

Parents & Caregivers

Setting Up Children for Future Success

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is the flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Tennessee organization. The Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting FREE books to children from birth to age five. The program is made possible through funding shared by Dolly Parton herself, and local Program Partners in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland.

Inspired by her father's inability to read and write, Dolly started the Imagination Library in 1995 to serve the children of her hometown in Sevier County, Tennessee. Today, her program spans five countries and gifts over 3 million free, high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children around the world. There is never a charge to families who participate in the program and it is open to all children under the age of five in geographic areas with operating programs.



As a parent or caregiver, reading with your child is one of the most important activities you can engage in to help set them up for success.

Dolly believes that if you can read, you can do anything, dream anything and be anything. Through her Imagination Library, Dolly wants to ensure every child can feel the magic that books create.

Register your child today and begin receiving one free, high-quality, age-appropriate book each month for your child, birth to age five. These books are personalized with your child's name and mailed directly to your home to create a one-of-a-kind gifting experience.

“

“The single most significant factor influencing a child's early educational success is an introduction to books and being read to at home prior to beginning school.”

– National Commission on Reading



Scan Me

Copyright © September, 2024 The Dollywood Foundation

[ImaginationLibrary.com](https://www.imaginationlibrary.com)



Engaging Parents & Caregivers

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library encourages good reading habits for parents, caregivers and their children. When your child receives their Imagination Library books, we ask you to do the following:

1

Begin reading with your child immediately

2

Read to your child at least 5 days per week

3

Read books multiple times

Snuggle, ask questions, notice letters, make sounds, have fun!



Each year, our esteemed Blue Ribbon Book Selection Committee, a specially selected panel of early childhood literacy experts, is responsible for reviewing hundreds of potential titles for inclusion in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

“

Thank you so much for the books! I love reading them to my daughter, some I had never read, and some I loved as a kid. It is an awesome program and my 3 year old LOVES getting her own special mail every month.

- Parent

My kids absolutely love getting their books in the mail every month! My husband and I read to our kids every night and enjoy the variety of stories we get to introduce them to. It was hard to pick just 3 that topped our lists, since so many are a huge hit in our house. Awesome program!!!!

- Parent



Local Program Partners

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is the flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Tennessee organization. The Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting FREE books to children from birth to age five. The program is made possible through funding shared by Dolly Parton herself, and local Program Partners in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland.

Inspired by her father's inability to read and write, Dolly started the Imagination Library in 1995 to serve the children of her hometown in Sevier County, Tennessee. Today, her program spans five countries and gifts over 3 million free, high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children around the world. There is never a charge to families who participate in the program and it is open to all children under the age of five in geographic areas with operating programs."



Supporting Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a powerful way to make a lasting impact on the lives of the children and families in your community.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library partners with local communities to gift one free, age-appropriate, high-quality book each month to children from birth to age five.

These books are personalized with the child's name and mailed directly to their home to create a gifting experience that makes books exciting and shows the child someone is thinking of them.



“

"We know that sustainable community change requires the engagement of community members, and the Imagination Library has been our vehicle to initiate this collaborative approach to ensure a life-long love of reading and learning for our community's youngest generation."

- Virginia Carmody, Executive Director,
Literacy Coalition of Onondaga County



Scan Me

Copyright © September, 2024 The Dollywood Foundation

[ImaginationLibrary.com](https://www.ImaginationLibrary.com)

