



***Quality programs that inform, involve and inspire***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**READY, SET, GROW: A one-hour primetime show on Early Learning from KCTS 9**

**SEATTLE** — In the first three years of life, a baby's brain triples its weight and makes 2 million connections per second. Through extensive research, scientists have discovered that children are, in fact, born learning, and in the first five years, they absorb the world around them at incredibly rapid rates. KCTS 9 explores the early learning of children from birth to age 5 in the town hall special **Ready, Set, Grow**, which combines panel discussions taped before a live studio audience with field reports and in-depth interviews. Hosted by Enrique Cerna, the one-hour program examines the cutting-edge research being conducted in Seattle on brain development during the crucial years from birth to age 5, and also explores the societal impact of early learning and how policymakers in our region and beyond are creating programs to help families. In addition, the special provides information about what parents, grandparents and other child care providers can do to foster learning during these vital years.

**Ready, Set, Grow** airs on KCTS 9 Wednesday, May 27, at 8:00 p.m. The Spanish-language version, **Aprender y Crecer Con Su Hijo** ("Learn and Grow with Your Child"), airs on KCTS 9's V-me digital channel (available across Washington state) at 7:00 p.m. Friday, May 29, and Saturday, May 30.

**Ready, Set, Grow** taps the knowledge and insights of engaging guests and policy experts including:

- **Dr. Andrew Meltzoff**, co-director of the University of Washington Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences (I-LABS); an internationally renowned expert on infant and child cognitive and social development whose discoveries have revolutionized our understanding of early memory and brain development
- **Dr. Patricia Kuhl**, I-LABS co-director and one of the world's leading authorities on language development, whose research has played a key role in showing how early experience alters brain mechanisms
- **Dr. Bette Hyde**, director of the Washington State Department of Early Learning
- **Rep. Ruth Kagi (D-Lake Forest Park)**, chair of the House Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services and legislative member of the Washington State Early Learning Council
- **William Gates Sr.**, co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- **Nina Auerbach**, president and CEO of Thrive by Five Washington, which works to create early-learning supports, services and systems for children and families

- **Terry Meersman**, vice chair of Talaris Institute, a Seattle-based nonprofit research institute that supports parents and caregivers in raising socially and emotionally healthy children
- **Bob Watt**, community activist on behalf of early-learning issues and member of the board of trustees of Casey Family Programs, a Seattle-based national foundation
- **Mary Gentry**, program director for PEPS (Program for Early Parent Support) and parent educator for the Parent Child Center at Seattle Central Community College
- **Linda Crisalli**, a specialist in early childhood education who has worked with, and on behalf of, young children and their families since 1969

**Ready, Set, Grow** is presented in four segments. The first segment looks at the science of early learning. Included are a taped field story on how we came to know what we know about infant brain development, and an interview with Dr. Andrew Meltzoff and Dr. Patricia Kuhl, co-directors of a multimillion-dollar University of Washington laboratory that's at the forefront of current early-learning research. Their work has yielded significant discoveries about cognitive development and social understanding and how the brain processes language. A field story about dual language learning reveals what happens in a child's brain when two languages are learned simultaneously and addresses the question of whether or not it's better to learn a primary language before learning a second language.

The second segment of the program focuses on public policy, with a field story that reveals why every dollar spent on early childhood education pays dividends of as much as \$16, and a panel discussion and audience Q&A on what the state's top policymakers are doing to help promote early childhood education.

The third segment looks at the critical role being played by some of Seattle's biggest and wealthiest nonprofits. In a panel discussion, representatives of these nonprofits share their organizations' plans and objectives. Viewers also hear about the research these nonprofits conduct on their own, and how they collect and use research done by others worldwide. A taped story looks at early-learning initiatives in other countries such as Canada, which has *twice* the rate of school readiness as the United States, and asks: What are Europe and China doing that America isn't? What works, and what doesn't?

The final segment provides helpful information for those who interact directly with babies and with children under age 5. A panel of experts takes audience questions and tackles topics ranging from how to stimulate learning to which educational toys to choose to how to pick a child care center or preschool.

Featured throughout **Ready, Set, Grow** are interactive quiz questions on child development, with answers revealed in the segment that follows.

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*The KCTS 9 mission is to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve by providing meaningful programming on air, online and in the community that informs, involves and inspires.*