



Harrisonburg and Rockingham County

Frequently Asked Questions

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OVERVIEW

What is Dolly Parton's Imagination Library?

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting program that mails free, age-appropriate, high-quality books to children from birth to age five, no matter their family's income.

Who's eligible to enroll?

Parents or guardians of children under age five who are residents of Harrisonburg City or Rockingham County, Virginia, are eligible to enroll in our local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program.

What are my responsibilities as a parent or guardian?

Start by submitting the online registration form, or pick up a brochure form at The Community Foundation of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County. To take part in our local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program, you must be a legal resident of Harrisonburg or Rockingham County.

If your child's address changes, you must notify The Community Foundation in order to continue receiving books in the mail. Log in to the [Parent Information Center](#) to update your family's information. When your child receives their Imagination Library books, spend time reading together.

Here are resources for parents or guardians from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. <https://imaginationlibrary.com/news-resources/parent-resources/>.

Are parents encouraged to read to their children upon enrollment in Imagination Library?

Yes, of course! It's never too early to begin reading to your child! The tips below offer ideas to help foster a love of reading. Try a new tip each week, and see what works best for your child:

- Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him or her. Talk about "story time" as the favorite part of your day.
- Incorporate humor and expression. Use different voices. Be interactive. Ham it up!
- Put the book away for a while if your child loses interest or is having trouble paying attention.
- Discuss what's happening in the book, point out things on the page, and ask questions. Read it again and again, and have fun!

“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

Parents may access additional resources from Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library [here](#)

Is there research supporting the values of the program?

Absolutely! Educators and researchers the world over have identified that reading with your preschool child(ren) is the single most important activity to prepare a child for school. You can view the Imagination Library’s logic model and research database [here](#).

What type of books will be mailed?

The first book the child will receive is always “The Little Engine that Could,” and the final book received is always “Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come.” Children will be mailed age-appropriate books in between. All books are printed through Penguin Publishing, and reading tips are provided on a flap on the back of each softcover book.

Are the books age appropriate?

Yes, All books within the program are age-appropriate and are selected by early childhood experts. More information about the Book Committee can be found at www.imaginationlibrary.com and select "Choosing Our Books" under USA menu. Every child receives the same welcome book, regardless of age, and the following month the age-appropriate titles will start to arrive.

Who chooses the books?

Each year, the 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. Recent studies suggest participation in the Imagination Library is positively and significantly associated with higher measures of early language and math development. The Blue Ribbon Book Selection Committee takes great care in choosing books that meet the different needs of children as they progress from birth to age 5.

Can I enroll if I don't live in Harrisonburg City or Rockingham County?

If you're not a resident of Harrisonburg or Rockingham County, visit Dolly Parton's Imagination Library website to check if the program is also available in your area.

How do we sign up?

Sign up at The Community Foundation website. Parents without Internet access can sign up on a computer at the Massanutten Regional Library or on a paper form available via The Imagination Library brochure.

Can I enroll multiple children?

Each child is eligible to be enrolled by their parent or guardian. If there are multiple children under five in a household, each child is eligible to enroll. The Dollywood Foundation switches out 18-20 books each year to ensure children in the same family won't always get the same books. Please note that twins and multiples will receive the same book selection.

What is a parent account?

If you provide an email address during registration, a parent account is automatically created for you. Once your child is approved and active in the program, parent account information, including your username and password, is emailed to you. Your username is always your email address. With your parent account, you can do things such as check your child's enrollment status, edit your address, and view a list of the titles mailed each month.

What should I do if my address changes?

If your family moves, you must provide The Community Foundation of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County with your new address in order to continue receiving books in the mail. You can update your child's mailing address by logging in to the Parent Information Center.

What does it cost?

The Dollywood Foundation covers program overhead by providing the enrollment database and coordinating the book selection, procurement, and fulfillment processes. The Dollywood Foundation also covers the costs of the books.

The Community Foundation's cost is approximately \$2.20 per book, per month (\$26 per child, per year).

To support The Community Foundation's Imagination Library with a gift, please click [here](#).

How can this be free?

There is no catch. There will never be any cost to you. There is no advertising. Your information will not be shared with anyone for any purpose. Dolly Parton created the Imagination Library to make books more available to young children, because early experience with reading is so important to their futures. The Community Foundation partners with The Dollywood Foundation to bring this program to Harrisonburg and Rockingham County children. The local donations are being raised by The Community Foundation of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County to help cover the costs of shipping.

How secure is the information provided to the Imagination Library?

Both The Community Foundation and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library take information security very seriously. We will not share it or use it for any purpose other than this service.

What if I don't have an email address to enroll my children?

If you do not have an email address you will need to contact The Community Foundation to find out more information. Call us at 540-432-3863 or visit our office at 317 South Main Street, Harrisonburg, VA.

What if our family is homeless?

Your family does not need a permanent address to sign up your child for the Imagination Library. Your child needs to be currently living within the limits of Harrisonburg City or Rockingham County, and have an address within Harrisonburg City or Rockingham County where he or she can receive mail. The books will be addressed to your child's name.

How can I support the Imagination Library?

