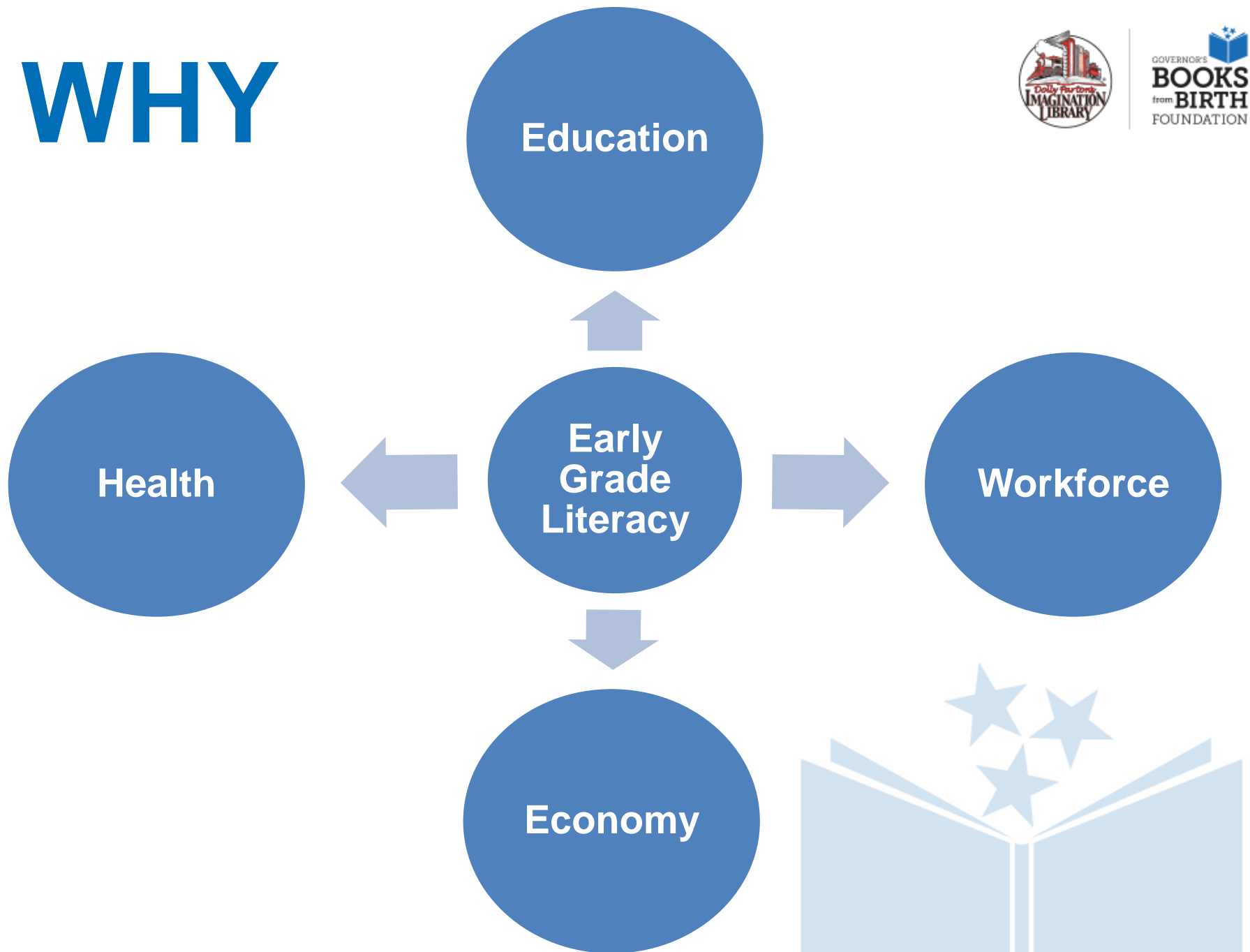




## Promoting early childhood literacy in Tennessee's birth to age five population

**Theresa Carl**, President, Governor's Books from Birth Foundation  
[Theresa.Carl@tn.gov](mailto:Theresa.Carl@tn.gov)  
[www.GovernorsFoundation.org](http://www.GovernorsFoundation.org)

