

Fostering Prosocial Behavior in Young Children

Grant

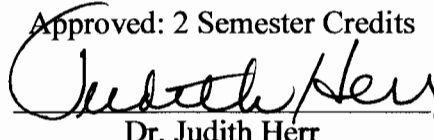
by

Kathy Preusse

**A Research Project Report
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the
Master of Science Degree
in**

Education

Approved: 2 Semester Credits

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judith Herr", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Judith Herr

The Graduate School

University of Wisconsin-Stout

May, 2005

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ABSTRACT

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------|--------------|
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| Fostering Prosocial Behavior in Young Children | | | |
| (Title) | | | |
| Education | Dr. Judith Herr | May, 2005 | 20 |
| (Graduate Program) | (Research Advisor) | (Month/Year) | (# of Pages) |
| American Psychological Association, 5 th edition | | | |
| (Name of Style Manual Used in this Study) | | | |

With so many children in group settings today, positive interactions are a necessity. The development of skills that allow a child to have positive and supportive interactions with others in a socially accepted manner is also a necessity. Therefore, the purpose of this proposal is to address the need to facilitate the development of prosocial behavior in young children through teacher training, new and expanded curriculum, and updated classroom materials.

The goals of this research project are to provide teacher training that focuses on current research and trends in teaching social skill development, expand curriculum resources that emphasize prosocial themes and concepts, and create updated classroom spaces that facilitate positive social interactions.

This research project will be evaluated through the use of questionnaires. The project's dissemination will be through presentation and publication.

This research project will benefit children by providing opportunities to develop prosocial skills such as: playing with others in a positive way; making choices and encounter the benefits and consequences of those choices; identifying how to enter play situations with others; negotiating social conflicts with language and positive social behaviors; and developing other skills that characterize socially competent human beings.

The Child and Family Study Center teachers will benefit be receiving valuable teacher training, curriculum resources and classroom materials that will facilitate prosocial development.

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April 6, 2005

Target Foundation
1000 Nicollet Mall, TPS-3080
Minneapolis, MN 55403

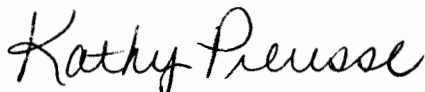
Dear Grant Review Committee,

This is my submission of the grant proposal titled "Fostering Prosocial Behavior in Young Children" for the grant cycle of 2005. The grant proposal components follow guidelines outlined on the foundation website. Additionally, I have enclosed supplementary materials to support the request.

The aim of this grant proposal is to increase prosocial skills in young children. With so many children in group settings, the development of skills that allow a child to have positive and supportive interactions with others in a socially accepted manner is a necessity. Therefore, the purpose of this proposal is to address the need to facilitate the development of prosocial behavior in young children through new curriculum resources, additional teacher in-service training, and updated classroom materials. This project will benefit children by providing opportunities to develop prosocial skills. The Child and Family Study Center teachers will benefit by receiving valuable teacher in-service training, curriculum resources and classroom materials that will facilitate positive play interactions.

Enclosed you will find the necessary review materials. I am looking forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



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Enclosures

Background Information

The mission of the Child and Family Study Center (CFSC) is to provide high quality programming for children of the University of Wisconsin-Stout students, faculty and staff, and the community.

The center offers programming for children ages six weeks through six years. The center consists of two sites - the Preschool and the Infant/Toddler Lab. The Preschool has two multi-age (3-5 yrs) classrooms that can accommodate up to 19 children in each room at any given time. The Infant Toddler Lab has three classrooms-the Infant Room, the Toddler One Room, and the Toddler Two Room. The Infant Room and the Toddler One Room can accommodate eight children in each room and the Toddler Two Room can have up to twelve children at a time. Collectively, the Center currently has ninety children enrolled.

The program philosophy includes an emphasis on social, emotional, physical, as well as intellectual development, enhancing the child's self-concept, developing skills in problem-solving, improving motor coordination and facilitating concept formation. Activities in the daily program include art, music, storytelling, sensory, movement, block building, outdoor play, dramatic play, field trips, cooking, language arts, emergent literacy, science, social studies, mathematics, and computer experiences. Through these activities and helpful interactions with teachers, the child's self-concept develops as he/she grows in intellectual processes, social interaction, and physical abilities.

