



January 2015

Dear Parents,

They say “if it seems to be too good to be true it probably is.” In this case, it’s a great offer and it *is* true!

The Ripon Area United Way, in partnership with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, is offering a great new program to all children *under 5 years old who live in the Ripon ZIP code*. Each month your child will receive a high-quality age-appropriate book delivered to your home. No strings attached. No charge. And no, the information about you or your child will not be sold or otherwise disclosed beyond this program! There is no catch to this offer! It’s simply an effort to get your child to love to read!

Between birth and two-years-old your child’s brain will triple in size to almost three-quarters of the eventual adult size brain. Recent studies show that children who have heard 30 million words before the age of three have better comprehension, a richer vocabulary, and have a better chance at being an accomplished reader and higher-performing student. This doesn’t mean they need to hear 30 million *unique* words, but lots of words and lots of variety makes a measurable difference.

Another study found a correlation between children who heard and read lots of books before five-years-old and their earning potential as an adult. The data indicates that for every year you choose to read with your child on a regular basis they have an additional \$50,000 lifetime earning potential. \$50,000 for each year – that’s a quarter million dollars for this investment from birth to five!

It’s that simple – talking and reading to your child is a wise investment in your child’s future that pays back over a lifetime. Reading to your child, pointing to pictures, and talking with them about the story add significantly to this 30 million word goal!

Local people who support the Ripon Area United Way – along with Dolly Parton and her deep love for reading and her generosity – make this program possible for your child. *It is free to you*. If you so desire you can make a donation to the United Way campaign, but there is no charge for this literacy program.

All you need to do is sign up your child! There are several easy conditions in our agreement with the Imagination Library foundation:

- Your child *must reside* in the 54971 ZIP code.
- They must be *under* 60 months (5 years) old. You can sign your child up any time before their fifth birthday though on their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday they will “age out” of the program.
- If you move you need to either let the Ripon Reads coordinator know or log in and update your child’s home address.

You can use the attached form to register your child or you can sign your child up online at [www.imaginationlibrary.com](http://www.imaginationlibrary.com). Click on “register my child” at the top of the page.

Our goal is to have every young child in Ripon excited about reading and every parent, guardian, and sibling engaged, too. However you measure it, reading is a skill that pays back handsomely over a lifetime!

If you have any questions or would like to sign up over the phone please call Jeff Puhlmann-Becker at 748-4131 or 748-3136 x 286 or by email at [jeff@puhlmann-becker.com](mailto:jeff@puhlmann-becker.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JPB', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeff Puhlmann-Becker  
President  
Ripon Area United Way