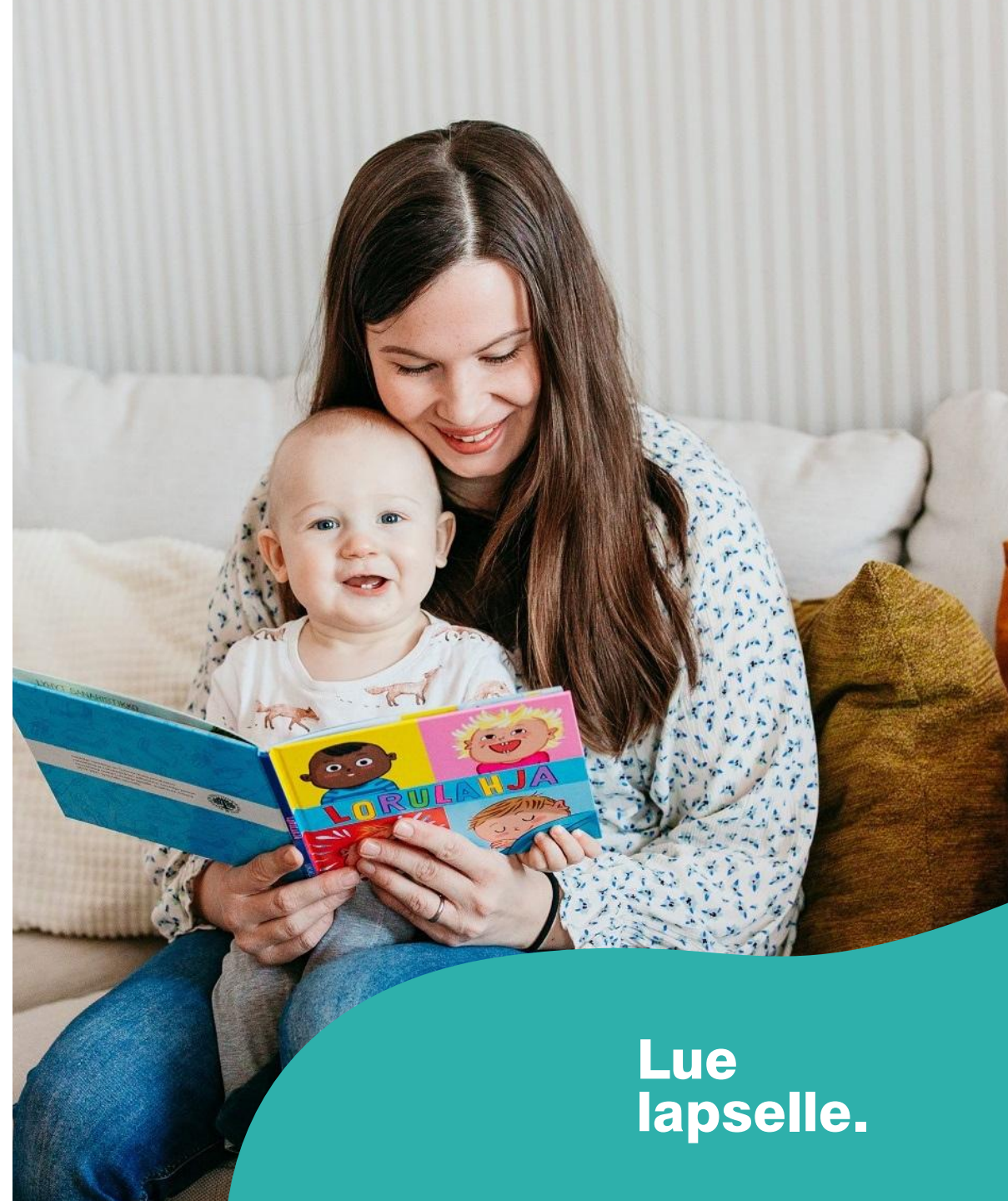


Finland's book bag programme: Long-term impact and the new multilingual story book

Global Network 19.5.2026
Project expert Vilma Tammelin
(MA)

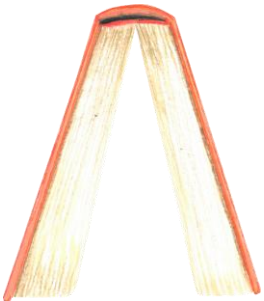
The Finnish Reading Center



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Today's topics:

- The Finnish Reading Center
- The Book Bag program's impact study results from 2025
- Reaching the multilingual families: The new book in multiple languages



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LUKUKESKUS
LÄSCENTRUM

The Finnish Reading Center

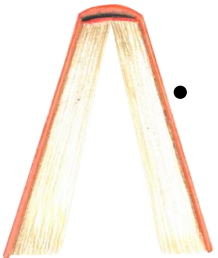
- A non-profit organization in Finland promoting reading and literacy in all ages.
- Main objectives:
 - Coordinating author visits
 - Providing information about reading
 - Leading projects and campaigns
 - Publishing two literature magazines
- Funded by Ministry of Education and Culture, and foundations.
- A member of EURead and Global Network for Early Years Bookgifting.



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Read Aloud –program: Promoting reading aloud over 10 years

- Material for professionals working with families (education, libraries, health care etc.)
- Articles about reading and literacy
- Wider reports: Multilingual literacy:
[Multilingual Literacy Report - The Finnish Reading Center](#)
- The book bag program Lukulahja lapselle.
- The website: <https://luelapselle.fi/>



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Finland's first nationwide book gift program: Lukulahja lapselle

- The aim is to ensure equal opportunities for early reading in all families in Finland.
- 300 000 babies have received a book bag since 2019
 - = 83 % of the babies born 2019-2025.
 - **Distributed in Finnish and Swedish + occasionally in minority languages**
- In collaboration with maternal and child health care clinics (MCHC).
- Funded by the Finnish parliament since 2022.

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The book bag includes:

- A rhyming book
- A bedtime story book
- A reading chart
- An invitation to the library
- (Before also: rhyme cards)



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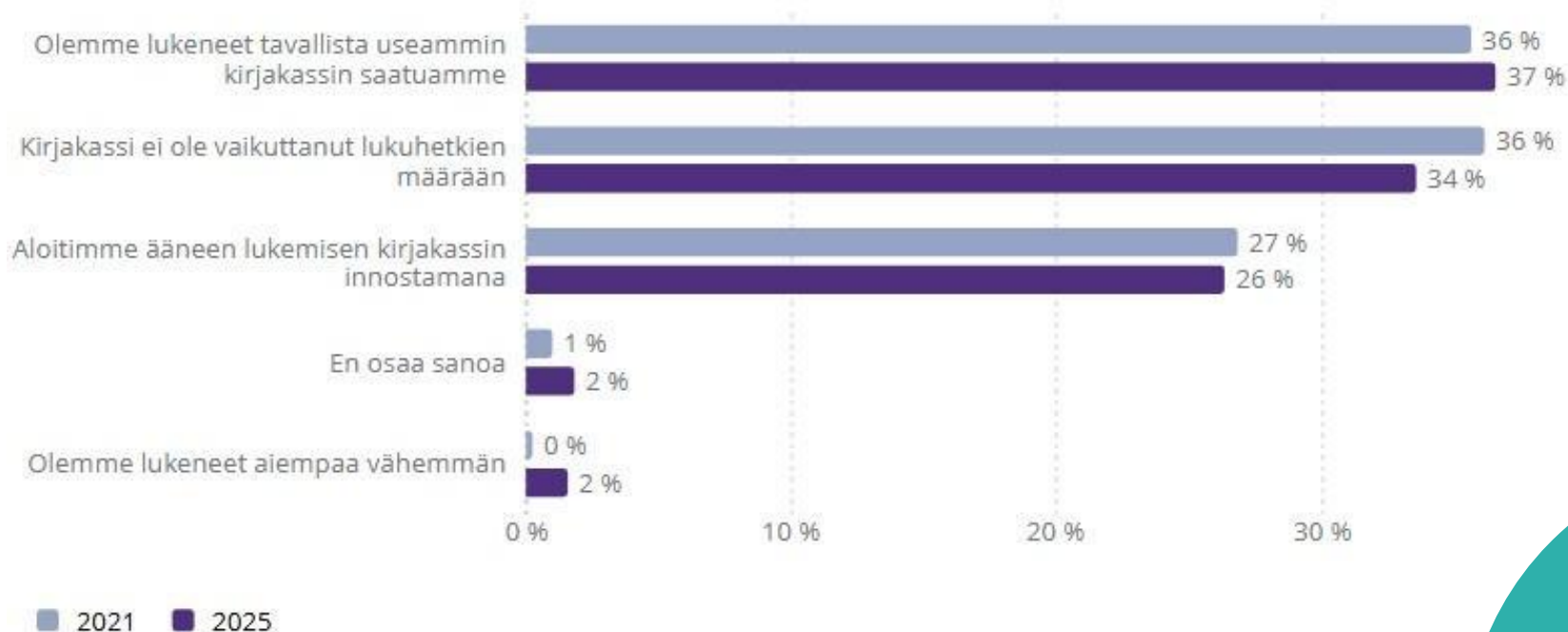
New information on the long-term effects of the book bag program

