

Laundromat Literacy

Want to organize an event at your local laundromat to encourage kids to read?

The idea -- created in 2017 by [Too Small To Fail](#), an initiative of the Clinton Foundation, in partnership with Gen2Gen -- has been gathering steam. Many adults age 50+ across the country have helped to host laundromat literacy events -- and you can, too!



“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.”

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. ”

-- Sharon Hooks, Toledo, Ohio

Follow these simple steps to get started.

1. Identify a local laundromat using [findalaundry.org](#).
2. Work with the manager or owner to get buy-in and set a date. Schedule a time when parents typically bring their children to the laundromat. Expressing enthusiasm helps get managers excited!
3. Decide on a program. You could host a read-aloud event (choose a favorite book to read) or build a library of children's books at the laundromat and encourage adults and children to read to one another. Or both! Building a library at the laundromat allows customers to borrow books to read during their visit. To stock it, collect book donations in your community and/or donate books yourself. You may want to build a book rack or lay books out on a table, so they're nicely displayed and easy to select.
4. Consider whether you want to bring snacks and drinks add fun activities like a puppet show or bring hands-on materials, like bubbles or play dough, to spark conversation and creativity.
5. Gather children's books and other supplies.
6. Develop and post fliers so customers can plan to bring their children. Watch [this quick tutorial](#) on how to create a flyer using Canva, or draw on a paper and print copies!
7. Bring photo release forms for the kids to sign, so you can take pictures that can be shared afterwards. Look online to find a template you can customize to meet your own needs.
8. Have your event and enjoy encouraging kids to read!
9. Share what you did -- with words and photos -- so others can learn from your experience and replicate it.

Watch [this video of Leslie Strafford](#) and hear her talk about her experience organizing an event in Boston and why she wants to do it again.

“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. I gave all the books, crayons, pencils, bookmarks and small toothpaste away.”

-- Sharae Speight, Dorchester, MA

We'd love to hear about your event, see your photos, and answer any questions you might have! Please email Karimah Nonyameko at knonyameko@encore.org.

