in partnership with Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe as part of TPF's 10th-anniversary celebration, Honoring & Onward.

An award-winning playwright and educator, Beth spent more than twenty years working with students and educators in elementary schools as part of the Education Department of Florida Studio Theatre. These experiences fueled her commitment to deepening community connections to improve reading proficiency in our region and beyond. In her twenty-plus years of arts education, Beth's sensitive and visionary education and learning approach continues to inspire students, parents, and educators. Beth was raised in Central New York and received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from SUNY-Oswego.



**Liletta Jenkins**

**State Children's Policy  
Council Manager  
AL Dept. of Early Childhood Ed.  
@AL\_DECE**

With 23 years of working with the State of Alabama, Liletta M. Jenkins serves as the State Children’s Policy Council Manager and State Lead for Alabama Campaign for Grade Level Reading for the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education.

In this position she oversees the State Children’s Policy Council, 67 County Children’s Policy Councils, and 5 Campaign for Grade Level Reading communities. She has led the Campaign for Grade Level Reading communities through a data prioritization tool process that explored data, needs, and gaps for formulating literacy plans based on the Alabama Grade Level Reading framework; birth to eight systems, family engagement, health, and well-being, learning outside of the classroom, supports for struggling readers, special education, and ELL. She has helped the local campaigns to secure funding for projects and supported local campaigns efforts to improve access to books through the development of mobile libraries, community lending library boxes, Dolly Parton Imagination Library expansion, and language access plans.

She has led state GLR strategies for Reach Out and Read Alabama expansion and Born Ready University 0-3 parenting trainings across the state to support early language and literacy. She has developed state and regional professional development trainings to improve Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Family Engagement, and Literacy conditions for children and families. She is an advocate for the well-being of children and serves on state and local boards; Alabama Literacy Alliance, End Child Hunger in Alabama, Alabama Council of Developmental Disabilities, Alabama Voices for Children’s Healthy Food Access Campaign, and One Place Family Justice Center.

Liletta earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and Master of Science degree in Management from Faulkner University in Montgomery, Alabama. She is a mother and resides in Montgomery, AL with her two children.



**Jane Park**  
**Director**  
**Too Small to Fail**  
**The Clinton Foundation**  
**@2SmalltoFail**

Jane Park is the Director of *Too Small to Fail*, the early childhood initiative of the Clinton Foundation, where she leads national partnerships with corporations, nonprofit organizations, and associations to promote children’s early brain and language development. Prior to her role with *Too Small to Fail*, Jane served as an early childhood education consultant, working with various nonprofits and media organizations to develop research-based programs and content for young children and families in the U.S. and the U.K. Jane was previously the Associate Director of Content in the Education, Research, and Outreach department at Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit organization behind *Sesame Street*. In that role, she helped develop the whole child curriculum on which the television series is based and integrate *Sesame Street*’s educational content across media platforms—including print, video, online, social media, and licensed products. Jane holds an MA in developmental psychology from Teachers College, Columbia University and a BA in communications from the University of California at San Diego.

## MODERATOR



**Ginger Young**  
**Founder and Executive Director**  
**Book Harvest**  
**@bookharvestnc**

Ginger Young is a nonprofit professional and children’s literacy advocate in North Carolina. She founded Book Harvest ([www.bookharvest.org](http://www.bookharvest.org)) in 2011 after recognizing the lack of equitable book access for youth in her home community of Durham, NC. Guided by two evidence-based facts -- that home libraries and parental involvement are essential to the healthy development of children -- the organization focuses on book abundance and early childhood literacy coaching and support for families, starting this work at the moment of birth. Under Ginger’s leadership, more than 1.5 million books have been harvested by children and families to take home and keep, supporting them in building home libraries. Her dream is that every child grows up in a home that is brimming with books and falls asleep each night enjoying a bedtime story with a parent; and that every parent feels supported in their role as their child’s first teacher and most heartfelt advocate.

Ginger is a founding member of the steering committee of Durham’s Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. She serves on the Board of Directors of The Hill Learning Center, an organization committed to transforming students with learning differences into confident, independent learners. She is a founding member of the North Carolina Public Education Task Force, and she serves on the National Advisory Board of the international social enterprise First Book. Ginger is a graduate of Harvard College and received her MPA from Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government. She is the mom of three avid readers.