



UNITED WAY OF THE LAKESHORE PARTNER AFFILIATE

DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY REPORT

Serving Muskegon, Newaygo, & Oceana Counties

United Way
of the Lakeshore



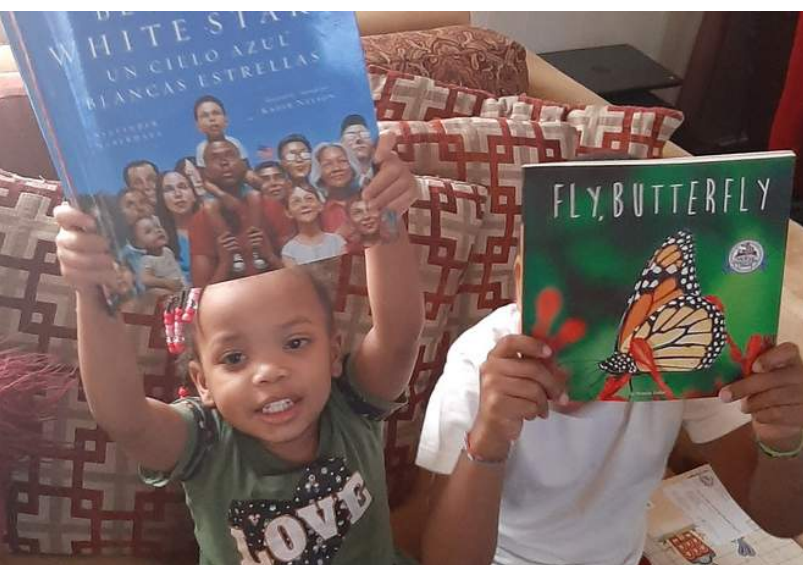
Year of 2021

WHAT IS DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY (DPIL)?

In 1995, Dolly Parton launched an exciting initiative to benefit the children of her home county in East Tennessee. Her dream was to foster a love of reading among her county's preschool children and their families by providing them with the gift of a specially selected book each month. She wanted children to be excited about books and feel the magic that books can create, and to ensure that every child would have access to quality books, regardless of their family's income. This initiative is now a national and global program managed by the Dollywood Foundation and brought to our local community by United Way of the Lakeshore.

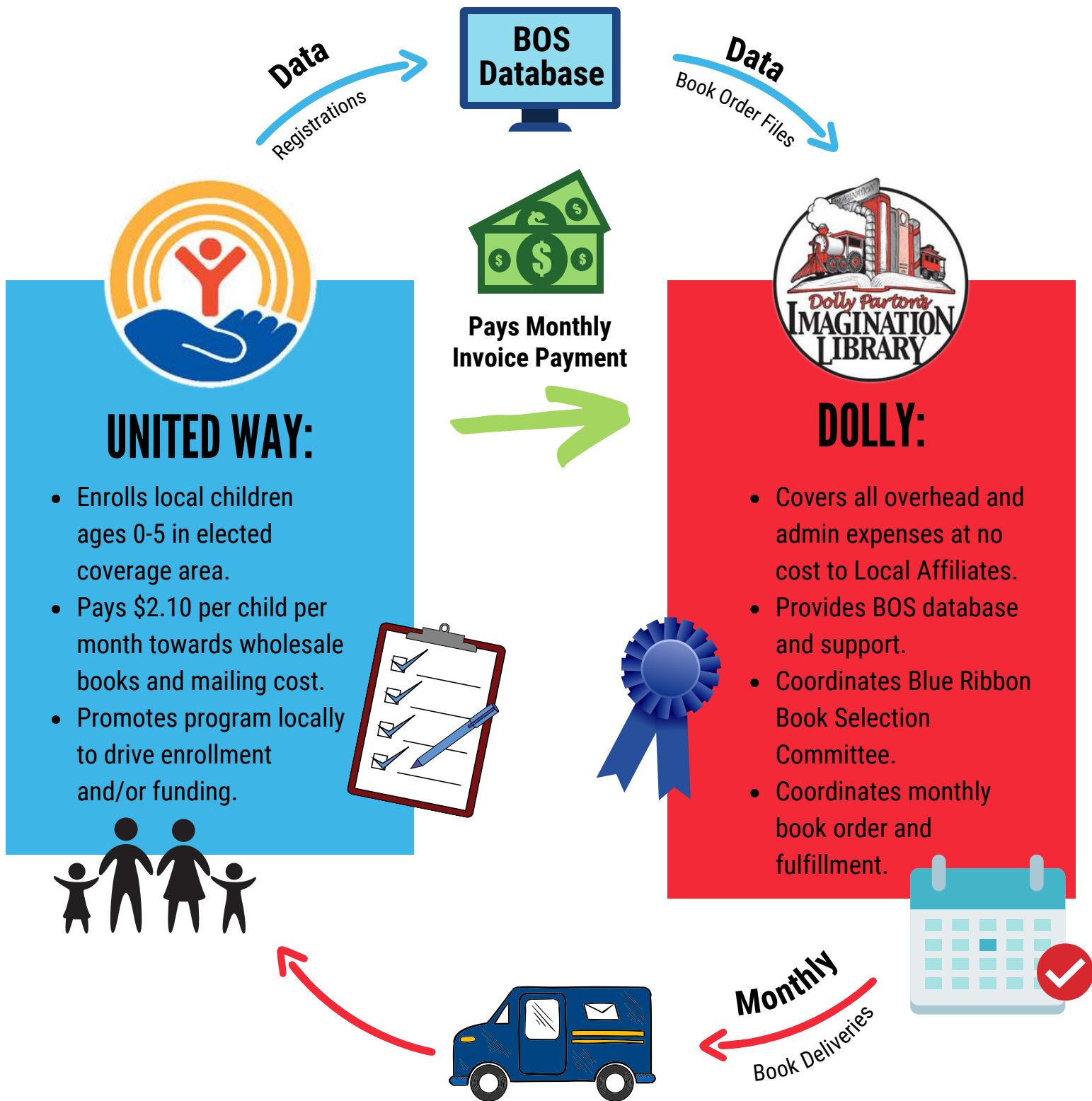
HOW IT WORKS:

All children under the age of five residing in Muskegon, Newaygo, or Oceana Counties are eligible to participate. Each month, every registered child receives a free, high-quality, age-appropriate book through the mail, continuing until the child turns five years old. Imagine every child having their own library of 60 books by the time they go to kindergarten!



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How Does United Way of the Lakeshore Team Up With Dolly Parton?



- Books arrive at child's home with name on the mailing label
- At no cost to the family, books are delivered monthly to children from birth to age 5 in a designated coverage area

Muskegon & Oceana History

Thanks to generous donors like Kathy Evans, the Morgenstern Family, the Muskegon County Great Start Collaborative, Country Dairy, and all those who donated through the Nichols "Matching in March" campaign, we are able to bring this wonderful program to families in Muskegon and Oceana counties.