Local Program Partners

“The True Heroes of my Imagination Library” - *Dolly*

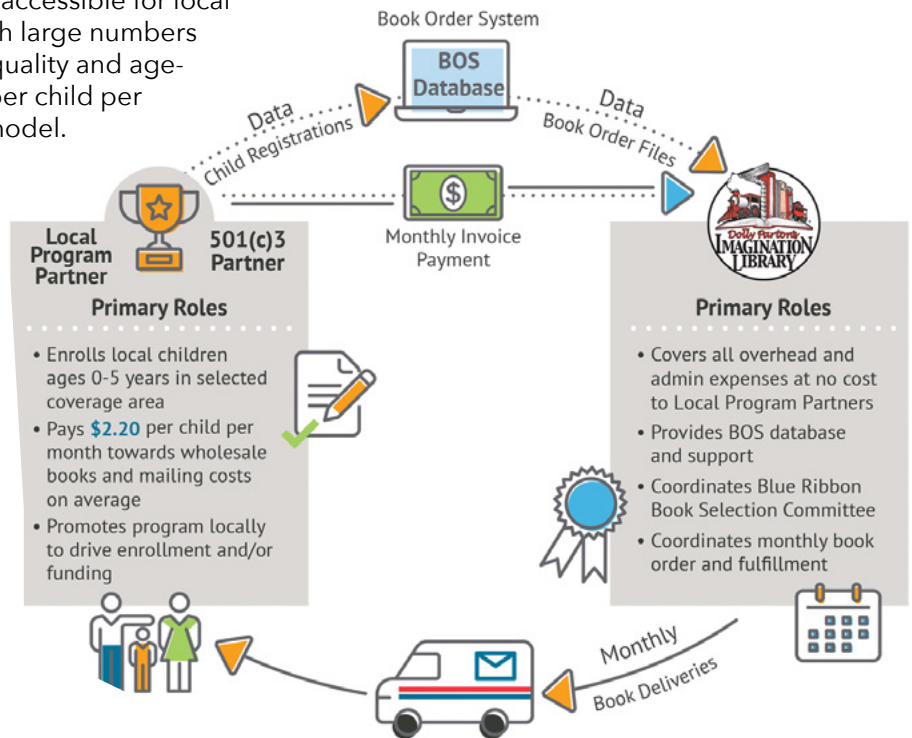
Improving early childhood literacy with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library creates opportunities for children to thrive so that they succeed in school and help their communities grow and prosper.

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library makes it accessible for local communities to regularly communicate with large numbers of children and families, providing a high-quality and age-appropriate library of books at a low cost per child per month through a flexible, highly scalable model.

Local Program Partners make the program accessible to all birth to age five children in their local area.

Local Program Partners:

- ✓ Pays the wholesale cost of books and mailing for children in selected coverage area
- ✓ Promotes the Program and Builds Awareness
- ✓ Registers Children to Participate
- ✓ Enters Information into the Book Order System



DOLLYWOOD
FOUNDATION



The Dollywood Foundation's support teams help Local Program Partners every step of the way. From managing the Book Order System, ordering and processing books, and providing marketing, finance and customer support. Let us help you get started in your community and become part of "Team Dolly"!

Over twenty five years ago, Dolly Parton created the Imagination Library to inspire a love of reading in children of her home county in East Tennessee. In 2000, the program was expanded to serve any community with local partner support and, today, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library reaches more than 3 million children across the world with a new, high-quality, age-appropriate book each month.

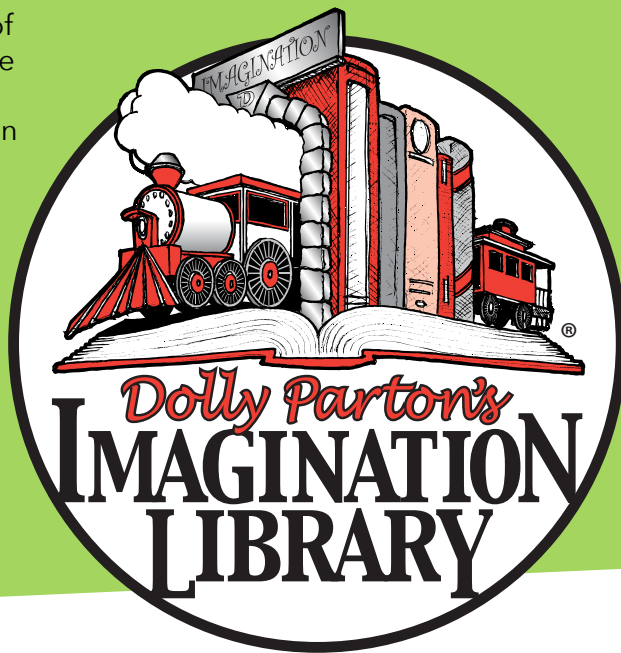


Books & Selection

Inspiring a Love of Books and Reading

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is the flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Tennessee organization. The Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting FREE books to children from birth to age five. The program is made possible through funding shared by Dolly Parton herself, and local Program Partners in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland.

