



# Book and Music Gifting: Seeding the Ground.

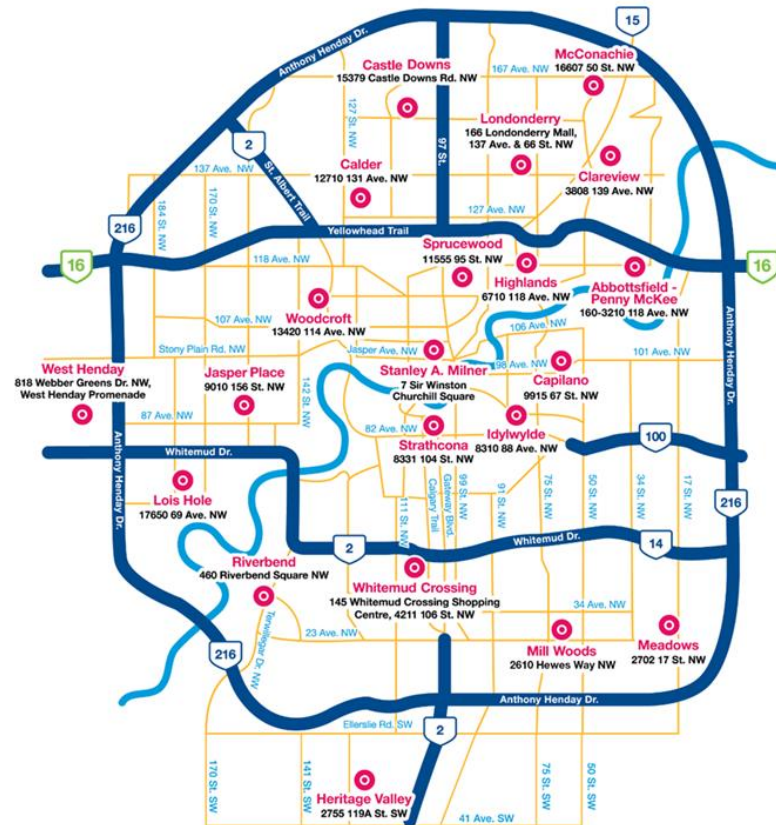
# Some Context

**Edmonton Public Library (EPL)** serves a population of **1.2 million**

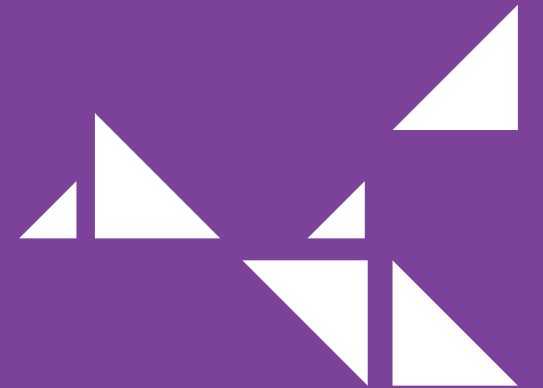
across **21** locations distributed throughout

the **699.8 square kilometres**

of the city of **Edmonton**



# EPL's Bookgifting Programs



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# Welcome Baby

**Welcome Baby** gives books to families in collaboration with EPL staff, volunteers and healthcare professionals

## What is it?



**Nurses distribute** book, music CD, early literacy tips, and tote bag at a child's first immunization visit or during a hospital neonatal intensive care admission



**EPL staff** gift families a second free book, rhyme booklet, and bag when their child 36 months or under gets a library card

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# Ready. Set. READ!

**Ready. Set. READ! (RSR)** gives books in partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to **5000** registered Edmonton children

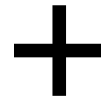
## What is it?



Up to 12 books per year, **60 books in total**



Special RSR literacy programs



Special RSR library card

Registered children are **mailed** one new book a month until they move out of Edmonton or reach age five

**EPL staff** invite families to exclusive RSR literacy programs, and families can sign their child up for a Ready. Set. READ! library card.