- Surveys targeting parents and nurses were conducted in 2025 and carried out by research company Innolink and The Finnish Reading Center.
 - Previous surveys in 2021 and 2018.
- Respondents in 2025:
 - **1 008 parents** of children aged 0-5
 - **215 nurses** working in MCHC clinics.
- All results of the impact study found in:
<https://luelapselle.fi/the-book-bag-impact-study-2025/>

RESULTS OF THE IMPACT STUDY:

63 % of parents said that the book bag has had a positive impact on their family's reading habits

Miten Lukulahja lapselle -kirjakassi on vaikuttanut perheesi lukuaktiivisuuteen? 1 604 >



What kind of impact has the book gift had on your family's reading habits? (2025)

37 % We've been reading more often after receiving a book bag

34 % The book bag has not affected the amount of time we spend reading

26 % We began reading aloud thanks to the book bag

2 % I don't know

2 % We've been reading less than usual

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RESULTS OF THE IMPACT STUDY:

Early book gifting shapes families' reading habits for years

- *What impact has the book bag your 3-5-year-old child received as a baby had on their current reading habits?*
- **64% of parents of 3-4-year-olds** report their child's growing interest in books and reading stems from the time they spent reading together during their baby's first year of life.
 - "We read aloud to our baby, and they continue to be interested in books now"
- **54% of parents with five-year-olds** share this view.

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RESULTS OF THE IMPACT STUDY:

Families who received a book bag spend more time reading to their children

- Of those who received a book bag, **91% of respondents reported reading to their children several times a week**, while 83% of the other respondents said they did.
- Of those who received a book bag, only 8% read just once a week to their children, and among other respondents it's 16%.
- Those who received book bags also read a longer time to their child in a single sitting.

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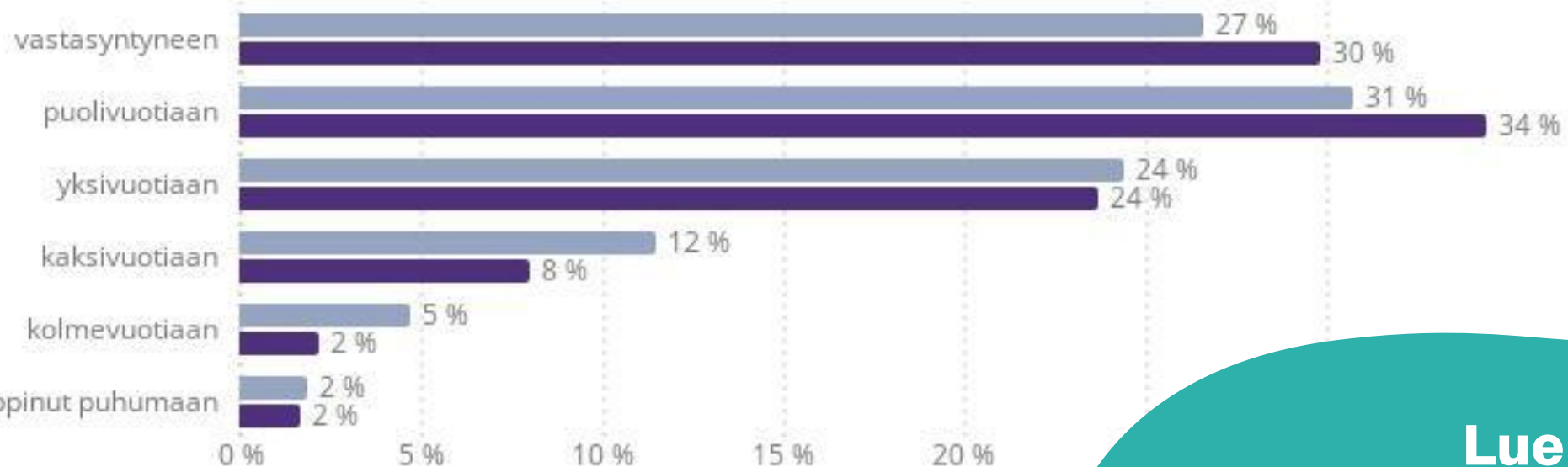
RESULTS OF THE IMPACT STUDY:

