

Recognizing Our Social Responsibility

At Platypus Media, our tagline is *Resources for Families, Teachers, and Parenting Professionals*. We know that it takes a village to raise a child, and we know that parents, teachers and parenting professionals are critical members of that village.



At Science, Naturally!, our tagline is *Bridging the Gap Between the Blackboard and the Blacktop*. Our niche is in inspiring kids to *want* to learn more about math and science and making these topics fun for the whole family. Our mission is to help kids make connections in math and science in ways where they get to that “Ah ha!” moment. We hope to help kids see how the curriculum they’ve been tasked to learn applies in the world in which their lives unfold.

Many people don’t know that Platypus Media and Science, Naturally! are under the same ownership. And many of those who do haven’t thought about the connection between the two. For us, maternal and child health are intrinsically related. In fact, in May 2010 the science academies of the G8 nations issued a statement recommending that world leaders commit more funding to improve the health of women, newborns, and children, including expanding access to prenatal and obstetric care. The academies also urged greater support for science education and entrepreneurial training in Africa and other developing regions, noting that such efforts are essential to spur economic growth and meet emerging challenges in public health and food security.

We pride ourselves in having products for kids from pre-readers to pre-adolescence, adult materials in multiple languages, ranging from low literacy pamphlets to referenced, footnoted materials for healthcare professionals. We have products for mom and dad, for kids, and for educators, whether they work in a school, a museum, or a hospital.

We also pride ourselves in being good citizens, from printing books on paper with post-hyphenated consumer content to donating materials into communities where they can make a difference, from offering incredible discounts to educational nonprofits, to volunteering our time and energy in our communities.

Here are some ways we strive to give back...

Promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Education

We have worked to create a series of entertaining and educational hands-on activities so that young children get excited about learning. We invite the children on stage for various events, all designed to test their knowledge of mammals.

Snugglepus, our lovable 5-foot platypus, has been spotted from San Diego to New York City inspiring kids to ask questions about mammals and learn about the animals we share our planet with.



- **Family Science Presentations**

- American Association for the Advancement of Science Family Science Days
- Prince George’s County (MD) Schools STEM Fair
- World Science Festival (New York City, NY)
- Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History
- Museum of Science, Boston, MA



- **Professional Science Presentations**

- American Association for the Advancement of Science
- National Association of Biology Teachers
- American College of Nurse Midwives

- **School Donations**

- We work with schools all around the country to provide donations for family science events, STEM fairs, and teacher in-service training.

- **Foundation Grant Support**

We provide incredible discounts to schools and educational nonprofits interested in using our trade books to connect with the classroom curriculum. We also provide grant development support to groups interested in seeking outside funds to support their work.

Promoting Literacy in the Community



Studies have found a direct correlation between early literacy and high school graduation rates and future economic success. The discipline, comprehension, and writing skills that children develop from reading prepare them for a variety of challenges. Moreover, researchers have found links between illiteracy and criminal activity. Many states, such as Indiana and California, use the number of children who are not reading at the proper second or third grade level to predict the number of new prison cells that need to be built.

Between our two companies, we create stimulating and educational books for kids from pre-readers to pre-adolescence. We also provide opportunities for adults to expand and extend the content of the books through our free web-based [Activity Guides](#). We also work with local and national community groups to promote literacy.

- **Working in the Schools**

For years, we have worked with [Turning the Page](#), a Washington, DC literacy program that inspires children to read while working with their parents to promote reading in the home.

We have also done programs at schools across the country:

- From preschools in Los Angeles, California to elementary school assemblies in Chautauqua, New York.

- **Working in the Community**

We have given early-childhood and family science presentations at

- Los Angeles Zoo
- National Zoo (Washington, DC)
- Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (Washington, DC)
- Smithsonian Resident Associates Program (Washington, DC)
- Museum of Science (Boston, MA)
- Children's Museum (Washington, DC)
- Children's Museum (Boston, MA)
- National Museum for Women in the Arts (Washington, DC)
- Summer Quest Public Library Programs
 - District of Columbia
 - Prince William County

Topics presented include:

- Learning About Your World Through Books
- Library Resources that Support Community and Cross-Cultural Connections in the Classroom
- Creating Books for Children: How to Write, Illustrate, and Create a Book for Your Family
- Using Children's Literature to Nourish Sibling Relationships
- Raising a Creative, Imaginative, Inventive Child
- Making a Book: Understanding the Process
- Name That Mammal!
- Babies and Mother, Mothers and Babies: How Animals Care for Their Young
- Exploring China and the Chinese New Year

- **Foundation Grant Support**

We provide incredible discounts to schools and educational nonprofits interested in using our picture books to connect with the classroom curriculum. We also provide grant development support to groups interested in seeking outside funds to support their work.

Breastfeeding – Promotion and Protection

- **Supporting World Breastfeeding Week:**

In August of each year, [World Breastfeeding Week](#) is celebrated across the globe. We work with many groups to support this event in many ways:

- **La Leche League USA:**

Each year Platypus Media is a Silver Sponsor for this national event. We were proud to contribute twenty \$10 gift certificates to individuals who raised funds during World Breastfeeding Week.

- **Community Breastfeeding Support**

Each year Platypus Media donates materials and products to local community groups (LLL, WIC, etc.) to help support World Breastfeeding Week locally.



- **Partnering with Community Nonprofits**

- **Family Health and Birth Center, Washington, DC**

Working with the Capitol Hill Community Foundation, Platypus Media worked to strengthen families in our own metropolitan area. In 2010, we supplied the FHBC with 2,358 copies of assorted educational materials in order to support their work of assisting women in need of guidance as they become young parents.



- **Showing Our Commitment Everyday**

- We believe that breastfeeding is the first step in creating a better world. We back up our beliefs by donating 6% of our profits to breastfeeding organizations.

Joan Brickhouse (center), peer counselor at FHBC, Dia Michels, president of Platypus Media, and Rich Wiley, a supporter of the FHBC, at the grant award ceremony.

- Platypus Media is a founding member of the DC Breastfeeding Coalition and the Maryland Breastfeeding Committee.

- Platypus Media has been involved in establishing and administering the annual Workplace Breastfeeding Awards (for the DC metropolitan area).

Breastfeeding Education

Dia has delivered keynote speeches and seminars across the country at maternal and child health conferences and workshops, including:

- International Lactation Consultants Association
- Lamaze, International
- Doulas of North America
- American Association of Birth Centers



- American College of Nurse Midwives
- La Leche League conferences, including their international conferences and state/regional ones in VA, MD, PA, NJ, CO, GA, NC, NH, WA, Southern CA/NV
- Numerous universities, hospitals and physician groups

She speaks on a variety of topics, such as:

- Women as Heroes: Empowerment Through Breastfeeding
- The Culture and Politics of Breastfeeding
- Extending Attachment Parenting Intimacy into the School Years
- The Hunger for Breastmilk
- Breastfeeding Against Odds
- Through the Lens of Lactation: Breastfeeding Benefits Everyone
- The Courageous Act of Lifting Your Shirt: Breastfeeding as Political Activism
- Controversies in Breastfeeding: Examining our own biases
- Fathers—An Important Part of a Breastfeeding Families



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