Kathy was awarded the Patricia B. Johnson Award for Community Leadership and Innovative Grantmaking in 2014, which included an Impact Grant from the foundation to the nonprofit of her choice. She chose United Way of the Lakeshore, using the funds to help launch the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program in our community. The Morgenstern children and grandchildren made a donation to United Way of the Lakeshore in honor of Richard and Nancy Morgenstern as a Christmas gift that same year. This generous donation was also used to help establish the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program. A grant from the Muskegon County Great Start Collaborative rounded out the initial funding to get the library up and running. With their help, we were able to start a pilot program for children age 0-5 in **Holton and Muskegon Heights**. As the program continued to grow, the United Way of the Lakeshore **expanded its affiliate program to Oceana County in 2017**.

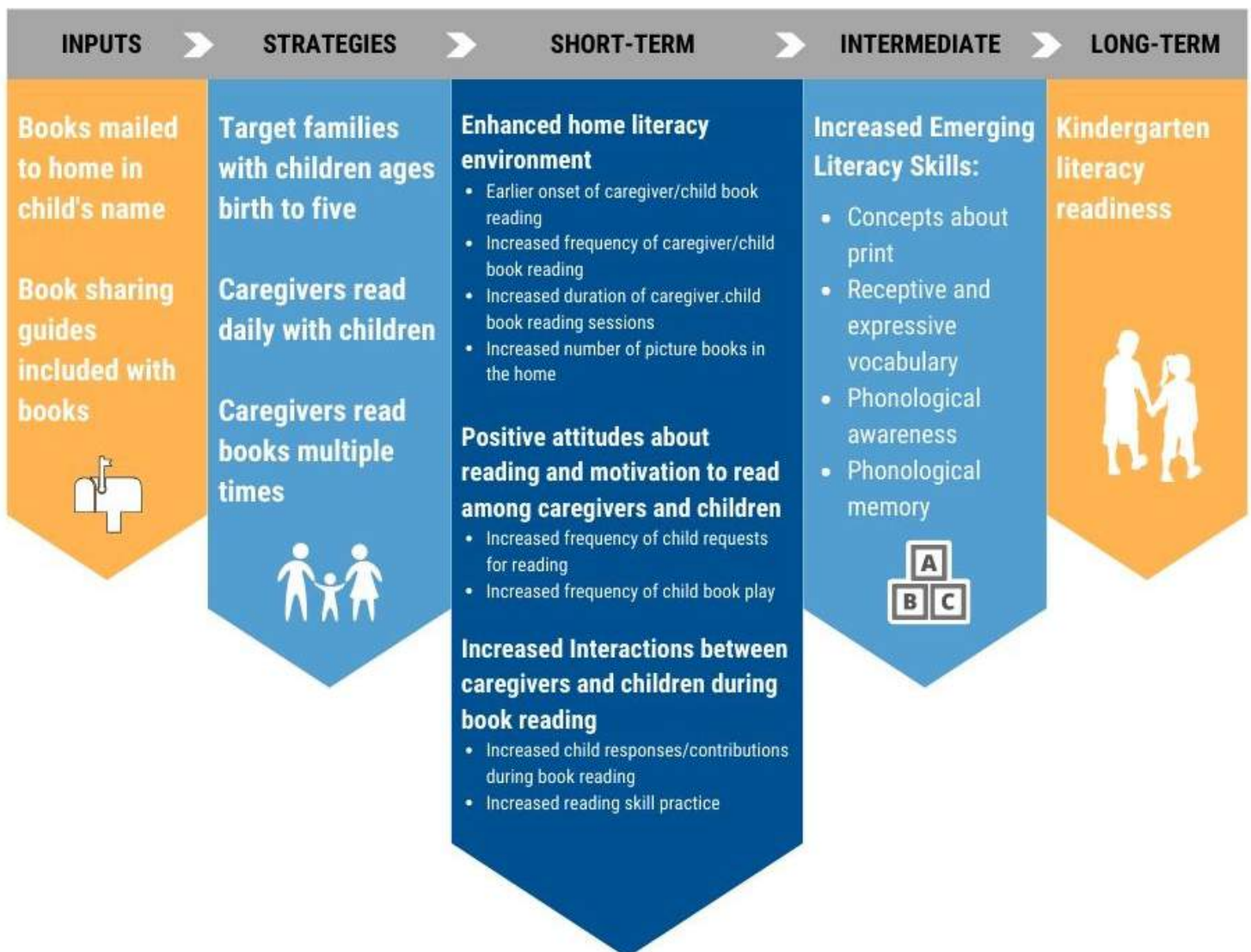
In 2017, Nichols generously offered to match up to \$25,000 in donations during March is Reading month, raising nearly \$50,000 to expand the program! In 2018, Nichols generously offered another match - up to \$35,000! Thank you, Nichols, for your continued commitment to our littlest learners. We are so grateful for the support of those who understand the importance of having this program in our community!

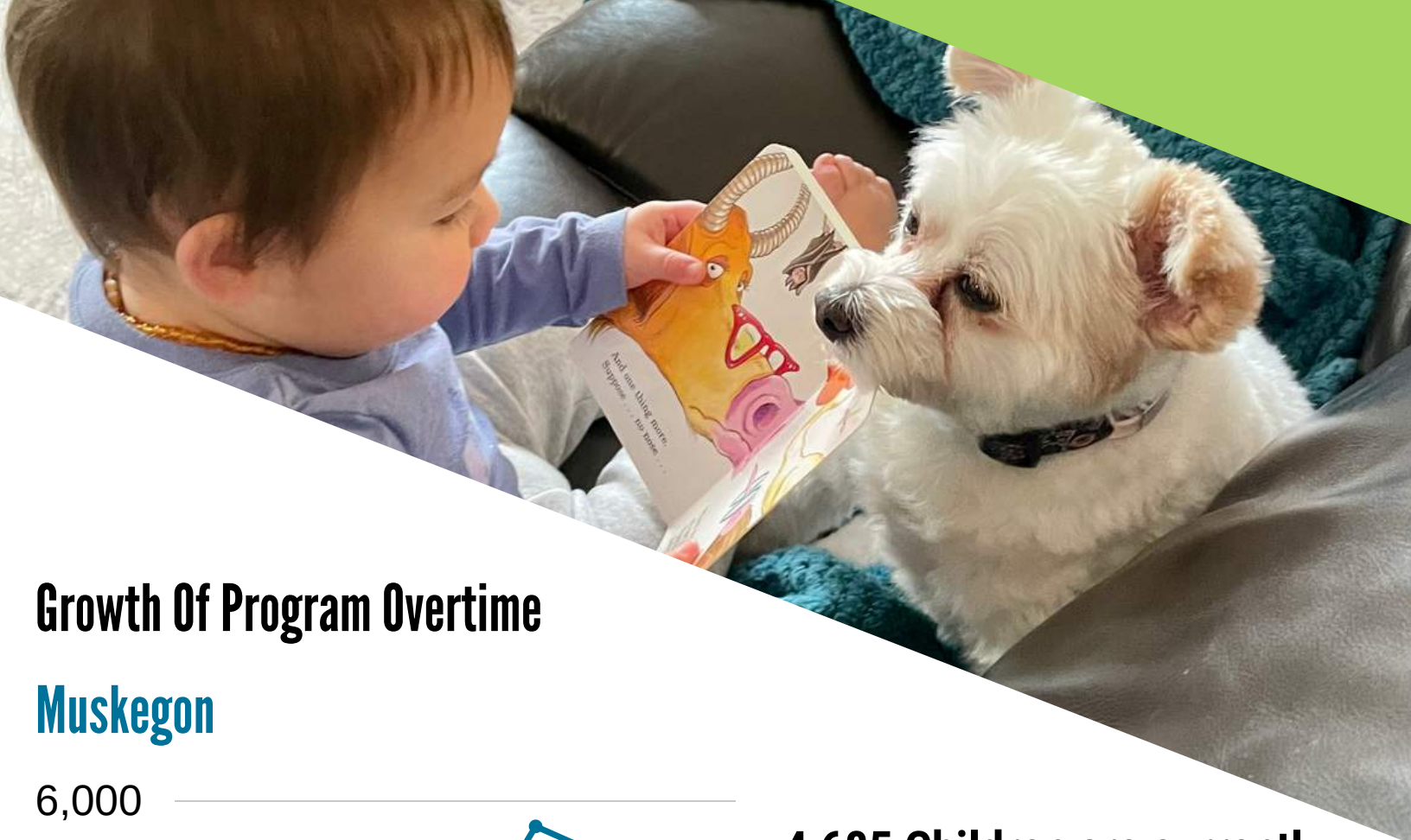
In 2018, Country Dairy generously offered to match up to \$5,000 in donations for children enrolled in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library Program that live in Oceana County. In 2022, Janet and Don Hasselbring as our new 2022 Oceana County Dolly Parton Match Sponsors, in memory of Jan's parents, Henry and Ellen Van Gunst, who valued literacy and reading for all of their children, the first generation of the Country Dairy Family! Since then, they have continued to be a great partner and support for our littlest readers.



