LITERACY COALITION OF HANCOCK COUNTY
Dear Literacy Partners,

How would your life be different if you could not read a restaurant menu, an election ballot, a prescription bottle label, a note from school, or a text? How would it make you feel if you could not read a story to your young child? Low literacy costs Americans billions in lost productivity in the workforce and has been linked to unemployment, crime, poverty and family conflicts. Because of you, the Literacy Coalition of Hancock County (LCHC) is facing the issue of illiteracy head on and we are making progress!

As our partner, you help us to provide and support programming that promotes literacy for all ages. To date, the Literacy Coalition has provided more than 73,000 books to almost 4,000 children in Hancock County through the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library (DPIL). (Did you know that for just $25 you can sponsor a child for a whole year in DPIL?) Our Community Books program allows us to distribute books in bulk to agencies that serve families in need. Thousands of children and their families have attended Family Literacy Nights in our schools, where every child leaves with a new book. Our Parent Partner videos provide tips on how to read with your youngest children and our Tell-a-Tale writing contest will enter its third year this January. For some fun adult competition, teams participate in our Community Spelling Bee each spring. I want to thank you for your support and I encourage you to become involved in our programming. We always need volunteers.

I am proud of the work that has been done to promote literacy and look forward to the continued stewardship of the LCHC’s mission. We make it a practice to monitor the success and challenges of programming and continue to adjust our strategic plan to meet the needs of our community. I believe the Literacy Coalition is part of the larger team of educators, agencies, workforce partners and coalitions working to make Hancock County the best place to live in Ohio. We couldn’t do all that we do without your financial support and your volunteer hours.

As we finalize the last remaining details from our annual fundraising campaign, we would like to take a moment to express our tremendous gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the LCHC’s success. A special thanks is extended to:

- All of our individual donors who sponsor a child in DPIL or support our other important programs
- Our generous and loyal friends who give of their time at our events
- Spelling Bee teams and sponsors
- The Community Foundation, Handbags that Help, Morning Rotary, Noon Rotary, The Findlay-Hancock County Public Library, Kiwanis, United Way, Marathon Petroleum Corporation, LaRiche Family of Dealerships, Hancock Wood Electric Co-Op, Hancock Leadership Class of 2016, Ball Metal, Hancock County ESC, Friends of the Library, Dollar General, First Federal, Walmart Foundation, Hancock Federal Credit Union, Hancock READS, University of Findlay and the Younger Family

Our campaign is coming to an end, but our very important work continues. Here at the Literacy Coalition our mission is to support lifelong literacy. Our vision is that everyone in Hancock County will be literate. Through our collaborative efforts, we can make this a reality. For more information on who we are and what we do, check out our website at https://www.hancockliteracy.org I hope you will continue to be our partner in literacy!

Sincerely,
Chelsea Bodnarik
Board Chair, LCHC

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**Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library**

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

There are many reasons parents do not read to their children, but the Literacy Coalition of Hancock County believes that we can eliminate one of those reasons: a lack of books within the home. In 1996, Dolly Parton launched an exciting new effort, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, to benefit the children of her home county in East Tennessee, USA. Dolly’s vision was to foster a love of reading among her county’s preschool children and their families.

Through the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, children in Hancock County will have books of their own...at no cost to the family! A new carefully selected book will be mailed, in the child’s name, to his or her home each and every month from birth until he or she turns five years of age. Titles are chosen by a blue ribbon panel of educators, are age appropriate, and have concepts that build upon each other. All children, regardless of household income are eligible for the program. Should a child move out of Hancock County, he/she is deleted from the program unless the family moves to another community that participates in the Imagination Library program.

Since our first mailing in November 2014, we have mailed over 73,000 books to children here in Hancock County. We currently have over 2,300 children enrolled in the program. $25 sponsors one child for one year (12 new books) and $125 sponsors one child for all five years (60 new books).

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**Parent Partner Videos**

Our Parent Partner video series is a useful literacy tool to help guide parents and caregivers of young children, ages birth through four years old. We want both parents and children to get the most out of their reading time as possible, while still making reading fun! Each video focuses on a variety of tips for reading with your child. It is never too early to start reading to a child.

