



Inspire a Love  
of Reading



# ANNUAL REPORT

DECEMBER 2023



**Dream More, Care More, Be More**

## Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

---

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library was founded in 1995 by Dolly Parton to deliver books in Sevier County, Tennessee. Since then, the program has grown to deliver more than a million brand new, high-quality, developmentally appropriate books each month across the United States and the world every month.



## Imagination Library Denver

---

### Mission

To increase access to age-appropriate books and promote kindergarten readiness by mailing one free book per month to children ages 0-5 through their "graduation" program.

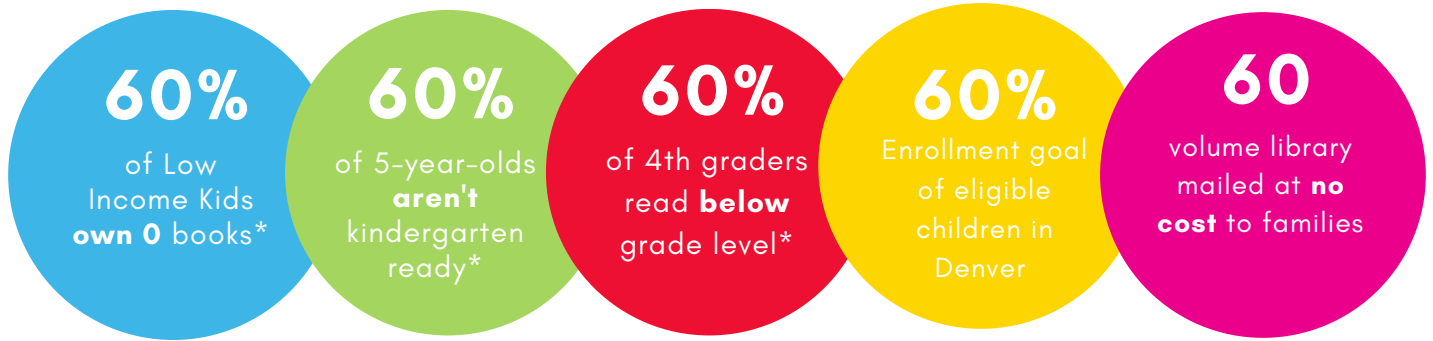
### History

In 2015, Imagination Library of Denver (ILD) launched a pilot program with 30 children at Family Star Montessori. Since its creation, ILD has expanded into 100% of Denver's neighborhoods, providing coverage to all children ages 0 to 5 within all of Denver's zip codes. Throughout just 8 years of operation, ILD has delivered 149,106 dynamic, diverse, and age-appropriate books and has graduated more than 2,912 students who exhibited kindergarten readiness based on assessments.

The importance of equitable access to early childhood books couldn't have been emphasized more than when Governor Polis signed SB20-185 on July 10, 2020, creating a statewide Imagination Library (IL) program. This commitment to match every dollar raised for books throughout the state offers a significant incentive for the organization to work with local philanthropists, businesses and individual donors who can leverage the matched dollar to sustain the program.



## IMAGINATION LIBRARY BY THE NUMBERS:



### Imagination Library Accomplishments

- Between Jan 2023 - Dec 2023, Imagination Library delivered **68,876** books to children in Denver, with 11,020 having English/Spanish content
- Enrollment increased nearly 40% since Dec 2022
- Imagination Library of Denver has mailed 149,106 books to 9,738 children under 5 since 2015
- Imagination Library serves 20% of the under-5 population
- **16%** of books are either fully bilingual Spanish-English or include Spanish-language content
- Our goal is to mail **24,000+** books every month by 2026, thus serving 60% of Denver's children
- More than **90%** of parents surveyed report that **Imagination Library helps prepare their child** for kindergarten

"Thank you for starting this program in Denver. We love the books that we get in the mail and my son is so excited about books now."

