

BOOKS FROM BIRTH



Igniting Literacy for Every Newborn

WHAT IS BOOKS FROM BIRTH?

Book Harvest's Books from Birth program partners with hospitals to send newborns home with a starter home library of 10 brand new board books. Healthcare providers equip new parents with this home library packaged in a Books from Birth box that includes a onesie and additional resources that help families foster early language and reading routines from a baby's first days.

Books from Birth lays the foundation for early relational health and optimal brain development in the first five years -- a precondition for school readiness, academic success, and a healthy childhood that leads to a lifetime of flourishing.



WHY BOOKS FROM BIRTH MATTERS



- Literacy support from a family's medical team increases active engagement in literacy activities at home, including reading aloud several times every week and reporting that reading together is a favorite shared family activity. [1]
- Books in the home are the single biggest predictor of a child's reading proficiency and long-term success in school [2], and regular reading from birth improves infant language scores by as early as 9 months of age. [3]
- A guiding principle of the American Academy of Pediatrics is that literacy begins at birth in the home, with parents. [4]

JOINING THE BOOKS FROM BIRTH NETWORK

Hospitals that are eligible to join Book Harvest's Books from Birth network commit to:

- participating in the program for a minimum of 12 months;
- working with Book Harvest to secure funding to reach every newborn in the hospital;
- providing all families who give birth in the hospital with a Books from Birth box containing 10 new specially-curated books and additional literacy resources;
- coordinating the attendance of relevant staff at learning sessions with Book Harvest;
- assigning a hospital staff person to conduct monthly check-ins with Book Harvest;
- and providing monthly reporting of data.



The current Books from Birth Hospital Network includes Maynard Children's Hospital (Greenville, NC) and Columbia Memorial Hospital (Astoria, OR).

[1] Klass, P., Dreyer, B. P., & Mendelsohn, A. L. (2009). Reach out and read: literacy promotion in pediatric primary care. *Advances in pediatrics*, 56, 11–27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yapd.2009.08.009>
[2] University of Nevada, Reno. (2010). Books in home as important as parents' education in determining children's education level. *ScienceDaily*. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/05/100520213116.htm ; Jacobs, T. (2018). Home Libraries Confer Long-Term Benefits. *Pacific Standard*. <https://psmag.com/education/home-libraries-confer-long-term-benefits/>
[3] Franks, A. M., Seaman, C., Franks, E. K., Rollyson, W., & Davies, T. (2022). Parental reading to infants improves language score: a rural family medicine intervention. *The Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine*, 35(6), 1156–1162. <https://doi.org/10.3122/jabfm.2022.220064r2>
[4] American Academy of Pediatrics. (2017). Reading with children starting in infancy gives lasting literacy boost. *AAP News*. <https://publications.aap.org/aapnews/news/13201>

ABOUT BOOK HARVEST

Book Harvest's mission is to provide books every child, support for every parent, and literacy for every community. Since 2011, Book Harvest has provided 2.4 million books to families in North Carolina and beyond, ensuring that children grow up with abundant home libraries and parents have the tools and power to ignite and strengthen their children's literacy. With programs that are grounded in evidence, Book Harvest believes that literacy starts at birth, in the home, powered by parents, and nourished with books. For more information, contact Jeff Quinn, COO, at jeff@bookharvest.org.

BOOKS FROM BIRTH

Maynard Children's Hospital Implementation Update

Book Harvest's Books from Birth program at Maynard Children's Hospital launched on October 1, 2024. By March 15, 2025, a total of 1,683 families with newborns had received the Books from Birth starter home library.



Reach

Among the **1,683 participating families**, roughly 300 had babies in the NICU, highlighting the program's ability to support families during challenging medical situations.

The remaining participants received the literacy resources directly on the birthing floor.



Statewide Impact

Participating families are from **33 counties** across North Carolina; 17 of these are Tier 1 counties. The participation of families from both urban and rural communities underscores the program's scalability and adaptability.

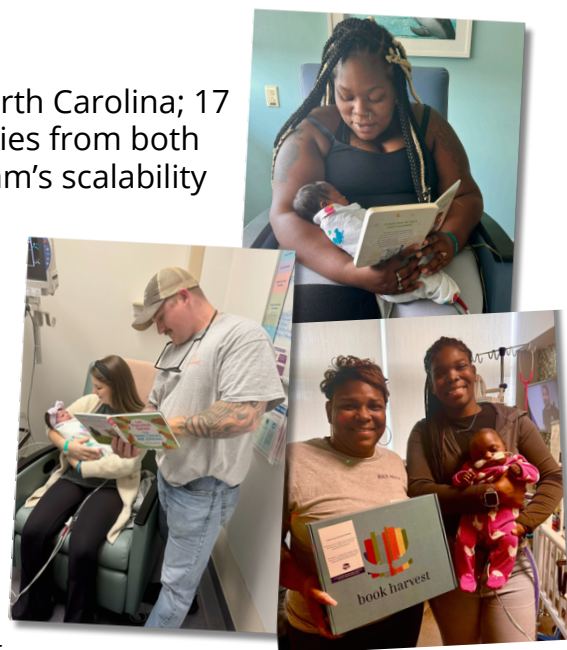


Implementation Blueprint

A detailed guide has been created for other hospitals interested in replicating the program.

The blueprint includes step-by-step processes for integrating the program into hospital workflows, training staff, and engaging families effectively.

Due to the program's demonstrated success, numerous hospitals in North Carolina and across the United States have expressed interest in adopting the program. A hospital system in Oregon recently launch Books from Birth.



As a proud Book Harvest Champion for ECU Health, I'm over the moon to share what we're doing right here in ENC! Thanks to our Books from Birth program, every newborn at Maynard Children's Hospital is already heading home with the sweetest gift—a box of 10 board books, educational goodies, and even a onesie!

This incredible partnership between Book Harvest and ECU Health is helping families across Eastern NC kick off a lifelong love of reading from Day 1. Why is this so important? Because half the kids in Pitt County aren't reading at grade level, and together, we're flipping the script—one baby and one book at a time!

Let's celebrate the power of stories, baby snuggles, and brighter futures!

J. Nicole, NICU Nurse, Maynard Children's Hospital



For more info contact Book Harvest COO, Jeff Quinn, at jeff@bookharvest.org or at (919) 824-0743.