Date

Name

Address

Address

Dear Name,

[Organization name] Imagination Library’s mission is to increase literacy in Arkansas by ensuring all children ages 0 to 5 in [name] County may participate in Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. Since YEAR, Affiliate Name has worked with local community organizations to increase the number of children receiving books from #### to ####.

In 1995, Dolly Parton launched Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library to benefit the children of her home county in East Tennessee. Dolly’s vision was to foster a love of reading among her county’s preschool children by providing them with the gift of a specially selected book each month. After launching in 1995, the program grew quickly. It became such a success that in 2000 a national replication effort was underway. To date, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library (DPIL) mails free, age-appropriate books to over 1.5 million children each month directly to their home from birth to age five in participating communities within the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and the Republic of Ireland. Dolly's homegrown effort is now a part of thousands of communities' early childhood strategies and is increasingly a vital part of educational policy for states, provinces, and territories.

By providing books at no cost to families, the Affiliate Name increases childhood literacy rates, fosters a love of books, and promotes a culture of reading among underserved families in high-risk communities of [name] County, Arkansas.

According to the Arkansas Community Foundation's Aspire Arkansas Report (2019), only 38% of Arkansas third graders are proficient in reading – specifically ##% in [name] County. Third grade is considered an important milestone in a student's career in terms of reading proficiency and is correlated to whether a student will graduate from high school. Research shows that 85% of a child's core brain development occurs before the age of three. This "wiring" shapes infants and toddlers' ability to learn to read and think critically. Recent studies have shown the importance of early reading, by connecting greater home reading during the prekindergarten period with later development of brain areas supporting mental imagery, narrative comprehension, and oral language skills (J.S. Hutton, 2015). Parents who read 1 picture book with their children every day provide their children with exposure to an estimated 78,000 words each a year. Cumulatively, over the 5 years before kindergarten, children from literacy-rich homes hear 1.4 million more words during storybook reading than children who are never read to (J. Logan, 2019). Early learning experiences also influence health, social, and economic outcomes.

Additional research indicates the dramatic correlation between the number of books in the home and future academic achievement. In a 2014 study, researchers concluded that children growing up with a home library, even as small as 25 books, got 2.4 more years of education than children from bookless homes, independent of their parents' education, occupation, and class (Evans, M.D., 2014).

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is an evidenced-based, best practice program (Library of Congress, 2014) that helps to prepare children for kindergarten and later academic success. Impressive program results report that children enrolled in the program score significantly higher in reading comprehension and vocabulary measures than their peers - not only in kindergarten, but also in second and third grades (Samiei, S., 2015).

Affiliate Name respectfully requests $#### to promote parental involvement, literacy, and education to children, ages 0 to 5, who live in [name] County. Requested funding will be used to provide a total of #### high-quality, age-appropriate books to ### children who live in this county. Books will be mailed directly to children’s homes once a month, for 12 months, at no cost to families.

By providing free books, the program will increase childhood literacy rates, foster a love of books, and promote a culture of reading among families in [name] County.

I look forward to your consideration of our request. I will be pleased to submit additional information or answer any questions you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact me at Phone Number and/or email.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Affiliate Name