The program has strengthened both parents' and nurses' awareness of the importance of early reading

At what age do you think you should start reading to your child? (2025)

- 30 % At birth
- 34 % When they are six months old
- 24 % When they are a year old
- 8 % When they are two years old
- 2 % When they are three years old
- 2 % Only once they have learned to talk

Minkä ikäisen lapsen kanssa kannattaa mielestäsi aloittaa lukeminen? 2 005



■ 2021 ■ 2025

Lue lapselle.



RESULTS OF THE IMPACT STUDY:

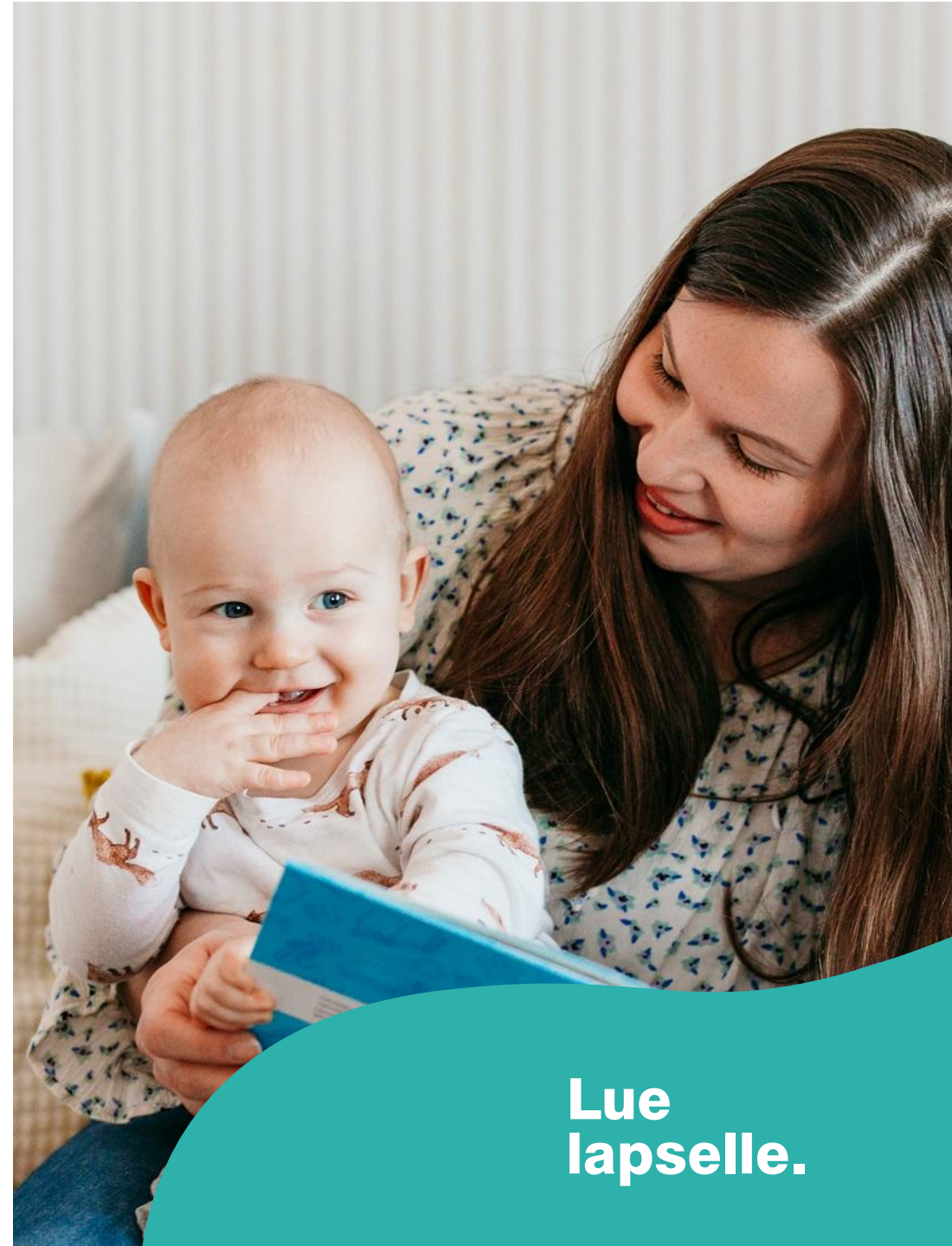
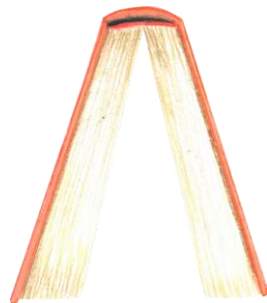
The public health nurses in Finland find reading even more important than before

