

News Release

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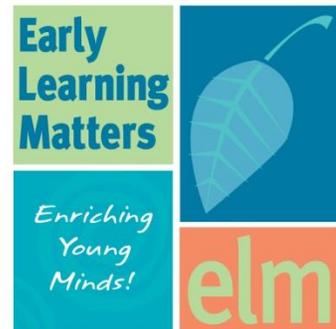
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Early Learning Matters Launches a Service Learning Project to Benefit Local Animal Shelter

Hillsboro, OR-April 28, 2014- Young leaders at Early Learning Matters (ELM) Preschool and Kindergarten have been busy collecting supplies and raising money for Bonnie L. Hays Animal Shelter. The service learning project compliments the schools leadership initiative *The Leader in Me*. This program is based on Stephen Covey's "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" that develops important 21st century leadership skills.

"Very young children can act as leaders and serve their community," says Kandy Dicken, Director of ELM. "This project fulfills a dual purpose; to gather much needed resources for local animals in need and to teach young children to engage in unselfish and altruistic behaviors." She adds, "Academics are important, but school must also be a place where children practice, and ultimately make a habit of, crucial skills such as empathy, initiative, collaboration, responsibility, and problem solving."

Students are collecting donations of pet food, treats for training, animal toys, and medical and grooming supplies. They are also conducting a penny drive. The students' goal is to fill two extra-large boxes with supplies and raise \$50.00 in pennies through May 21st. Supplies will be delivered to the shelter by students and families on May 22nd. Bonnie L. Hays, located in Washington County, cared for roughly 4,000 stray, abandoned, or neglected animals in 2013 alone.

About Early Learning Matters (ELM): ELM provides opportunities in an enriched environment for children to develop strong thinking skills. Programs include an innovative Preschool, Pre-K, and Kindergarten program, summer classes, and community, parent, and teacher education. ELM serves many families from a broad spectrum in the greater Portland Metro area. While there are approximately 1500 schools to offer Franklin Covey's *The Leader in Me* program worldwide, ELM remains the only school licensed in Oregon, providing the program since 2010. For more information on Early Learning Matters visit www.strongthinkers.com. For more information on *The Leader in Me* visit www.theleaderinme.org.



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