

# Read to Me

A newsletter for families and others who care about the future of young people

Volume 4, Issue 1

Fall 2009

## Special Points of Interest in this newsletter:

- Selection of Imagination Library books
- Wild About Parenting 2010
- Beyond the Book
- "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom" January 2010 Events
- One Slice of Chocolate Cake



United Way  
of Southwest Minnesota

## Selection of Imagination Library Books

The books for Imagination Library are selected yearly by a Dolly Parton Foundation committee composed of parents, teachers, child development specialists, librarians, publishers and others specializing in early childhood literacy.

Special attention is given to the selection of books that are age-appropriate and that promote inspiration and imagination. Of additional concern are the development of positive themes such as love of reading and learning; regard for diversity of people, their roles, culture and environment; promotion of self-esteem and confidence; and an appreciation of art and aesthetics.

Each series of books should contain certain characteristics specific to their age appropriateness including:

### YEAR ONE

- Vision—bright, big, colorful
- Touch—board pages
- Rhyme and rhythm
- Simple—easy to use
- Minimal text—point and say
- Playful sounds
- Nurture—attachment and lullaby themes

### YEAR TWO

Continue concepts from year one and build upon them, including

- Repetition and predictability—generate language
- Motor skills
- "Self-help" activities—things children can do, things familiar in their daily life

- Use of real photo illustration
- Body awareness
- Nursery rhymes
- Colors, letters, numbers

### YEAR THREE

- Wordless books, including building your own story (reader and child)
- Values and character
- Issues—fear, conflict, love, safety
- Colors, letters, numbers
- Nursery rhymes

### YEAR FOUR

- More complex stories—hero, complication, resolution
- Diversity of others—faces, environment, OK to be different
- Play, humor, fun
- Nursery rhymes and poetry

### YEAR FIVE

- School preparation and readiness
- Use rebus (pictures used for words)
- Science—non-fiction
- Folk tales
- Thank you, appreciation
- Rhymes and poetry

NOTE: All children born in the same year, receive the same book in a given month. For example, the book a child receives in November 2009 will be the same for a child born in January 2009 as it is for a child born in August 2009. Therefore, some children will receive more or less books from a "year's" line up of books.

### ARE YOU PLANNING TO MOVE SOON?

Call us at 507-929-2273 or email us at [unitedway@unitedwayswmn.org](mailto:unitedway@unitedwayswmn.org) if you have moved or are planning to move. It takes 6—8 weeks for address changes to go into effect, so the sooner we know of your move, the less books your child will miss out on!

**Imagination Library** books are mailed out at bulk library rates and **can not be forwarded by the post office. So, if you move and you haven't let us know, your child will miss out on a book or two!**





## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### “Wild About Parenting”

This year’s Annual Parent Education Event will be

**Barbara Coloroso presenting on her book**

**“Kids are Worth It!”**

**Tuesday, March 23, 2010 from 7-9 p.m.**

The event is **FREE** for anyone wishing to attend and will be held at the  
Schwan Center for the Performing Arts  
Marshall High School, Marshall, MN

Go to our website ([www.unitedwayswmn.org](http://www.unitedwayswmn.org)—Success by Six—Wild About Parenting) for additional information, including following our blog! CEU credits and daycare training hours will be available. Please pre-register for these credits at: [teresa.kock@unitedwayswmn.org](mailto:teresa.kock@unitedwayswmn.org)

**Funding partners:** United Way of Southwest Minnesota, Success By Six, Marshall ECFE and Little Cubs Preschool, Share group-Canby. **Supporting partners:** Midwest Child Care Resource & Referral, University of Minnesota Extension

## TAKE YOUR CHILD BEYOND THE BOOK

### Don’t let the fun of reading to your child stop at “The End!” Take your child “Beyond the Book!”

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Have you ever read a story to your child, it’s their favorite and you’ve wondered how can I incorporate this into their everyday life? In other words, how can you bring the story to life.

We did just that this past January when we had a costumed Llama, as well as reading and other activities, as part of our “Llama Llama Read-a-Rama” events held in four local communities. The books, “Llama Llama Red Pajama” and “Llama Llama Mad at Mama” are both part of the Imagination Library program.

There are additional resources available that you can use every day at home to bring your child’s favorite books to life. We are going to begin sharing some ideas with you! This newsletter’s focus is the favorite Llama Llama series.

Some ideas you can use at home:

- Declare today red shirt day and have your child wear a red shirt like the baby llama in the book.

- Check out author Anna Dewdney’s website, [www.annadewdney.com](http://www.annadewdney.com). If your child is old enough, they can visit the website with you. There are many different activities you can print out for your child to do.
- Go to: <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/childrens-book/printable/62361.html>. This website has Llama Llama activity sheets and a door hanger for your child’s bedroom.
- To learn about real llamas, check out this website for llama facts: [http://www.education-world.com/a\\_lesson/animalsAtoZ/animalsAtoZ017.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/animalsAtoZ/animalsAtoZ017.shtml)
- Look up South America (where llamas are from) on the map
- Relate what you are doing to the Llama Llama Misses Mama story. This story can help children transition in a variety of situations. For example: It may help children transition slightly better from house to car to school. Quote the book if your child is having a difficult time, saying something like: “Mama Llama always comes back, and before you know it, like Llama Llama, you will have had so much fun with your friends that it doesn’t even feel like I was gone.”



These links are available on our website. Go to [www.unitedwayswmn.org](http://www.unitedwayswmn.org) and click on the “Links” tab.

# TAKE YOUR CHILD BEYOND THE BOOK

Continued.....



