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## About Us

In 2004, Governor Phil Bredesen created the non-partisan, not-for-profit *Governor's Books from Birth Foundation*® (GBBF) to serve as a catalyst and tangible resource to Tennesseans establishing and sustaining county Imagination Libraries. Initially charged with conducting the Imagination Library statewide rollout, raising statewide funds, and training volunteers, Foundation staff now serve Imagination Library organizers by providing fundraising, public relations, and other support.

Tennessee's statewide **Imagination Library** provides a new, age-appropriate, high-quality book every single month to registered children from birth to age five, at no cost to the family and regardless of income.

Since inception, Tennessee's Imagination Library has grown by leaps and bounds:

- Just over **9.4 million books** have been **delivered** since October 2004.
- **219,140 Tennessee children** – or **58 percent** of our state's total under-five population are receiving the books currently.
- **155,788** five-year-olds have **graduated** from the Imagination Library. Thus, more than **374,928** preschoolers will have a greater chance of succeeding in school and in life, thanks to this community investment in their (and our) future.
- **All of Tennessee's 375,000 children under age five have access to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.**

## About the Imagination Library

- Dolly Parton created the Imagination Library in 1996 as a gift to the children in her hometown of Sevierville, Tenn.
- The cost of the program is \$24 per child, per year. In Tennessee, this cost is split evenly between a county's non-profit sponsoring organization, and the Governor's Books from Birth Foundation.
- A blue ribbon committee of childhood education experts selects the books for the Imagination Library, including such beloved classics as *The Little Engine That Could*®, *Spot Goes to the Farm*, *The Snowy Day*, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, and *Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!*
- Up to ten bilingual Imagination Library books, included throughout the birth to age five enrollment period, feature Spanish and English text on the same page.
- In many communities, hospital nurses register children for the program the very day they are born. Also, local pediatricians and family physicians offer parents of their preschool patients a "prescription to read."

## About the Resources

### Fundraising

To support Tennessee's Imagination Library, the governor annually requests the General Assembly's approval of a State budgetary allocation to cover half of each county's cost of providing books every month, based on projected increases in children registered. As half the cost of the monthly book order is covered by the GBBF, county Imagination Library sponsoring organizations must raise \$12 per child, per year.

The Foundation raises funds from various corporations, foundations and individuals throughout the state. These funds provide assistance to distressed counties. Also, donated funds are used for special projects such as purchasing full sets of Imagination Library books for nearly 2,000 voluntary Pre-K and Head Start classrooms.

Additionally, GBBF staff work directly with county Imagination Library sponsoring organizations to help raise funds from a variety of sources. Contributions to any county Imagination Library can be made through a secure online transaction at [www.GovernorsFoundation.org](http://www.GovernorsFoundation.org).

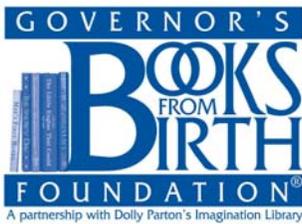
### Public Relations

Press releases, event planning and fundraising training are provided to boost enrollment, momentum and exposure for county Imagination Libraries. The Foundation also maintains a user-friendly Web site, distributes a quarterly newsletter, and hosts annual training workshops.

### Program Partnerships

The Governor's Foundation proudly utilizes the passion and resources of a growing number of Tennessee associations, non-profits, businesses, local and statewide library and teacher organizations, civic groups, state and local governments, etc.

More than 276 teenagers representing 39 counties have also become active Imagination Library partners with the *Governor's League of Extraordinary Teens*, a project which engages teens aged 13 – 19 years in raising funds and enrolling children in county Imagination Libraries.



## Governor's Books from Birth Foundation Highlights

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- The GBBF has raised **nearly \$4.2 million** in donations and pledges for statewide application or to cover individual counties' monthly book costs. Fifty-seven percent of all funds raised by the GBBF has been or will be passed through directly to county sponsoring organizations in order to help cover their half-share of the costs for monthly Imagination Library book orders.
- Contributions from statewide donors **AT&T, Comcast, Delta Dental of Tennessee, Dollar General, Wal★Mart** and others go toward several purposes, including: assisting economically distressed counties, growing an endowment fund, and incentivizing enrollment increases.
- **NISSAN North America** continues supporting Dolly's Imagination Library in the four Tennessee counties where its employees live and work. Similarly, **Piedmont Natural Gas Co.** has pledged contributions to local sponsors in its nine market counties.
- With assistance from the GBBF, Shelby County has forged a groundbreaking partnership with **Volunteer State Health Plan**. VSHP's \$300,000 annual pledge for three years (\$900,000 total) will cover enrollment for every Memphis-area newborn insured by VSHP. Reciprocally, Shelby Co. Books from Birth will make every effort **to enroll in the Imagination Library** each newborn covered by the VSHP TennCare MCO.
- The GBBF has maintained Imagination Library program operations with the same number of staff since inception, and held the portion of its budget allocated to administrative overhead to just **7.75%**. The Center for Non-Profit Management affirms that a 7.75% administrative budget is excellent, based on the benchmark of 15% or below widely accepted among standards for best practices in the not-for-profit sector.
- Using donated funds, twelve counties have received short-term assistance with county book and mailing costs through the GBBF's Distressed County Grant program.
- Also made possible by donated funds from statewide donors, full sets of Imagination Library books have been gifted to **1,920 Head Start** and **State-funded Pre-K** classrooms.
- GBBF staff continue to assist other U.S. states as they seek guidance on how to establish a **statewide** Imagination Library. For this purpose, Tennessee Technological University's BusinessMedia Center developed an interactive CD-ROM tool encapsulating the story of Tennessee's public-private partnership model.
- To boost registration and fundraising, the GBBF maintains strong statewide partnerships with organizations in the education, health care, business, government and not-for-profit sectors.
- Currently **276 teenagers representing 39 counties have been inducted into the Governor's League of Extraordinary Teens**. These teens have registered more than 2,903 children and raised over \$37,511 for their county Imagination Library programs.