Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is Coming to Maine!

Thanks to support and funding from Governor Mills and the Maine legislature, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library will be expanding in Maine in mid-2023.

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library puts books into the hands and hearts of children across the U.S. and four other countries. The program partners with states and local communities to provide an age-appropriate, high-quality book each month to registered children from birth to age five. The books are mailed directly to children’s homes, free to families. Each book includes reading tips for that specific title, with the child’s name printed on the label.

Q: When is the program launching in Maine?

A: The launch date has not yet been finalized. We’re working to get important pieces in place so that it can launch in mid-2023.

Q: When and how can I register my child?

A: Once a local sponsoring program (called an affiliate) is established in your area, you can register your child, who will be immediately enrolled. If there isn’t a program yet in your area, you can still sign up your child, who will be on a waiting list until a local affiliate is in place. Go to the Imagination Library’s website and click on “Can I register my child?”

Q: Why is the program available in some areas already?

A: There are a few local programs already operating in Maine where local sponsors are paying the entire cost for the areas they cover. Once the statewide program launches statewide, state funds will cover half of those costs.

Q: How will the program be funded?

A: The State of Maine will fund half the cost of the books and shipping; local programs, called affiliates, along with other funders, will fund the other half. A local affiliate must be established before children are eligible in each area of Maine. The Dollywood Foundation set the program up in this way as they feel it’s very important to have local support backing the program.

Q: Doesn’t the Dollywood Foundation pay for, or contribute to, this program in Maine?

A: In Maine and most participating states, the state and local funders pay the cost of the books and shipping for the kids in their area. The Dollywood Foundation provides tremendous support that keeps the program costs very low and makes it simple for us in Maine to carry out, including selecting the books; negotiating for cost effective books and shipping; packaging and shipping the books to children’s homes; providing support to promote the program and early learning; and much more.
Q: Our organization works with young children/families and would like to give these books to the kids in our area. Can we sign up to do that?

A: The Imagination Library mails books directly to children’s homes. Once the program is up and running in your area, your organization can play a very important role in letting the parents you serve know about the program and helping them sign up for it.

Q: I/my organization would like to help with the program; how can I/we get involved?

A: Thank you! There are several ways to help right now, and more options once the program launches:

- Provide funding for your local affiliate or the statewide program
- Become a local affiliate

Please fill out this form to let us know that you’re interested in helping and we’ll reach out to you soon.

If you have further questions, please contact Beth Crist at the Maine State Library at beth.crist@maine.gov.

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**About Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library**

Since launching in 1995, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library has become the preeminent early childhood book gifting program in the world. The flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has gifted over 200 million free books in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and The Republic of Ireland. This is achieved through funding shared by The Dollywood Foundation and Local Program Partners. The Imagination Library mails more than 2 million high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to enrolled children from birth to age five. Dolly envisioned creating a lifelong love of reading and inspiring children to Dream More, Learn More, Care More, and Be More®.

The program has been widely researched and results demonstrate the positive impact on early childhood development and literacy skills. Penguin Random House is the exclusive publisher for Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library.

For more information, please visit imaginationlibrary.com.