The Children’s Book Bank
2021-22 Year-end Report

When we launched our A Story Like Mine Initiative in 2015, only 1% of the books donated to us were inclusive. Over time, that has increased and last school year, 7% of the books donated to us were inclusive. We look forward to receiving even more inclusive books as the initiative continues!

A Year for the Books

In the 2021-22 school year the Children’s Book Bank celebrated a number of exciting milestones. From distributing our millionth book in the fall to our merger with SMART Reading this summer, it’s truly been a momentous chapter.

As children moved back into classrooms last fall, the Book Bank was eagerly by their side with a return to pre-pandemic services. Thanks to the ability to once again engage volunteers in our warehouse to restore gently-used books with thoughtfulness and care, we filled 11,398 children’s lives with 91,882 beautiful books!

Our service included home libraries for our youngest children (ages birth to five) through the Building Home Libraries program, which reached 4,470 children with 56,714 books. And for the first time in two years, we were able to host free school-wide book fairs in person at local Title One elementary schools, providing 25,563 books to 6,928 students!

“The books in Spanish contain stories of our customs and experiences of our roots. It is beautiful to be able to share our identity as parents.”

Partner at Latino Network’s Juntos Aprendemos Program

More books, together!
SMART and the Children’s Book Bank gave away a combined 216,430 books last year!

—Teacher at James John Elementary
Spotlight: Our Millionth Book

During the 2021-22 school year the Children’s Book Bank celebrated an incredible milestone, distributing our millionth book to a Portland child! To mark the occasion, a pre-K student who attends Melissa Kolb’s class at Kelley Head Start came by the Book Bank warehouse with her family to collect her very special book.

Ms. Kolb also received a free library of inclusive children’s books for her classroom, in addition to each child’s personal collection for home.

We were excited to welcome volunteers back to the warehouse for book cleaning sessions this year!

98% were satisfied with their volunteer experience, 90% were very satisfied

98% believed their volunteer work had a positive impact on the community

“When we model how to read, enjoy, and care for books, and the purposes they have, kids [...] are able to develop a sense of agency with relation to literacy: I am a reader, I can use books for entertainment, or to learn new things!”
—Melissa Kolb, Teacher at Kelly Head Start

Books are a commodity I never had much growing up, and the books I did have were much loved. I feel great about the opportunity to play a part in children having access to books.

- Book Bank Volunteer

Pictured: Volunteers cleaning books at the Book Bank warehouse.

Pictured: Students at Kelly Head Start enjoying their new classroom library of inclusive children’s books.