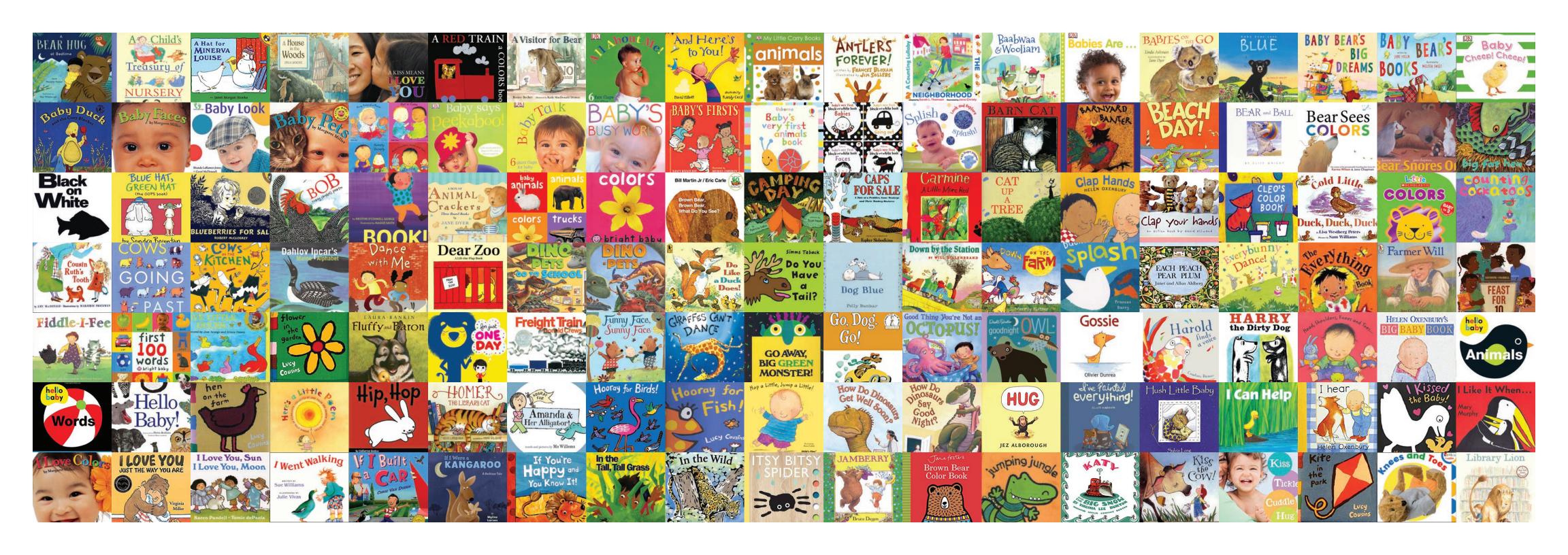


YEARS OF BOOK GIVING





A LETTER FROM THE CLINICAL ADVISORS

S PRACTICING PEDIATRICIANS, we see the impact Raising Readers has on Maine families on a daily basis. We're proud to say that for 20 years, Maine's healthcare providers have brought the importance of early literacy to the forefront of pediatric primary care. Each time we give a Raising Readers book at a well-child visit, we talk with families about why reading and interacting with children is so important for their development and how these activities set the stage for a healthy childhood and promising future.

Raising Readers is one of the most satisfying aspects of our work as healthcare providers. One of the highlights of our day is seeing a child's face light up when they receive their new book. Starting the visit off by giving a book prompts discussion about the importance of early literacy and changes the dynamic of the office visit for the better. Time and time again, parents and caregivers tell us that reading together with their children is a highlight of their day, too. Children will recount previous books that they've received from the program and parents always comment that these books are some of their very favorites.