Inspired by her father's inability to read and write, Dolly started the Imagination Library in 1995 to serve the children of her hometown in Sevier County, Tennessee. Today, her program spans five countries and gifts over 3 million free, high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children around the world. There is never a charge to families who participate in the program and it is open to all children under the age of five in geographic areas with operating programs.



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library books include...



Blue Ribbon Selection Seal

Each book is specially selected by a panel of leading childhood literacy experts.



Book-Specific Reading Tips

Most books have Reading Tips that extend the engagement and interaction between the child and caregiver.



Various Formats

Award-winning books are available in various formats.

- Board Books
- Flexibound
- High-Quality Soft Cover



Bilingual English/Spanish Books

Two bilingual English/Spanish books are included each year in each age group.



New 100% Bilingual Book Option

In select states in the U.S., families have the option to enroll in our bilingual English/Spanish program where every book is bilingual.



Braille Books

Through a partnership with the American Printing House for the Blind, we are able to help provide books to children who are blind or low vision in the U.S.



Scan Me

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Book Selection

Imagination Library books are chosen by our Blue Ribbon Selection Committee, and are personalized with the child's name and mailed directly to the child's home to create a gifting experience that makes them feel special.



Select high quality, age appropriate books



Build a home Library of books



Inspire a love of books, shared reading time



The Blue Ribbon Book Selection Committee consists of early childhood professionals who lend their expertise in choosing the perfect set of age-appropriate books for hundreds of thousands of children across the U.S. To learn more, visit [imaginationlibrary.com](https://www.imaginationlibrary.com).



From the first book, "The Little Engine That Could" to the last book, "Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!", every book is selected with a special purpose.

"Book day is our absolute favorite mail day!! Seeing her face light up as she gets a new "night night" book is one of my favorite things to see as a parent!"

- Parent

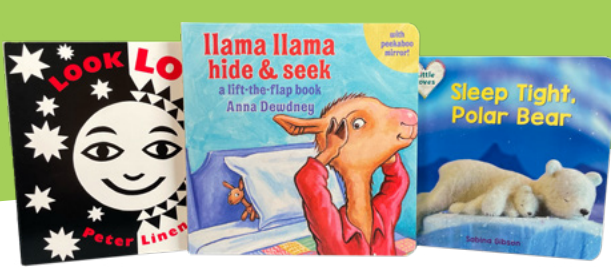


Main Themes of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Books: Inspiration & Imagination

Additional Themes:

Love of reading and learning, regard for diversity of people, their roles, culture, and environment, promotion of self-esteem and confidence, appreciation of art and aesthetics.

To learn more, visit imaginationlibrary.com



Year One

- Bright, big, colorful
- Rhyme and rhythm
- Minimal text
- Point and say
- Playful sound
- Nurture, Attachment, Lullaby themes

Year Two

- Continue concepts from year one and build upon them
- Repetitive and predictable
- Daily routines
- Real photo illustrations
- Body awareness
- Nursery rhymes
- Colors, Letters, Numbers



Year Three

- Wordless books - build your own story (reader and child)
- Values and character
- Issues: Fear, Conflict, Love, Safety
- Colors, Letters, Numbers
- Nursery rhymes

Year Four

- More complex stories: Hero, Complication, Resolution
- Diversity of others faces, environments - OK to be different
- Play, Humor, Fun
- Nursery rhymes and poetry
- Imagination



Year Five

- School preparation and readiness
- Use rebus (pictures used for words)
- Science-non-fiction
- Thank you, appreciation
- Rhymes and poetry



Research

Common Outcomes for Imagination Library Programs

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is the flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Tennessee organization. The Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting FREE books to children from birth to age five. The program is made possible through funding shared by Dolly Parton herself, and local Program Partners in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland.

Inspired by her father's inability to read and write, Dolly started the Imagination Library in 1995 to serve the children of her hometown in Sevier County, Tennessee. Today, her program spans five countries and gifts over 3 million free, high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children around the world. There is never a charge to families who participate in the program and it is open to all children under the age of five in geographic areas with operating programs.



Since its founding, The Dollywood Foundation has encouraged research on the Imagination Library program to assess communities' reactions to the program and its impact on children's literacy.