# WHY



# Early Brain Development is Rapid



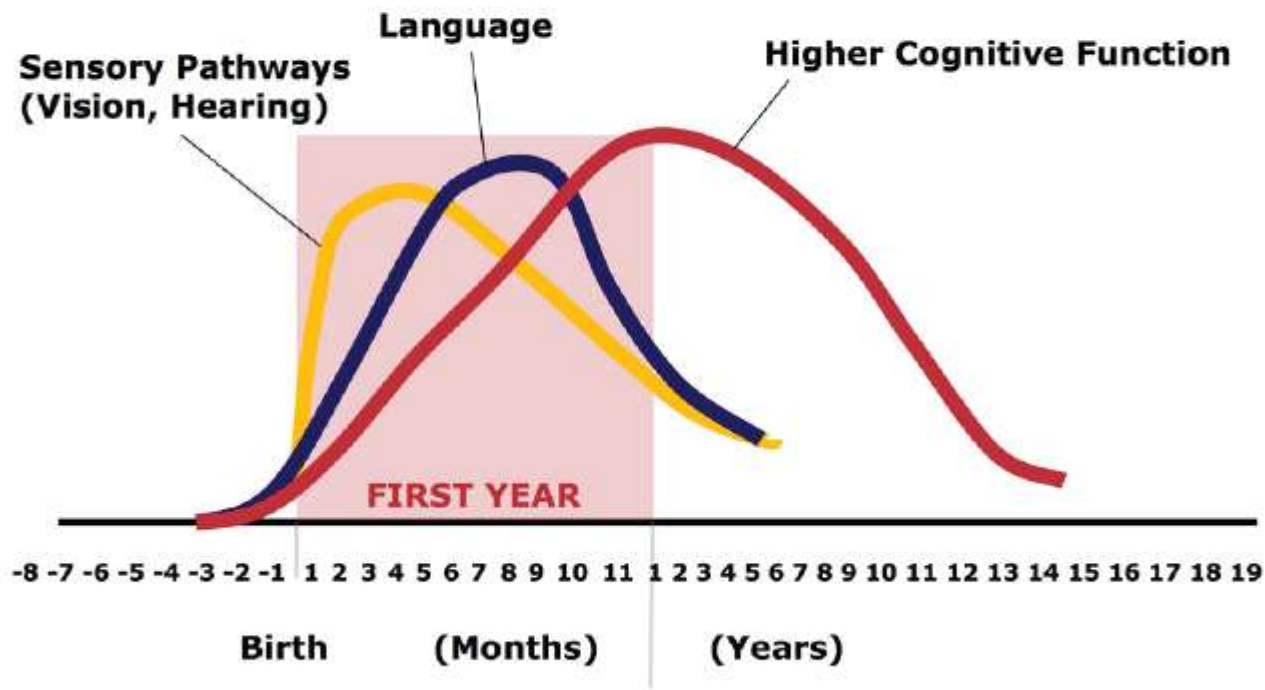
A BABY'S BRAIN DOUBLES IN SIZE  
DURING THE FINAL 6 WEEKS OF  
PREGNANCY

BY AGE 3, A CHILD'S BRAIN IS  
ALREADY 80% OF IT'S ADULT  
VOLUME

Image Source: "Three Core Concepts in Early Development." Center for the Developing Child, Harvard University.  
[http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/three\\_core\\_concepts/](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/three_core_concepts/)

# Early Period Sets the Trajectory

## Human Brain Development Neural Connections for Different Functions Develop Sequentially



Source: C.A. Nelson (2000)

# TN's Read to Be Ready Initiative



**Goal:** 75% of TN's 3<sup>rd</sup> graders proficient in reading by 2025

Fastest Improving State, but...  
35% of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders read at grade level