- Marcia, parent





## Target Areas for Growth 2024

---

Imagination Library Denver Goals for this year:

- Intensifying enrollment in all Denver neighborhoods with a 2024 goal to grow from 6,863 books to 10,000 Denver. By increasing enrollment levels we can ensure equitable access to developmentally appropriate books and promote kindergarten readiness to children in Denver.
- Collaborate with partners to ensure all current enrollees receive their Imagination Library books uninterrupted so they can consistently engage in the program with their caregivers.
- Raise financial resources for the continuance of IL for children who are most in need of books and reading support to match and raise the funding from the State of Colorado
- Continue program evaluation with all Denver participants to gauge their level of satisfaction with the IL program and how ready their children are for kindergarten.

Although our program is open to ALL children in every Denver zip code, we focus much of our enrollment efforts on children in highest-needs communities. For Denver, we use 2020 Census data and statistics drawn from the Denver Human Services Index (DHSI) to identify neighborhoods with low preschool enrollment levels and low kindergarten readiness scores, as well as communities that utilize safety-net services, to prioritize areas that may not have reliable access to books. These neighborhoods include Elyria Swansea, Globeville, Clayton, College View, Westwood, Barnum, Montbello, Northeast Parkhill, Athmar Park, Ruby Hill and East Colfax. According to current US Census Data, there are 17,150 eligible children (children ages 0-5) in these targeted areas.

**The National Commission on Reading reports that the two most important factors to a child's educational success are books in the home, and being read to and with BEFORE they begin school.**



### **ALL MEANS ALL**

ILD provides equitable access to one high-quality, age-appropriate book each month to ALL families at no hassle and **no cost** until their 5th birthday no matter the zip code or income level.

## Impact Statement

---

Imagination Library has a sophisticated measurement system that allows staff to track which books are mailed, enrollment percentages (including a breakdown by zip code), the number of graduates (children who turned 5 and entered Kindergarten) and the number of books mailed in any given time frame. We also use Census data to compare the number of enrolled children to the number of eligible children, to better understand which zip codes need outreach.

We measure the success of the program through an annual parent/caregiver survey that allows us to glean the number of times per week parents read to their children, how prepared parents feel their children are for kindergarten and the impact the ILD program has on the child's literacy.

Specific to Denver, 62% of parents reported ILD has increased reading within their family. 72% said that ILD had a positive impact on their child's literacy, with an added 87% of parents strongly agreeing that ILD helped prepare their child for kindergarten.

Finally, thanks to the statewide funding of the program, Imagination Library and the Colorado Department of Education have partnered to invest in a multi-year statewide evaluation to measure the impact of Imagination Library on kindergarten readiness. Imagination Library Denver was selected one of the initial communities for the pilot in 2022-23, which later was expanded statewide to all affiliates.

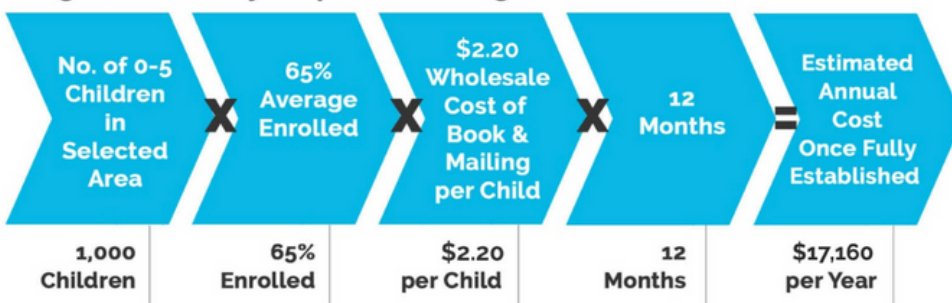
## Financials

---

### Cost of Imagination Library Denver 2023

Government grants	47%	\$62,633
Corporate donations/grants/sponsorships	44%	\$59,005
Individual donors/grants	7%	\$9,040