The majority of this research has been implemented by local program partners or local researchers at the local community level to provide formative and summative feedback to support local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library implementations.

“

90% of physical brain development occurs in the first three years of life, when a baby forms over 1 million new neural connections per second.



Scan Me

The Dollywood Foundation initiated a review of over 20 years of research conducted on Imagination Library programs in the U.S. and Internationally.

The findings from the body of DPIL research indicate the program is extremely popular in the communities where it is implemented and show promise in promoting changes in home literacy environments, children's attitudes toward reading, and early literacy skills.

Richer Home Literacy Environments

- Parents read aloud more to their children and were more comfortable reading as a result of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.
- Parents reported their children owned more books as a result of participating in the program.



Positive Perceptions

- Participating family members were overwhelmingly positive about the program and its impact on their children when asked in questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups.
- Community members, including Imagination Library partners and preschool and kindergarten teachers, also had positive views of the program and its impact on book ownership and literacy practices in homes.
- The positive views of the program and its impacts were present regardless of the demographic characteristics of the community or its participants, and longer program participation often resulted in more positive outcomes.

Improving Attitude and Skills

- Parents believed their children were more interested in reading due to receiving the books each month.
- Participating children were excited when their DPIL books arrived in the mail monthly, addressed specifically to the child.
- Some studies found DPIL had promise with respect to developing children's early literacy skills, as participants had more advanced skills than their classmates who did not participate in the program.



Logic Model

The Dollywood Foundation is committed to supporting local DPIL programs and communities.

One focus of our recent work has been identifying common outcomes for all DPIL programs. This will ensure we are all on the same page and provide the best program possible for children and families. These research-based outcomes were identified through reviews of literature and are considered to be building blocks for lifelong literacy, supported by the research, and aligned with DPIL's philosophy and goals.



Imagination Library Strives to...

Enhance participants' home literacy environments so that...

- Books are available in homes
- Caregivers begin reading to children early in life
- Caregivers read to children frequently and for increasing amounts of time as they age

Promote positive attitudes and increased motivation to read so....

- Children ask adults to read to them
- Children "play" with books independently

Increase the number of interactions between caregivers and children during reading so...

- Children respond and contribute to book reading
- Children practice reading skills