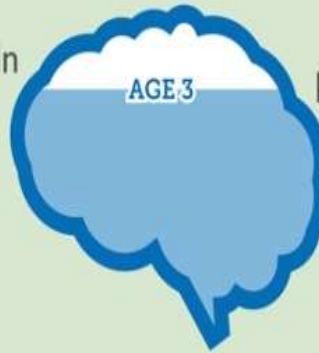
2018 infants=2025 3<sup>rd</sup> graders  
*No Time To Waste!*





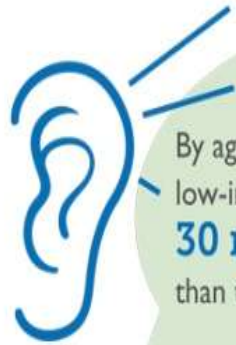
**Reading aloud** is widely recognized as the **single most important** activity leading to literacy acquisition.

A child's brain grows to **80% of its full size** by age 3.



In the first few years of life, a child's brain builds **700 connections** per second.

Reading to a child in an interactive style raises a child's IQ by **6 points**



By age three, children from low-income families may hear **30 million** fewer words than their more affluent peers.

**1**  **:300** 

In middle income neighborhoods, the book to child ratio is **13** to **1**, compared to **1** to **300** in low-income neighborhoods.

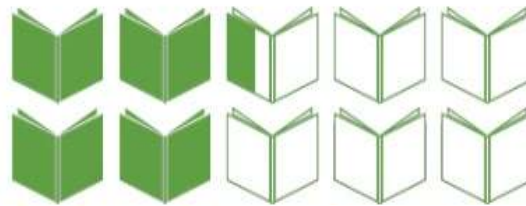


Children with as few as **25 Books**

in the home complete an average of two more years of schooling than those with no books.



Vocabulary development by **age 3** has been found to predict achievement by third grade.



**Only 35%**

of TN 3rd graders are reading proficiently.

**48%**

of children in the United States are read to each day.



# The Real Why: From Author, Anna Dewdney



# HOW? OUR VISION is a..



TN where all preschool children have books in their homes,  
develop a love of reading and learning,  
and begin school prepared to succeed,  
from kindergarten throughout their educational journeys.





# 5 Strategic Goals



1. Reach More Children
2. Demonstrate Our Impact
3. Increase Brand Awareness
4. Empower Local Affiliates
5. Build Organization Capacity