#### Imagination Library Simplified Funding Formula



*\*Example for community with 1,000 eligible children*



# Enrollment & Book Mailing Numbers

Since 2015 when Imagination Library Denver began **149,106**

books have been mailed to kids in the metro Denver area

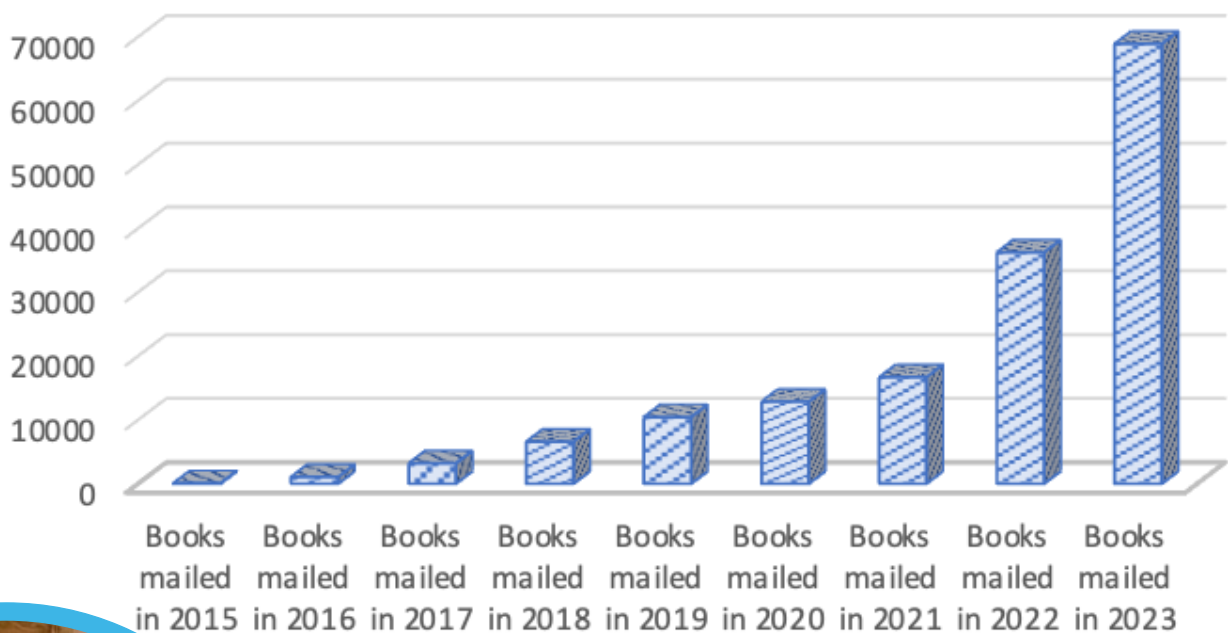
In 2023 **68,876**

have been mailed to kids in the metro Denver area

**60%** increase in enrollment **EACH YEAR** that ILD has been mailing books

**2,912** kids have "graduated" from ILD and were kindergarten ready when starting school

## GROWTH CHART OF BOOKS MAILED



# IMPACT & SUPPORT

---

Thank you so much for  
making Imagination Library  
possible! We love it!  
LEO

“ We believe in setting up our community for success in life—Imagination Library ensures that every child enrolled has access to good books. We are proud to support Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. ”

**--GREG PARADIES, PARADIES LAGARDERÉ, DENVER PARTNER**

Dear Imagination Library,  
Thank you so much for sending my two children new books each month. The choices and selection are so great for their ages. We appreciate your work to bring great quality books to our household.

Thank you!  
The Stern household



# CONTACT INFORMATION

Imagination Library Denver  
3000 Lawrence Street  
Denver, CO 80205  
[info@imaginationlibrarydenver.org](mailto:info@imaginationlibrarydenver.org)

# ADDENDUMS

---





# Engaging Affiliates & Community Partners

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.



**Affordable, high quality and turnkey**



**Parents love it and read more with their child**



**Research confirms the impact on early literacy**

## Become an Imagination Library Partner

A community and its affiliate organization make the program accessible to all birth to age five children in their local area.