- **88 % of the nurses** consider regular reading to be very important for a child's development. (in 2021: 83 %)
- **99 % of public health nurses** believe it is important to discuss the value of reading with families at their clinics.
- **96 % of the nurses** consistently remind families of the importance of reading.
- **All respondents** expressed their willingness to continue distributing the book bags for the families.

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“With books as a gift, it’s easy and fun to bring up reading and talk about how families can incorporate it into their daily lives and make it a part of their routine. Most families are really happy about the book bags.”

– public health nurse, 2025 survey



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RESULTS OF THE IMPACT STUDY:

41 % of parents believe the information of reading shared at the MCHC has influenced the family's reading habits

- According to the parent respondents' estimates, the amount of time spent reading and how reading is practiced is influenced the most by:
 - **the news on the benefits of reading** (43% of respondents)
 - **the importance of reading shared at the maternal and child health care clinics** (41% of respondents).
- Those who had received a book bag, mentioned more frequently the MCHC clinics, but also **early childhood education and school**.

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MCHC clinic is an equitable setting to boost family reading

- According to the impact study, early bookgifting has broad and long-lasting effects on family reading.
- The nurses in maternal and child health care clinics in Finland reach nearly every baby.

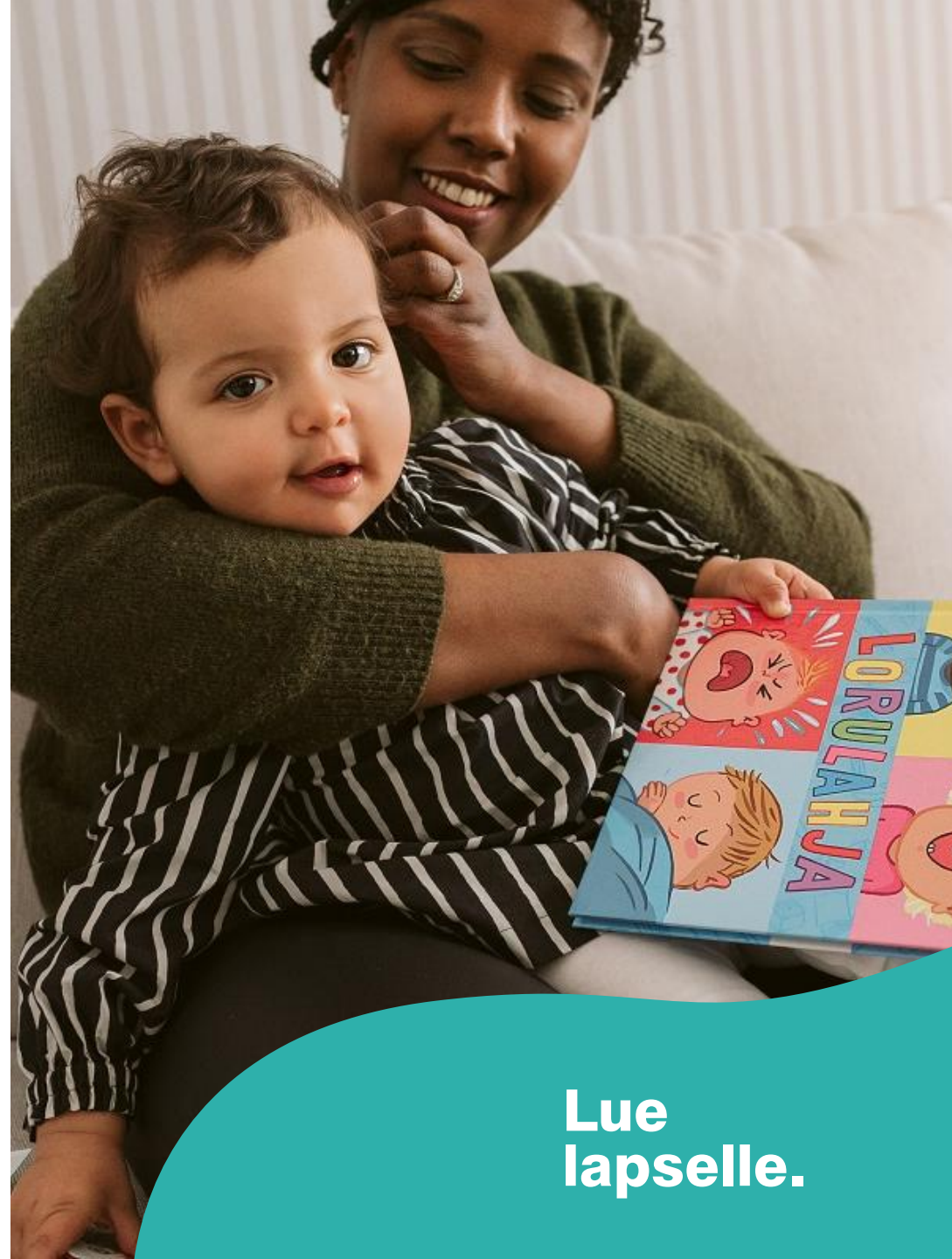
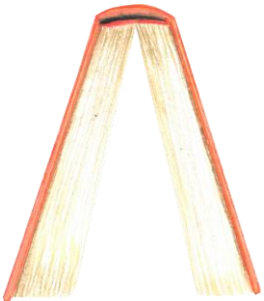
“Parents have been really happy about the book bags. It incentivizes them to go to the library and serves as a reminder of the importance of reading for children and adults.” – public health nurse



