Participants will learn to implement Friends on the Block from Dr. Jill Allor, principal investigator on the IES research grant from which the curriculum was developed.

This four-session live, virtual workshop will provide teachers with practical, research-validated methods for teaching foundational literacy skills to students with intensive needs, including students with developmental and intellectual disabilities, dyslexia, or other disabilities. Though the target of the workshop is students with intensive needs, the materials follow the science of reading and structured literacy and are completely appropriate for beginning readers (K–1) who are developing typically and for struggling readers who have not mastered foundational skills. The program is highly flexible so teachers can easily provide customized lessons to meet the needs of varying learner types.

Friends on the Block is a unique curriculum that includes carefully designed books with scaffolds that allow students to begin reading books very quickly while enhancing comprehension through teacher-read “helper” text. Explicit, systematic lessons accompany each book and facilitate transfer of skills immediately to the books. The program was designed by researchers, and research is ongoing. Support for carrying out this research was provided by grants R324A130102 and R324A200151 from the Institute of Education Sciences.

Register: mtsu.edu/dyslexia