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**Tell-A-Tale**

Children who live or attend a school in Hancock County can write a short story (350 maximum). Adults can assist younger children by writing their story down for them. Older children should print their story. This year’s contest will run January 1-31, 2019 and there will not be assigned topics. Children can use their imagination and write about anything. The child can include illustrations (one picture or many) but they are not required. Once the stories are all submitted (deadline January 31) a third party of judges will rank the top three stories in each grade level. Winners will be printed in a special literacy tab of the Courier and given to every K-5 grade student in Hancock County.

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**Family Literacy Nights**

The Literacy Coalition is able to hold fun, free Family Literacy Nights (FLN) at our local schools. During these engaging events, children get to participate in literacy related activities with their adult(s). We show the importance of literacy while in an exciting, family-friendly event. The purpose of FLNs are:

- to provide information to parents about how they can help their children develop literacy skills at home.
- introduce parents/caregivers to literacy standards.
- provide/model games and activities to teach literacy concepts.
- have fun!

Since 2016, we have had over 3,300 participants attend our Family Literacy Nights and have given out 1,800 books.

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**Community Books**

Community Books is a program that allows the Literacy Coalition to give books in bulk to local agencies that may have at-risk children walk through their doors. We currently work with 7 local agencies including The Center for Safe and Healthy Kids, Chopin Hall, City Mission, Hope House, Open Arms, and Salvation Army. Since 2017, we have given out over 1,150 books to more than 230 children!
Thank you!

Corporate Supporters

Ball Metal
Chuck and Mariann Younger Fund
Dollar General
Findlay Flag City Morning Rotary Club
Findlay Rotary Club
Findlay Service League
Findlay-Hancock County Public Library
First Federal Bank
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Hancock Leadership Class of 2016
Hancock Reads
Hancock Wood Electric Cooperative
Handbags that Help
Help Me Grow
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Did you know?

- Studies have shown that a child who is ready to learn to read in kindergarten is more likely to achieve the third-grade reading guarantee, compared to a student who is not ready.
- Research has proven that students who do not meet grade-level reading standards by the conclusion of their third grade year are likely to struggle with reading for years to come or for the remainder of their school and adult life.
- The presence of books in the home has a greater influence on a child’s education level, more than a parent’s income, nationality, or education level.
- 8% of Hancock County is illiterate, equivalent to 4,000 adults.
- We are currently serving over 2,300 children in our Imagination Library.
- Our Imagination Library helps remove the financial and transportation barrier in getting books in the hands of our local children.
- The LCHC has mailed out over 73,000 books to children right here in our community.
- Our Imagination Library helps prepare children for kindergarten.
- If we have an illiterate adult, they are unable to read job applications, unable to read medication directions, unable to follow cooking directions, unable to assist their child with homework, and more likely to live in poverty.

How Can I Help?

Your donation will help support:
- Preschool, Grade School and Adult Literacy Initiatives
- Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library
- Family Literacy Nights
- Parent Partners
- Tell-A-Tale Contest
- Administrative Responsibilities

___ I would like to make a donation to support the Literacy Coalition of Hancock County.
___ I am interested in volunteering with the Literacy Coalition of Hancock County.

Name: ____________________________
Phone: __________________________
Email: ____________________________

The Literacy Coalition of Hancock County is a 501 (c)(3) Organization.
Your donation is tax deductible as a public charity.
Make checks payable to: Literacy Coalition of Hancock County
Literacy Coalition of Hancock County
7746 C.R. 140
Findlay, OH 45840
(419) 419-422-7525 ext . 207

Need help?

If you or someone you know needs literacy assistance, please reach out to the Literacy Coalition of Hancock County and we can connect you with the appropriate organization to further your literacy skills. Email us at Director.literacycoalition@hancockesc.org or call us at (419) 422-7525. ext. 207

Reading tips for Babies from Reading Rockets:
- Snuggle up with a book
- Choose baby-friendly books
- Keep books where your baby can reach them
- Talk with your baby — all day long
- Encourage your baby’s coos, growls, and gurgles

Reading tips for Preschoolers from Reading Rockets:
- Read together every day
- Give everything a name
- Say how much you enjoy reading
- Read with fun in your voice
- Know when to stop

Reading tips for Kindergarteners from Reading Rockets:
- Say silly tongue twisters
- Read it and experience it
- Use your child’s name
- Talk to your child

- Ask your child to talk about his day at school. Encourage him to explain something they did, or a game he played during recess.

Reading tips for 1st, 2nd, 3rd graders from Reading Rockets:
- Don’t leave home without it
- Take control of the television
  - Be patient
  - Make books special
- Be your child’s #1 fan