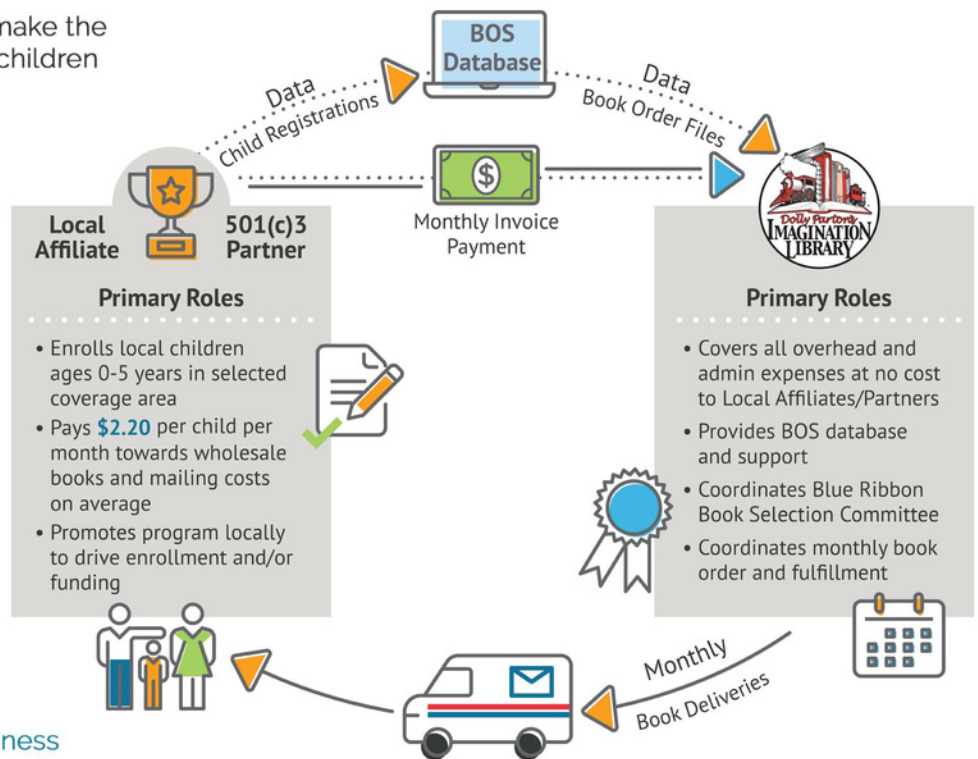
The Dollywood Foundation manages the system to deliver the books to the home. From the rigorous review of books by the selection committee to providing the Book Order System and overseeing the mailing of a book to each child every month from birth to age five, the Imagination Library supports the local community and affiliates every step of the process.

### Community Partners:

- ✓ Pay the wholesale cost of books and mailing for children in selected coverage
- ✓ Promote the Program and Build Awareness
- ✓ Register Children to Participate
- ✓ Enter Information into Book Order System

Over twenty 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 1 million children across the world with a new, age-appropriate book each month.

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



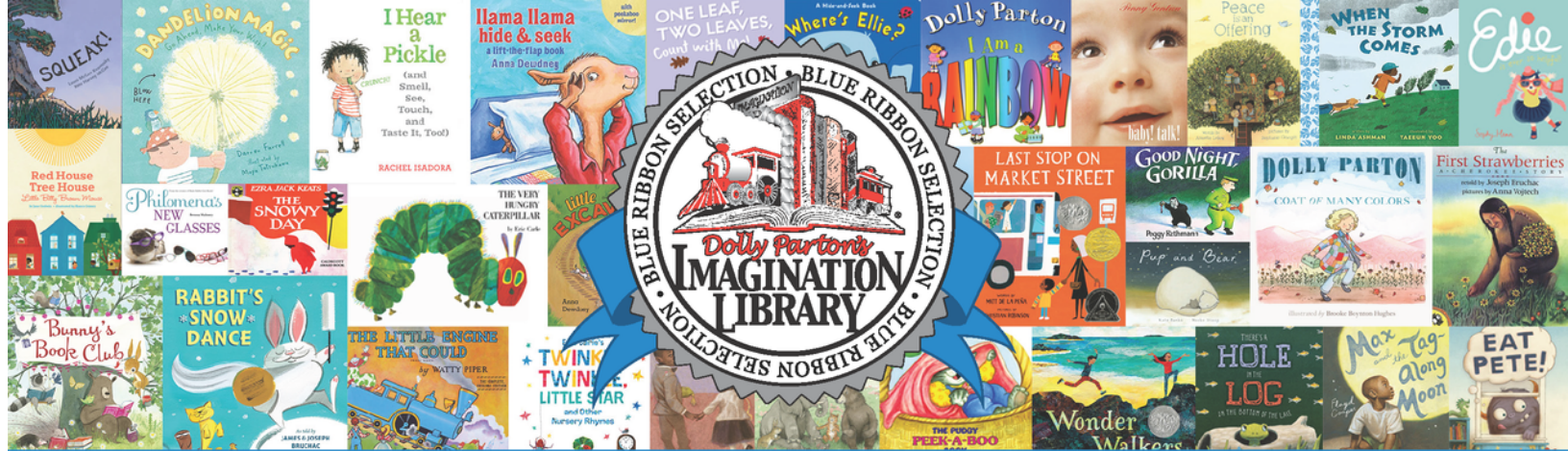
### Start a Local Community Imagination Library Program Today!