This past year, these moments—of finding joy in engaging with books and reading with children—have been more important than ever. In January, Raising Readers gave out its 3 millionth book, a milestone reached thanks to the statewide network of hospital birth center staff, midwives, and primary care providers who are dedicated to encouraging a love of books and reading among Maine families. Shortly after that celebration, the COVID-19 pandemic began. With all the uncertainty, restrictions, and changes it brought, providing Raising Readers books to our patient families was an incredible gift and at least one familiar routine we could continue to share with them.

As providers, we'd like to thank the Libra Foundation not only for starting this program 20 years ago, but also for continuing to recognize the value of giving treasured books to Maine families and continuing to support providers in our championing of early literacy. Libra's investment has created a generation of readers in Maine, and for that, we are grateful.

Annie Powers, MD, Ph.D. Brian Youth, MD, FAAP Gabe Civiello, MD, FAAP Jennifer Dubail, MD



"Raising Readers represents a powerful, statewide action expressly designed to support and empower families in building their children's literacy. I can think of few things more important than that for the future of our state."

Susan Bennett-Armistead Ph.D., Raising Readers Early Literacy Advisor

UR BASIC QUALITY OF LIFE depends on our ability to read write, and comprehend."* With this foresight 20 years ago, the Libra Foundation, founded by the late philanthropist Elizabeth Noyce, set out with a mission to improve and promote literacy in all Maine babies and young children.

In 2000, Owen Wells, former President and CEO of the Libra Foundation and current Vice Chairman of its Board of Trustees, first proposed the concept that would become Raising Readers. Research showed that babies were learning skills each time a parent or caregiver would talk, read, or sing to them—skills that would eventually enable them to read independently when they started school. With this knowledge, Mr. Wells and the Libra Foundation's Board of Trustees set out to provide all Maine children with the opportunity to grow into adults who read regularly, love books, and are able to navigate the education and healthcare systems as well as the world beyond. The idea was simple: Every child would get a small library of books to call their own.

By partnering with every hospital, midwifery, and primary care provider office in the state of Maine, Raising Readers continues to reach virtually every child with developmentally appropriate, high-quality children's books at birth and at every regularly scheduled well-child visit through age 5. Made possible by a longstanding partnership between MaineHealth and Northern Light Health, healthcare providers not only give books to families, but also provide advice to parents and caregivers about the importance of regularly reading to and interacting with their children.

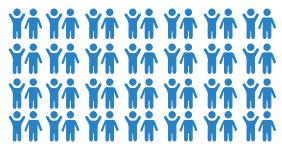
Libra's vision for an improved quality of life through literacy continues to become a reality. With their ongoing support, Raising Readers has given over 3 million books to children from birth to age 5 in the past 20 years and continues to distribute nearly 65,000 books annually to Maine families.

Raising Readers is now the largest health and literacy program ever undertaken by a state and continues to serve as a model for similar efforts around the world. The Libra Foundation's investment in Maine children and their families is one that will surely produce dividends for decades to come.

SINCE IT BEGAN, RAISING READERS HAS:

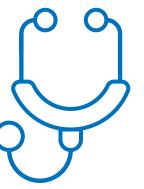
Given out over 3 million books





Reached over 290,000 Maine children

Partnered with all midwives, hospitals and healthcare providers that serve Maine children.



"One of Raising Readers' prime strengths is that it is a straightforward concept that is completely agnostic with regard to any societal distinctions in Maine — regardless of education, religion, ethnicity, location, economic status or access to services, every child and family in Maine receives books and can then tailor their own relationship to the written word. In that sense, it is a statewide, comprehensive uniter toward a common and single purpose: to discover reading's untold riches."

Craig Denekas, CEO, the Libra Foundation

^{*}Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy

A TIMELINE FROM THE BEGINNING

For two decades, Raising Readers has reached so many milestones, thanks to the help of a vast network of partners passionate about promoting health through early literacy.

"Raising Readers books support a love of reading, self-confidence and loving attachments between parents and their children. Each time a book is shared between a loving adult and a child, it opens opportunities for lots of back-and-forth interactions that are fun while building a strong foundation in a child's brain for all future learning and development."

