

A woman and a young girl are sitting on a colorful patterned blanket outdoors, reading a book together. The woman is wearing a white t-shirt with a logo that says "W/COAST NEW CENTER". The background shows a sandy area with some colorful objects and a yellow diagonal graphic overlay on the right side.

News from Street Library

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Dear friends,

Street Libraries in New York and New Mexico have consistently brought books and creative activities to children and families every week throughout 2017. Your support and shared belief in empowering individuals, strengthening families, and transforming communities have made it possible for the Street Library facilitators to continue this important work in the communities where it is very much needed. Thank you!

*We would like to introduce our old friend and a special Street Library facilitator from New Mexico – **Esther**. Esther's grandchildren have been part of the Street Library in Gamerco, NM, for over four years. Now, she's bringing a new Street Library to her part of the community. We asked her what changes she has seen in her grandchildren and family life—thanks to Street Library—and what inspires her to want to bring Street Library closer to other families.*

Their minds **expand**.

Street Library gives children a choice. It helps them to realize that they can think outside the box and use their imagination. To me, that's them creating their own activity; it's theirs, what they created out of the box. Their minds expand further. In art, my granddaughter, Breanna, even got a certificate. The art teacher said, "You have a creative mind."

At school, Breanna was using her hands like a calculator. The teacher said, "What are those dots for?" Breanna said, "It helps me with my math." The teacher was amazed that **she was thinking out of the box**—those are the words she used—where her mind was way out there bringing her information in her own way. She had a system.

Two years ago, Breanna was at the 48th percentile in reading. Then last year, she got a certificate for "Most Improved Reading." She is at the 86th percentile now. She really improved in her reading since Street Library helped her with the books. I'm so proud. I'm so proud.

We need little minds to help our big minds. That means: **voice your opinion.**

I see a big difference in my grandkids' attitude. Before, Breanna was shy. Now her low self-esteem is not there anymore. I think what really helped her is **learning that change is good**. She always wanted everything the same. She didn't want anything to change. But, for certain things, I put her in the middle and said: "Help us. We need help too. We don't have a mind like you because you're little, so we need little minds to help our big minds. That means voice your opinion."

There's a couple of children I've seen go to Street Library, and **they're not angry anymore**. They're more at ease. There's no more foul language coming out of their mouths. One girl used to be easily frustrated. When I went back to a later Street Library, she sat there and was following really well. She had patience. I think it comes from Street Library facilitators being patient with children, teaching them how to be patient.

At home, my granddaughter's **teaching me.**

Since we've been doing Street Library, we cut back on their TV time. The TV doesn't go on, not at all. There are reading and art activities. I even bought a glue gun. We're doing work. Breanna's showing me what Street Library has taught her. She's coming up with her own arts and crafts. So she's teaching me.

With the Street Library facilitators, there are a couple of hours where she can come and ask, "Can you help me read or help me do this?" Then the facilitators go ahead and help her or they say, "Give me a few minutes and I'll come and help you." It's different because as a grandparent I'm usually in the kitchen doing something. These days I'll turn off the stove—dinner can wait—and I'll go help her. **I'm learning that as I see what Street Library facilitators do** because I watch them too, how they deal with the kids. So, I'm learning to put stuff down and say, "OK, I can help. What do you want me to do? Can you show me?"

I want to share Street Library too because what Breanna brings home **makes me happy.**

I moved here [opposite side of the neighborhood] one year ago in September. I got a bigger space. So now I'm pushing my grandkids outside and shutting off the TV. The best thing for them to do is to go outside and learn. I see some of the neighborhood kids sit there in the yard and they're so bored. Why not have a Street Library there? I think they would enjoy it. Some parents don't have a chance to run to the public library. Street Library gives them a chance to read a book or two. Any chance they get they'll be happy with it.



I met a grandfather. He just opened up and said he's also raising his grandkids. Then I said, "We'll bring Street Library to the neighborhood." He said: "That would be good. That would be good." **The neighbors are excited.** I got the feeling they're willing to help if we get to know them a little better.

I notice, with **ATD Fourth World, that you talk "family."** Family is important. It doesn't matter if you spend only a couple of seconds being there together at Street Library. You're together as a family. That's what I've noticed about all of you: It's just family and warmth. You go there and you can be yourself. I got that warmth there, getting to know ATD Fourth World. I want to share Street Library too because what Breanna brings home makes me happy. Breanna is really proud of what she makes. I'm proud to show it off.