The Child and Family Study Center program goals are broad and focus on the whole child. Collectively, they represent all four areas of development: social, intellectual, physical, and emotional. The program goals are to develop:

- a positive self concept and view of one's self as a worthwhile and competent human being

- independence

- problem-solving skills

- language skills: listening, speaking, and writing

- fine motor coordination

- curiosity about the world

- positive social interaction skills

- self expression skills

- large motor coordination

- creative expression skills

- an appreciation for the value of one's own rights as well as others

- an awareness and respect for an individual's cultural background

- an awareness and respect for each other's uniqueness and differences

(Child and Family Study Center Parent Handbook, 2005)

The Child and Family Study Center also serves as a laboratory school and observation site for early childhood education majors and other related majors at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The center experience allows university students to observe and participate in linking theory with practice.

The Problem

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2001), there are over twenty-one million children under the age of six in center-based child care programs in the United

States. Programs vary in their content, but one of the aspects that is common to all is the social context in which learning and care occurs. All early childhood teachers have a tremendous responsibility to meet the developmental needs of the whole child, and more than that, to help children develop the social skills necessary to succeed in the program setting, as well as in society.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) pointed out that “preschoolers are capable of engaging in truly cooperative play with their peers and forming real friendships. However, development of these important social skills is not automatic for children. They need coaching and supervision to learn and maintain appropriate behaviors with others.” (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 116).

There has been a lack of evidence of strategies and emphasis in early childhood curriculum to foster prosocial behavior in young children. Katz (1995) pointed out that one of the tasks of early childhood educators should be to support children’s development of self. However, many times this translates to a unit on “I am special”. Development of the self requires more than teaching one unit; it requires opportunities to take initiative, experience success on difficult tasks and developing problem solving skills. Acquiring these skills should be a large part of any early childhood curriculum. (NAEYC; Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). A comprehensive curriculum should include a variety of techniques and strategies built in to foster social skill development.

The Child and Family Study Center lab school serves as a model classroom for student teachers and practicum students as they connect theory with practice. The Center must set the example for developmentally appropriate practices by modeling best practices. Constant training and updating is needed by CFSC staff members to keep abreast of current research in prosocial

skill development in order for high quality programming, teaching and learning to occur. In addition, classrooms must provide materials and equipment that support these current trends to foster prosocial skills.

The Need and Purpose

Children need companionship and interactions with other people. Maslow's hierarchy of needs points out that love and belonging are basic needs that must be met. According to Maslow, the need to belong must be achieved before an individual can move on to the higher levels of self-esteem and self-actualization (Wardle, 2003). In other words, children need to have a sense of belonging to a group in order to thrive whether it is in school or in another social context.

To develop prosocial behaviors that instill a sense of belonging a preschool curriculum should consider the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC; Bredekamp & Copple, 1997) list of twelve principles that educators should use as a guide for developmentally appropriate practices. They are:

1. Domains of children's development-physical, social, emotional, and cognitive-are closely related. Development in one domain influences and is influenced by development in other domains.
2. Development occurs in a relatively orderly sequence, with later abilities, skills, and knowledge building on those already acquired.
3. Development proceeds at varying rates from child to child as well as unevenly within different areas of each child's functioning.

4. Early experiences have both cumulative and delayed effects on individual children's development. Optimal periods exist for certain types of development and learning.
5. Development proceeds in predictable directions toward greater complexity, organization, and internalization.
6. Development and learning occur in and are influenced by multiple social and cultural contexts.
7. Children are active learners, drawing on direct physical and social experiences as well as culturally transmitted knowledge to construct their own understandings of the world around them.
8. Development and learning result from interaction of biological maturation and the environment, which includes both the physical and social worlds that children live in.
9. Play is an important vehicle for children's social, emotional, and cognitive development as well as a reflection of their development.
10. Development advances when children have opportunities to practice newly acquired skills as well as when they experience a challenge just beyond the level of their present mastery.
11. Children demonstrate different modes of knowing and learning and different ways of representing what they know.
12. Children develop and learn best in the context of a community where they are safe and valued, their physical needs are met, and they feel psychologically secure.