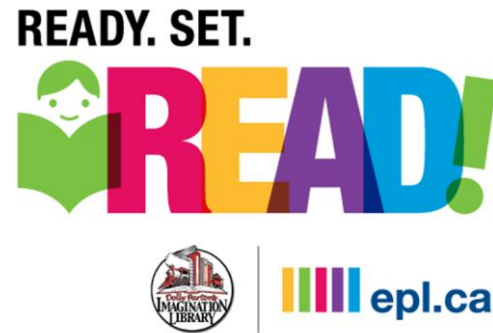
# United Way Kid Kits®

In collaboration with the United Way Alberta Capital Region, EPL distributes The Kid Kits® to families that participate in Ready. Set. READ! programming

## What is it?

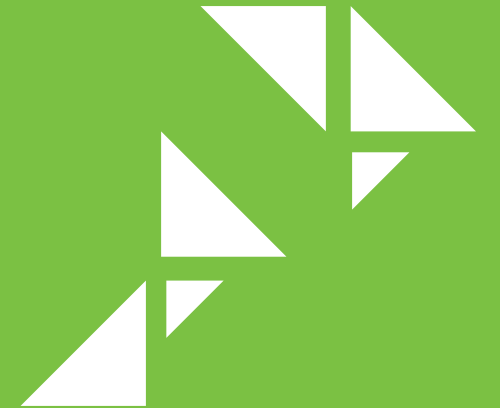


Five different kits for children from birth to 5 years each including a toy, book, and activity cards with early literacy strategies for each age



EPL only distributes these kits to RSR families according to their child's age at special programs where kit contents and intended use is explained

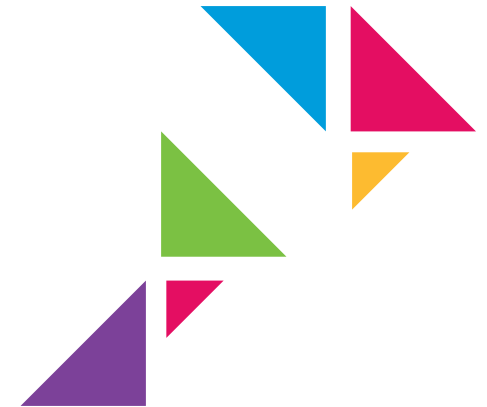
# Outcomes



# Welcome Baby Results

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Welcome Baby Packages Delivered to Public Health Centres/ NICUs</b>	10,220	7,140	9,780	9,320	10,440	11,420
<b>Births in Edmonton</b>	13,925	12,251	11,340	11,008	10,873	N/A
<b>WB Coverage Based on Births</b>	73.4%	58.3%	86.2%	84.7%	96.0%	N/A

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Welcome Baby Memberships Created</b>	3,748	1,351	1,903	3,741	4,363	3,632



# Welcome Baby Surveys

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I was happy to receive the Welcome Baby package.	41 74.55%	12 21.82%	1 1.82%	0 0%	1 1.82%
The Welcome Baby package made me more aware of services and resources offered by the Edmonton Public Library.	37 67.27%	12 21.82%	5 9.09%	0 0%	1 1.82%
The Welcome Baby package provided useful information and tools for supporting early literacy interactions (e.g. reading, singing, playing) at home with my baby.	38 69.09%	15 27.27%	1 1.82%	0 0%	1 1.82%



*“Parents are **always very excited to receive a book** for their baby, and it gives me a great introduction to discuss Community resources, **language development,** and multilingual families.”*

– A Nurse

*“**Thank you** for the welcoming package and **bringing awareness** to parents of newborns and **encouraging literacy** in our homes.”*

- A Parent

*“**Thanks** a lot for those present, it was very cute. **We'll come to the library,** as I like to read for my baby and was looking any classes for future. **I didn't know that I may find everything in one place.**”*

