Groundbreaking International Study of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

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SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Largest dataset in the world on shared book reading,

collected data from over 86k families in five countries.

- Survey included 86,000+ caregivers across five countries (U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia, Republic of Ireland) with children in the Imagination Library program.
- Caregivers completed surveys at baseline, 6 months, and 12 months, after receiving at least 10 books.
- Responses from 18,112 caregivers who completed all three surveys were compared with 37,776 caregivers who had not yet received books.
- Surveys examined the home literacy environment, caregiver, and child reading attitudes, and children's early literacy skills.
- Findings drew from both quantitative and qualitative data related to caregiver demographics and literacy behaviors.

Key Findings

1. Closes Literacy Gaps

In all countries, the program was found to have significant impact helping to prevent early literacy gaps that often persist through school.

FACT

Research found that after just 10 books, children in the program were at least **4x more likely** to demonstrate stronger emerging literacy skills—such as vocabulary and phonological awareness—compared to children not in the program.

2. Strengthens Home Literacy Environments

In all countries, children in the program were read to significantly more often than children not in the program.

FACT

Children enrolled were **9x more likely** to be read to 4 or more days per week compared to children not in the program.

3. Inspires Reading Globally

In all countries, children in the program were significantly more likely to enjoy books and engage in meaningful reading interactions.

FACT

Children in the program were **9x more likely** to be interested in books and **15x more likely** to join in during shared book reading compared to children not in the program.

4. Builds Positive Family Reading Habits

In all countries, the Imagination Library was found to significantly encourage family reading and build traditions around reading.

FACT

Caregivers around the world in the program were **6x more likely** to count images, **7x more likely** to describe images and **4x more likely** to let the child hold the book compared to caregivers not in the program.

*Galea, Claire Melanie Anita (2025). The Impact of shared book reading on children and their Families: insights from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Macquarie University. Thesis. https://doi.org/10.25949/30123745.v1

USA Impact

Groundbreaking Study of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Children in the US were **11x more likely** to be interested in books and **15x more likely** to join in during shared book reading compared to children not in the program.

Children in the US were nearly **3x more likely** to demonstrate concepts about print compared to children not in the program.

Children in the US were **9x more likely to initiate** shared book reading compared to children not in the program.

Children in the US were **5x more likely** to be interested in reading compared to children not in the program .

Caregivers were **6x more likely** to count images, **8x more likely** to describe images and **5x more likely** to let the child hold the book compared to caregivers not in the program.

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Canada Impact

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Children in Canada were **13x more likely** to be read to 4 or more days per week compared to children not in the program.

Children in Canada were **11x more likely** to initiate shared book reading compared to children not in the program.

Caregivers were **6x more likely** to count images, **8x more likely** to describe images and **5x more likely** to let the child hold the book compared to caregivers not in the program.

Children in Canada were **7x more likely** to demonstrate expressive vocabulary compared to children not in the program.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Canada

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United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland Impact

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Children in the UK+ Ireland were **5x more likely** to demonstrate alphabet knowledge compared to children not in the program.

Children in the UK + Ireland were **11x more likely** to initiate shared book reading compared to children not in the program.

Children in the UK + Ireland were **9x more likely** to demonstrate phonological awareness compared to children not in the program.

Caregivers in the UK + Ireland were **6x more likely** to count images, **7x more likely** to describe images and **4x more likely** to let the child hold the book compared to caregivers not in the program.

The average number of books in the household for children in the UK + Ireland **went up by 30**, compared to children not in the program.

Children in the UK + Ireland were **5.5x more likely** to spend time reading alone.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library
United Kingdom & Republic of Ireland

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Australia Impact

Groundbreaking Global Study of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

The **number one benefit** reported by caregivers in Australia was that their children enrolled in the Imagination Library developed a strong love of books and reading.

Children in Australia were **6x more likely** to demonstrate receptive and expressive vocabulary compared to children not in the program.

Children enrolled in the Imagination Library in Australia were **9x more likely** to be read to 4 or more days per week compared to children not in the program.

In Australia, caregivers who read daily from birth were **5x more likely** to still read daily at age 3, and their children showed stronger early literacy skills.

Caregivers were **7x more likely** to count images, **8x more likely** to describe images and **4x more likely** to let the child hold the book compared to caregivers not in the program.

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