



Enewsletter April 2025

Nebraska Growing Readers

A Successful Reading Culture You Helped Build

Anecdotal evidence about NGRs first year has certainly suggested that our first year was a blazing success. We registered over a thousand providers for free books in under 6 months, registered another 3,000 plus kindergarteners to receive free books in the home, published 37 books by 33 local authors, and established the first 3 book gardens in the state.

And you are a big part of these successes! The engagement you've created with the families you serve has helped to build a crucial literacy landscape that will place Nebraska as a forerunner in making reading accessible to all children and families.

But we aren't just telling you this. The numbers are in. A joint evaluation conducted by Nebraska Children and Families Foundation and the Munroe Meyer Institute shows that we have indeed increased the number of books in homes, the frequency and duration of reading, and the likelihood to meet reading benchmarks among groups that received books.

With the new year of NGR work, we want to continue to offer you important literacy resources and to encourage you to continue your efforts to reach out to families and community members to make literacy important in your area.

This month we focus on literacy resources that can help you in that effort.

Free Book Resource

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library is available in several areas throughout Nebraska. Families in a supported region can sign up to get 1 book a month from birth to 5 years old. You can visit the website to see if your area is supported.

[Visit the Site](#)

Book Resources in Nebraska

Our friends at Nebraska Extension Early Childhood Development have several awesome literacy resources you can use in your child care and to share with families.

Nebraska Extension's **Read for Resilience** offers free book guides to help children cope through storybooks. These guides go with specific books covering topics like disaster, loss, grief, major stressors, the importance of friendship and connection, and more. The guides are free, but you will need your own copy of the accompanying book.

[Visit Read for Resilience](#)

The **STEAM Imagination Guides** website provides all caregivers (early childhood professionals and parents) with books, guided questions, and expanded learning resources to support literacy development, enhance relationships, and to make a connection with your local library. This year's book guides include 4 for infant and toddlers and 8 for preschoolers, and many local libraries are gearing up to have the books available to check out. Previous years' guides are also available.

[Visit STEAM Imagination Guides](#)

Discover and Design Guides are simple activities for children to do with a caregiver that include making a craft for a STEM project. The guides offer book suggestions that enhance the lessons

[Visit Discover and Design Guides](#)

Learning in the Heartland is a series of virtual field trips using a video, related book, and a variety of activity options.

For more information and resources from Nebraska Extension Early Childhood, visit <https://child.unl.edu/> or contact earlychildhood@unl.edu, or your local 4H.

NGR News

NGR Evaluations Show Literacy Success



The results of an evaluation of NGR conducted by Nebraska Children and Families Foundation and the Munroe Meyer Institute have just been released. We're pleased to announce the following results:

- Access to books increased within participating early childcare centers.
- Daily reading time with children increased among participating families and in early childcare settings.
- Having greater access to books was associated with higher frequency of reading within early childcare settings and among participating families.

- Among Sixpence Home Visitation Families, children with more books at home were more likely to meet benchmarks for early language and literacy skills.

[Read the Report](#)

Book Events and Workshops Resource

Linked 2 Literacy is a Lincoln-based nonprofit offering book events throughout the year and workshops for caregivers.

[Visit the Site](#)

Nebraska Book Spotlight

Use NGR Books as a Resource

There are plenty of NGR books you can use as educational and social resources in your care space. Match a book with an activity, a social emotional lesson, or as reinforcement of important safety rules. Below are sample resource books for you to check out:



The weather is warming, which means swim time is just around the corner. *We're Going Swimming* is a great way to reinforce important safety rules as children get ready to dive in.

-Talk about water safety every time you are going to be by an open water source.
-Don't forget to drink water when swimming (but not the water you're swimming in)!

[Read the Book](#)



Everyone needs rest, and if you're looking to encourage your children to nap, what could be better than reading about cute dogs sharing their naps with their human companions.



[Read the Book](#)

Activities Resource

[Visit the Site](#)

Nebraska Library Commission has a kid's resource page full of activities, coloring pages, and more.

**Did you enjoy reading these books?
Want to read other books available
in the NGR library?**

[Visit the NGR Library](#)

Join Our Facebook Group

Nebraska Growing Readers has a Facebook Group where you can get up-to-date information about the program; engage with this program and the other NGR provider sites; and share ideas, resources, and tips for getting kids excited about reading.

[Follow Us on Facebook](#)

This private group, will require you to answer a question to get in. There are no wrong answers. We just want to assure a safe space specifically for providers.

Learn More about Nebraska

[See Nebraska-Related Books](#)

Nebraska Growing Readers continues to build the library of content written by Nebraskans and about the various cultural experiences you can find in the state. Want to know more about Nebraska books? Visit our Spotlight on Books page to see what's happening in your state.

Nebraska Growing Readers is a collaboration between Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, the Nebraska Department of Education, the Statewide Family Engagement Center, and Unite for Literacy.

If you have questions or comments concerning the program, please contact [Greta Carlson](mailto:gcarlson@nebraskachildren.org) (gcarlson@nebraskachildren.org).



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