



*(Shopping News Photo by Donald Reese)*

The High Five Campaign, powered by United Way of Lancaster County, is collaborating with the Library System of Lancaster County and the Local Public Libraries of Lancaster County to launch a new preschool literacy program. The “1,000 Books Before Kindergarten” initiative will be funded by money raised earlier this year for the High Five Campaign for Every Child, with the generous support of many donors. High Five’s goal is to have every child in Lancaster County ready to succeed by being prepared for kindergarten.

“Study after study has shown that when children come to kindergarten ready to learn, they are launched on a path for future success,” said Carol Y. Phillips, PhD, interim president and chief executive officer of United Way of Lancaster County. “As one Harvard University study reported, ‘Hearing thousands of words through the act of reading 1,000 books is sure to provide a language rich environment that will pay off in school and in life.’” This partnership with Lancaster County libraries is an exciting next step in High Five’s work.

The “1,000 Books Before Kindergarten” program is a library initiative for parents, grandparents and caregivers, and their young children, newborn to five years. It equips them to share the joy of books and reading aloud to Lancaster County’s youngest children. In addition to the program, the Library System and the Local Public Libraries will also be collaborating with United Way to determine ways to align with other well-established early literacy efforts, including Dolly Par-ton’s Imagination Library, Reach Out and Read, Head Start, Pre-K Counts and work being done by Behavioral Health and Development Services and local school districts. “We are absolutely thrilled to be partnering with the United Way on the 1,000 Books project,” said Bill Hudson, Administrator for the Library System. “This is a great partnership since both the United Way and public libraries in Lancaster County are committed to early childhood education. The research is clear; the better prepared children are when they reach kindergarten, the greater their chances are for success in school and beyond.”

All 17 libraries across Lancaster County will participate in the “1,000 Books Before Kindergarten” program. It is hoped that at least 6,000 of Lancaster County’s pre-schoolers will participate in the pre-literacy program this beginning year through one of their local libraries.

Parents, grandparents and caregivers will receive a 1,000 Books folder when they enroll at the library and are encouraged to read to their child daily to start building their 1,000 book lists. Participants are encouraged to avail themselves of the libraries’ extensive children’s book collections which can include multi-language age-appropriate books, as well as, the offered programming such as story times, for parents and young children. Local libraries will reward small prizes at certain milestones to participants, and special gift books for those who reach 500 and 1,000 books read. Sign-up for “1,000 Books Before Kindergarten” will be happening soon!

For more information on “1,000 Books Before Kindergarten,” parents are encouraged to contact their local library. Information on early literacy efforts is also available by contacting Andrea Heberlein, United Way of Lancaster County Education Director at 717-824-8124.

Shown are children and youth librarians from Lancaster County who were on hand at the Lititz Library for the program launch. Front row: Amy Moyer (Lititz Public Library), child, Karen Payonk (Lititz Public Library) child, child, child, child, child, Shannon Richard (Lititz Public Library), child, Heather Smith (Eastern Lancaster County Library); standing second row: Renee Christiansen (Library System of Lancaster County), Mary Anne Stanley (Manheim Township Public Library), Carol Hinrichs (Adamstown Area Library), Kim MacNeal (Ephrata Public Library), Aimee Nelson (Elizabeth-town Public Library), Jennifer Miller (Elizabethtown Public Library), Nicole Hartman (Quarryville Library) and Lisa Weissend (Manheim Community Library).