These principles illustrate how socialization is intertwined in all areas of development and positive interaction skills are crucial to the well-being of children. Bredekamp and Copple (1997, p. 114) described the relationship between cognitive development and social

development; “Children do not construct their own understanding of a concept in isolation but in the course of interaction with others,” interactions with peers play an important role. Berk (2002, p. 375) concluded that “as children become increasingly self-aware, more effective at communicating, and better at understanding the thoughts and feelings of others, their skill at interacting with peers improves rapidly.”

By obtaining these funds and implementing this project the children will be given opportunities to enhance prosocial behaviors in the following areas that correlate with the NAEYC principles:

Interacting through play

- To participate in a game with other children
- To interact with other children
- To participate in small group activities
- To engage in socio-dramatic play situation
- To engage in cooperative play

Making choices

- To discuss a problem and possible solutions
- To increase perspective-taking skills

Entering and being a part of a group

- To perform the role of a leader and the role of a follower
- To consider another’s perspective
- To share a space with another child

Negotiating conflict

- To see the effect of one’s behavior on others

- To develop concern for the welfare of others
- To solve a problem in a peaceful manner
- To participate in a group discussion

Developing self-control

- To communicate a want or desire verbally
- To act in a caring manner

Benefits and Significance

According to a NAEYC publication, the classroom is a place to learn about human relationships. This project will benefit children by providing opportunities to:

- Play and work with others in a positive way
- Make choices and encounter the benefits and consequences of those choices
- Figure out how to enter play situations with others
- Negotiate social conflicts with language and positive social behaviors
- Develop other skills that characterize socially competent human beings
(Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 118).

This project will benefit the teachers of the Child and Family Study Center by providing:

- valuable teacher training that addresses strategies for facilitating positive play interactions
- additional classroom materials and equipment help create an optimal learning environment

- various curriculum resources needed for planning a comprehensive teaching approach to fostering prosocial skill development.

Furthermore, the teachers will obtain insight and training on current trends and teaching strategies, use classroom materials in ways that produce optimal student learning, and gain knowledge from curriculum and planning resources that foster prosocial behavior in young children.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: To provide teacher training that focuses on current research and trends in teaching social skill development

Objective: To provide a teacher workshop highlighting the Moozie Kindness Curriculum

Goal 2: To expand curriculum resources that emphasize prosocial themes and concepts

Objective: To provide a variety of curriculum and planning resources that will be available to the CFSC staff for future curriculum planning on the topic of prosocial behavior

Goal 3: To create and update classroom spaces that facilitate positive social interactions

Objective: To integrate materials in the learning environment so that children can develop prosocial skills

Other Funding Sources

The grant cycles of the University of Wisconsin-Stout are not compatible with this project and its timeline.

Timeline

| Activity | Persons Involved | Date | Expected Outcome |
|---|--|-----------------|--|
| Goal 1 Activity 1 Prepare for teacher training workshop (contact speaker, set date and time, reserve room for workshop, and get refreshments) | Kathy Preusse | August, 2005 | Flyer, handouts |
| Goal 1 Activity 2 (1) Workshop for teacher training | 12 teachers of the Child and Family Study Center | September, 2005 | Curriculum implementation using grant materials, supplies and resources |
| Goal 2 Activity 1 Order and prepare space for curriculum resources | Kathy Preusse | August, 2005 | New resources ordered. Space prepared for easy storage and retrieval of resources. |
| Goal 2 Activity 2 Prepare and distribute to CFSC staff a list of new curriculum resources now available | Kathy Preusse | August, 2005 | List distributed to CFSC staff |
| Goal 2 Activity 3 Expanding curriculum resources | 12 teachers of the Child and Family Study Center | September, 2005 | Teachers plan and implement lessons and activities found in resources |

| | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|--|
| Goal 3 Activity 1 | | | |
| Order classroom materials and distribute materials to classrooms upon arrival | Kathy Preusse | August, 2005 | Materials ordered and distributed to classrooms |
| Goal 3 Activity 2 | | | |
| Prepare and distribute list of new classroom materials | Kathy Preusse | August, 2005 | List of new classroom materials prepared and distributed to classroom teachers |
| Goal 3 Activity 3 | | | |
| Creating and updating classroom spaces | 12 teachers and children of the Child and Family Study Center | September, 2005 | Materials integrated into the classroom through the use of displays and learning centers |