Dr. Steve DiGiovanni. Pediatrics. Maine Medical Center Outpatient Clinics



2000

The Libra Foundation proposes the idea for Raising Readers.

Eastern Maine Healthcare (now Northern Light Health) and MaineHealth collaborate to reach every child in the state.



Raising Readers partners with Affiliated Materiel Services (now Owens & Minor) to deliver books to sites.

2003

Raising Readers is fully implemented at hospitals and through midwives.

2004

Raising Readers is fully implemented at primary care offices across Maine



2005

MAINE

The first anthology is distributed to 5-year-olds.

Graduation of the first class of Raising Readers.

2006

Exclusive online book ordering database is launched.

2007

The 1 millionth book is given by Barbara Bush to a young patient at Prime Care Pediatrics in Biddeford.

2008

Raising Readers receives national recognition in an issue of The Nation's Health, a publication of the American Health Association.



Literacy Explorer Kits are developed with the Maine Family Literacy Initiative and the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy.

Raising Readers celebrates its

Maine is ranked first in the nation for

parents reading to their children.

2014

2011

2010

10th anniversary.

The 2 millionth book is given to a 5-vear-old child at the YorKids practice in York.



on News Center Maine's show, 207.

nation for parents reading to their children.

Raising Readers and The Barbara

2020

Raising Readers celebrates its 20th anniversary.



2015

The last anthology is distributed to 5-year-olds

2018

Raising Readers is featured

For the second time, Maine ranks first in the

2019

Bush Children's Hospital partner to bring "Story Time at BBCH" to patients and their families.



Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center.

MORE HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2020:

- Visited with site coordinators at over **260** hospitals, birth centers, and medical offices.
- Distributed about 10,600 totes to newborn babies through hospital and midwife partners.
- Distributed about **148,000** books to Maine babies and children at their well-child visits through healthcare providers.
- Helped build **61.000** Maine children's home libraries with Raising Readers' books.
- Gifted a copy of the 5-year-old book selection Little Beaver and the Echo to our friends at Maine public libraries.
- Gave 38 boxes of sample books to primary care offices to share with their communities.



This year, Raising Readers

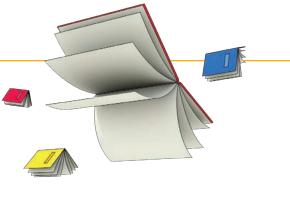
presented its 3 millionth book

to 5-year-old triplets during a

special event at The Barbara

JOURNEY OF A BOOK

Have you ever wondered how Raising Readers books are selected or how they make their way into the hands of Maine children? Learn how on this journey of a book!









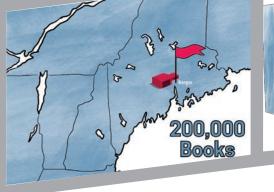
Each year, we meet with publishers and search catalogs to find the best children's books published in the past 12 months.



Of the hundreds of sample books sent to Maine to be considered for selection, only about 100 books are reviewed by the Book Advisory Committee.



This committee of doctors, nurse practitioners, home visiting nurses, librarians, and early literacy experts gather to help us choose just one book for each age group.



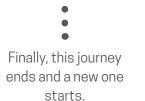
Once selected, 200,000 customized books are printed and shipped to our partners at Owens & Minor, a medical supply warehouse in Bangor. Here, they wait until the time comes for hospitals and doctor's offices to order books from the Raising Readers website.



Every morning, book orders are picked, packed, and sent to participating hospitals and primary care offices all over Maine. Once received. each book is lovingly unpacked and shelved by healthcare providers, ready to go home with Maine families.



Shortly after their birth and at every well-child visit, children receive beloved Raising Readers books from their healthcare providers, instilling the importance of reading aloud from Day One.



In the homes of Maine families, children snuggle up with someone they love to hear a good story. This is where a child's lifelong love of books and reading begins.