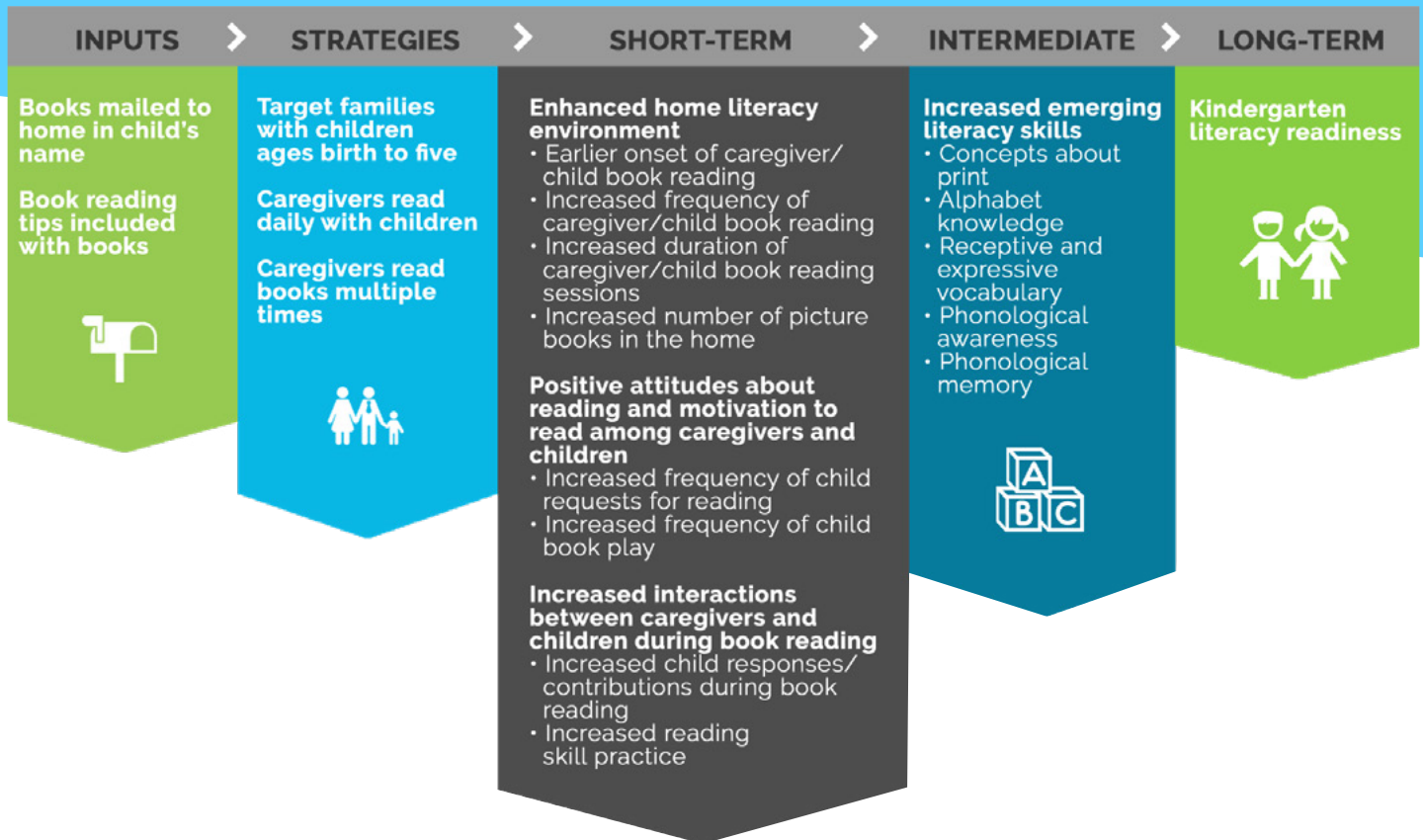
Such that children develop emerging literacy skills including...

- Understanding print conventions
- Naming letters and making letter sounds
- Increasing their vocabulary
- Understanding oral sounds, syllables, and words
- Improving auditory memory



Logic Model

Based on Imagination Library Research Findings and Literature Review



The Dollywood Foundation is committed to guiding and assisting community-based DPIL programs to provide the best experience for all participants. The Foundation will support both beginning and existing community-based DPIL programs by providing resources to help organizations...

- ✓ Become familiar with the research on DPIL and what lessons were learned
- ✓ Use The Dollywood Foundation's resources and guidance to communicate effectively with researchers and other community stakeholders
- ✓ Provide a security-first process when data is requested

The Foundation looks forward to continuing our work supporting rigorous research on Imagination Library in existing and new DPIL communities. Through this research, we can continue to expand Dolly's vision of ensuring every child is exposed to the magic of books!



Community Leaders

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is the flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Tennessee organization. The Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting FREE books to children from birth to age five. The program is made possible through funding shared by Dolly Parton herself, and local Program Partners in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland.

Inspired by her father's inability to read and write, Dolly started the Imagination Library in 1995 to serve the children of her hometown in Sevier County, Tennessee. Today, her program spans five countries and gifts over 3 million free, high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children around the world. There is never a charge to families who participate in the program and it is open to all children under the age of five in geographic areas with operating programs.



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library puts books into the hands and hearts of children across the world.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library partners with local communities to gift one free, age-appropriate, high-quality book each month to children from birth to age five.

These books are personalized with the child's name and mailed directly to their home to create a gifting experience that makes books exciting and shows the child someone is thinking of them.

With support from local funders and partners, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is available to all children, at no cost to the family, regardless of the family's income.

"Reading aloud to children at a young age can positively impact their brain development. When preschool children listen to stories, it activates the areas of their brains that are associated with processing images and narrative comprehension."

- Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

This model helped the Imagination Library receive:

- 🏆 A coveted Best Practice Award from the U.S. Library of Congress for addressing social barriers to literacy
- 🏆 2021 Library of Congress Literary Award, 2022 Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy
- 🏆 2022 Council of Chief State School Officers Distinguished Service Award
- 🏆 2023 Martin Luther King Center Legacy Service in Education Award
- 🏆 2023 American Public Health Presidential Citation
- 🏆 2024 Education of Commission Corporate Award



Scan Me

Copyright © September, 2024 The Dollywood Foundation

[ImaginationLibrary.com](https://www.imaginationlibrary.com)

Supporting Cognitive Development

School Readiness for children from birth to age five

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a dependable partner for educators and local communities. Each book in the Library collection is hand selected to address the child's current development needs. A national panel of experts in the field of early childhood and literacy lend their expert recommendations and advice to select the perfect set of books for hundreds of thousands of children.

“

“60% of the kindergartners in neighborhoods where children did poorly in school did not own a single book.”

- Patterns of Book Ownership and Reading, D. Feiteison and Z. Goldstein

1

Foster interactions around book reading

2

Establish positive attitude towards reading

3

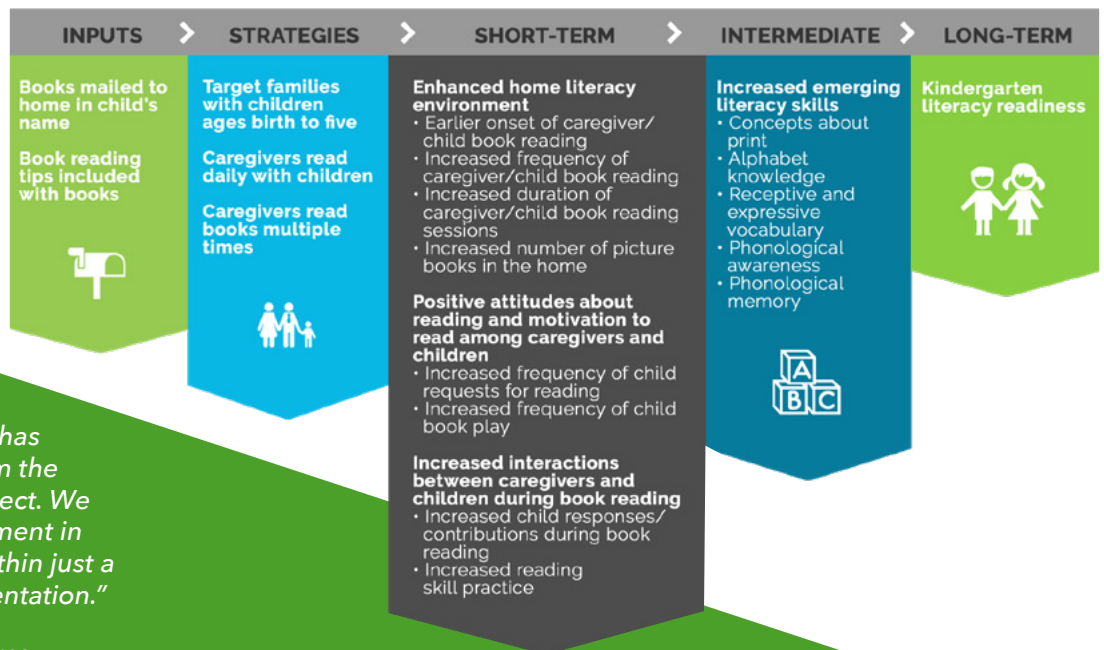
Increase emerging literacy skills

Inspire a Love of Reading

Children cherish the personalized books they receive each month through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL). When parents and caregivers read to their children, it also exposes them to a larger, more diverse vocabulary and greater variety of sentence structures than just talking to them. Children develop concepts of print, alphabetic knowledge, phonological awareness and improved memory-all essential skills leading to school readiness and future academic success

Logic Model

Based on Imagination Library Research Findings and Literature Review



“

“Our school district has benefited greatly from the Imagination Library project. We began seeing improvement in kindergarten readiness within just a year or two after implementation.”

- Superintendent Burns, Arkansas

38%

Families receiving books through DPIL, parents increased their reading with children by 38%.

75%

75% of teachers believed that DPIL graduates performed better in school than their peers.

97%

97% of parents believed that their child will be better prepared for school after having participated in the Imagination Library.