Logic Model

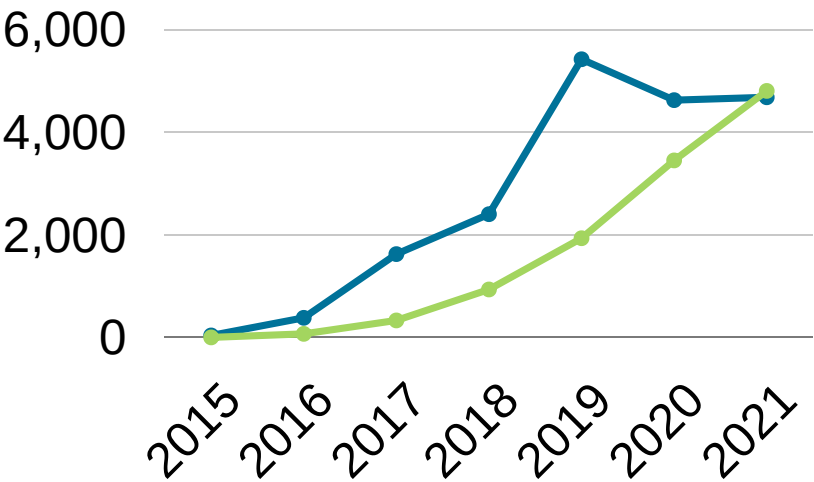
The Dollywood Foundation is committed to supporting local Imagination Library programs and communities. One focus of our recent work has been identifying common outcomes for all Imagination Library programs. This will ensure we are all on the same page and provide the best program possible for children and families. These research-based outcomes were identified through reviews of the literature and are considered to be building blocks for lifelong literacy, supported by the research, and aligned with the Imagination Library's philosophy and goals.





Growth Of Program Overtime

Muskegon

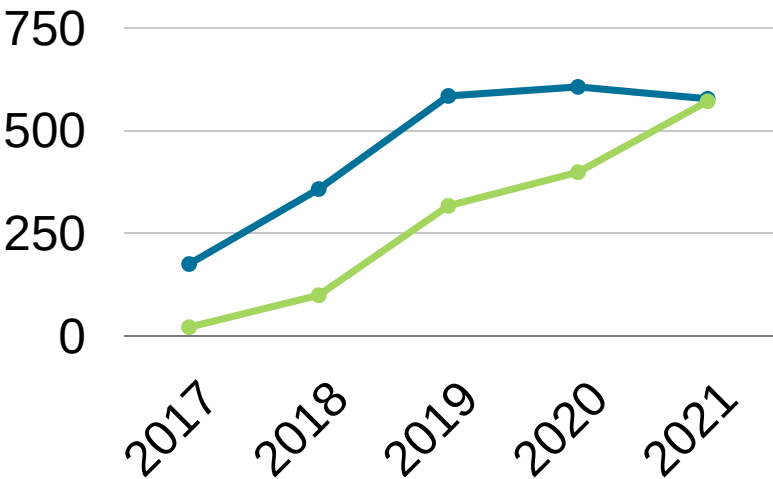


4,685 Children are currently enrolled in Muskegon County. That's 44% of the eligible children in Muskegon County.

Key

- Total # of children currently enrolled in December of that year.
- Total # of children who graduated from the program over time.

Oceana



578 Children are currently enrolled in Oceana County. That's 41% of the eligible children in Oceana County.



Zip Code Data! Muskegon

ZIP CODE	CHILDREN ENROLLED	SCHOOL DISTRICT
49303 - Bailey	1	Grant
49318 - Casnovia	2	Ravenna
49415 - Fruitport	194	Ravenna, Fruitport
49425 - Holton	101	Holton
49437 - Montague	156	Montague, Whitehall, Holton
49440 - Muskegon	32	Muskegon, Mona Shores
49441 - Muskegon, Norton Shores	973	Muskegon, Mona Shores
49442 - Muskegon	1204	Fruitport, Muskegon, Oakridge, OV, RP
49443 - Muskegon - PO Box	7	
49444 - Muskegon, Heights, Norton Shores	704	Fruitport, Muskegon, Muskegon Heights, Mona Shores, Orchard View
49445 - North Muskegon	574	Muskegon, North Muskegon, Orchard View, Reeths Puffer, Whitehall
49448 - Nunica	4	Fruitport
49451 - Ravenna	181	Ravenna, Oakridge
49456 - Norton Shores, Spring Lake	16	Mona Shores
49457 - Twin Lake	326	Holton, Oakridge, Orchard View, Whitehall
49461 - Whitehall	210	Whitehall, Montague, Reeths Puffer