Contact us by visiting the website to reach your regional director, to complete the online Start-A-Program form and to learn more about how it works.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is active in all 50 states and other countries around the world.

**Let us help you get started in your community.**





## 2023 BLUE RIBBON SELECTIONS UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CORE PROGRAM

The first book a child receives is **The Little Engine That Could™** (customized version)  
The month a child turns 5 they will receive **Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!** (customized version)  
Titles on this list are subject to change.



### GROUP 6 Children born in 2018

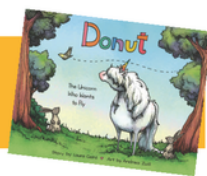
- Spend It!
- In Our Garden
- Wild Horses
- You Can Be ABC
- + Wonder Walker
- I'm Not Scared, You're Scared Drop
- Rabbit's Snow Dance
- A Gift for Nana
- The Tree in Me
- Carpenter's Helper



### GROUP 5 Children born in 2019

- Milo's Hat Trick
- Find Fergus
- There's a Monster in Your Book
- The Rabbit Listened
- Alex's Good Fortune
- When the Storm Comes
- Say Hello to a Worm
- Goldilocks & the Three Bears
- Grandpa & Jake
- + Ten Ways to Hear Snow
- + Coat of Many Colors
- The Night Before the Dentist

### GROUP 4 Children born in 2020



- A Story for Small Bear
- This is the Tree We Planted
- Richard Scarry's Busy Busy People
- Raindrops to Rainbows
- + Ocean Lullaby
- + Baby Builders
- Just Try One Bite
- Somewhere Right Now
- + The Snowy Day
- Donut
- Corduroy
- How We Say I Love You

### GROUP 3 Children born in 2021



- Dandelion Magic
- Green Tractor
- I Am a Rainbow
- The Big Slide
- Llama Llama Meets the Babysitter
- K is for Kindness
- + Mine, Mine, Mine, Yours!
- Birding for Babies: Backyard Birds
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar Eats Breakfast
- Ice Cream Face
- Solitary Animals
- + I Hear a Pickle



### GROUP 2 Children born in 2022

- Corduroy's Shapes
- Where is Your Nose?
- Home Builders
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar's First Summer
- Good Morning Farm Friends
- Richard Scarry's First 100 Words
- Little Poems for Tiny Ears
- Vehicles (Picture Show)
- Eric Carle's Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star and Other Nursery Rhymes
- Good Night Gorilla
- Llama Llama Red Pajama
- Tad and Dad



### GROUP 1 Children born in 2023

- Baby! Talk!
- Pudgy Pat A Cake
- Who Says Quack?
- Look at the Animals
- + Baby Sounds
- Pudgy Book of Mother Goose
- Sleep Tight, Polar Bear (Little Loves)
- Can You Guess? Animal Sounds with The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- Roald Dahl Colors
- Llama Llama Hide & Seek
- Babies Love Animals (A Tummy Time Book)



Penguin Random House  
PENGUIN YOUNG READERS

• Signifies a new book to the program  
+ Signifies a bilingual English / Spanish title or Hispanic Content



Penguin Random House



# Affiliates & Community Partners



Inspire a Love of Reading



**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 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 grow up.

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, age-appropriate, high-quality book each month to registered children from birth to age five. These books are personalized with the child's name and mailed directly to the child's 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 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*



United Way of Wyoming Valley

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a dependable partner for local communities and provides a low-cost, turnkey program to help young children develop a love for books and reading.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library makes it accessible for local communities to reach large numbers of children and families with books at a low cost per child per month through a flexible, highly scalable model.