

Free books available for Amador County children through First 5

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Via news release

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September is National Literacy Month and First 5 Amador is pleased to announce "Dolly Parton's Imagination Library," a new program available to all children, from birth to age 5, who reside in Amador County.

Originally created by Parton in 1996, the program mails a new, age-appropriate book every month to registered children from birth until their fifth birthday - at no cost to the family, regardless of income.

"First 5 Amador is very excited about this addition to our community," said Cheri Garamendi, school readiness coordinator for the organization. She also adds that "reading helps your child develop four basic thinking skills, including the ability to pay attention, a good memory, the ability to solve problems and good language skills."

Each year, one third of America's children arrive at their first day of school developmentally behind their peers and without the skills necessary to succeed at their grade level, according to Jumpstart, a nationwide leader in promoting early literacy. When children begin behind their peers, catching up, especially without additional assistance, is difficult and unlikely.

The first book that each child receives is a customized version of the children's classic, "The Little Engine That Could. " On a monthly basis, children will then receive a developmentally appropriate book to help build their early literacy library. When signed up at birth, a child will receive their 60th free book the month that they turn 5.

Registration brochures are available at the Jackson, Plymouth and Lone Amador County Library branches, Amador County Public Health Department, any of the four weekly playgroups offered by The Resource Connection and First 5 Amador, the Upcountry Community Center, Camanche Lake Community Center, the Lone Family Learning Center, the First 5 Amador office in Jackson or through Amador County Public Health and First 5 Amador's Baby Welcome Wagon Program. Alternatively, parents can register online at www.imaginationlibrary.com.

First 5 Amador is providing seed money for the project, but the program's continued success and sustainability is contingent upon support from community members throughout Amador County. Donations can be sent to The Resource Connection, Attn: Imagination Library, P.O. Box 216, Sutter Creek, CA 95685 or can be made online at www.theresourceconnection.net. First 5 Amador supports and designs programs for children ages 0 to 5. For more information, visit www.first5amador.com or call 257-1092.