It only costs \$26 to support a child's participation in the program for a year or \$130 to support a child from birth to age 5. Donations to our local Imagination Library program can be made through The Community Foundation [website](#) and/or made payable to The Community Foundation at P.O. Box, 1068, Harrisonburg, VA 22803. Please write "Dolly Parton's Imagination Library" in the memo line.

Who pays for the Imagination Library?

The Community Foundation funds our local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program with generous help from community partners and individual donors.

To support the project and learn more visit [here](#).

How does the Imagination Library benefit children?

Inspiring the love of reading and learning early in a child's life helps to develop strong literacy skills. Statistics and independent reports have shown Dolly Parton's Imagination Library drastically improves early childhood literacy and enhances kindergarten readiness for children enrolled in the program. Children read more when books are in the home!

But isn't my child is too young to read?

It's never too soon to start reading to your child! Reading aloud to young children is a key literacy-boosting activity. A study done by Le Moyne College faculty found that the longer a child is enrolled in the program the more frequently parents will read to their children, and increases the likelihood that an adult will discuss the story with the child.

A follow-up study released in August 2015 compared the "kindergarten readiness" of children who participated in the Imagination Library for three or four years of the five-year program vs. children who did not. The results showed a 28.9% increase in the number of children who were prepared for kindergarten based on this measure.

Does my child get to keep the books?

Yes! These books are your children's to keep forever! The Imagination Library creates a love of book ownership as a way to encourage a love of reading as an everyday activity. For many of the children that this program will reach, these will be the first books that these children will own.

Your child's name will appear right on the mailing label of each book. Children are very excited to receive their own book in the mail, and this helps to encourage their enthusiasm about reading the books.

As a community partner, may I help promote Imagination Library?

Sure! We appreciate your assistance as we work to promote the program in locations that support underserved families (such as public libraries, HeadStart, food pantries, etc.). Funding is limited and as responsible stewards of donor dollars, we aspire to place books in the homes and hands of families who need them most. Contact The Community Foundation at 540-432-3863 to discuss further.

I don't have eligible children, but can I still be involved?

Yes! There are many ways to help promote our Imagination Library program and share the love of reading. Advocate. Share our Facebook posts and the registration link with friends and family who may be interested in enrolling their children. Give. Help [provide](#) books to local children by supporting The Community Foundation. A donation of \$26 will

provide one year of Imagination Library books or \$130 will provide five years of books to a child. [DONATE](#)

NEW ENROLLMENT

Who can enroll children in the Imagination Library?

Only parents, legal guardians or legal custodians may enroll a child.

How do I know if my child was accepted into the program?

If you provide an email address with your registration you will be notified via email when the registration is approved or entered into our system. If you do not have an email address you will need to contact The Community Foundation at 540-432-3863 or visit our office at 317 South Main Street, Harrisonburg to find out more information but it does take 6-9 weeks for books to start arriving after approval.

Our family can afford books, may we still enroll?

Yes! This program is for all children. If you can, you are welcome to sponsor your own child(ren). Gifts can be made to The Community Foundation [here](#). A donation of \$26 will provide one year of Imagination Library books or \$130 will provide five years of books to a child.

How can I enroll my child?

The easiest way to enroll your child is to do so online at <https://imaginationlibrary.com/check-availability/>. There is a brief survey to be completed first before proceeding to the enrollment form.

When will my child get the first book?

The first book will arrive about two months after you sign up. For example, if you sign up in September, your child will receive the first book in late November.

Because the national organization is so large, it takes a little while to get new addresses into their system. But once you get the first book, a new book will come regularly every month until your child's fifth birthday.

I thought I signed up, but I never got a book.

If you have already waited two or three months for the first book: Have you received a "Welcome" email or letter? If not, there may have been an issue with your sign-up. Please call The Community Foundation at 540-432-3863 so we can help.

My child missed a book.

If it is this month's book: Sometimes the book doesn't come until the very last day of the month. If it doesn't come by the beginning of next month, please call The Community Foundation at 540-432-3863 so we can help.

If you have already waited past the end of the month: Did you recently move? If so, you need to change your mailing address in the [Parent Area](#) of the national website for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

If you have already waited past the end of the month, and you have not moved recently: Please call The Community Foundation at 540-32-3863 so we can help.

One child got a book, but my other child didn't.

Books may come at different times of the month. Once each of your children has received a first book, each month's books should arrive by the last day of the month – but not necessarily on the same day.

Why don't my kids receive their books on the same day?

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library books are mailed in groups based on birth year. While each enrolled child in your household will get a new book every month, the books won't arrive on the same day for children of different ages.

Why am I being asked to complete a survey when I register?

We use the survey to gather information to share with our donors so they can see the program impact and the importance of the Imagination Library to early literacy and our community.

Is the information provided on the registration form private?

The information will not be used without your permission for any purpose other than those related to the Imagination Library.

Why is my child's status listed as "pending"?

Registrations received online will be placed into a pending area until the program coordinator reviews their information. Once the registration is approved, the child becomes active in the program, and the parent will receive an email. The accounts of children that have recently moved are flagged and also moved into a pending area until their address is updated. Please note that a child's status may only remain in the pending area for up to 60 days before being permanently removed from the system. It is important to contact The Community Foundation (540-432-3863 or revlan@tcfhr.org) if there is a change of address or to update it via your parent account.