Evaluation Plan

This project will be evaluated through the use of two questionnaires. In May, 2005 the first questionnaire will be distributed to the twelve teachers of the Child and Family Study Center. This survey will ask teachers to identify present levels of training, curriculum resources available and classroom techniques used in facilitating prosocial behavior. At a staff meeting during professional development week in August of 2005, a list of the new materials and curriculum resources will be provided to the staff as well as the location of these items. Time will be scheduled for the staff to become acquainted with these resources and to discuss the purposes, uses and expected outcomes.

A second questionnaire will be distributed to the staff of the Child and Family Study Center during a weekly staff meeting in December, 2005 to determine whether:

- the strategies presented at the teacher training were effective in the classroom and if they were viewed by the teachers as effective
- the curriculum resources were effective in the development of prosocial behavior
- the classroom materials were used and how they enhanced prosocial behavior
- more training, curriculum resources or classroom materials are needed to continue to facilitate the development of prosocial skills

Dissemination of Results

The project's dissemination plan is tri-fold.

- The results from the questionnaires will be presented at a staff meeting during professional development week in January of 2006. There will be time at this meeting to discuss the results and to formulate a plan for future action.
- Because growth in the area of social and emotional development must be measured over time, it is important to assess teacher implementation and children's progress every semester. Therefore, at a staff meeting during professional development week each semester the staff will discuss their ongoing effects to foster the development of prosocial behavior. The effectiveness of training, curriculum resources and classroom materials will be discussed as well as setting goals for teachers and children.
- An article will be submitted to *Early Childhood News* for publication on the topic of prosocial behavior.

First Survey of Child and Family Study Center Teachers (May, 2005)—

The purpose of this survey is to assist the project director in collecting information regarding prosocial behavior. Briefly answer the following questions.

1. Is there a specific physical area of your classroom where prosocial behavior is more evident? If so, what?
2. Is there a specific physical area of your classroom where prosocial behavior is less evident? If so, what?
3. What are your biggest challenges in regard to fostering prosocial behavior in your classroom?
4. What specific training have you had in fostering prosocial behavior?
5. What specific training do you need in fostering prosocial behavior?
6. What resource guides do you currently use to develop curriculum that promotes prosocial development in your classroom?
7. What specific materials are needed to promote prosocial behavior in your classroom?
8. What classroom materials do you use on a regular basis to foster prosocial behavior?
9. What are some concerns parents have expressed to you concerning prosocial behavior in your classroom?

Second Survey of Child and Family Study Center Teachers—

The purpose of this survey is to assist the project director in collecting information regarding the effectiveness of teacher training, curriculum guides and classroom materials provided by the grant to foster prosocial behavior. Briefly answer the following questions.

1. What specific strategies have you used from the teacher training session that has increased prosocial behavior in your classroom? What evidence have you seen of this increase?

2. What specific activities for fostering prosocial behavior have you used from the new curriculum guides? Please state name of resource and page.

3. What specific changes have you made to the physical areas of your classroom that have resulted in facilitating prosocial behavior? What evidence have you seen?

4. Have you received any comments from parents about the new techniques and materials being used to foster prosocial behavior? If so, what?

- 5A. Do you feel that the teacher training, additional curriculum guides and classroom materials provided in this project were sufficient for fostering prosocial behavior in the children of the Child and Family Study Center?

Insufficient

Very sufficient

1

2

3

4

5

5B. If you answered 1-4, please specify what areas and resources are still needed.

5. What additional information can you provide that will be important for the evaluation of this project?

Budget Narrative

The items requested in this grant have been selected to enhance the development of prosocial development in young children at the Child and Family Study Center.

Personnel-

The teacher training workshop (2 hour) will address the first goal of the project “providing teacher training that focuses on current research and trends in teaching social skill development”. Teachers will be introduced to teaching strategies and content outlined in the Moozie Kindness Curriculum. During this training session the web, concepts, goals and supporting activities of the curriculum will be addressed. There will be time for hands-on learning as well as a question and answer time. Funds will be used to compensate the trainer and trainees. This workshop will take place at The Child and Family Study Center.