Follow this link to see the entire journey of a Raising Readers book - from start to family read-aloud time - on our YouTube channel, youtube.com/RaisingReaders.





PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS Andre

We envision a state where every child will receive new books to call their own from their doctor or health care provider and every parent or caregiver will regularly read aloud to their child, starting the day they're born.

We're moving the needle.

Maine consistently ranks
as one of the top states
where parents read four
or more days a week to
their children* because of
the network of healthcare
partners who make
Raising Readers possible.

*National Survey of Children's Health, 2018

Androscoggin; Auburn Medical Associates • B Street Family Health Center • Central Maine Family Medicine Residency • Central Maine Family Practice • Central Maine Medical Center • Central Maine Pediatrics • Community Clinical Services Family Health Care • Community Clinical Services Pediatrics • DFD Russell Medical Center — Leeds • DFD Russell Medical Center — Turner • Family Health Care Associates • Franklin Health Livermore Falls Family Practice • Knapp Family Practice • Lisbon Family Practice • Margaret E. Matthews, MD • Minot Avenue Family Medicine • Pediatric Associates of Lewiston • Poland Community Health Center • Poland Family Practice • St. Mary's Center for Family Medicine at Mollison Way • St. Mary's Regional Medical Center • Western Maine Family Health Center • Aroostook: Acadia Family Health Center • Cary Medical Center • Fish River Rural Health — Bolduc Avenue Health Center • Fish River Rural Health - Eagle Lake Health Center • Fish River Rural Health - Madawaska Community Health Center • Full Circle Health Care • Houlton Family Practice • Houlton Pediatrics • Houlton Regional Hospital • Katahdin Valley Health Center - Ashland * Katahdin Valley Health Center — Houlton * Maliseet Health & Wellness Center * Micmac Family Health Services * Northern Light AR Gould Hospital * Northern Light Pediatric Care — Presque Isle * Northern Light Primary Care — Caribou * Northern Light Primary Care — Fort Fairfield * Northern Maine Medical Center * Northern Maine Medical Center Medical Practices — Family Practice * Pines Health Services — Caribou Health Center * Pines Health Services — Kimball Community Health Center • Pines Health Services — Presque Isle Family Health Center • Pines Health Services — Washburn Health Center • Pines Health Services — Women's and Children's Health Center • Cumberland: Bayside Midwifery • Bridgton Hospital • Bridgton Primary Care • Carl J Schuler, DO • Ciampi Family Practice • Dr. Harry E. Davis Pediatrics • Freeport Medical Center • Gray Family Health Center • Greater Portland Health - Greater Portland Health - Greater Portland Health - South Portland - Greater Portland Health at Riverton Park - Harbourside Family Practice - Honey Bee Home Health - Intermed Family Practice at Foden Road - Intermed Family Practice in Yarmouth • Intermed Pediatrics at Foden Road • Intermed Pediatrics at Marginal Way • Intermed Pediatrics in Yarmouth • Lotus Family Practice • Maine Medical Center • Maine Medical Center Pediatric Clinic • Maine Medical Partners Falmouth Pediatrics • Maine Medical Partners Family Medicine Center • Maine Medical Partners Falmouth Family Medicine • Maine Medical Partners Falmouth Family Medical Partners Falmouth Family Medical Partners Falmouth Falmouth Family Medical Partners Falmouth Falmouth Falmouth Family Medical Partners Falmouth Falmouth Falmouth Falmouth Falmouth Partners Scarborough Family Medicine • Maine Medical Partners South Portland Pediatrics • Maine Medical Partners Westbrook Family Medicine • Maine Medical Partners Westbrook Pediatrics • Martin's Point Health Care — Bowdoin • Martin's Point Health Care — Brunswick • Martin's Point Health Care — Gorham • Martin's Point Health Care — Fortland • Martin's Point Health Care — Portland • Martin's Point Health Care — Fortland • Martin's Point Health Care — Portland • Martin's Point Health Care — Fortland • Martin' Coast Hospital • Mid Coast Medical Group — Primary Care • Mid Coast Medical Group Family Practice • Parkview • Mid Coast Medical Group Pediatrics • Midcoast Pediatrics • Naples Family Practice • North Bridgton Family Practice • North Bridgton Family Practice • Midcoast Medical Group Pediatrics • Midcoast Medical Grou Northern Light Mercy Hospital • Northern Light Primary Care — Falmouth • Northern Light Primary Care — Gorham • Northern Light Primary Care — South Portland • Northern Light Primary Care — Windham • Northern Light Primary Care — Yarmouth • Open Circle Family Practice • Osteopathic Family Medicine • Portland Direct Primary Care • Portland West Family Practice • Red Tent Midwifery • Root Cellar Pediatric Clinic • Steep Falls Family Practice • Stephen R. Barter, MD • The Birth House • Two Rivers Midwifery Clinic • Franklin: Franklin Health Farmington Family Practice • Franklin Health Pediatrics • Franklin Memorial Hospital • Jean Antonucci, MD • Mt. Abram Regional Health Center • Rangeley Family Medicine • Strong Area Health Center • Wilson Stream Family Practice • Hancock: Acadia Integrative Medicine • Birch Moon Midwifery & Lactation Care • Bucksport Regional Health Center - Cadillac Family Practice Community Health Center - Cooper -Gilmore Health Center • Ellsworth Family Planning & Primary Care • Lisa Stewart Women's Health Center • Mt. Desert Island Hospital • Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital • Northern Light Pediatric Care — Ellsworth • Northern Light Primary Care — Blue Hill • Northern Light Primary Care — Castine • Northern Light Primary Care — Ellsworth • Northern Light Primary Care — Gouldsboro • Northern Light Primary Care — JAX • Northern Light Primary Care — Southwest Harbor • Northern Light Primary Care — Stonington • Primary Health, LLC • Trenton Health Center • Kennebec: Augusta Family Medicine • Be Well My Friend, LLC • Belgrade Regional Health Center • DFD Russell Medical Center — Monmouth • Elmwood Primary Care • Family Focused Healthcare • Family Medicine Institute • Gardiner Family Medicine • Hallowell Family Practice • In the Nest Midwifery • Kennebec Midwifery • Kennebec Pediatrics • Loveiov Health Center • Maine Dartmouth Family Practice • Maine Family Natural Health • MaineGeneral Medical Center • Maranacook Family Health Care • Mount Vernon Midwifery • Northern Light Inland Hospital • Northern Light Primary Care — Clinton ■ Northern Light Primary Care — Downtown Waterville • Northern Light Primary Care — Oakland • Northern Light Primary Care — Waterville • Oakland Family Medicine • Rosalind Waldron. MD • Twin Pines Family Medicine • Waterville Family Practice • Waterville Pediatrics • Winthrop Family Medicine • Winthrop Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine • Knox: Hope Health Family Practice • Islands Community Medical Services • Megunticook Family Medicine • Pen Bay Family Medicine • Pen Bay Medical Center • Pen Bay Pediatrics • Lincoln: Full Circle Direct Primary Care • Lifespan Family Health Care • Lincoln Medical Partners — Boothbay Harbor • Lincoln Medical Partners — Waldoboro • Lincoln Medical Partners Family Care • Lincoln Medical Partners Family Medicine - Wiscasset • Lincoln Medical Partners Primary Care • Medomak Family Medicine • Midcoast Midwifery • Miles Memorial Hospital • Sheepscot Valley Health Center • Waldoboro Family Medicine Wiscasset Family Health • Oxford: Aardvark Pediatrics • Bethel Family Health Center • Elsemore Dixfield Family Medicine • Fryeburg Family Medicine • Joseph deKay, DO • Rumford Hospital • Sacopee Valley Health Center • Stephens Memorial Hospital • Swift River Health Care • Western Maine Family Practice • Western Maine Pediatrics • Penobscot: Brewer Health Center ■ Brewer Medical Center — Penobscot Community Health Center ■ Capehart Community Health Center — Penobscot Community Health Center • Evergreen Healing Center • Health Access Network — Lee • Health Access Network — Lincoln • Health Access Network — Medway • Health Access Network — West Enfield • Helen Hunt Health Center — Penobscot Community Health Care • Hometown Health Center — Dexter • Hometown Health Center — Newport Katahdin Valley Health Center — Millinocket
 Katahdin Valley Health Center — Patten Millinocket Regional Hospital Family Medicine • Newport Family Practice • Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center - Northern Light Family Medicine and Residency - Northern Light Pediatric Primary Care — Bangor • Northern Light Primary Care — Husson Avenue • Northern Light Primary Care — Husson Avenue • Northern Light Primary Care Family Medicine • Penobscot Nation Health Primary Care — Corinth • Northern Light Primary Care — Cutler Health Center • Northern Light Primary Care — Newport • Northern Light Primary Care — Orono • Osteopathic Center for Family Department • Penobscot Pediatrics — Penobscot Community Health Care • Penobscot Valley Primary Care • Riverview Pediatrics • St. Joseph Family Medicine — Brewer • St. Joseph Family Medicine — Broadway • St. Joseph Family Medicine — Evergreen Woods • St. Joseph Family

