



Project Open Book

Project Summary:

At The Library, we believe every child matters. And books matter to every child. Even in this age of iPhones and tablets, the number of books in the home has a huge impact on a child's future success. As reported in Science News (ScienceDaily.com) the results of a large, 20-year study confirm this¹:

For years, educators have thought the strongest predictor of attaining high levels of education was having parents who were highly educated. But, strikingly, this massive study showed that the difference between being raised in a bookless home compared to being raised in a home with a 500-book library has as great an effect . . .

Unfortunately, here in Dauphin County, there are many children who are lucky to have 1 or 2 books at home, let alone 500. Through Project Open Book (POB), you can help improve the outlook for our community's children.

Goal:

The goal of Project Open Book (POB) is to provide Dauphin County children a better opportunity to succeed in school and life by addressing their need for books in the home, helping them to enjoy reading and encouraging their family's support of reading. POB has a special focus on at-risk families with the outreach component of the program.

Need:

Two-thirds of America's children living in poverty have no books at home, and the number of families living in poverty is on the rise.

¹ M.D.R. Evans, Jonathan Kelley, Joanna Sikora, Donald J. Treiman. **Family scholarly culture and educational success: Books and schooling in 27 nations.** *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 2010; DOI: [10.1016/j.rssm.2010.01.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2010.01.002)

According to a comprehensive meta-analysis of the relationship between access to print materials and children's reading², access to books and print material:

- Improves children's reading performance
- Proves instrumental in helping children learn the basics of reading
- Causes children to read more and for longer lengths of time
- Produces improved attitudes toward reading and learning in children

Strategy:

- Distribute books for children to keep through library programs and outreach visits. Through use of already trained library staff, key community partnerships, and donated funds and materials, The Library will provide children, particularly at-risk children, with books they can keep. Books are provided through donations of appropriate items and items purchased with funds provided by sponsors and supporters.
- Encourage parents of at-risk children to participate with their children in library programs and events, by providing them information both at the library and via outreach visits to community locations.
- Encourage parents met at outreach visits and library programs to get their children library cards and visit The Library with them.
- Outreach visits are conducted by existing library staff. In addition, books to keep are incorporated into several library programs.

Current Library Programs That Include Books to Keep:

- Joan Y. Leopold Children's Book Week
 - Provide copies of selected author title to participants in author visit programs
 - Provide copies of selected author title to child care and other outreach locations
 - Approximately 250 books per year
- One Book, Every Young Child
 - Provide copies of books to children in library programming
 - Provide copies of books to children in child cares and other outreach locations
 - Approximately 1,500 to 2,000 books per year
- Summer Reading Club
 - Provide books as prizes to all children who complete the program.
 - Approximately 2,000 books per year
- Paws 2 Read
 - Provide books to each child who attends three of these special programs where they read to a service dog.

² Children's Access to Print Material and Education Related Outcomes, commissioned by Reading is Fundamental and conducted by Learning Point Associates, an affiliate of American Institutes for Research (AIR).

- Approximately 120 books per year

Existing POB Community Outreach Locations:

- Dauphin County Adult Probation & Parole Office
 - Provide books to be distributed to children of parents on probation or on parole
 - Approximately 125 books per quarter (about 500 books per year)
 - Provide Passport and other promotion material about library programs and services
- Habitat for Humanity
 - Provide families with children moving into new Habitat home with a collection of 10 to 12 books per child for a home library
 - Approximately 50 books per year
 - Provide families with library card applications/library cards to use their local library
- Capital Area Head Start
 - Provide Passport and other promotion material about library programs and services
 - Provide books to children through the annual One Book, Every Young Child Initiative
 - Approximately 800 books
 - Provide classrooms/facilities with books through the annual Children's Book Week Celebration
 - Approximately 15 to 60 books
 - Provide programming to classrooms through grant-funded special projects (ex: For Me, For You, For Later early finance/math learning, Discover Math and Science). These books are distributed to outreach partners such as TriCounty OIC, Camp Curtin, Capital Area Head Start
 - Provide books as part of these programs
 - Approximately 800 books per program
- Community Action Commission
 - Provide Passport and other promotion material about library programs and services
 - Provide books to be distributed through the Commission's in-house and home visitor programs, child care facility and affordable housing complex
 - Approximately 200 books per quarter (about 1200 books per year)
- The Interfaith Shelter For Homeless Families
 - Provide monthly programming visit
- 1 & 2 STAR child care facilities and relative/neighbor care
 - Provide outreach programs and visits

In addition, The Library distributes information about children's programming and services, and in some cases books to organizations that serve at-risk youth such as food banks, the YWCA, and school districts.