



# talkreadplay

## Spring 2024 Progress Report

Every Child Thrives is a collaborative network of 60+ active and engaged community partners, whose vision is to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive in health, learning and life. Every Child Thrives aligns the work and resources of many organizations (including Foundation strategic investments) to support three priority areas: Strong Families, Kindergarten Readiness and School Success.

### PRIORITY:

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Strong Families

### STRATEGY:

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Weave a web of support for young children and their families

### WHY INVEST?

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Empowering caregivers\* as their child's first and most important teacher helps create strong, positive, and nurturing relationships. 90% of brain development happens in the first five years of life. Caring, responsive interactions between children and the adults in their lives are the building blocks for early brain development.

TalkReadPlay (TRP) is a community movement designed to strengthen families by promoting Early Relational Health. From play spaces that encourage

interaction to outstanding storytime connections being built at our public libraries, there are countless Every Child Thrives partners bringing TalkReadPlay to life and weaving support for caregivers as a child's first teacher into the fabric of our communities.

\*The Foundation uses the shorthand term caregivers to refer to any individual who may be involved in raising a child.

Learn more about TalkReadPlay at our website: [watertownhealthfoundation.com](http://watertownhealthfoundation.com).



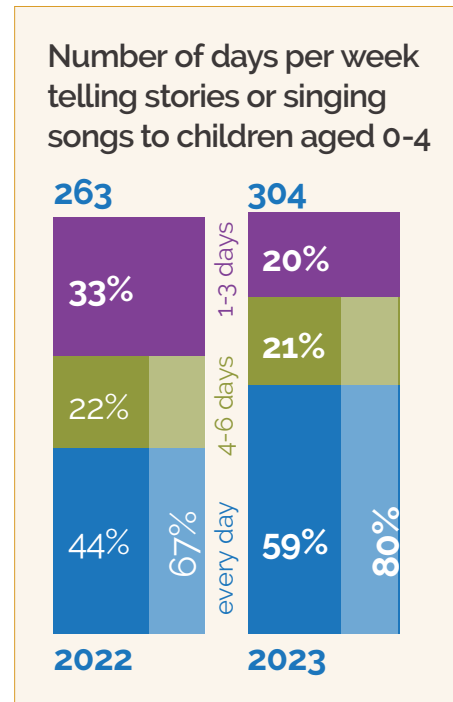
## Measured effectiveness of TalkReadPlay

A survey of 400+ Dodge and Jefferson County residents found TalkReadPlay efforts are paying off for families.

80% of caregivers to a child aged 0-4 reported telling stories or singing songs to the child at least four to six times per week in 2023, an increase from 67% in 2022.

Digging deeper, the survey compared caregivers who participated in TalkReadPlay programming and those who did not.

- » Those who participated were slightly more likely to read or sing to their child at least four to six times per week (75% compared to 70%).
- » Among those who participated, the number reading or singing often increased from 58% in 2022 to 75% in 2023.



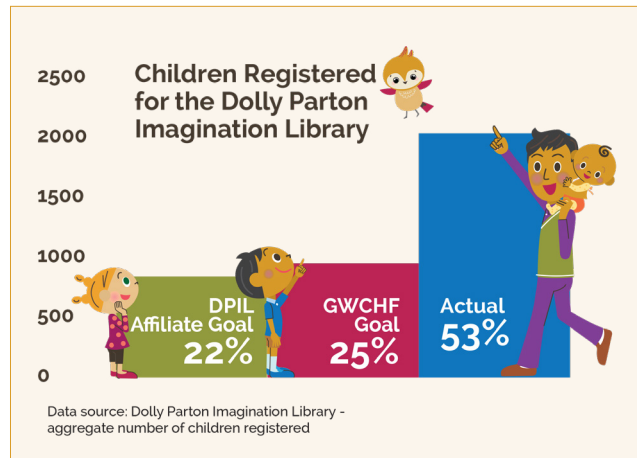
## Grew the number of children registered to receive free books

We estimate that over half of the children in Dodge and Jefferson Counties are registered with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

The Imagination Library provides a specially-selected, high-quality book each month to participating children from Birth to Age 5. Books are selected based on the child's age, personalized with each child's name, and mailed directly to their home each month. Two of the high-quality books featured each year are written in Spanish.

The Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation provides funding support for the program. Libraries, medical providers and

other Every Child Thrives partners provide outreach to families, encouraging them to register their children to receive books.



## Support libraries as leaders in promoting Early Relational Health

Public libraries in Dodge and Jefferson Counties are vital TalkReadPlay partners. They encourage early learning, and—

through evidence-based programming and practices—help families learn and grow in their role as their child's first teacher.