

## Educational Media and Engagement

The Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, as amended, established a vision for media that would be used for “instructional, educational, and cultural purposes,” and encouraged “the development of programming that involves creative risks and that addresses the needs of unserved and underserved audiences, particularly children and minorities.” Reaching nearly 99 percent of U.S. households, public media uses its tremendous reach — on air, online, and in communities — to provide learning resources to children and families throughout the United States, in diverse communities and at all income levels.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) invests in content and community engagement that provides parents, teachers and children, especially those in low-income communities, with high-quality content on multiple platforms and in different settings that improves learning outcomes. With support from CPB and other partners, local public media stations provide a range of educational and learning services to their communities, in formal (i.e., schools) and informal learning environments, based on local needs.

### Children’s Content

Families trust public media to provide content that is safe, fun, free, and educational for their children. CPB’s longstanding support for innovative children’s media projects, such as PBS KIDS Kart Kingdom, has positioned public media as a leading online destination for children. Recent examples of CPB-funded children’s educational content include:

- “Molly of Denali” (premiering in summer 2019)
- “Splash and Bubbles”
- “Ready Jet Go!”
- “Nature Cat”
- “Odd Squad”
- “Peg + Cat”
- “Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood”



### Ready To Learn

Ready To Learn (RTL) is a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department of Education, CPB, and PBS that leverages the capacity of public media to address the critical school readiness needs of children ages 2-8, especially those in low-income households. An independent meta-analysis by Lisa B. Hurwitz of Northwestern University, published in the February 2018 [Child Development](#) journal, found that exposure to RTL content improved children’s literacy skills, especially vocabulary and phonics concepts, equal to about one and a half months of learning beyond typical growth.

The U.S. Department of Education solicits competitive bids for RTL every five years, and Congress considers and determines funding annually. CPB and PBS have received funding to implement RTL since its inception more than 20 years ago. The 2015-2020 RTL grant, Content, Community and Collaboration: Advancing Children’s Learning Through Personalized Media Experiences, focuses on

engaging families with evidence-based and high-education-value television programs and digital content that build children’s literacy and science skills.

RTL has provided vital funding for public media’s children’s content and services, including “Molly of Denali” (premiering 2019), “The Ruff Ruffman Show,” “Ready Jet Go!,” “Peg + Cat,” “Super Why!” and “Between the Lions.” RTL commercial-free content is available on broadcast, online and via mobile apps that are distributed for free to low-income communities, where family access to mobile devices continues to increase. The U.S. Department of Education requires rigorous evaluation and over the past five years, this research has shown that RTL-funded work has successfully increased performance in math and literacy of children ages 2-8, fostered increased family engagement, and empowered parents and educators to support children’s learning.

### **American Graduate**

The American Graduate initiative is public media’s long-term commitment to help young people succeed in school, career and life. During the past six years public media stations across the country forged community connections and innovative partnerships to help improve student outcomes – substantially contributing to an increase in the national high school graduation rate to an all-time high of 84 percent. National and local reporting, on air and online is helping communities understand the challenges and community-driven solutions associated with education and future successes. Public forums, town halls and community conversations have activated discussions between community leaders, educators and other stakeholders.



American Graduate was launched in 2011 with 25 public media stations in high need communities to spotlight the high school dropout crisis. In 2018, CPB awarded 19 public media stations a total of \$3.7 million to advance education and career readiness in their communities.

More than 21,000 hours of local and national American Graduate content have reached more than 10 million households, and thousands of interactive resources are available for students, parents and teachers in the American Graduate Collection in PBS LearningMedia.

## **BY THE NUMBERS**



**\$17M +**  
raised by  
local stations



**21,397**  
content  
hours



**1,700**  
partners



**9,000+**  
American  
Graduate  
Champions\*



**5,453**  
events,  
meetings,  
convenings



**100s** of interns,  
community  
producers,  
students trained