Medicine — Hampden • Twin City Family Medicine • Winterport Community Health Center — Penobscot Community Health Care • Piscataquis: Heritage Homebirth • Katahdin Valley Health Center — Brownville • Northern Light Primary Care — Dover-Foxcroft • Northern Light Primary Care — Greenville • Northern Light Primary Care — Monson • Northern Light Primary Care — Sangerville • Sagadahoc:
DaySpring Integrative Wellness • Northern Sun Family Health Center • Richmond Area Health Center • Riverside Healing Center • The Birth Center at Northern Sun • Topsham Family Medicine • Somerset: Bingham Area Health Center • Family
Circles Healthcare • Four Seasons Family Practice • Jackman Community Health Center • Penobscot Community Health Center • Madison Area Health Center • Northern Light Primary Care — Madison • Northern Light Primary Care — Unity • Seaport Community Medicine • Waldo: Arthur Jewell Community Health Center • Belfast Pediatrics • Donald S. Walker Health Center • Embrace Midwifery • First Light Community Midwives • Islesboro Health Center • Lincolnville Regional Health Center • Morningstar Midwifery • Mothers Moon • Northern Light Primary Care — Unity • Seaport Community Health Center • Stockton Springs Regional Health Center • Waldo County General Hospital • Waldo County Medical Partners Primary Care — Unity • Seaport Community Hospital Family Medicine • Vork Down East Community Hospital Family Medicine • Waldo County Medical Partners Primary Care • Washington: Annold Medical Center • Calais Regional Medical Center • Eastport Health Care • Harrington Family Health Center • John Gaddis, Do • Milbridge Medical Center • Passamaquoddy Health Center • Pleasant Poin

"Raising Readers has been an amazing program for parents as well as the children. Not only is it educational but it helps develop a relationship with the staff who present the books at the time of the visit. It has been a highlight of my nursing career. I actually was an employee here at Harrington Family Health Center 20 years ago at the beginning when Raising Readers began! It has been amazing! Thank you!"

Cindy Strout, Harrington Family Health Center

FEEDBACK

We're always inspired by our community of passionate supporters including parents, caregivers, healthcare providers, authors, illustrators, publishers and other early literacy champions. They're at the foundation of our mission to ensure that every Maine child is read to regularly by a loving adult, starting at birth, and will grow up to be a healthy, literate adult.

"Seeing a child come into the library and

select books I know were chosen by Raising

Readers warms my heart. But even more

exciting is hearing the child say, as she/he puts

the book on the circulation table. "I have this

book at MY house!"