# Our Tennessee Story



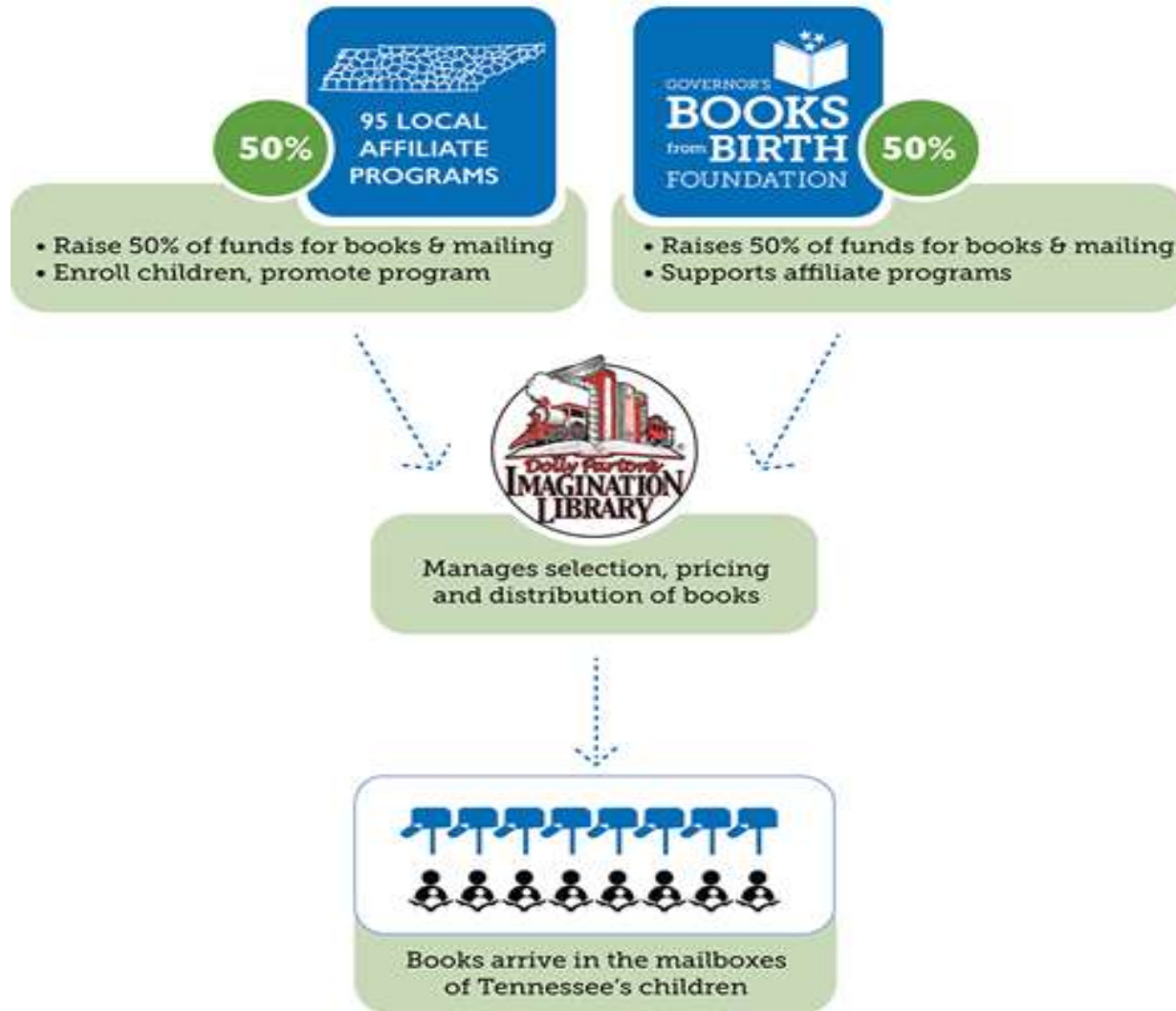
1996

2004

2018



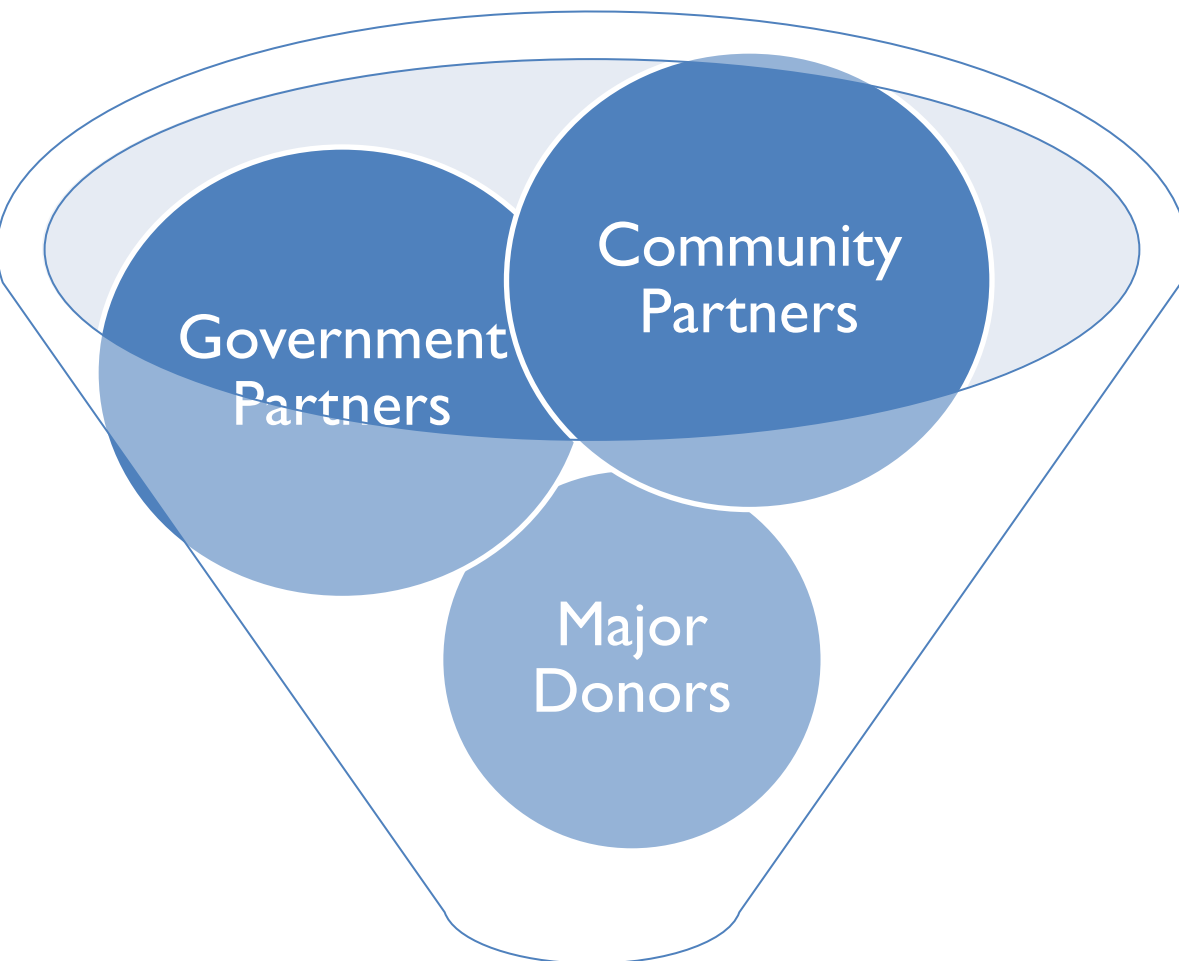
# The Tennessee Model: 2004 - 2018



# Volunteers Are Golden!







**Partners**







# Birthing Hospital Initiative



# Story Book Trails



# Enrollment Partnerships



Tennessee Department of Health

Welcome Baby initiative



Tennessee Department of Human Services