Zip Code Data! Oceana

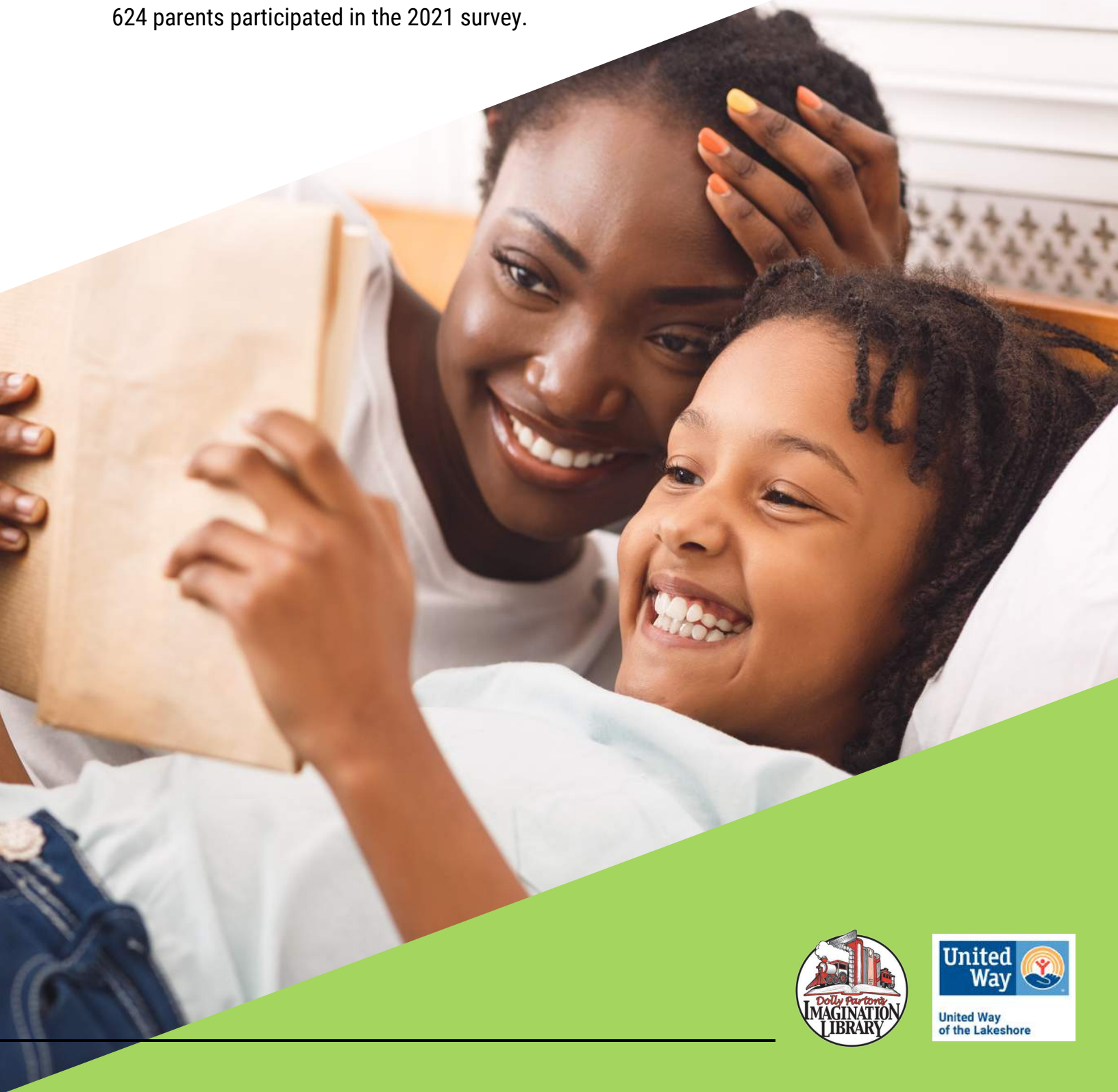
ZIP CODE	CHILDREN ENROLLED	SCHOOL DISTRICT
49420 - Hart	188	Hart
49421 - Hesperia (showing as Oceana County)	2	Hesperia, Fremont, Hart, Shelby, Baldwin, Walkerville, White Cloud, Holton
49436 - Mears	27	Pentwater, Hart, Shelby
49437 - Montague (showing as Oceana County)	5	Whitehall, Montague, Shelby, Holton
49446 - New Era	57	Montague, Shelby
49449 - Pentwater	48	Ludington, Pentwater, Hart, Mason County (Central & Eastern)
49452 - Rothbury	56	Whitehall, Montague, Shelby, Hesperia, Holton
49455 - Shelby	191	Shelby, Hart, Hesperia, Montague
49459 - Walkerville	4	Walkerville, Hesperia, Mason County (Central & Eastern), Hart



Survey

United Way of the Lakeshore conducts a survey every year in March with the parents enrolled in the program. The following pages are examples of testimonials and calculated metrics based on the data.

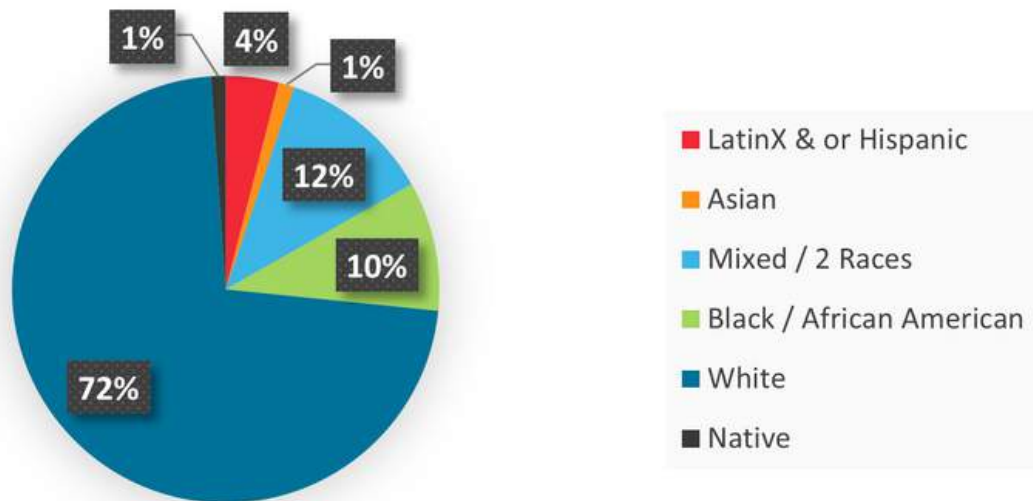
624 parents participated in the 2021 survey.



Survey Demographics:

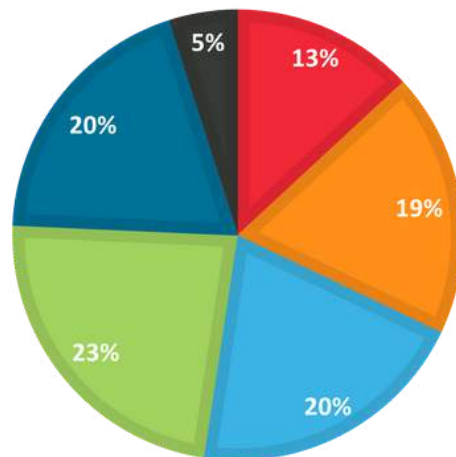
All parents that have a child currently enrolled in the program were asked to fill out the survey for the 2021 United Way of the Lakeshore Affiliated Imagination Library Program. Below is a make up of those who responded:

Survey Response Breakdown by Race of Child:

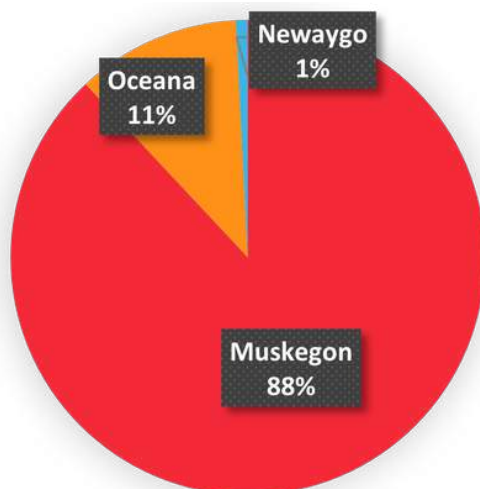


Survey Response Breakdown by Age of Child:

Under 1 1 Year Old 2 Years Old 3 Years Old 4 Years Old 5 Years Old

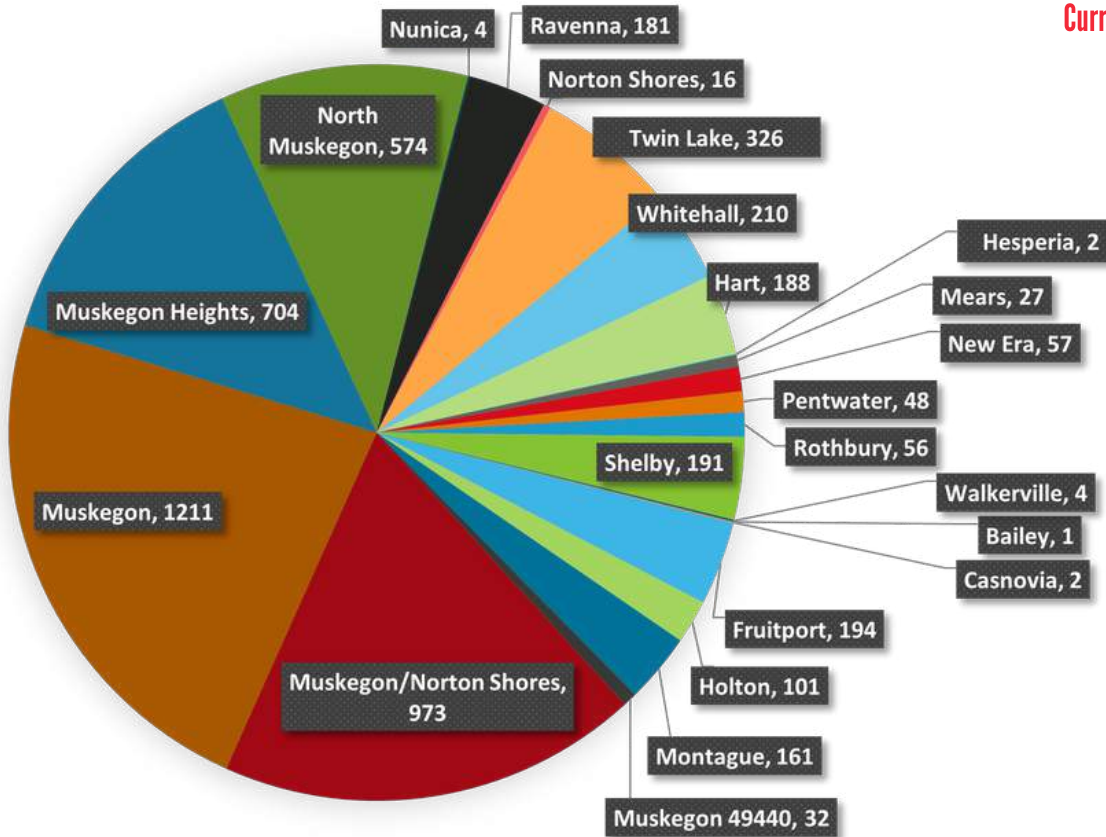


Survey Response Breakdown by County Residence:

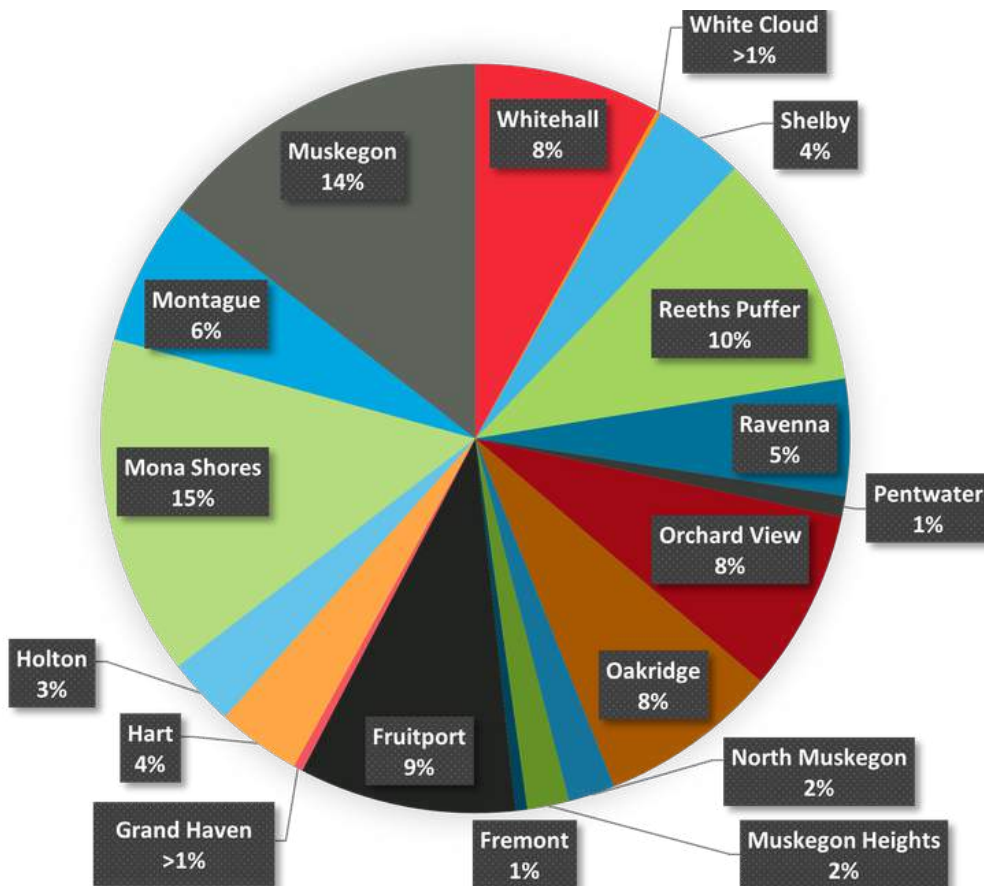


Survey Demographics Continued:

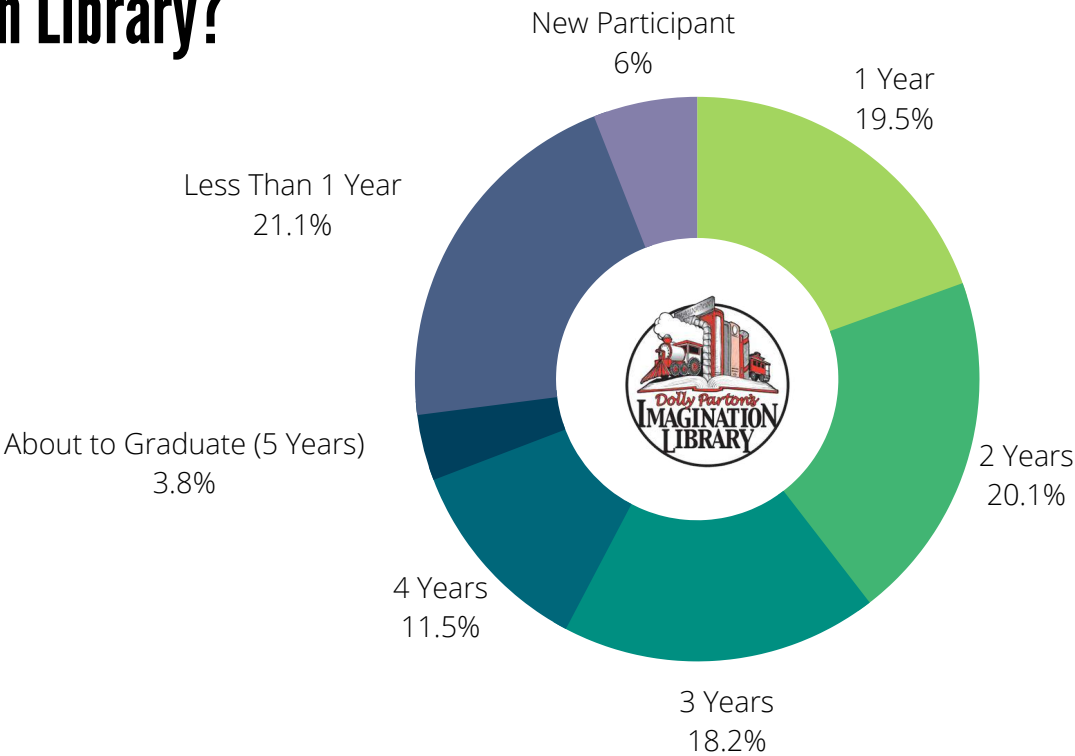
Current Enrollment Numbers In County Areas



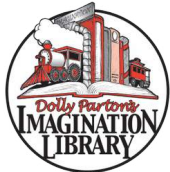
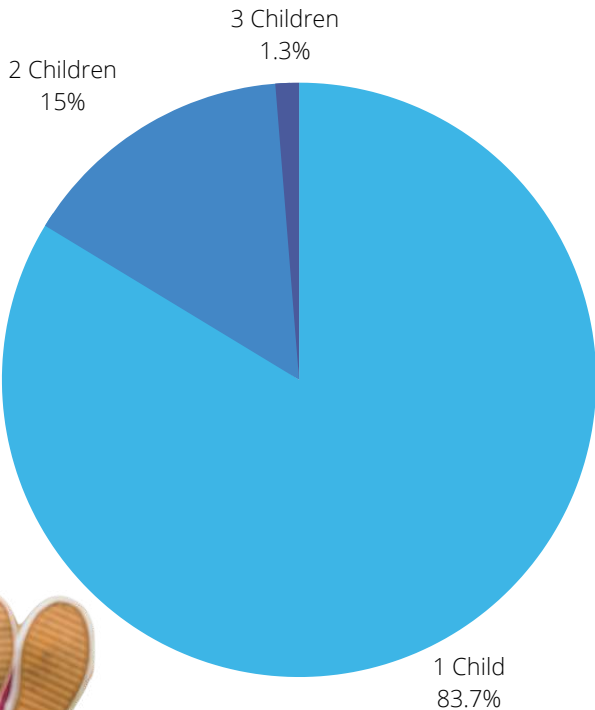
Survey Response Breakdown by School District



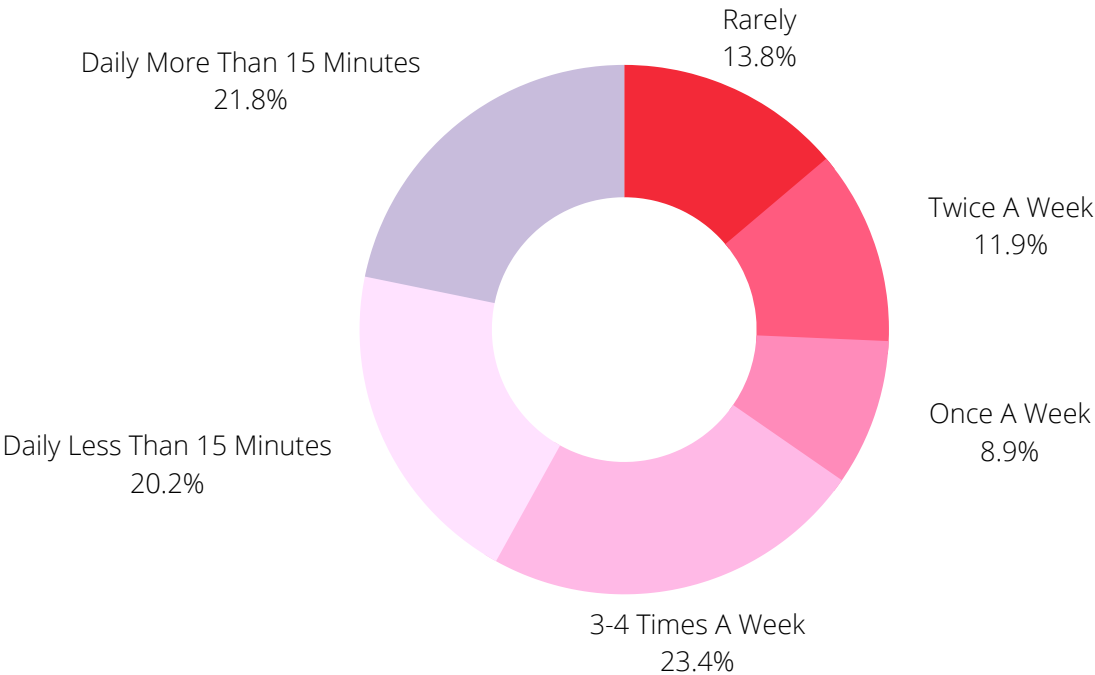
How Many Years Has Your Child Been In The Dolly Parton's Imagination Library?



