

Program Overview



Inspire a Love
of Reading



Dolly Parton believes that if you can read, you can do anything, dream anything, and be anything. Through her Imagination Library program, she wants to ensure all children have books at home, regardless of the environment in which they live.

Welcome to the Imagination Library

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library puts books into the hands and hearts of children across the world. We partner with local communities to provide a specially-selected, high-quality book each month to participating children from birth to age five. These books are personalized with each child's name and mailed directly to their home to create a gifting experience that makes books exciting and encourages families to spend time enjoying books together.

Best of all, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is available to all children at no cost to the family.



"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 well over 1 million 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. I would love for your community to join our family so please take the time to explore our website. 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 handwritten signature of Dolly Parton in black ink.

Dream More, Learn More, Care More, Be More

ImaginationLibrary.com



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting program that mails free books to children from birth to age five in participating communities within the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia.



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 more than 90 million books to children in more than 2,000 local communities worldwide.

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.

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.

The presence of books in the home supports the child's academic, social, and emotional development. Children develop a special bond with their parents and caregivers by reading together. The Imagination Library puts books into the hands and hearts of children across the world at no cost to the family.

Challenge: Children who are read to early in life are better prepared for school. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has been shown to significantly increase the time parents and caregivers spend reading to their children each week.

Key Stakeholders



Policymakers and Funders have significant influence in directing resources and catalyzing partnerships to adopt, scale, and take full advantage of opportunities with the Imagination Library.

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 their child from birth to age five improves their future reading ability and academic success.

Educators and Community Leaders validate the impact and continued progress as young students develop reading skills. Reducing the literacy gap in the early years allows teachers a better start in developing lifelong learners.

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