130 offices statewide



Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Every child in foster care

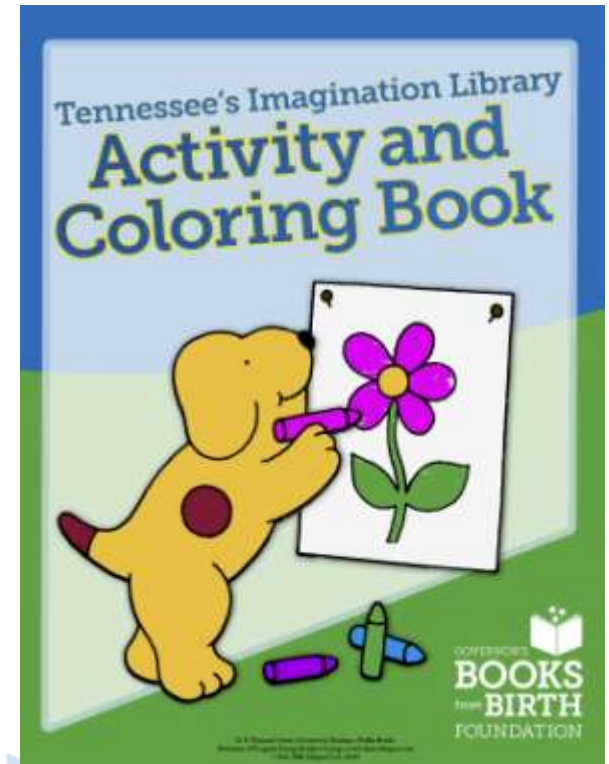


Tennessee Department of Education

Read to Be Ready



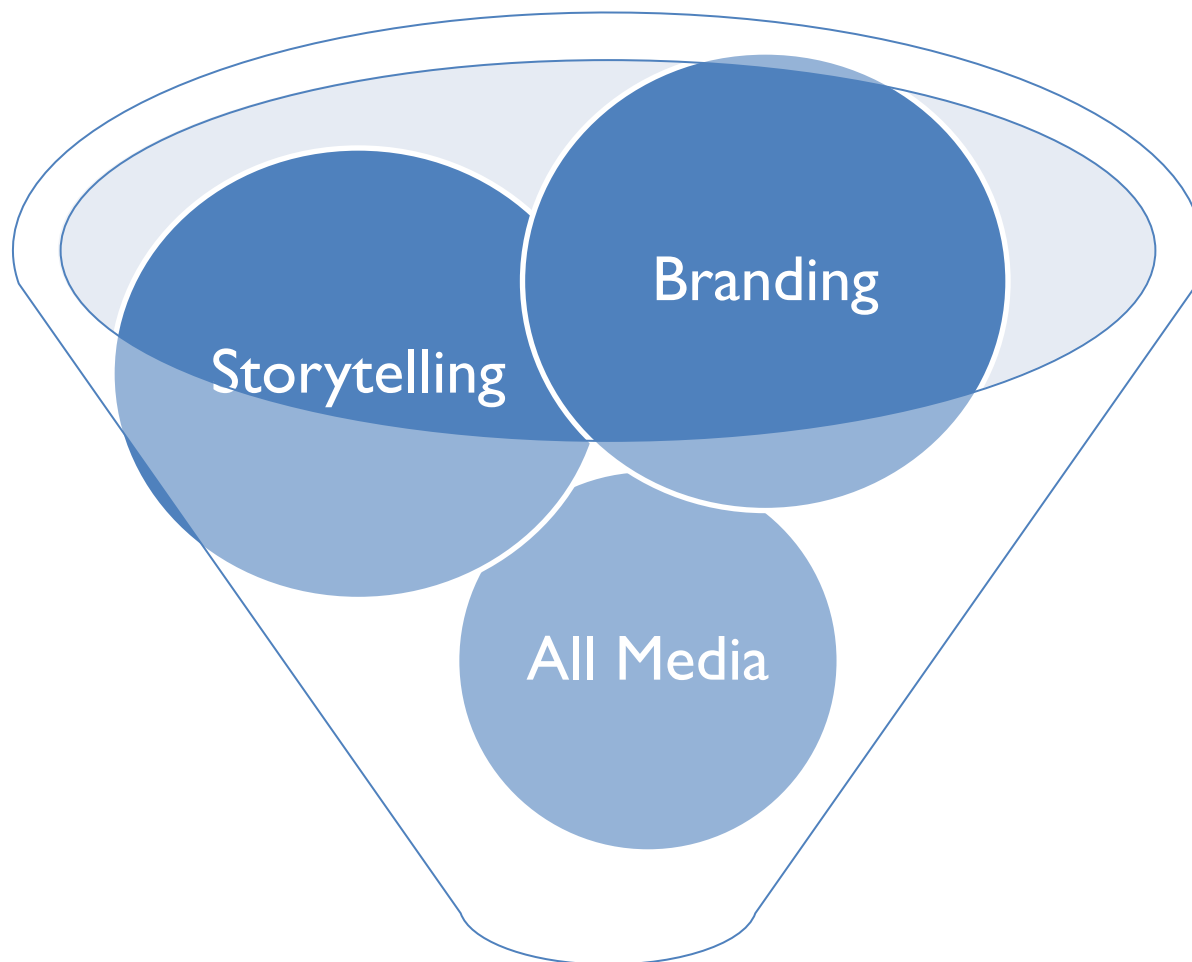
# Volunteer Support





# 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Bus Tour





**Tell *Your* Story!**

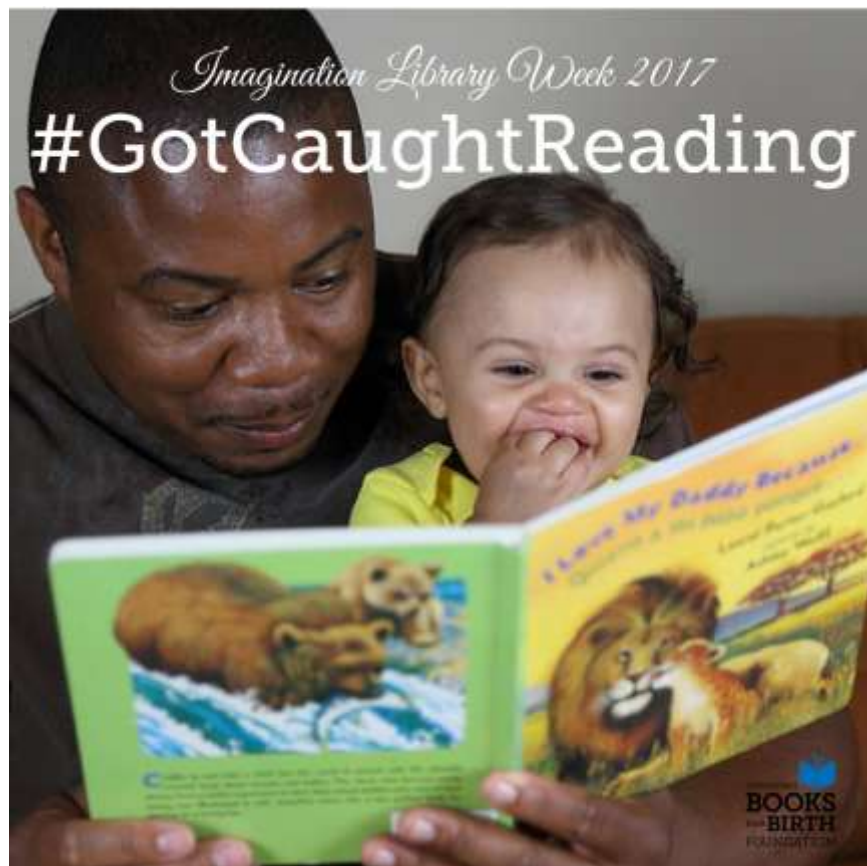


# Imagination Library Week





# Social Media







# Reading with your child

Resources & activities for engaging with your Imagination Library books

## How old is your child?



# TN Research Proves Impacts



The findings from across these studies revealed the following impacts.

1.

A<sub>B</sub>C

EARLY READING  
SKILLS

2.

1+1=2

SCHOOL  
READINESS

3.



LANGUAGE  
DEVELOPMENT

4.



LIFE SKILLS  
DEVELOPMENT

5.



CONCEPT OF  
PRINT & BOOK  
APPRECIATION

6.



PARENT  
ENGAGEMENT

7.



HOME LITERACY  
PRACTICE

8.



EXCITEMENT  
ABOUT BOOKS  
& READING

# Shelby County



An analysis of academic and non-academic variables was conducted for approx. 19,000 children enrolled for some length in IL, and later enrolled in Shelby County Schools.

