

# Imagination Library of Jackson County

## Program Information

### General Program Information

- All Jackson County children under age five are eligible to enroll to receive a free, age-appropriate book each month from the Imagination Library (IL) of Jackson County.
- The number of children served depends upon the funds available. More than 11,700 young children have participated since the program's May 2008 launch, and **in May 2016 the 342,000<sup>th</sup> book** was mailed!
- A child enrolled at birth will own a library of 60 quality children's books by age five.

### Program Benefits

- Recent analysis of Jackson County's school readiness demonstrated that participating in the Imagination Library increased children's early literacy skills. Imagination Library participants had better literacy scores upon beginning school than their peers who did not participate. The longer children were enrolled in IL, the better they scored on the assessment. This is especially true for children from lower-income Jackson County households. *View the full report by Michigan State University at [www.greatstartjackson.org](http://www.greatstartjackson.org).*
- Imagination Library parents read to their children more often -- daily or almost every day.
- Parents stated that Imagination Library was their number one way to get books in the hands of their children. Families with fees at the public library can no longer check out library books for their children.
- Parents report that receiving the books in the mail reminds them to read with their young child.

### Program Cost

- It costs only \$30 annually to send 12 books to an enrolled child. Dolly Parton's IL provides Jackson's program with a volume book-ordering system and mails the books to enrolled children.
- Yearly funding of \$120,000 is needed to serve the existing 4,000 Imagination Library-enrolled children and allow even more Jackson County children to participate.
- **ALL FUNDS** to support the program **MUST BE DONATED** by the **COMMUNITY** or the program cannot exist. When a community brings Imagination Library to their area, **NO** funding comes with it.

### Program Goals

- Continue to support the annual school readiness assessment (PALS), which assesses the foundational literacy skills of children entering kindergarten. This assessment helps measure the impact of Imagination Library on a child's school success.
- Increase the number of children who met or exceeded the benchmark on the PALS assessment by 2% each year. This assessment is a direct indication of a child's future literacy success!

### How Can You Help?

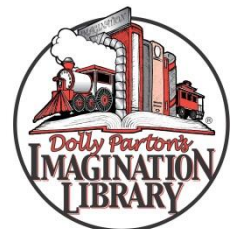
- **Make a donation** to support the program.
  - Donations can be mailed to:  
Jackson County Imagination Library Fund  
c/o Jackson Community Foundation  
One Jackson Square, Suite 308  
Jackson, MI 49201
- Help spread the word about the need for additional funding to support the program.
- Hold a fundraiser to benefit Imagination Library of Jackson County!
- Register, and encourage others to register, children for this important program

*Donations may be eligible for a tax credit of up to 50% of the amount donated.*

*Visit the foundation at: [www.jacksoncf.org](http://www.jacksoncf.org) for details*

### Need More Information?

- Visit [www.greatstartjackson.org/imaginationlibrary](http://www.greatstartjackson.org/imaginationlibrary)
- Contact: Kelly Friedland at 517-990-3625 or email: [Kelly.friedland@jcisd.org](mailto:Kelly.friedland@jcisd.org)



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## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### 1. *Who operates the program?*

- Jackson's Imagination Library (IL) is volunteer driven. The Great Start Collaborative of Jackson County provides administrative support of the IL volunteer Fundraising Council and assists with increasing community awareness of the program and its need for additional funding. The Jackson District Library processes new registrations and address changes, and helps recruit eligible children. They also support the efforts of the Fundraising Council. Several Great Start partners throughout Jackson County help recruit eligible children.
- The program fiduciary is the Jackson County Intermediate School District.

### 2. *How are the books selected?*

- A national committee reviews the Library annually. The committee includes representatives from Parents as Teachers National Center, the International Reading Association, the University of Tennessee, Rutgers University, and the teaching profession. New titles are introduced each year so younger children will not receive the same books as their older siblings.

### 3. *What role does Dolly Parton play in the local program?*

- In 1996, Dolly Parton established IL in her home county in Tennessee. The program model is now available for replication worldwide in local communities.
- Dolly Parton's Imagination Library provides local communities with behind-the-scenes infrastructure to keep costs low.

### 4. *Who pays for the program?*

- All costs for Jackson's Imagination Library program must be funded locally by businesses, organizations, and individuals who believe in the importance of early literacy and recognize the critical need to ensure that every child enters school ready to learn.
- The following businesses and organizations (plus many individuals) have contributed funds to the Jackson County IL:
  - Consumers Energy
  - United Way of Jackson County
  - The Rotary Foundation
  - Dawn Foods Foundation
  - Hurst Foundation
  - Jackson Community Foundation
  - Jackson Educators for Young Children
  - Applebee's
  - Finley's American Grill
  - In Good Company
  - United Way of Jackson County's Labor Participation Committee
  - United Way of Jackson County's Women's Leadership Council
  - And many more...

For additional information about registration and other program details,  
please go to: [www.greatstartjackson.com/imaginationlibrary](http://www.greatstartjackson.com/imaginationlibrary)

