



RAISING a Reader

2025 Impact Report

READING TOGETHER
CHANGES EVERYTHING



Letter from the President & CEO

For 27 years, Raising a Reader has stood alongside families, educators, and community partners, nurturing the next generation of readers through shared reading. And in a world of rapid change and evolving technology, beautiful, physical books remained our constant companion. In 2025, because of this approach, thousands of trusted connections brought our programs to life throughout hundreds of communities, empowering families and igniting children's literacy journeys and the joy of reading together.

In fact, by working in lockstep with communities, we reached more than 150,000 families in 2025, helping make shared reading a consistent and joyful part of daily life.

Program data show measurable child-level outcomes:

- ➔ Children asked to read nearly two additional times per week, and time spent reading together increased from 14 to 23 minutes
- ➔ 73% of parents reported observing meaningful gains in their child's school readiness and curiosity about reading.

As we closed 2025, we also concluded our strategic plan. Despite uncertainty, we expanded programmatic reach, strengthened our data and operational systems, and deepened our national partnerships. Over the past three years, our program partner network grew by 40 percent, and we doubled our philanthropic support through meaningful multi-year commitments.

Looking ahead, we carry forward an important lesson. We know that sustainable impact requires disciplined focus including on what we measure, how we grow, and the operating systems that support our work. Our next strategic plan, launching in summer 2026, will focus on disciplined growth, measurable impact, and ensuring literacy continues to light the way for children and families nationwide.



With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Torgerson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line at the end.

Michelle Torgerson
President & CEO

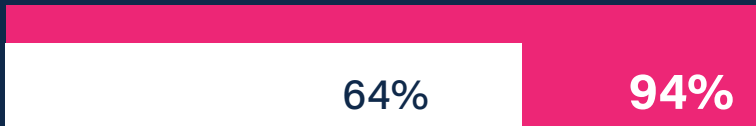
Families Build Reading Routines Together



Raising a Reader helps families establish a consistent shared reading routine. Families reported reading more often and for twice as long, after participating in Raising a Reader’s Classic Red Book Bag Program.



Families read together about **50% more often** after RAR.



94% of RAR families have established shared reading routines, up from 64%



121 Minutes

Before RAR families were reading, on average, 52 minutes per week. After RAR families are reading, on average, **121 minutes per week**

49% children asked to read **49% more often**

Together, these shifts show a meaningful change in day-to-day habits: families aren’t just reading more—they’re building a routine that supports early literacy skill development and deepening family connections.