- A Parent

*“This is **such a highlight** of our first immunization appointments and really **helps us set a positive tone** for the interaction overall. **I am so happy to have the Welcome Baby kit as a part of our visits.** Parents love them! “*

– A Nurse

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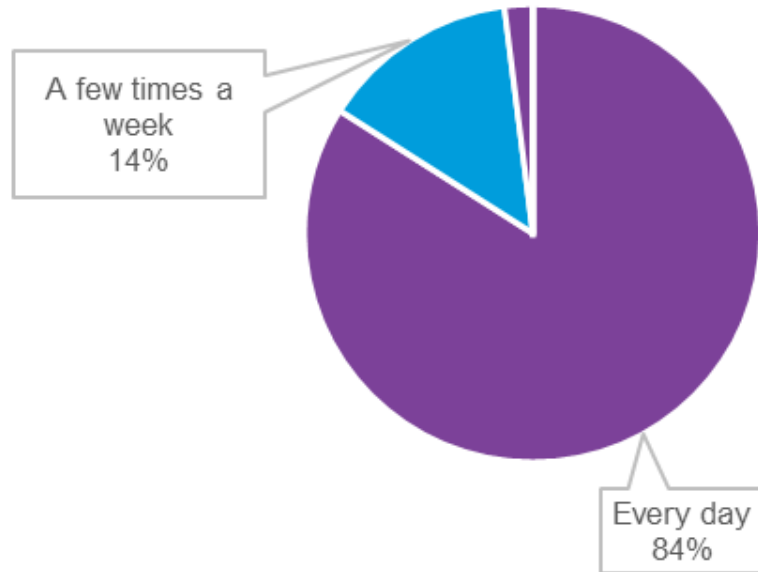
# Ready. Set. READ! Results

- In total, **6,456** children have been or are still part of the RSR program. As of December 31, 2024, **1,317** children have graduated from the program (i.e. turned five years old).
- A total of **98,081** books have been mailed to children enrolled in the program from its start in May 2022 until December 2024.
- Participant feedback indicates that the program has **contributed positively to reading habits and a love for reading**. The program has also encouraged many families to visit and use the library.