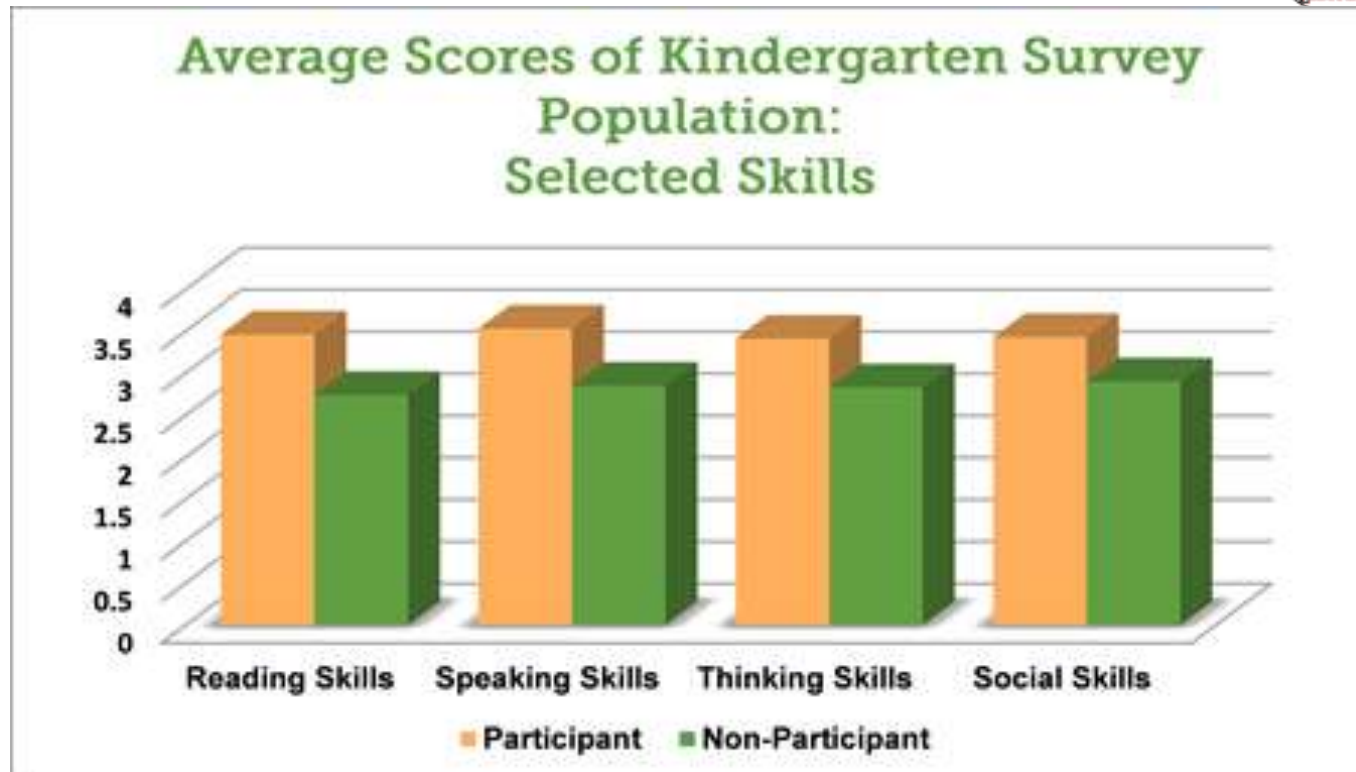
Children who were enrolled longer in IL had statistically significantly higher academic scores on the SAT10 assessment areas given in first and second grade.

**Lexile scores**, across all grades, had a statistically significant **positive relationship** with duration of enrollment.

Children who are enrolled for longer periods of time are **more likely to score higher** on academic assessments through early grades. Further, this research indicates that students are more likely to have increased school attendance and less likely to be suspended.

The analysis matched kindergarten through fourth grade students who were enrolled in Shelby County Schools between the academic years 2013/14 and 2015/16.





**Children who participated in the IL program were more likely to score higher on literacy assessments, even into third grade.**



# “A Healing Effect on the Community”



Participants of these focus groups and interviews confirmed the results discovered from statistical methods and added their opinions on important points that go **beyond literacy** to the **program's deeper impacts on whole communities**, including:

The “healing effect on the community” manifesting in **emerging neighborhood initiatives, increased library usage and literacy - child development program collaboration.**

The **establishment of reading routines** seeming to bring about **increased stability, emotional well-being and improved atmosphere in families facing difficulties** (such as poverty and stress experienced by families where parents work long hours and have limited support raising children).





# Celebrate! Past, Present, Future