No funds are requested to cover ordering and distribution duties. These tasks will be performed as part of my job responsibilities as a Child and Family Study Center staff member.

Services/Supplies-

A Moozie Kindness Curriculum guide, book and puppet will be purchased for four out of five classrooms (excluding the infant room) to support the teacher training workshop. The materials will be used by teachers as they plan and implement classroom activities.

The second area stated in goal two “expanding curriculum resources that emphasize prosocial themes and concepts” is addressed by purchasing curriculum guides that will be available to the teachers of the center. Five resource guides (2 each – total 10) will be used by the staff for future curriculum planning. These guides have been selected because of their availability, age appropriateness, diversity and incorporation of all developmental areas. Two of

each guide will be ordered to accommodate the center's two physical sites (the Preschool and the Infant/Toddler Lab) thus providing ready access of materials to all teachers.

The third area stated in goal three "creating and updating classroom spaces that facilitate positive social interactions" will be addressed by purchasing and introducing classroom materials that can be used to foster prosocial skill development. A comprehensive curriculum should have a variety of teaching techniques promoting all areas of the classroom for optimal learning to take place. A summary of the materials is as follows: 42 books, 1 poster set, 1 puppet theatre and 3 puppets, 3 puzzles, 2 block set, 6 large motor props, 12 dramatic play props, 1 art easel and 2 art supplies, and 1 science item. These materials were selected because they are developmentally appropriate for preschool children as well as appropriate for integration into the different curriculum areas of a classroom.

The cost of shipping the materials has also been estimated and included in this proposal.

Budget

I. Personnel

| Item | Cost |
|--|---------------|
| (1) presenter for a two-hour teacher training workshop (\$100.00/hour x 2 hours including all preparation and travel expenses) Topic: Moozie Kindness Curriculum | \$ 200.00 |
| Teacher stipends to attend (1) two-hour evening workshop (\$30/person x 12 teachers) | 360.00 |
| TOTAL | 560.00 |

II. Services/Supplies

A. Curriculum Resources:

| Item | Amount | Price Per Item | Catalog/page | Cost |
|--|--------|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Moozie Kindness Curriculum, Storybook and Puppet set | 4 | 40.00 | Children's Kindness Network | 160.00 |
| Celebrating Likes and Differences | 2 | 15.99 | ABC p. 310 | 31.98 |
| With Respect for Others | 2 | 18.99 | ABC p. 310 | 37.98 |
| Adventure in Peacemaking | 2 | 24.99 | Creative Diversity p. 50 | 49.98 |
| The Values Book | 2 | 14.99 | Creative Diversity p. 50 | 29.98 |
| The Peaceful Classroom | 2 | 16.99 | Creative Diversity p. 51 | 33.98 |
| | | | TOTAL | 343.90 |

