

Gov. Holcomb launches a statewide expansion of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

INDIANAPOLIS- Governor Eric J. Holcomb today kicks off the statewide expansion of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library , which gifts free, high quality, age-appropriate books to children from birth to age five on a monthly basis, regardless of family income. Gov. Holcomb announced Dolly Parton's Imagination Library statewide expansion as part of his 2023 Next Level Agenda.

The goal of the statewide expansion is to make books available to children ages 0 – 5 in every zip code in Indiana. The program is free to enrolled children and will soon be available to more children and families in Indiana.

"I learned from a very young age that reading is the key to education and opportunity," Gov. Holcomb said. "The ability to read can transport children to places they have never been before and open doors they never knew existed. By making Dolly Parton's Imagination Library available in every zip code, we are giving Hoosier children the tools they need for literary success."

On May 4, 2023, Gov. Holcomb signed legislation into law that allotted \$6 million over the biennium, \$2 million in the first year and \$4 million in the second year, as part of a community share to expand the program to every zip code in the state.

"It takes a lot of great people working together to make this possible, and I want to thank Governor Holcomb, the Indiana General Assembly, State Librarian Jake Speer and all our Local Community Partners across the state who helped make this dream a reality," Dolly Parton said.

The Indiana State Library will coordinate the program and provide the state's match to interested organizations or individuals to become local program partners. Currently in Indiana, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is available in 54 counties and is partially available in eight counties, with expansion plans to fully cover the entire state – all 92 counties. Starting Sept. 1, current local Imagination Library partners will only pay 50% of their local program cost with the remaining 50% paid by the state.

To check to see if a program is available in your area, visit www.imaginationlibrary.com. You can enroll your child or sign up to be notified when a program comes to your community.

About Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Since launching in 1995, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has become the preeminent early childhood book-gifting program in the world. The flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has gifted over 200 million free books in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and The Republic of Ireland. This is achieved through funding shared by The Dollywood Foundation and Local Program Partners. The Imagination Library mails more than 2.4 million high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to enrolled children from birth to age five. Dolly envisioned creating a lifelong love of reading and inspiring children to Dream More, Learn More, Care More and Be More.

The program has been widely researched and results demonstrate its positive impact on early childhood development and literacy skills. Penguin Random House is the exclusive publisher for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.