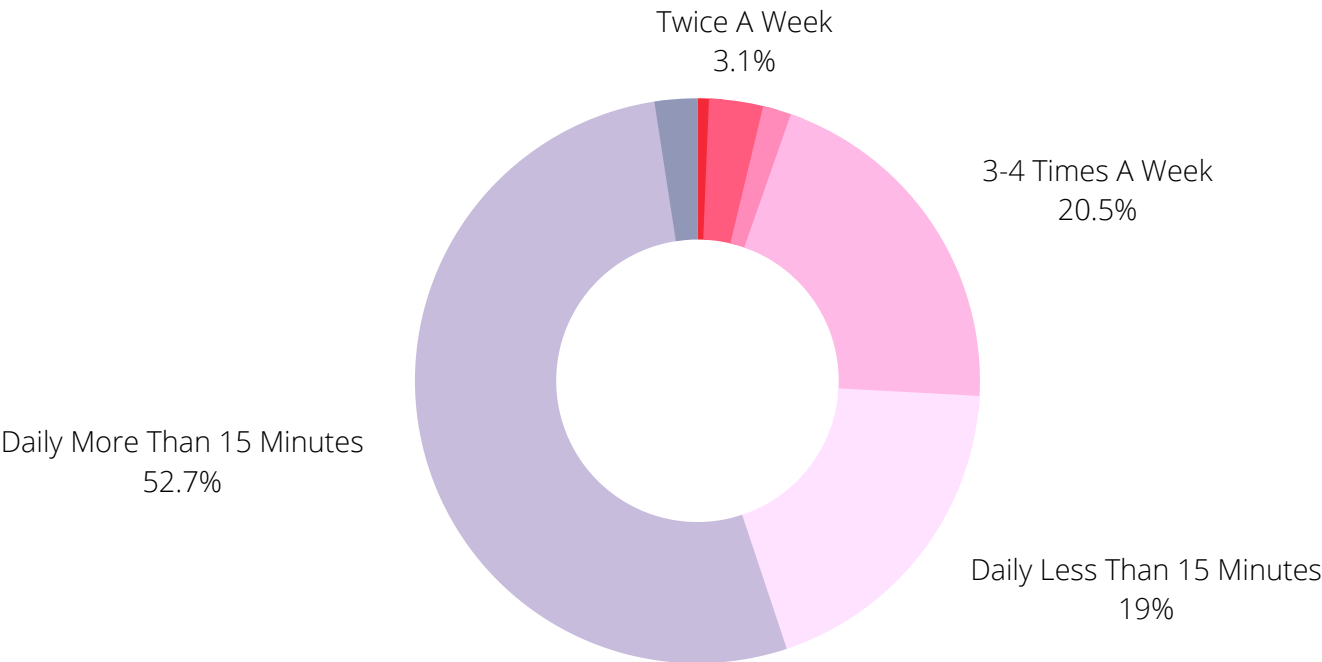
How Many Children Do You Have Enrolled?

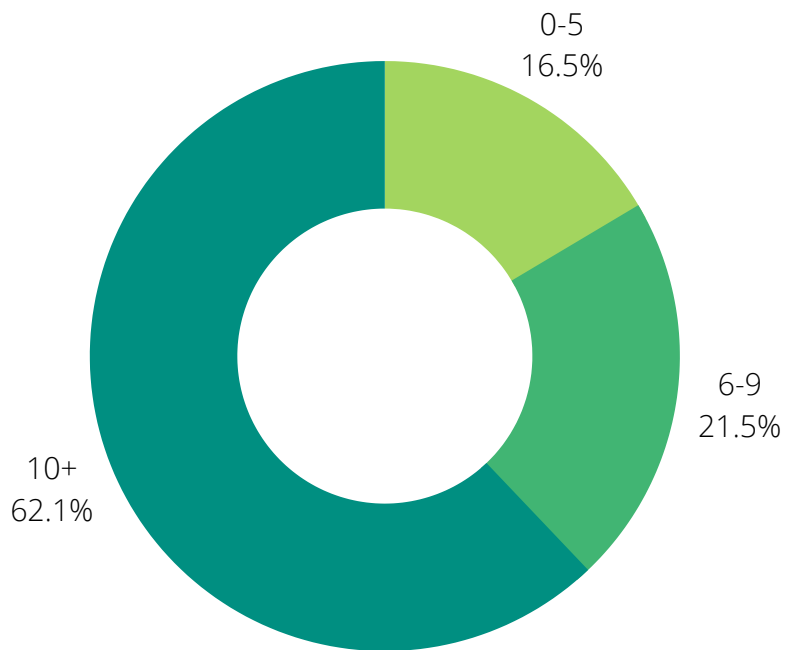


BEFORE joining the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, how many times per week did you read with your child?



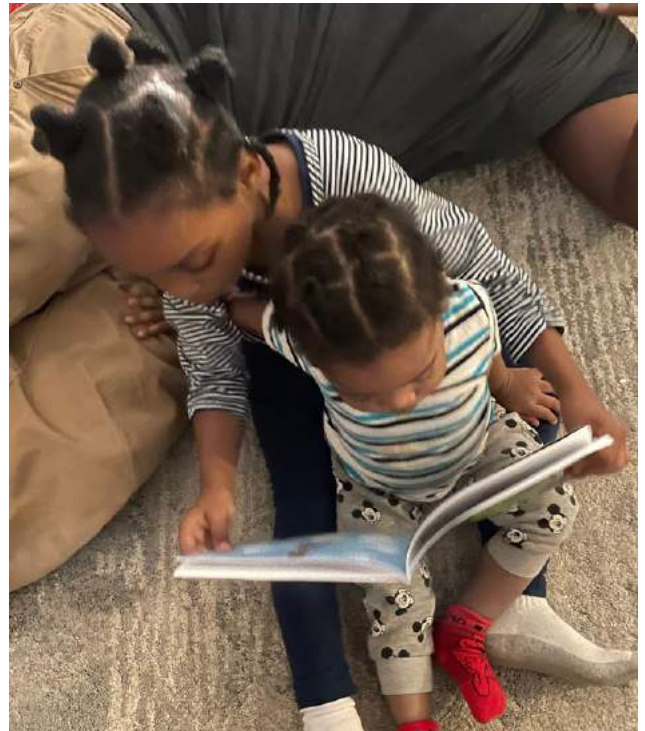
AFTER joining the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, how many times per week did you read with your child?





BEFORE joining the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, how many books were in your home?

87% of children in the program look through books to pretend to read! This is great creative growth for children as they make up stories to go along with the pictures and words!



91% of surveyed parents reported that the Imagination Library through United Way of the Lakeshore helped prepare their child for kindergarten!

My daughter is very smart and has a very big imagination. Not only does she make the books we read come to life, but she has learned her colors, animals, and numbers thanks to Dolly! - *Abigail D., Oakridge*

My son has been exposed to so many more words and learning opportunities to prepare him for preschool!
- *Michael D., Fremont*

The cultural diversity and broad range of the Dolly books has exposed our entire family to stories we might not have been exposed to. My son will have a great understanding of the variety of people when he starts kindergarten in the fall. - *Christina L., Fruitport*

My son has been slow to speak, but when we read books together he shows that he understands the words by pointing at the pictures as we read. - *Tina S., Fruitport*

I think it has helped in his love of books and has us reading together every night. He's still learning his letters and numbers but he has got books from this program that is helping him with that! - *Lisa N., Hart*

My oldest aged out of the program but participated in it for three years. Now they are one of the top readers in their class and still loves to read. We can't wait to see what happens with our youngest! - *Lindsay R., Mona Shores*

My daughter is using words beyond her age range. Before starting preschool this year, she was already aware of her colors, shapes, and numbers! - *Desire J., Muskegon Public*

My daughter now pretends to read to me at the store just by looking at the pictures on the boxes. She also remembers the storylines from when I read books to her. I feel like the program has really expanded her imagination now that we read more together. - *Alison A., Shelby*



94% of surveyed parents reported that the Imagination Library through United Way of the Lakeshore helped them as a parent!