B. Classroom Materials:

| Item | Amount | Price Per Item | Catalog/page | Cost |
|--|--------|----------------|--------------------|-------|
| <i>Be Gentle</i> by Virginia Miller | 2 | 8.63 | Amazon | 17.26 |
| <i>Miss Tizzy</i> by Libba Moore Gray | 2 | 6.99 | Amazon | 13.98 |
| Learning to Get Along Series | | | | |
| <i>Share and Take Turns</i> | 2 | 8.21 | Amazon | 16.42 |
| <i>Understand and Care</i> | 2 | 8.21 | Amazon | 16.42 |
| <i>Respect and Take Care of Things</i> | 2 | 8.21 | Amazon | 16.42 |
| <i>Join In and Play</i> | 2 | 8.21 | Amazon | 16.42 |
| <i>26 Big Things Small Hands Do</i> by Coleen Paratore | 2 | 11.53 | Amazon | 23.06 |
| <i>One Smile</i> by Cindy McKinley | 2 | 13.56 | Amazon | 27.12 |
| <i>Words Are Not For Hurting</i> by Elizabeth Verdick | 2 | 8.96 | Amazon | 17.92 |
| <i>Teeth Are Not for Biting</i> by Elizabeth Verdick | 2 | 7.16 | Amazon | 14.32 |
| <i>Hands Are Not For Hitting</i> by Marine Agassi | 2 | 9.71 | Amazon | 19.42 |
| Diverse books | | | Creative Diversity | 78.92 |
| <i>I Am America</i> | 2 | 6.99 | p. 17 | |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>A Rainbow All Around Me</i> | 1 | 17.99 | | |
| <i>Children Around the World</i> | 2 | 7.99 | | |
| <i>Friends at Work</i> | 1 | 14.99 | | |
| <i>You Be Me and I'll Be You</i> | 2 | 7.99 | | |
| <i>Understanding Differences</i> book set | 1 | 43.99 | ABC p. 311 | 43.99 |
| <i>The Way I Feel Series</i> | 1 | 57.99 | ABC p. 311 | 57.99 |
| Character Education Books & CD | 1 | 44.95 | Constructive Playthings p. 178 | 44.95 |
| Character Education Posters | 2 | 9.99 | Constructive Playthings p.178 | 19.98 |
| Brick Bonanza | 2 | 108.95 | For Kidz Only p. 114 | 217.90 |
| Mini Ben Hur Push Trikes | 2 | 124.95 | For Kidz Only p. 34 | 249.90 |
| Phone-A-Friend | 2 | 22.95 | Early Learning p. 53 | 45.90 |
| Giant Floor Puzzles | 3 | 9.99 | Lakeshore p. 127 | 29.97 |
| Play Parachute | 1 | 27.99 | Teachers' Discount p.148 | 27.99 |
| Art Easel for 4 | 1 | 279.00 | Lakeshore p. 64 | 279.00 |
| Multicultural Clothing Set | 1 | 129.00 | Lakeshore p. 97 | 129.00 |
| Asian Wear (boy) | 1 | 17.99 | Creative Diversity | 17.99 |
| Indian Wear (girl) | 1 | 19.99 | Creative Diversity | 19.99 |
| Create-a-Family Cutters and Dough Set | 2 | 18.99 | Teachers' Discount p. 41 | 37.98 |
| On The Go Puppet Show | 1 | 42.95 | Teachers' Discount p. 83 | 42.95 |
| Puppets 1 girl (white) | 1 | 38.95 | ptpuppets.com | 125.90 |
| 1 boy (hispanic) | 1 | 38.95 | | |
| 1 dog 30" | 1 | 48.00 | | |
| Doll House | 2 | 99.91 | Teachers' Discount p. 84 | 199.82 |
| Asian and Hispanic Families | 2 | 19.95 | Teachers' Discount p. 84 | 39.90 |
| Dancing Rainbow Hoops | 3 | 8.05 | Teachers' Discount p. 148 | 24.15 |
| Marble Express | 2 | 27.95 | Teachers' Discount p. 46 | 55.90 |
| | | | TOTAL | 1988.83 |

C. Miscellaneous

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Refreshments for one evening workshop – Pizza and Lemonade (12 people @ \$5.00/person) | 60.00 |
| TOTAL | 60.00 |

D. Estimated Shipping Costs:

| Catalog | Calculations | Amount |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------|
| Amazon | \$3.00 per shipment + \$.99 /book (some books are included in free shipping promotion, if available at time of ordering) | 24.78 |
| ABC | 15% of total price of items (171.94 x 15%) | 25.79 |
| Creative Diversity | 15% of total price of items (230.84 x 15%) | 34.63 |
| Constructive Playthings | 15% of total price of items (64.93 x 15%) | 9.74 |
| For Kidz Only | 17% of total price of items (467.80 x 17%) | 79.53 |
| Early Learning | 10% of total + \$3.00 (45.90 x 10% +3.00) | 7.59 |
| Lakeshore | 15% of total price of items (437.97 x 15%) | 65.70 |
| Teachers' Discount | Free over \$199 (428.69) | Free |
| Children's Kindness Network | 4 sets | Free |
| ptpuppets.com | Free shipping over \$85 | Free |
| | TOTAL | 247.76 |

| | | |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|
| | TOTAL REQUESTED FUNDS | 3200.49 |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|

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