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Reaching the multilingual families in the program

- Foreign language speakers in Finland 2024: over 610 000 (10,8 % of the population).
- The book bag was available in minority languages in 2019-2021: Somali, Arabic, Russian, Estonian, and three Sami languages spoken in Finland
- In 2022-2025 only in Finnish and Swedish
 - [A printable Parent's guide](#) available in 22 languages.
 - Nurses' most popular wish: book bags in more languages and new books!



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The new story book in multiple languages brings the multilingual bags back in 2026!

- Made with extra funding from two foundations
- Stories and illustrations are made by people from different language backgrounds.
 - 27 people were involved in the process: authors, illustrators, translators, etc.
- All the languages: Finnish, Swedish, Somali, Arabic, **Ukrainian**, Russian, Estonian, and three Sami languages spoken in Finland + later: Romani language



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TILKKUTÄKIN ALLA

Katri Tapola
Kuvitus Sanna Pelliccioni

7

Kääriydy sinäkin unenpehmeän tilkkutäkin alle
kuulemaan satuja, jotka tuovat kaikki maailman ihmiset yhteen!

SAARA JA KEVÄT

Salaado Qasim
Kuvitus Aya Chalabee

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SINÄ OLET ALKU KAIKELLE MITÄ OLEN

Frank Furu
Kuvitus Malin Ahlsved, käänös Katri Tapola

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RUSINAPULLAPERHE

Maaria Päivinen
Kuvitus Julia Savtchenko

24

SNURLA, VIKSI JA KADONNUT YÖ

Maryna Smahina
Kuvitus Julia Savtchenko, käänös Aino Törni

30

UUSI YSTÄVÄ

Inger-Mari Aikio
Kuvitus Aya Chalabee

36

ZIRIKLI

Carmen Baltzar
Kuvitus Malin Ahlsved

41



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SNURLA, VIKSI JA KADONNUT YÖ

Maryna Smahina
Kuvitus Julia Savchenko
Käännös Aino Törni



Yhtenä päivänä yö katosi. Snurla oli jo asettunut mukavasti sänkyyn ja kääriytynyt peittoonsa, mutta yötä ei silti näkynyt. Jokin oli vialla.

