



SEPTEMBER 2019



LAUNCH IS A SUCCESS!

Thank you for being a part of Shire Kids! In early 2019, I started this journey to bring Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to Bennington County. The Imagination Library is a free book-gifting program that mails high-quality, age-appropriate books to children from birth to five years old.

After a few months of research (and a lot of paperwork) our 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and Local Champion, Shire Kids, was formed. Though the program is free for the families and children enrolled, the cost to run the program is approximately \$25, per child, per year. Early support from Stewart's Shops, Vermont Country Store and Lawrence Property Management, along with a major grant from the Stratton Foundation, allowed us to launch the program earlier than anticipated. We're also grateful for generous support from SVMC and the Ben & Jerry's Foundation. On July 10th, we opened enrollment with a goal of 400 children by the end of 2019. Less than seven weeks later, we had 400 children enrolled, and are quickly expanding.

Our Enrollment Partners are key to the success of this program. Enrollment Partners include local service providers that regularly interact with families with small children. Preschools, pediatricians, libraries, Children's Integrated Services (through SVHC), WIC of Bennington County, and early intervention specialists are actively discussing this program with families, and enrolling new children every day. Special thanks to Jennie Moon, Dr. Lynn Mann, and Cathy Lawrence for your early support. If you know a potential Enrollment Partner, please share my information!

Thank you!

Enrollment Partners

Plans for the upcoming quarter



WHAT'S NEXT?

MORE FUNDRAISING

Since we have already exceeded the expected number of enrolled children, we are expanding fundraising efforts to increase capacity and ensure longevity of the program. Most Imagination Library programs throughout the country are sponsored by United Way, Rotary Clubs or are Federally funded. Absent of a major philanthropic organization such as these, Shire Kids has secured all funding through local business donations and grants. The fall deadlines for grant proposals are quickly approaching, and we will also be ramping up a drive for local business support. **You are crucial in getting the word out that we are actively fundraising to support this meaningful program! Please share with your networks and encourage them to take my phone calls. Donations can be made on our website, shirekidsvt.org. Thank you!**

BOOK DONATION LOCATIONS

We will be setting up donation locations in the following towns: Dorset, Manchester, Arlington, Bennington, and Pownal. These drop spots will be a place to donate gently used books that your children are no longer reading. The books collected will be re-distributed through pediatricians, book swaps and also used in year-end gift programs.

BOOK SWAP

Shire Kids is partnering with the Dorset Church to host a Community Book Swap on November 16th – save the date! The swap will include children's books from baby board books through YA (young adult). A separate email with more information on the Book Swap is coming in October.

Contact Us

shirekidsvt.org

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We will be seeking volunteers in each town to assist with book donation locations.

"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents."
– Emilie Buchwald