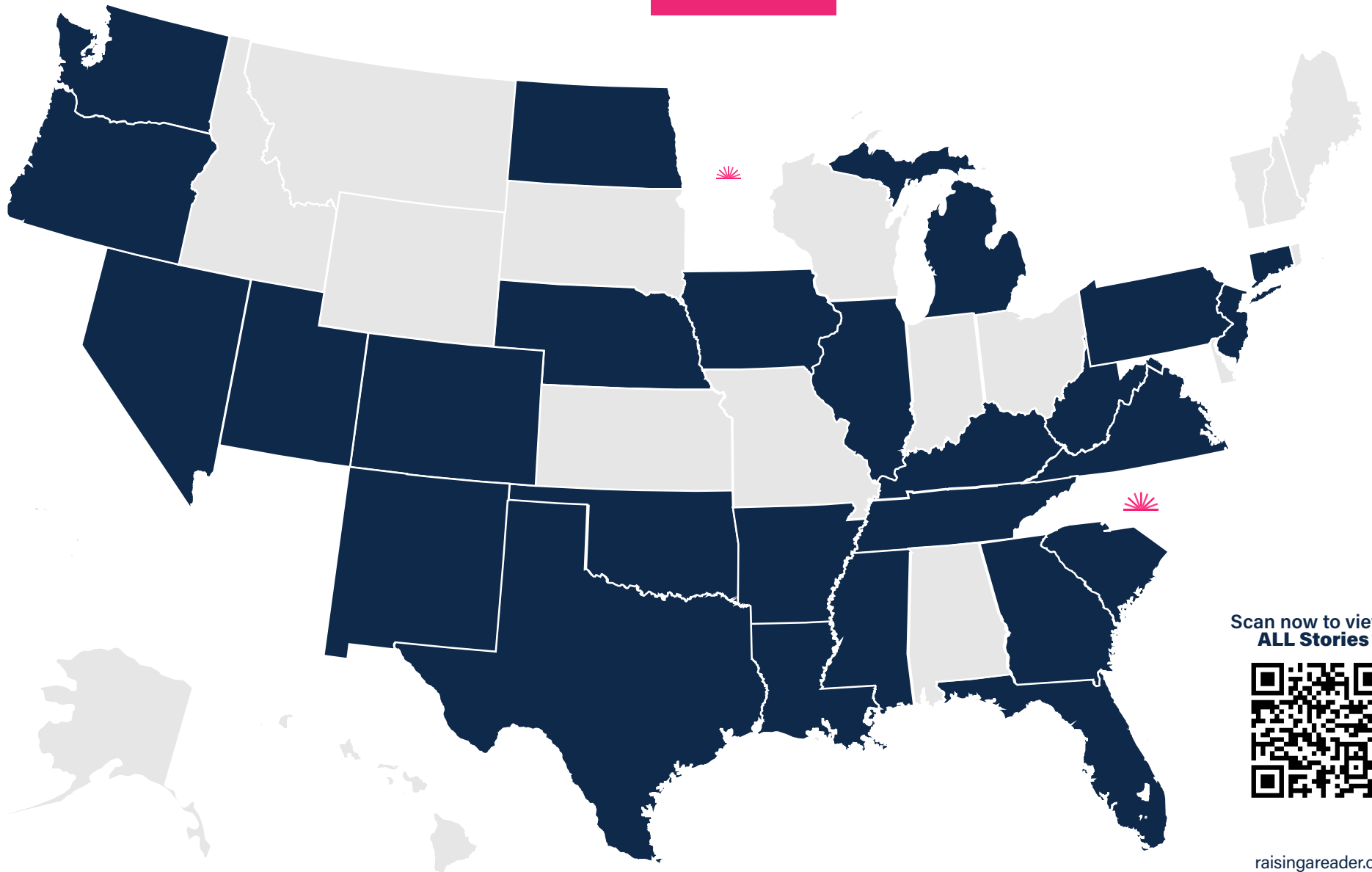
Raising a Reader Across the Country

From coast to coast, Raising a Reader works alongside over 3,000 local partners to bring books and reading routines into the homes of over 150,000 children and families across 34 states.

 RAR State

 RAR State
Rollover for additional info.

[View ALL Stories](#)



Scan now to view
ALL Stories ▼



Reading Together Turns Curiosity Into Confidence

Raising a Reader helps children build positive early experiences with books that strengthen motivation and readiness to learn. After participating in RAR programs, families and educators report increases in children's interest in reading, enthusiasm for learning, and readiness for school.



73%

of families observed a moderate to large increase in their child's readiness for school



75%

of families reported a moderate to large increase in their child's reading



73%

of families reported a moderate to large increase in interest in school and learning

These gains illustrate a powerful early learning flywheel: as children discover a joy for reading, their engagement deepens—fueling the confidence, curiosity, and measurable school readiness essential for their next chapter.



“Raising a Reader helped my son be engaged in what he is reading and interact with his books and characters.”

— Parent, United Way of Greensboro, NC

Thank You to Our Donors

Investors



Partners



Sustainers



2025 Board of Directors

Carol Emig
Chair

Sterling Speirn
Secretary

Erica K. Wood
Treasurer

Michelle Torgerson
President & CEO

Jennifer Blatz
Member

Kirk Law
Member

Kris Perry
Member

Meredith Crooks
Member

Karen Calloo
Member

Portia Kennel
Member

Gihani Fernando
Member