Ehkä yö oli eksynyt? Tai ehkä se oli vain myöhässä? Oliko sellainen edes mahdollista?

Snurla kömpi pois peittonsa alta ja katsoi ulos ikkunasta.

Ulkona paistoi yhä aurinko. Tuuhean lehmuksen kukissa surisi pörräinen.

”Onpa outoa”, totesi Snurla.

Nyt Viiksikin nousi istumaan sängylleen.

”Mitä täällä tapahtuu?” hän kysyi tyytymättömänä.



”Yö katosi johonkin”, Snurla selitti.

Siksi unta ei siis tullut, hän päätteli. Miten voi nukahtaa, kun ulkona on vielä valoisaa?

”Se ei kyllä käy”, murisi Viiksi.

Snurla otti naulasta yömyssynsä ja veti sen korvilleen. ”Mennään etsimään”, hän sanoi. ”Kenties yö on eksynyt jonnekin.”

Viiksi huokaisi ja nousi sängystään vastahakoisesti.

”Hyvä on. Mutta ainoastaan jos saan syödä matkalla mustikoita.”

Viiksi todella piti mustikoista.

Niin he lähtivät matkaan. Viiksi kumartui tuon tuosta poimimaan marjoja ja maiskutteli niitä iloisesti.



Olin ihan kuin joku satuolento itsekin, sain kuvitella mitä itse tahtoinkin kun mummu avasi jälleen uuden oven astua sisään. Tikkutäkki lämmitti. Muistin miten äiti oli sanonut, että tikkutäkkiin mahtuu kaikki värit, maat, ihmiset ja kielet. Siinä me olimme, kaikki yhdessä...

ZIRIKLI

Carmen Baltzar
Kuvitus Malin Ahlsved



Ziriklin silmät painoivat. Hän oli vaipumassa uneen. Samira-äiti lauloi hiljaa vieressä:

Salon hongathan ne humajaa...

Zirikli siirtyi unten maailmaan. Unten maailmassa hänen jalkansa ovat väsyneet. Hän kävelee metsäpolkua Samiran, Leila-mummon ja veljensä Dimitrin ja Danielin kanssa. Metsäpolun varrella kasvaa voikukkia. Niistä Zirikli tietää, että unten maailmassa on kevät. Kun perhe tulee suojaisalle paikalle metsän siimekseen, he alkavat valmistaa leiriä. Zirikli auttaa keräämällä oksia nuotioon. Silloin metsästä kuuluu

riks, raks

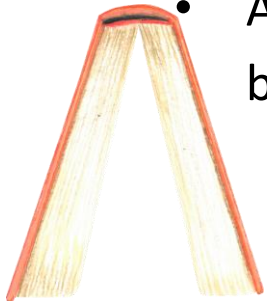
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Contents of the multilingual book bag:

- The Story book in your own language
- A Parents's Guide in your own language
- A Rhyming book in Finnish
- A Reading chart in Finnish/Swedish
- 6 800 multilingual book bags.
- The clinics make orders by filling in a form for multilingual book bags.
- A smaller storage delivers the multilingual book bags



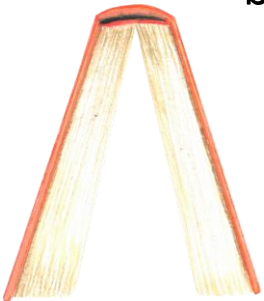
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Thank you!

Questions/comments?

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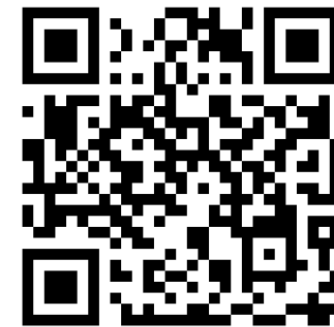


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Find out the impact study results
and more in

luelapselle.fi



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