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WRITTEN SUBMISSION FOR THE PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATIONS  
IN ADVANCE OF FEDERAL BUDGET 2023

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BY: THE DOLLYWOOD FOUNDATION OF CANADA



# Recommendation

Provide FREE books to Canadian children under five years old.

We propose that the government fund and support book ownership for infants and all children under five years old to help offset the potential long-term consequences caused by decreased access to early childhood education support. Book ownership has been directly linked to early childhood literacy development and school readiness. Presently 25% of Canadian households do not own a single book.



Current large scale program that is

**AFFORDABLE**

less than \$50 per child per year for a book mailed once a month



Inspiring a love of reading

**PROVEN TO INCREASE LITERACY IN THE HOME**

while ensuring equitable access



Universal program

**INCLUSIVE**

within a set designated area



Turnkey and

**SCALABLE**

with shared funding model



Simple and easy

**ACCESSIBLE**

to expand coast to coast to coast



Children arrive at school with a

**SHARED EXPERIENCE**

receiving the same book based on birth year

# Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Canada-Wide Program



The Dollywood Foundation is a nonprofit charitable organization founded by Dolly Parton in 2006. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is the main program and focus. The Dollywood Foundation of Canada was established in 2016, partnering with 350 communities and currently mailing 43,000 books monthly.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a designed, turnkey program that mails high-quality, age-appropriate books to children from birth until age five, no matter their family's income.

The program is dedicated to improving the lives of children by inspiring a love of reading with books, free of charge, to families through local community partnerships. The Imagination Library uses unique strategies to inspire family reading, is community-based to drive ownership, and, most importantly, is designed to improve the lives of children at scale.

The Imagination Library's home gifting model is subtle yet ingenious - free to the family. It gets children excited about owning books and inspires shared family reading by getting books directly to children at home with their names on the label.

In addition to being a universal program, ensuring equitable access to all children in a community, a focus on diversity and commonly shared values with title-specific reading tips in many books promote inclusion and ownership.

We recommend providing the Imagination Library to all children under 5 in Canada through a shared-cost model between the Dollywood Foundation of Canada, local affiliates, and public funds.

# Shared Funding Model



The Dollywood Foundation of Canada covers overhead/administrative costs associated with making the program available in local communities.

Local community partners are responsible for reduced book and mailing expenses for children registered in their coverage area.

Government providing a 50%-dollar match developed in coordination with provincial leaders, public funds, federal grants, and private funds.

## **Generates a robust public / private partnership!**

A "Shared Funding Model" provides stability and sustainability for local and provincewide programs. Local and provincial programs experience extensive, nonpartisan support and participation from the private and public sectors.

This partnership creates a long-term, foundational component of community and provincial early literacy strategies.