I'm pregnant. Can I add my unborn child to the waiting list?

Because we will need to know the exact birth date of your child (to ensure age-appropriate books), it is important to wait until after your child is born to enroll them in the program.

I have twins. Will they receive the same book every month?

Yes. Instead of receiving two identical books every month, most families with twins opt to enroll both children as one participant. We can put both children's names on the mailing label, so they will receive the gift together each month. This allows The Community Foundation to enroll an additional child (or one from the waiting list) to receive the second book.

I don't live in Harrisonburg City or Rockingham County. Can I sign my child up to receive books?

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library registrations are handled by local affiliates who serve specified areas. Click [here](#) and enter your zip code to find out if there is a local affiliate serving your county/community.

My child will be five in two months. Can I still sign her/him up?

Sorry, registrations received within 10 weeks of the child's 5th birthday cannot be processed in time for the child to receive a book from the Imagination Library. Instead, why not consider regular trips to the Massanutten Regional Library where you and your child can select books from the Children's department. If your child doesn't already have a library card, please stop at their circulation desk to get one.

Do we come pick up our books from The Community Foundation?

No, The Imagination Library will mail the book to your child at the address you provide on the registration form. Make sure the address you provide is correct. If you move, update your address on the [Imagination Library Parent Information Portal](#).

ALREADY ENROLLED

I enrolled my child approximately 2 months ago, how long before the books arrive?

The first book typically arrives 8 weeks after a child's enrollment form has been activated. The books are ordered on the 1st of each month for delivery by the last week of the following month. For example, if your enrollment was activated before 5 p.m. on June 1st, you will receive your first book by the last week of July. However if your enrollment was activated after 5 p.m. on June 1st, you would rollover to the July 1st order for delivery of your first book by the last week of August. In other words, it may take up to 10 weeks before you receive your first book. After that time, a book will arrive each month.

Why do my child's books come at different times every month?

Penguin Random House specially prints Dolly Parton's Imagination Library books every month, keeping program costs affordable. The different age groups' books are mailed as they are ready, which varies from month to month. Your child(ren)'s books can arrive at any point in the month. Please contact us if you have not received a book in 8 weeks.

My older child already receives books. If I enroll my younger child, will they receive the same books that my older child did?

The Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Book Selection Committee rotates approximately 25% of titles for each age group each year. Families who enroll multiple children and therefore receive some "repeat" books often choose to donate the duplicates back to The Community Foundation to give to children on the waiting list. Please remember to peel the mailing label from the back of the books before donating to protect your privacy.

We moved here and transferred our enrollment. Will my child receive the same books they received before we moved?

No. Each month, the book a child receives is determined based on their birthday. This ensures that children receive books that are appropriate for their age and developmental stage. It also means that one child should never receive the same book twice, even if they move!

What if I'm moving outside of the service area?

If you're moving out of Harrisonburg or Rockingham County, you may still continue to receive books if your new zip code is part of a currently operating area. If you move into an area where there is not a community partner sponsoring Imagination Library, your child will no longer receive books.

How do I change my address?

Change your mailing address in the [Parent Section of the national website for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library](#). If you don't remember your log-in information, the website provides information about how to have it sent to you.

How do I get my login information?

If an email address was added to your child's record upon registration, this will serve as your username. If you do not know the password please request a new password using the New Password/Forgot Password link on the login page. If your link has expired or is invalid, you can request a new link at any time by visiting www.imaginationlibrary.com/bos.

My child stopped receiving books. What happened?

If your child recently turned five years old, they graduated from the program. Their last book should have been Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!

If you moved, please change your mailing address in the [Parent Section of the national website for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library](#). If you don't remember your log-in information, the website provides information about how to have it sent to you.

Please contact The Community Foundation at 540-432-3863 or visit us at 317 South Main Street, Harrisonburg if neither of these are true and your child has not received a book in over a month.

WAITING LIST

I've received notification that my child is on a waiting list. Why?

Once we've reached maximum capacity based on available funding, we add children to a waiting list. To keep the waiting list as equitable as possible, we add children based on enrollment date.

How can the community help prevent or reduce the number of children on the waiting list?

As with any program, funding and resources are limited. First, we ask for your generous financial support. It only costs \$26 to support a child's participation in Imagination Library for a year or \$130 to support a child from birth to age 5. Donations can be made payable to The Community Foundation of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County's Imagination Library by check or you may donate online at www.tcfhr.org.

Also, we plan to work strategically with community partners to promote the program in locations that support underserved families (such as public libraries, HeadStart, food pantries, etc.). Funding is limited and as responsible stewards of donor dollars, we aspire to place books in the homes and hands of families who need them most.

What happens if my child turns five while on the waiting list?

This happens occasionally when a child is almost five years old when added to the waiting list. We will contact you to find out your child's special interests (characters, themes, subjects, etc.) and select 3-5 books from our library of donated new and lightly used children's books for them. With your permission, we can even hand-deliver these books to your home!