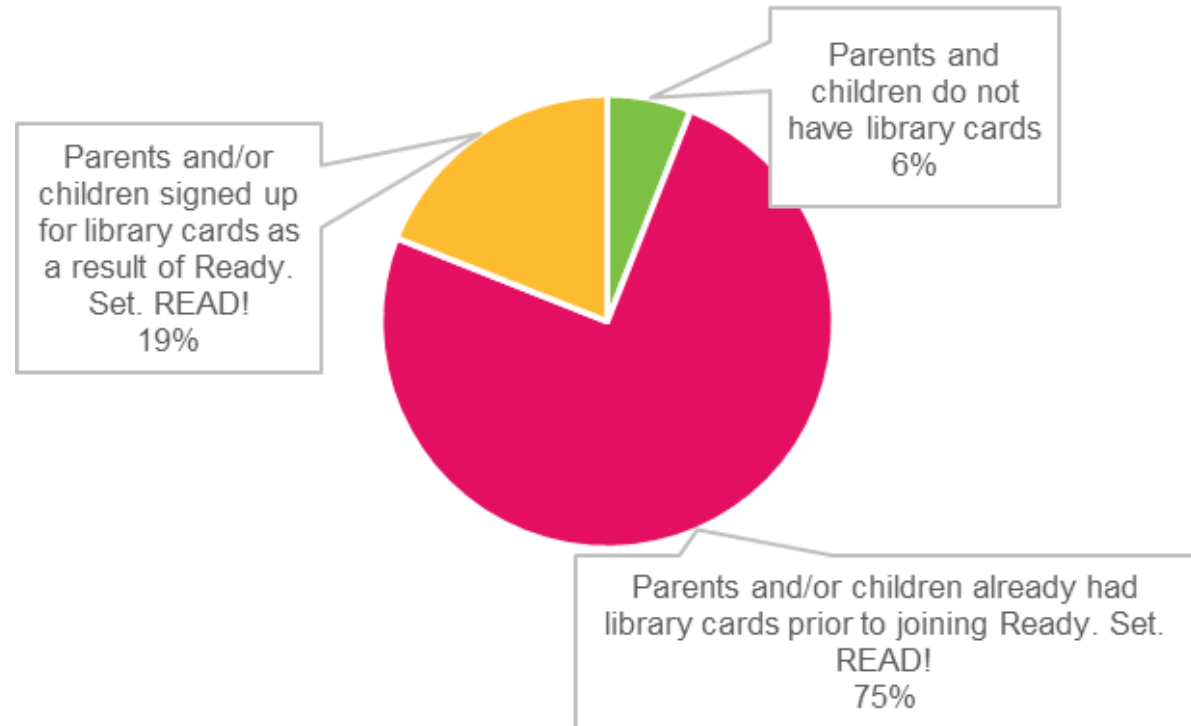


# Ready. Set. READ! 2024 Survey

On average, how often do you read together with your child at home?

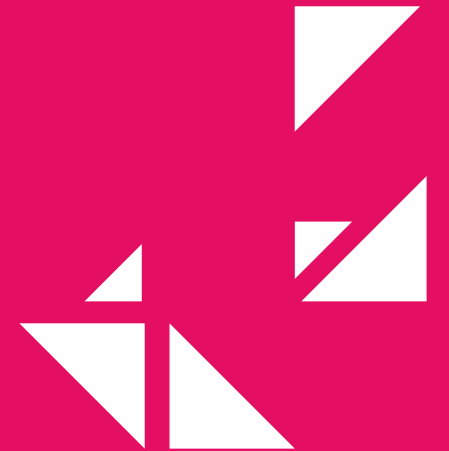


Please select the option that most applies to your family:



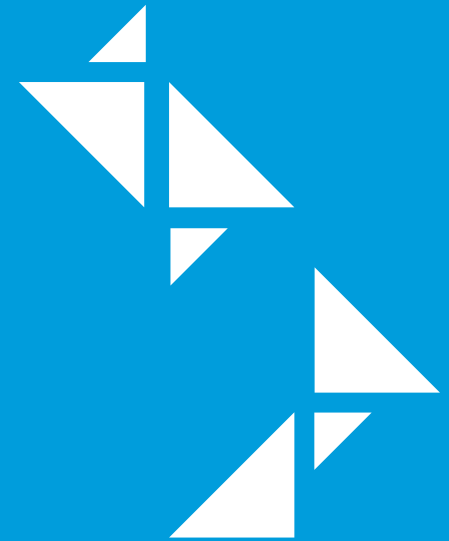
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- “Not only my kids **learning English and new words** from these books, and me too!!!))) Thanks for that opportunity!”
  - “My daughter loves getting her books! It definitely **fueled her interest in reading**. She will get books off her shelf one right after another and bring them to us to read to her.”
  - “It's absolutely wonderful, I'm so happy I had a chance to find this program because without it my son would not have a chance to have **books of his own**.”
  - “One of the books we received (What Does the Crocodile Say) has helped **IMMENSELY** with my daughter's anxiety about daycare drop off and we never would have thought to buy something like that for her of her own accord. It's definitely shown us that connecting a book with her own life events can **help her process her emotions** and explain things to her in a way she can understand.”

# Gifting Music





# Advocating for a Provincial Bookgifting Program



# Provincial Proposal

- Proposed a program based on EPL's Welcome Baby but scaled to reach all babies born annually in the province.
- A province-wide program would eliminate disparities between communities – those that have the resources to provide extra support for early literacy and those that don't.
- Economies of scale would mean high quality books could be provided through the program, making it a cost-effective way of reducing barriers.





# Thank you.

Elaine Jones | [Elaine.Jones@epl.ca](mailto:Elaine.Jones@epl.ca)