The program has really helped me slow down and make time for reading and cuddling with my kids. - *Misty S., Whitehall*

It has helped me create a routine for bedtime stories as well as helping us financially because buying books can be very expensive. - *Christina S., Shelby*

I am a first time parent so I am learning as I go. This program is educational and reinforces family values, while helping us teach our child to read. - *Alexia A., Muskegon Public*

The books are a tremendous gift, we are so thankful to have them! While we could always get books from the library, having books that we are able to keep and grow our own library at home has helped us keep reading. Reading has become my daughter's favorite pastime with us! - *William N., - Holton*

Now we take time out of our busy schedule each night to read and sit down as a family! It has increased the amount of time we spend all together. - *Bianca R., Hart*

Some of these books I probably would have never came across. This program has been helpful because we are diversifying our books and home that we can enjoy! - *Jillian R., Ravenna*

I think I'm more excited than he is for the book that comes in the mail every month because I know it will be something new and fun to share with him. It helps me think of ways to engage with him more, like looking at pictures and working on turning pages together. - *Joy H., Muskegon Heights*

I recently got out of a bad marriage and these books have given me something extra special to use as bonding time with my sons as we adjust to our new normal life at home. They have been incredibly helpful. - *Jacklyn K., Newaygo*





What Parents Say About The Program:

The Dolly Parton Library has helped me remember to foster the love of reading and learning in more ways than one!

- Kelly M., Fremont

Reading with my children has become a moment of peace and connection with my kids, instilling calm in them. We are enjoying the slow-down moments from adult responsibilities and getting to the time to just be with our kids. -Elisa R., Fruitport

At 15 months our daughter is in love with her books and she gets very excited when she receives a new one. Every day she grabs a book from her bookshelf and brings it over to me to read to her. It is a great feeling as a parent to see your child excited about books and that excitement continues when she receives new books! - Michael B., Hart

Before my oldest graduated from the program he would always sit and read to my youngest. Now my youngest loves to read just as much! - Courtney C., Holton

The most iconic book for us is Dolly Parton's Coat of Many Colors. My kids absolutely love this book. It has taught us about having a rich life has nothing to do with wealth, but with your mindset. Thank you all so much for making this program possible. These books are one of the greatest gifts we have ever received - Sarah L., Mona Shores

Thank you so much United Way of the Lakeshore for partnering up with Dolly Parton! We could never afford to buy this many books on this many different topics. My son absolutely loves opening up a brand new book once a month.

- Silena B., Montague

Our 3-year-old daughter who has autism receives speech and occupational therapy weekly. Dolly's Library has assisted her mother and I in the progress of her therapy. The variety of books she receives has helped make this progress possible! I wish I could share the excitement my daughter has when she is able to say a new word that she learned from her books, it is magical. - Kim K, Muskegon



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What Parents Say About The Program:

His eyes brighten up and he asks for books every night now. Sometimes he wants me to read the same book over and over again. There are a couple of books that have made him laugh so hard that it made me laugh. He really likes "Night Train". He loves all of the colors and shapes that we find. - Joy H., Muskegon Heights

Thank you for supporting this amazing program! My 3 year old and I both love our daily story time and always look forward to a new book every month. They've been even a greater blessing during the pandemic. My son was just one when it started so we haven't been able to take him to play and learns like we had expected. Thank you again! - Laura L., New Era

Happiness is seeing all the smiles on my children's faces when we get a new adventure (in a book) to explore.
- Jacklyn K., Newaygo

My daughter has found a passion for books through this program at such a young age! - Brandi A., North Muskegon

My daughter is in and out of the hospital quite a bit. We use these books as a way to ease her mind while we are in the middle of a stay. They provide a sense of familiarity by bringing the books and reading the stories. - Melissa K., Oakridge

I am a young teen mom and receiving these books helps me spend the extra 15 or more minutes a night preparing her for school and one day for her to read on her own. - Kylee S., Orchard View

We've received just 2 books so far but the last one was a farming book! We are farmers ourselves! The twins loved looking at the photos of the cows, pigs, and chickens. I cannot say enough about this amazing program and how we are excited for more books to come! - Sara B., Ravenna

The moments I read with my child will be cherished forever! - Victoria K., Reeths Puffer





What Parents Say About The Program:

The last book we received was called "The Snow Day" by Ezra Jack Keats. When she saw the book she was really excited and said, "I love that book we read it at school" (she's in preschool 2 days a week.) That evening she had me read it to her multiple times in a row and the next day she "read" it to her preschool class on her own! - *Leanne V., Shelby*

We love the Dolly Parton Imagination Library! My 2 year old loves to read books. His favorite is the Little Excavator. I think we have read it well over 200 times now! We make sure to say "Thank You" to Dolly every time we read. I love being able to gift my child with the love of reading, learning, quality time, imagination, and illustration. It is a wonderful opportunity to receive new books for free that we wouldn't have selected. We also utilize the fun resources that go with the books of other activities and learning opportunities at home. - *Zvezda D., Whitehall*



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Supporting School Readiness

Strong, productive communities are dependent upon a skilled workforce that can compete in a global economy. To build those skills, it is critical to reach children early—even before they start school. Once a young person falls behind it can be very difficult to catch up. **Recent Kids Count data shows that 65.8% of Muskegon, 64.8% of Newaygo, & 78.4% of Oceana County third graders are not reading proficient.** We can change those statistics for our kids and our community. Kids who are lucky enough to have the proper resources and support early on will have the skills needed to succeed. Kids learn to read by third grade, then they read to learn. Making sure they are reading proficiently by third grade sets them on a solid path for all future learning.

United Way of the Lakeshore is committed to building an educated workforce, starting with quality early literacy programs, including making Dolly Parton's Imagination Library books available to all children under 5 to help them learn to love reading. Early literacy proficiency will help change the odds for kids in school and careers.

To honor that commitment, we are continuing emphasis on early literacy and parent education supports, especially for at-risk families. In 2003, the High Scope Research Foundation compiled a comprehensive literature review of a history of studies which all came to the same conclusion – the single most important activity to prepare a child for a life of learning was to read frequently with the child, preferably every single day.

United Way of the Lakeshore piloted Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) in Muskegon Heights and Holton Public Schools in 2015 to support the READ EARLY READ OFTEN initiative; DPIL is now available across Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties.





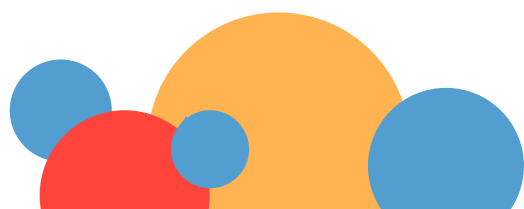
United Way Education Goals:

Build A Skilled & Educated Workforce

Short-term goals: have parents sign-up to have monthly books mailed to children between the ages of birth and 5 – especially those at-risk populations including families at or below the federal poverty level, and ALICE families. Parents report increased reading frequency and that children are better prepared for school.

Medium-range outcomes: increased kindergarten readiness; reading proficiency by the end of 3rd grade; alignment with classroom instructors, reading tutors, and mentors through our Lights On! After-School Programs, school stations, and tutors affiliated with the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, and other education support programs.

Long-range outcomes: a ready workforce with reading proficiency; college and career ready youth who succeed, so they are able to add to the tax base, rather than the tax burden (Chase & Diaz, 2015); mitigate child care needs for ALICE families through high-quality after-school programs.



Thank You!
DOLLY SPONSORS



The Cannon Family Fund

The Lothmann Family Fund

Libraries in Muskegon & Oceana Counties

Community Foundation for Oceana County Donor Advised Funds

Community Foundation for Muskegon County Donor Advised Funds

Numerous individual donors who are passionate about early literacy



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