



UNITED WAY BRINGS FREE NATIONAL BOOK PROGRAM TO SANGAMON COUNTY

New, free books delivered to preschool age children from birth to five years old.

United Way of Central Illinois has partnered with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to bring new, free books to preschool age children in Sangamon County. Children who are registered for the program will receive an age appropriate book in the mail every month from birth until their fifth birthday. The program's objective is to foster a love of reading for children and encourage parents to read with them.

There is no cost or obligation to families who want to participate. The only criteria for eligibility is a child's age and place of residence, (they must live in Sangamon County.) United Way's \$100K gift from Scheels and a \$20,000 grant from the JPMorgan Chase Foundation are the initial funding sources for Imagination Library.

As the local sponsor of this program, United Way of Central Illinois oversees registration and pays for the books and postage. The Dollywood Foundation manages the system to deliver the books to the home. Books are selected by the Dolly Parton Imagination Library Committee which meets each year to select the books for the children. The seven members of the committee include educators to ensure the age appropriateness of the books.

Dolly Parton started this program in 1996 because she wanted children to be excited about books and to feel the magic that books can create. Moreover, she wanted to ensure that every child would have books, regardless of their family's income.

Registration for Imagination Library is underway at the following day care centers:

Building Blocks Preschool, West Campus	Springfield Urban League Head Start
Building Blocks Preschool, South Campus	Early Learning Center
Ball Charter School	Little Flower School
Chatham Elementary School	Ball Elementary School
Kountry Kids (<i>New Berlin</i>)	Beginning Steps (<i>Rochester</i>)
All His Children (<i>Sherman</i>)	Child Development Center (<i>Lincoln Land Community College</i>)

If your child is enrolled at one of these schools, ask the School Administrator about registration.

Over the next two years, United Way will expand the program to include additional day cares, pre-K programs in local school districts, social service agencies and hospitals until every family with preschool age children has the opportunity to participate.

Visit our website to learn when new day care centers are registering or call 217-726-7000.