2012 Research, Acadiana in Lafayette, LA

Copyright © September, 2024 The Dollywood Foundation

ImaginationLibrary.com

Funders & Policy Makers

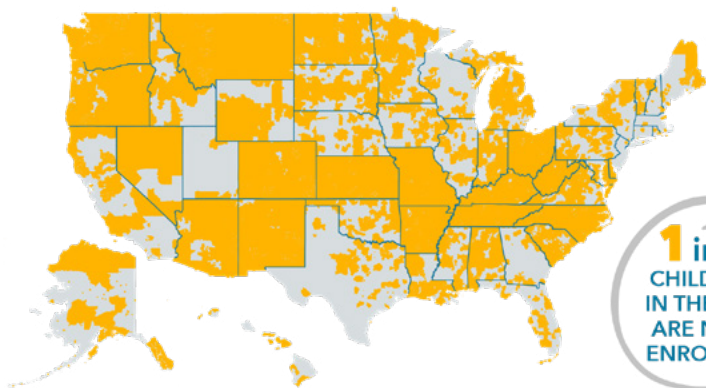
Giving the Gift of Reading

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is the flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Tennessee organization. The Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting FREE books to children from birth to age five. The program is made possible through funding shared by Dolly Parton herself, and local Program Partners in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland.

Inspired by her father's inability to read and write, Dolly started the Imagination Library in 1995 to serve the children of her hometown in Sevier County, Tennessee. Today, her program spans five countries and gifts over 3 million free, high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children around the world. There is never a charge to families who participate in the program and it is open to all children under the age of five in geographic areas with operating programs.



DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY NATIONAL GROWTH ACROSS THE USA



1 in 7
CHILDREN
IN THE USA
ARE NOW
ENROLLED!

A love of books and reading offers the foundation for literacy skills that set children up for future success. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library levels the playing field for all children by helping them build a home library of their very own and encouraging increased interaction with caregivers around books and reading.

Books are personalized with the child's name and mailed directly to their home, creating a special gifting experience and sense of ownership.



"You can never
get enough
books into the
hands of enough
children."

Dolly



Scan Me

Copyright © September, 2024 The Dollywood Foundation

[ImaginationLibrary.com](https://www.ImaginationLibrary.com)

Helping Children Succeed & Communities Prosper

Improving early childhood literacy with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library creates opportunities for children to thrive so they succeed in school and help their communities grow and prosper.

1

Foster interactions around book reading

2

Establish positive attitude towards reading

3

Increase emerging literacy skills

Dolly is investing in young children and hopes you will too.

The Dollywood Foundation covers program overhead by providing the custom-built Book Order System and coordinating the book selection, procurement, and fulfillment processes. In addition, The Dollywood Foundation purchases high-quality, customized books at scale, significantly reducing cost. With these contributions, our local partners are only required to cover the at-cost book and mailing expenses for children registered in their coverage area.

Funders and local partners facilitate the cost of providing books so there is no cost to children and families. This approach, along with the model that the program is available to all children in a covered area, helped Dolly reach 1 in 7 children in the U.S. currently and gift over 3 million books globally each month.

The average retail cost of Imagination Library titles is about \$14 per book. However, by purchasing in volume, the Imagination Library is able to acquire and mail customized books for about \$2.20 per child per month.

How can you get involved?

- ✓ Help fund Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in your community. \$26 = Books for 1 child for a whole year!
- ✓ Utilize your position as a community leader to advocate this impact of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in your community.
- ✓ Connect with potential community partners to let them know you are interested in financially supporting Dolly Parton's Imagination Library locally.
- ✓ Organize other friends and colleagues to join in financially supporting Dolly Parton's Imagination Library for local children.
- ✓ Foster local Imagination Library research on books and literacy practices in the home.

The *Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics* states that reading aloud to children at a young age can positively impact a child's brain development. When preschool children listen to stories, it activates the areas of their brains that are associated with processing images and narrative comprehension. It also exposes children to a larger, more diverse vocabulary and greater variety of sentence structures than just talking to them.

