

Over 1.9 MILLION new books to Collier kids since 2005

“Dear Books for Collier Kids, thank you so much for my books. I really love them. I can’t wait to read them with my family and friends.” ~ Isabel, student

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Importance of Books for Collier Kids:

- Literacy is one of the best predictors of a child’s future success
- A lack of basic literacy skills is linked with academic failure, delinquency, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, unemployment, low productivity and welfare dependency
- In some of our nation’s lowest income areas, there is 1 book for every 300 kids
- Children whose parents are unable to read often struggle with reading too, perpetuating a cycle of poverty
- Without access to books, low-income children return to fall classes with reading scores 30% lower than those with steady access to books (called *Summer Slide*)
- By the end of 5th grade, at-risk kids are nearly 3 grades behind in reading skills
- 63% of Collier County School District’s 18,000+ elementary students are economically needy; the District has designated 68.42% of the students as “economically disadvantaged” across all schools
- 23 of Collier County’s 34 elementary schools are Title I with at least 75% of students enrolled in free or reduced-cost lunch programs due to low family incomes
- 90+% of children in Collier County’s Title I elementary schools are economically disadvantaged and benefit from BCK’s free book program

Books for Collier Kids:

- All volunteer organization, no office, no staff; \$.91 of every dollar spent on BOOKS
- 2005: launched as First Book-Collier County to provide new books to children in need, addressing a crucial factor affecting literacy — access to books
- 2010: recognized by Collier Co. School Board for providing access to literacy
- 2015: changed name to **Books for Collier Kids**, reflecting a focus on disadvantaged children in pre-K, kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades in Collier Co.
- 2017: Palmetto and Poinciana Elementary schools added to the program
- 2018: Naples Park, Sabal Palm and Calusa Park added to the program
- 2018: ONE MILLION books distributed throughout Collier County since 2005
- 2019: New program providing 3+ titles annually to 3-year-olds at Grace Place, Guadalupe Center, Fun Time Early Childhood Academy via Collier County Public Schools’ pre-K registration sites
- 2021: Expanded to support pre-K through 2nd grade with three additional schools in 2021-2022 which are on the ‘cusp’ of Title I (75% economically needy) (Lake Park, Big Cypress and Corkscrew Elementary schools); serving 26 schools
- 2022-2023: Added Osceola, Collier Charter and Gulf Coast Charter elementary schools

Books for Collier Kids provide new books to children in need.
Access to books addresses one of the most important factors affecting literacy.

- 2023 & 2024: Platinum Seal of Transparency on Guidestar/Candid.org (formerly Charity Navigator)
- 2023-2024: Added Tommie Barfield, Pelican Marsh and Vineyard's elementary schools; total of 32 schools
- 140,000 new books distributed to 10,700+ Collier kids annually; 1.9 million books since 2005
- Early childhood experts select top-quality, age-appropriate books from The First Book Marketplace and the Book Bank in-bulk, at heavily discounted prices
- Supports the curriculum in more than 400 Collier County classrooms
- Collaborates with Habitat for Humanity and Christ Child Society of Naples to provide more than 100 "starter home libraries" to low-income families in the community every year
- Partners with organizations to provide books to children: Fun Time Early Childhood Academy, Collier County Public Schools, Early Literacy and Learning Model (ELLM), Fostering Success, Grace Place for Children & Families, Guadalupe Center for Immokalee, Boys & Girls Club of Collier, Christ Child Society of Naples, Youth Haven and many more

"What you and the other volunteers do for our students is amazing. Our students get to build their own home libraries thanks to you. We hope you know how much we appreciate it."
 ~ Darlene Spano, Director of Education Fun Time Early Childhood Academy

Books for Collier Kids' Success:

- Measurable improvements in Collier County School District children's reading scores since material distribution began in 2005
- Survey ratings of more than 98% for value and effectiveness
- Thriving partnerships with more than 20 local nonprofits serving disadvantaged children
- Praise and appreciation from Collier County School Board and Superintendent Dr. Patton
- Named "Outstanding Nonprofit" of 2012 by the Collier Community Foundation
- Praise from teachers, parents and students
- More than 10,700 children a month engaging their imaginations to learn, play and grow as they enjoy their monthly new book selection

"Thank you for the books. I read the book. I sound out the words that I do not know. You are the best. I love you. I love you 'cause you gave us the books."
 ~ Maria, pre-K student, Manatee Elementary School

Support for Books for Collier Kids:

An all-volunteer nonprofit organization, community support allows BCK to continue providing life-transforming educational adventures and experiences to our neediest children:

- \$50 buys 1 book for every child in a Head Start pre-K or Title I classroom
- \$100 buys 1 book for every child in 2 classrooms
- \$250 buys 1 book for every child in 5 classrooms
- \$500 supports an entire classroom (250+ new books) for a full year, providing each child with a book a month to take home, cherish and share

For more information on **Books for Collier Kids**, please visit www.BooksForCollierKids.org, or call Chair Sallie Williams at 239-394-4062.

Books for Collier Kids is dedicated to putting a steady stream of new books into the hands of children living in poverty in our community – books for them to read and own. Books in the home are vital to a child's ability to read and learn: www.BooksforCollierKids.org.

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