



Raising Readers

in Story County

“Helping Children Grow Up with Books and a Love of Reading”

BOOK DRIVE TIPS



Gilbert Elementary 4th graders donated 16 boxes of books to RRSC.

Raising Readers in Story County (RRSC) is a non-profit agency that serves Story County families with children ages 0-8. As a way of promoting early language and literacy development, we are committed to ensuring all children have access to good quality books.

Many people have children's books that their family has outgrown or no longer needs. Book drives make it easy for people to donate gently used books to a good cause.

When books are donated to RRSC, volunteers clean, sort, and label them. Then the books are recycled by distributing them to local food pantries, clothing closets, Little Free Libraries, welfare agencies, and other programs that serve disadvantaged Story County families with young children.

RRSC invites local groups to conduct book drives to collect new and gently used children's books from family members, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and others.

Book drives allow RRSC to reach more children with the gift of books and the promise of literacy. Recycled books are distributed

RRSC encourages you to take photos of your book drive and email them to contact@raising-readers.org.

Step 1: Get inspired

Anyone can do a book drive. These are a few examples.

Schools and Students

Local schools are effective hubs for book drives and other literacy promotion events. Obtain permission from the district and building first. Principals, teachers, media specialists, and parent leaders usually support these kinds of events and will often organize a book drive in their classrooms or building. Students often involve their parents. Have a visible way to report how many books are collected by each class and by the school as a whole. Consider having some incentives or a celebration at the end of the book drive.

Middle and high school students could organize book drives as a way to pursue an organization's goal to make a difference in

the community or for an individual to fulfill community service requirements.

Businesses and Service Organizations

A book drive can help corporations or business to fulfill a mission to give back to the community in which they are located. Instead of exchanging gifts at a holiday party, invite guests to bring new or gently used children's books to be donated to children with few books of their own.

Special Occasion Parties

Plan a Raising Readers Book Drive Party for your book club, service group, office, 4H, Camp Fire, Boy Scouts, elementary classroom, sorority or fraternity holiday party. Request books, one for you and one for Raising Readers, at your baby shower or child's birthday party.

Step 2: Get Organized

Consider inviting schoolmates, coworkers, friends, family, neighbors, and other organizations to help plan and carry out your book drive. You might also engage community and education leaders, librarians, faith groups, elected leaders, business and religious leaders, and youth and family groups. When people are involved, you are likely to get more books donated.

Step 3: Choose a Time

Book drives can be held any time during the year. You might schedule one in conjunction with an established literacy event or holiday, such as one of these.

January

- Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service, <https://www.nationalservice.gov/mlkday>
- National Readathon Day, <http://global.penguinrandomhouse.com/readathon/>

February

- Valentines Day

March

- Dr. Seuss Read Across America, www.nea.org/readacross/index.html

April

- Week of the Young Child, <http://www.naeyc.org/woyc>
- Drop Everything and Read Day, <http://www.readingrockets.org/calendar/dear>
- National Library Week, <http://www.ala.org/conferencesevents/celebrationweeks/natlbraryweek>
- National Volunteer Week, <http://www.pointsoflight.org/signature-events/national-volunteer-week>

May

- Screen-Free Week, <http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/screen-free-week-partner-childrens-book-week-may-1---7-2017>
- Children's Book Week, www.cbcbooks.org
- Get Caught Reading Week, <http://www.getcaughtreading.org>

July

- Summer Learning Day, <http://gradelevelreading.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/2016-GLR-Calendar.pdf>

September

- Reading is Fundamental (RIF) Day, <http://www.rif.org/whats-new/live-event/>

October

- Teen Read Week, <http://teenreadweek.ning.com>

November

- National Family Literacy Day, <http://holidaysofyear.com/national-family-literacy-day/>
sponsored by National Center for Family Learning (NCFL), <http://www.familieslearning.org>

December

Holiday giving

There is no set length of time for a book drive, but most run from two weeks to a month. Donors need time to receive the information, go through their personal libraries, and get the books to the collection site.

Step 4: Choose a Collection Site

Place boxes or bins in a visible and safe location, such as in an entryway or lobby of a school, business, or church. Boxes should be strong enough to hold a large number of books. A plastic storage bin (18 gallons) works quite well. Books can be transferred into smaller boxes or tote bags once the bin is full. It is a good idea to choose one person who will be responsible for checking the collection bin regularly during the book drive.

Place posters advertising the book drive near the book collection bin, and in prominent areas around the venue. Include information such as the start and end dates, the collection site(s), the name of a contact person at the venue, and the phone number and web site of RRSC or other organization who will receive the books for anyone wanting more information. Only gently used or new children's books appropriate for children are desired. Others will be donated to the public library book sale.

Another option is to target a neighborhood and post signs and deliver flyers saying books placed on the curb would be picked up on a certain day.

Step 5: Publicize your Book Drive

Decide on key messages about the importance of reading and how donated books will be recycled and used. RRSC can help.

Printed promotional materials could include newsletters, posters, flyers, yard signs and local newspapers. Websites, emails, and social media can also announce the book drive and provide reminders and updates. Schools, business, and local organizations will have established ways to communicate with families, employees, and members. Take photos to document your activities.

Step 6: Wrap up

Notify RRSC of when you will count the books. Pack the books in small boxes or tote bags since books are heavy. Schedule a time to deliver the books or arrange for them to be picked up.

Celebrate your successful book drive. Report the results, collect quotes, and take more photos. Thank your team and the donors. RRSC will also add our personal and public thanks for your book drive.

RRSC contact information:

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