Imagination Library Simplified Funding Formula

Number of
0-5 Children in
Selected Area

X

65%
Average
Enrolled

X

\$2.20
Wholesale
Cost of Book
& Mailing
per child

X

12
Months

=

Estimated
Annual Cost
Once fully
established

1000 Children X 65% X \$2.20 X 12 months = \$17,160/yr
(Example for community with 1,000 eligible children)



Program Overview

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is the flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Tennessee organization. The Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting FREE books to children from birth to age five. The program is made possible through funding shared by Dolly Parton herself, and local Program Partners in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland.

Inspired by her father's inability to read and write, Dolly started the Imagination Library in 1995 to serve the children of her hometown in Sevier County, Tennessee. Today, her program spans five countries and gifts over 3 million free, high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to children around the world. There is never a charge to families who participate in the program and it is open to all children under the age of five in geographic areas with operating programs.



These books are customized with the child's name and sent directly to their home from Dolly, creating a special gifting experience that makes reading exciting and lets the child know they are cherished.



"Before he passed away, my Daddy told me the Imagination Library was probably the most important thing I had ever done. I can't tell you how much that meant to me because I created the Imagination Library as a tribute to my Daddy. He was the smartest man I have ever known but I know in my heart his inability to read probably kept him from fulfilling all of his dreams.

"Inspiring kids to love to read became my mission. In the beginning, my hope was simply to inspire the children in my home county, but here we are today with a worldwide program that gives a book a month to millions of children.

"Of course, I have not done this alone. The real heroes of our story are the thousands of local organizations who have embraced my dream and made it their own. They raise millions of dollars each year and wake up every day with a passion to make sure their kids have every opportunity to succeed.

"It's been quite a journey but we have so much more left to do. Let's share this dream that all children should grow up in a home full of books.

"The first step is always the hardest, but you'll never know unless you try..."

A stylized blue signature of Dolly Parton.



Scan Me

Copyright © September, 2024 The Dollywood Foundation

[ImaginationLibrary.com](https://www.ImaginationLibrary.com)

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Books

Each year, our esteemed Blue Ribbon Book Selection Committee, a specially selected panel of early childhood literacy experts, is responsible for reviewing hundreds of potential titles for inclusion in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.



Provide the gift of literacy for all children, birth to age five



Inspire children to love books and reading



Support parents and communities in fostering a child's success

Together, making a difference.

Since 1995, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has delivered millions of books to children in thousands of local communities in five countries. With the support of local funders, coordination by partners, and encouragement from community leaders and organizations, parents and educators spread the love of reading and engage children in the most fundamental skill necessary to succeed in life.



Why Invest in Early Literacy?

1. Ninety percent of physical brain development occurs in the first three years of life, when a baby forms over 1 million new neural connections per second.
2. When a young child enters kindergarten ready for school, there is an 82% chance that the child will master basic skills by age 11, compared with a 45% chance for children who are not school-ready.
3. Later in life, at-risk children who do not receive high-quality early childhood experiences are 25% more likely to drop out of school, 40% more likely to become teen parents and 60% less likely to attend college.
4. Investment in high-quality early childhood programs for at-risk children from birth to age five delivers a 7-10% annual return on investment through improved education, health, social and economic outcomes, increased productivity and the reduced need for social spending.

Having books in the home is crucial for a child's academic, social, and emotional development. Reading together fosters a unique bond between children and their parents or caregivers. The Imagination Library extends this impact globally by providing books to children worldwide, free of charge, nurturing their minds and hearts.



Key Stakeholders

The true heroes of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library



Funders & Policymakers

Funders & Policymakers have significant influence in allocating resources, catalyzing partnerships, and maximizing the potential of the Imagination Library to scale and capitalize on opportunities.

Parents & Caregivers

Parents and Caregivers are a child's first teacher and set the course for developing their child's love of books and reading. Reading to a child from birth to age five improves their future reading ability and academic success.



Community Leaders

Community Leaders ensure the impact and ongoing progress of young students as they develop reading skills is crucial. By reducing the literacy gap in the early years, teachers can effectively lay the foundation for creating lifelong learners.

Local Program Partners

Local Program Partners offer the connection point, driving local awareness, enrolling local children, and paying the wholesale cost of the books and mailing each month.



Statewide Program Partners

Statewide Program Partners oversee support for Imagination Library volunteers, staff, and supporters to drive enrollment and provide universal access to high-quality, age-appropriate books across their state.