DEB LADD, LIBRARIAN

Here's some of what our supporters have to say:

"Reading books makes us healthy. It's like vegetables for our brains." 4-YEAR-OLD MAINE CHILD

"We love Raising Readers! I'm always impressed with the quality of each book and how thoughtfully it has been selected. Early literacy is such an important part of children's lives. The Raising Reader's program has helped our family add some great books to our home library."

MOM EMILY

"I was so happy when I received my canvas bag of books at the hospital.

We continue to use that bag as our library bag. I believe that loving books will set you on the right path to learning and enjoying the benefits of escaping into a good book.

I love Raising Readers."

MOM MEGAN

"Raising Readers is such an important part of our health center. When the children come in for their well-child visits, we give the books to them, and they are so excited to get them and to have them to read.

The parents are equally excited. It encourages families to spend time together and read together."

SITE COORDINATOR CHERIE, MADISON AREA HEALTH CENTER "I absolutely love what the Raising Readers program does and look forward to getting a book at my daughter's yearly checkup. It is a great way to start children off with building their at-home library. Some kids are not fortunate enough to have a large collection of books at home. With the help of this program, kids are able to have some wonderful books to call their own. I will cherish those books and hang onto them for when my girls have children of their own."

MOM MEGHAN

"Raising Readers is a truly wonderful program! For some of our patients, the only books they own are the Raising Readers books - making those books enormous gifts to the children and ensuring their future literacy skills."

MAGGIE ZAMBONI, DO, INTERMED

ONLINE — COMMUNITY RESOURCES

In a year defined by uncertainty and lots of time at home, Raising Readers sought to provide resources that would offer comfort to parents, caregivers, and children. We partnered with authors and illustrators, publishers, public libraries, and community-based organizations to bring our online community trusted, high-quality activities especially for children aged birth to five.

THIS YEAR, WE:

- Created the Raising Readers' Read-Aloud Group on Facebook to share videos of Maine authors and illustrators, medical practitioners, program advisors, and partners reading aloud their favorite Raising Readers books.
- Regularly updated the Raising Readers blog to showcase read-aloud videos, program partners, and free, downloadable book activities.
- Published a Family Resources for 2020 webpage to share a regularly updated list of Raising Readers-approved activities and materials.
- Partnered with our friends at the Maine State Library to share printable Raising Readers' Book Lists to share with library-loving families in Maine.

Raising Readers Read-Aloud Group



To join the Facebook read-aloud page: facebook.com/groups/raisingreadersreadaloud



"Thank you! This was just what my little guy needed this morning as his big sister dives into her homeschool work! Lynn Plourde is such a wonderful and

Mom via Facebook

animated author!"

"There are many who believe that any book is good for a child. From day one, the Libra Foundation and Raising Readers set that bar so much higher. When a healthcare professional puts a book in a child's hands, that book is imbued with the program's deep commitment to raise not only a reader, but a new Maine citizen."

> Kirsten Cappy, Curious City Books Raising Readers Book Advisor

THANK YOU

On behalf of Raising Readers' staff and advisors, we thank every person who makes books and reading a part of growing up in Maine.

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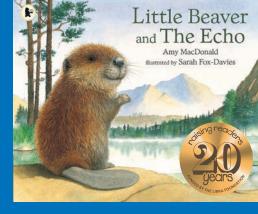
Clinical Advisor Maine Medical Center Newborn Nursery Maine Medical Partners, Westbrook Pediatrics MaineHealth

KIRSTEN CAPPY Book Advisor Curious City Books



There's something extra special about knowing there are people in Maine who spend their days creating and illustrating stories and books for families to read together.

We'd like to thank the authors and illustrators who have given their time and talents to inspire Maine children's imagination, creativity, and literacy development through their stories and art.



In 2020, many 5-year-olds received this commemorative edition of Little Beaver and The Echo by Amy MacDonald at their well-child visit in celebration of Raising Readers' 20th anniversary.





Children fall in love with books because of the memories created when they snuggle up and read with someone they love.

Learn more at raisingreaders.org









