



Gently Used Book Drive Toolkit

In this kit, you will find the tools needed to successfully organize your gently used book drive for the children and families served by Reach Out and Read. Everyone who organizes and contributes to book drives helps us reach more children with the gift of shared reading and support of early literacy.



Thank you for helping to ensure that all young children have access to books and a path to early literacy!

About Reach Out and Read

There are many reasons that your family, friends, colleagues, and others in your network will want to contribute to a gently used book drive — they'll be inspired by many of the same reasons you believe in Reach Out and Read's work!

- Book deserts are geographic areas that lack consistent access to high-quality, affordable print children's books and other print reading materials.
 - » In some low-income communities, there is only one book for every 300 children. (In high-income communities, there are about 13 books for every child.)
 - » 45 percent of our nation's children live in homes where books are unaffordable and/or neighborhoods that lack public libraries and stores that sell books.
 - » 67 percent of the schools and programs in the country's lowest-income neighborhoods cannot afford books at retail prices.
 - » 32.4 million American children do not have access to books.
- Reach Out and Read gives young children a foundation for success by incorporating books into pediatric care and encouraging families to read aloud together.
- Reach Out and Read promotes positive parent-child interactions through shared reading during the span of rapid brain growth and development that occurs between birth and age 5. This can be particularly important for families who may experience adverse outcomes due to poverty.
- Reach Out and Read is uniquely poised to reach more children than other organization because we are the only national literacy nonprofit that partners directly with pediatric medical providers.
 - » Over 90 percent of children in the U.S. visit a trusted medical provider at least once a year.

- With a network of more than 36,000 providers at 6,200 sites nationwide, Reach Out and Read provides books and guidance about shared reading to 4.4 million children and families each year.
- Last year, Reach Out and Read distributed 7.1 million new developmentally, linguistically, culturally appropriate books to children.
- Reach Out and Read is endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, who has cited the abundant research about the success of our model and called literacy promotion as “an essential component of primary care pediatric practice.”
- \$140 provides one child with five full years of the Reach Out and Read program.

Where to Donate the Books

1. Find a program site near you using our online [Find a Site](#) tool.
2. When reviewing the list, look for sites with a book icon:  . These program sites accept book donations.
3. Once you have decided on a program site(s), click on the book icon and complete **the form** so the program site(s) knows the book donation is in the works. ***Please note that Reach Out and Read works diligently to ensure book drives support your local program sites, but the ultimate goal is to support sites in need.***

Questions? Interested in offering a book drive through your employer?
Contact development@reachoutandread.org.

How to Run the Book Drive

- The book drive can be a group or individual effort.
 - » If you choose to set up a committee of volunteers to help, start by reaching out to family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, or classmates to generate interest.
- Contact your school and community librarians, school principal, Scout troop leaders, or religious leaders to ask for support and participation. Remember, there is strength in numbers!
- Reach Out and Read program sites accept gently used books for children from newborn to high school age. We also accept new books for children newborn through age 5. **For examples of books Reach Out and Read shares with young children, please visit our [storefront on Bookshop](#).**

Where to Hold the Book Drive

- **Businesses:** A book drive can be a significant way for a corporation or company to give back to the community in which it is located.

- **Service organizations and professional affiliations:** Many service groups like Scouts, Lions Clubs, Kiwanis, etc. and professional affiliations like Kappa Psi, American Academy of Pediatrics chapters, etc. choose to collect books for Reach Out and Read.
- **Schools:** Schools, especially elementary schools, are among the most important organizing hubs for book drives. Principals, teachers, media specialists, and PTAs typically support these events and will often organize book drives in their schools. Be sure to get permission within the school, either through the principal or director, before you start.
 - » Organizing a book drive is a great way for middle and high school students to fulfill community service projects.
 - » Consider providing an incentive for the class that collects the most books or keeping a graph in the school lobby of how many books are collected by each class and the school as a whole.
- **Religious organizations or places of worship:** Churches, temples, mosques, and synagogues are great places to hold book drives. Religious school classes or individual students may want to run a book drive for a confirmation, bar or bat mitzvah, or community service project. Ask religious leaders to assist in promoting your book drive and literacy to their members.

When to Hold the Book Drive

Book drives can be held at any time. Consider holding a drive in conjunction with other reading or literacy events at your school or library, or in conjunction with the following annual events.

- **Take Your Child to the Library Day | February**
- **Library Lovers Day | Valentine's Day (February 14)**
- **Read Across America Day | Dr. Seuss's birthday (March 2)**
- **D.E.A.R. – Drop Everything and Read | Beverly Cleary's birthday (April 12)**
- **National Library Week | April**
- **Week of the Young Child | April**
- **Children's Book Week | May**
- **Get Caught Reading Week | May**
- **Screen Free Week | May**
- Juneteenth | **June**
- **National Literacy Month | September**
- **TeenTober | October**
- **National Family Literacy Month | November**
- Thanksgiving | **November**
- Christmas / Hanukkah / Kwanzaa | **December**

Other holidays to consider include Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, Holi, and Easter.

Most book drives run between two weeks and a month. Donors need time to receive the information, go through their personal libraries, and get the books to the collection site. However, there is no set length of time for a book drive. Work with your committee, if you have one, and with the venue you have chosen to determine what is best. **Once the drive is over, please remember to remove posters and other promotions.**

Deliver the Books

Books should be packed in manageable boxes (such as banker or copy paper boxes) and delivered to your selected and approved Reach Out and Read program site(s). Please contact the program site(s) in advance to schedule a drop-off day and time.



We thank **YOU** for considering a gently used book drive to help the millions of kids around the country who don't have access to books. Your support helps us further Reach Out and Read's mission and impact!