

# Dolly Parton's Imagination Library



1. Program History
2. Local Program Design
3. Launch Party Overview
4. Sign-Ups & Waiting List
5. Funding & Cost to Sponsor a Child

# Program History



In 1995, Dolly Parton launched Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) to benefit the children of her home county in East Tennessee. Dolly's vision was to foster a love of reading among her county's preschool children and their families by providing them with the gift of a specially selected book each month. By mailing high quality, age-appropriate books directly to their homes, she wanted children to be excited about books and to feel the magic that books can create. Moreover, she could insure that every child would have books, regardless of their family's income.

Dolly's Imagination Library became so popular that in the year 2000 she announced that she would make the program available for replication to any community that was willing to partner with her to support it locally. Since the initial program launch in the U.S., Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has gone from just a few dozen books to over 60,000,000 books mailed to children in the United States, into Canada and across the proverbial pond into the United Kingdom! Currently over 1600 local communities provide DPIL to over 750,000 children each and every month.



# How it works

- **Families register children for the program—for free—through a replication site.** Children must be aged birth to five years old to participate. There is no minimum/maximum income level that families must meet in order to participate.
- **The replication site enters the children's registration data into the DPIL database.** Registration data includes the child's name, child's date of birth, parent's name, mailing and home addresses, email address, and phone number.
- **DPIL mails an age appropriate book directly to the child every month until they begin kindergarten.** Each month's book coordinates with the individual recipient child's age. Books are selected by a national committee of professional educators and experts in the field of youth literacy. A child who is registered at birth will own a library of 60 books by the time they begin kindergarten.
- **The replication site visits local post offices monthly to pick up undeliverable books.** Families are responsible for informing the replication site of any changes to address in order to continue receiving books. The replication site updates the DPIL database with address changes.
- **The replication site pays a monthly invoice to DPIL for the cost of the books/mailing.** The annual cost for books and postage is \$25 per child.

# Local Program Design

- **Adhere to the aforementioned model**
- **Add the following components**
  - Staff the program through the Literacy Council.
  - Limit capacity to 200 children in the first year.
  - Work with the Buncombe Partnership for Children.
  - Pre-register children involved with BPFC and LCBC.
  - Develop and implement a survey to gauge program impact.
  - Design and implement workshops to teach parents how to use DPIL books to promote early literacy skills with their child/ren.
  - Re-distribute undeliverable books in the community.



# Launch Party – Nov. 21

- Registered 40 children.
- Provided blocks and crafts for children to practice creativity and gross and fine motor skills.
- Fed approx. 150 people pizza, fruit, and veggies after a cold morning viewing the parade.
- Gave away over 100 books



# Sign-Ups & Waiting List



200 children are registered,  
representing

- Launch Party attendees
- Literacy Council families
- Families involved with BPFC programming
- Families involved with the Nurse Family Partnership

90 children are on the waiting list, representing some from the above sources, plus community inquiries.



# Funding/Cost to Sponsor

While it only costs \$25 per child for the books and postage, the true cost of delivering the program in its entirety is \$85 per child. The following have invested to make this program a reality:

- Buncombe Partnership for Children
- Literacy Council Corporate Partners
- Literacy Council Private/Individual Donors

Thank you!

