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Community Foundation for Livingston County
Awards \$8,010 Grant For Childhood Literacy Program

Funds will help Great Start Livingston to strengthen communication between parents and children in an effort to increase childhood literacy

Howell, Mich. – Parents can give their young children a “great start” toward literacy through a program designed to increase parent-child interaction and get preschoolers excited about books. Great Start Livingston, a coalition of agencies working on behalf of children under age five, has launched an early childhood literacy program with grant support from the Community Foundation for Livingston County, an affiliate of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan.

The grant of \$8,010 was awarded to the Women’s Resource Center, fiscal agent for the Great Start Livingston collaborative. It will allow the collaborative to continue its partnership with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, a nationally recognized nonprofit organization with a proven track record of increasing children’s interest in reading and fostering parent-child interaction. Great Start Livingston is replicating the Imagination Library’s successful book distribution program, and the grant will allow the group to provide books for 650 children per month over a five-month period.

The interest in the Imagination Library has been growing in the Livingston County area. When the program was launched in August 2006, it was estimated that the project would reach about 660 children within the first year. However, Great Start Livingston enrolled nearly 1,300 within the first six months.

“Parents want their children to succeed,” says Marilyn Emerson, executive director, Women’s Resource Center of Livingston County, and chairperson of Great Start

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Livingston. “This program gives families the tools to prepare young children to read and write by the appropriate age. It sets them on the right path for the future.”

The Community Foundation for Livingston County, established in 1991, is a permanent charitable endowment fund created to benefit the residents of Livingston County. Its mission is to support and improve the county’s quality of life. The Foundation is building community capital through contributions from a wide variety of donors so that the charitable needs of Livingston County can be met, today and in the future. The Foundation is an affiliate of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan.

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