



# Literacy at the Laundromat

During our **Gen2Gen Reads** mini campaign last fall, older adults across the country were champion literacy advocates, leading projects called “Literacy at the Laundromat”. This *too small to fail* idea is designed to encourage kids to read while waiting at a local laundromat.

The Literacy at the Laundromat projects were completed before December 20<sup>th</sup>. We had a debrief call with the Gen2Gen champions and celebration to wrap-up their wonderfully successful efforts.

## Literacy at the Laundromat Steps to Success:

**step 1:** Identify a local laundromat

**step 2:** Get permission from laundromat owner or manager to host and read-aloud event or create a mini library at the laundromat

**step 3:** Gather children's books and other supplies

**step 4:** Develop and post flyers of the event or library debut

**step 5:** Have your event! Have fun encouraging kids to read! Take photos. Be sure to obtain signed release forms for each photographed person if you plan to use them in publications. Gen2Gen would LOVE to hear about your event and see your photos.

Send to [knonyameko@encore.org](mailto:knonyameko@encore.org)

**step 6:** Evaluate your event. Use what you learn to do it better next time

**step 7:** Share what you did so others can learn from it and replicate it

### **1. Host a Read-Aloud Event.**

Use flyers to inform customers ahead of time so they can bring their children. Then, choose a favorite book to share! It is ideal to schedule a time to read with the children when families are there. You can add fun activities like a puppet show or bring hands-on materials, like bubbles or play dough, to spark conversation and creativity.

### **2. Build a Library at the Laundromat**

Customers can borrow books during their visit. You may wish to build a book rack, collect book donations in your community, or donate books yourself!

Whatever you decide to do to promote literacy at the laundromat, be creative and have fun encouraging kids to read. The following pages have examples of Gen2Gen Reads Literacy at the Laundromat projects.

Find other cool [do-it-yourself Gen2Gen projects here](#)

Check out our [Learning Hub tools](#) for tips on how to embed Gen2Gen best practices in your activities.

[Toosmall.org](#) (TSTF is a network partner of Encore.org)



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## EXAMPLE PROJECTS

### Sharon Hooks - Toledo, Ohio

Retired; Neighborhood Association Leader

Read-A-Loud Event

**Key Take-Aways** - "OMG!, the kids LOVED it". They were excited to have the books and the stuffed animals I gave away. This was a great idea for our community. I plan to do it again. Thanks Gen2Gen and TSFT".

**Key Learning** - "Saturday was the perfect day for this. There were lots of families washing clothes. The laundromat manager really appreciated the event. I had no problems. It made me feel good to do it in our community."



### Sherae Speight - Dorchester, MA Neighborhood Advocate; Community Volunteer

#### Read-A-Loud Holiday Event *(letter from Sherae)*

On Sunday December 17th, Me and my daughter Rilee went to the Rossmore Laundromat. We started at 9am. It took about an hour for things to pick up but once they did, it didn't stop. **It was an amazing experience.** People were so excited to see the setup and they were very supportive of the idea of "reading in the laundromat." I'm grateful for the experience, **other parents were looking at me as an educator oppose to "babysitting" their child while they washed clothes.** Some stopped and read along! **This was a fun venture I think it should be done again.** The supplies were easy to manage. The snacks were affordable and I left with nothing. I gave all the books, crayons, pencils, bookmarks and small toothpaste away.

Please thank Gen2Gen and TSTF for the opportunity. Rilee and I would be more than happy to help again. Children are the Future!



We brought reading to the laundromat



# Literacy at the Laundromat

**Leslie Strafford** - Boston, M A  
Community Leader; Health and  
Wellness Advocate



Read-A-Loud  
and Library



**Key Take-Aways** - "The laundromat owner was immediately enthusiastic about the idea. He was so excited that he posted a FB live post during the event. The laundromat was packed that day. Parents and kids were super excited to read the books. They also enjoyed the snacks and prizes I gave to them. It was a huge success. I will definitely do it again!"

**Key Learning** - "The kids liked the healthy snacks and juice boxes. Explain with excitement what you want to do and the laundromat owner will get excited as well!"

## Organized Neighborhood Improvement Orlando, FL - Group of Neighborhood Leaders



*(Letter from ONIC)*

On December 19, 2017, six youth gathered for hot cocoa, popcorn, and story time at the Forest Edge Apartments' laundromat. **Though small in size, the laundromat provided an intimate and different setting other than the learning center for an activity to occur.**

Resident Community Leader Pamela Brathwaite, spearheaded the activity by joining the youth on a **bean bag to read from a variety of holiday and inspirational stories.** During the activity, **Pamela encouraged each of the youth to participate and practice reading to one another.** In the spirit of the season, the youth created holiday wreaths and received gifts.