**Take your child “beyond the book” with some of the Imagination Library books you receive in the mail each month!**

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United Way of Greater Chattanooga Project Ready for School has worked with students from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga to put together activities that go along with many of the books your child may receive in the mail through the Imagination Library program.

With these activities you can extend the benefits of reading beyond the printed page! They are educational, fun and free! Following is an example of how to go “Beyond the Book” with the first Imagination Library book that each child receives.

## Activity for “The Little Engine That Could”

**Author:** Watty Piper

**Summary of Book:** This book is about a train that breaks down. It has to deliver toys to boys and girls on the other side of the mountain. A little blue engine happens by and decides to try and help the big red engine over the mountain by pulling it over. It doesn't believe it can pull it initially, but with determination it overcomes its obstacles as it slowly pulls the toys and animals to the other side.

**Before Reading:** Talk about the front and back of the book. Allow children the opportunity to tell what they see. Either build on what they know or introduce the concept of a train and a clown. Talk about trains—what they sound like, look like, where they might go, etc. Ask them to predict what they believe the book will be about.

**During Reading—Ask these questions:**

**Beginning:** What toy would you like to get? How do you think the children feel knowing toys are coming? Point to all the animals on the pages and have a few stuffed animals that are in the train. Let each child have a stuffed animal and chug along as you read the story.

As you discuss feelings, let the children try to show the different emotions with their faces (happy, excited, sad, etc.)

**Middle:** Talk about why the train may have stopped. Ask why the toys were so thrilled to see the various engines, especially the blue engine. Ask the children if they believe the blue engine will be able to pull the toys over the mountain.

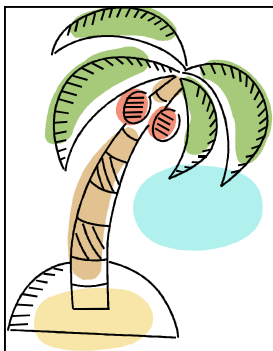
**End:** Let children predict what will happen page by page as the little blue engine tries to get over the mountain. Discuss how the toys, children, and the blue engine must feel after accomplishing such a big goal!

**After Reading:** Talk to the child about the little blue engine. Emphasize the blue engine's positive attitude. Walk around the room playing like a train saying “Choo-choo! I think I can, I think I can!”

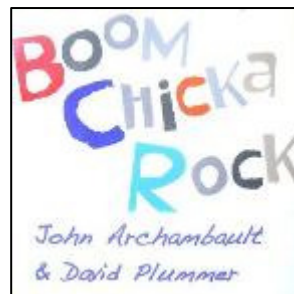
If you have the space, get up and let the children put their hands on the child's hips in front of them (with you as the engine). Be a choo-choo train, chugging and puffing along the way. Be a train all over the yard. Take turns letting children be the caboose. Direct the children to do different things (ex. “Let's chug to the left,” “Now let's chug around in a circle,” etc.)

Make a train from rectangles (the number of cars depends on the number of letters in your child's name) and write one letter of their name on each car. Help the child glue the rectangles on another sheet of paper in a row in order so their name is spelled correctly. Encourage children to add wheels, some stacks, etc.

For more Imagination Library: Beyond the Books—go to <http://www.liveunitedchattanooga.com/www/docs/1166/>



**During January, 2010, GO BEYOND THE BOOK to learn your letters and numbers while rocking out! United Way of Southwest Minnesota Success by 6 will host our second Read-A-Rama this January. Watch for more details about the dates and locations. This year's theme will be based on the books “Chicka Chicka Boom Boom!” and Imagination Library's “Boom Chicka Rock.”**





## United Way of Southwest Minnesota

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**This is a special  
newsletter for families  
who have children  
enrolled in Imagination  
Library.**



### CHOCOLATE CAKE - JUST ONE SLICE!

Did you know that you could have delicious, homemade, warm chocolate cake in just five minutes? You can!

#### Ingredients:

- 2 Tablespoons flour
- 3 Tablespoons sugar
- 2 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
- 1 large egg
- 2 Tablespoons milk
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 Tablespoons chocolate chips
- Small splash of vanilla extract

#### Preparation:

Add dry ingredients in a mug and mix well. Add the egg and mix thoroughly. Pour in the milk and oil and mix well. Add the chocolate chips and vanilla extract and mix again. Put the mug in the microwave and cook on high for 2 minutes. The cake may rise over the top of the mug, but don't be alarmed! Allow to cool and tip out onto a plate if desired.

### Imagination Library Sponsors in Other Areas

Through funding and coordination, United Way of Southwest Minnesota sponsors the Imagination Library program for all families that live in our service area, which includes the following school districts: Balaton, Canby, Lake Benton, Lakeview, Lincoln HI, Lynd, Marshall, Milroy, Minneota, Murray County Central, Russell-Tyler-Ruthon, Tracy, Westbrook-Walnut Grove, and Yellow Medicine East (including private and charter schools in these communities).

**Do you know a child (ages birth - 5 years) who lives outside of our service area but would love to receive an Imagination Library book each month at their home?**

The Imagination Library is sponsored in three countries by over 950 communities and reaches almost 500,000 children each month. If you would like to check to see if an area is covered by a "local champion," please follow these steps to find out if there's a sponsor for a specific zip codes.

Go to [www.imaginationlibrary.com](http://www.imaginationlibrary.com)

1. Click on "First Time Visitors"
2. On this page you will see, on the upper right hand side, beneath the train cars, a box to enter the zip code you are searching for, right under "find your affiliate"
3. Type the zip code you are searching for and see if there is a sponsor for that zip code area