

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to come to Kendall County

Preschool children of Kendall County will start receiving free books in the mail. Child Care Resource & Referral of Joliet is working with The Community Foundation of Fox River Valley to bring Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to local children. Every child registered in the program will receive one age appropriate book per month. The program covers children from birth to age 5.

"Our purpose is to improve early childhood literacy. By working with the Dollywood Foundation, our goal is to give one book per month to every child enrolled in the program, from birth to age five," said Chris Bzdon, Executive Director of Child Care Resource & Referral

The experiences of thousands of families, as well as research in child development, affirm the benefits of early learning experiences for children. Research shows that activities such as reading regularly with children, beginning in infancy, can produce a significant growth in I.Q., which lasts a child's lifetime. Parents are the first and most important teachers their children will ever have. "I hope that every family will experience the joy and wonder of their children's imaginations as they learn about the world and it's many surprises," Dolly said. "If we can help turn the dreams of a child into the promise of a bright future, then one of my biggest dreams will come true."

The Dollywood Foundation is a 501c(3) non-profit foundation founded by Dolly Parton to support educational projects and improve the quality of life in Dolly's native Sevier County, Tennessee. The mission of the foundation is to share the life and legacy of Dolly Parton as an inspiration for children to "Dream More...Learn More...Care More...and Be More."

The Imagination Library is a 60-volume home library for preschool children. It was created to stimulate children's imaginations and encourage reading within the family at an early age. A panel of child educators selects the books for the library each year, always beginning the series with a special copy of The Little Engine That Could.

In December of 1999, Dolly announced that she would extend the opportunity to communities to replicate The Imagination Library in their own area. While each community must financially support its own effort, the foundation will provide technical assistance in setting up the program, assist with public relations and marketing materials, work with Dolly on national/international promotional efforts, and convene the growing network to inspire, share, and innovate. The foundation will also manage the composition of the library and coordinate the ordering and mailing of the books to maximize cost effectiveness.

"By working with the Dollywood Foundation, the Community Foundation of Fox River Valley can implement this program for only \$25 per child enrolled per year," said Chris Bzdon, "That's only \$2.08 per month for the book and the mailing of the book."

The Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley is a non-profit, philanthropic organization based in Aurora, Illinois that administers individual charitable funds from which grants and scholarships are distributed to benefit the citizens of the Greater Aurora Area, the TriCities and Kendall County Illinois. For more information, please see www.communityfoundationfrv.org.

Anyone interested in receiving more information is encouraged to contact Karen Flores at 815-741-1163 ext. 251 or at KFlores@childcarehelp.com.

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