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**RAISING A READER HITS MILESTONE OF 15 MILLION BOOKS SHARED  
AS PROGRAM HELPS FAMILIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY ESTABLISH  
DAILY LITERACY ROUTINES FOR CHILDREN**

**More than 2,500 community partners bring literacy program to families nationwide**

REDWOOD CITY, CA, March 10, 2015 – Raising A Reader has reached the 15 million mark for number of books shared by children and their parents participating in the organization’s highly regarded children’s literacy program. Raising A Reader implements its program through more than 2,500 locations nationwide, including public schools, libraries and community organizations, to bring literacy resources to families across the country.

Raising A Reader’s mission is to engage parents in a routine of book sharing with their children from birth through age eight to foster healthy brain development, healthy relationships, a love of reading, and the literacy skills critical for success in school and life. Research shows a direct and proven relationship between family engagement and the academic growth and development of children, including social competence and relationships, cognitive development, communication skills, literacy development, vocabulary growth, expressive language and comprehension skills.

“There have been many efforts focused on teaching children to read and improving literacy skills through book ownership; however those are only two parts of the equation,” said Gabrielle Miller, Ed.D., national executive director of Raising A Reader. “There is abundant research and evidence that family engagement and establishing daily reading routines for children are critical components in a child’s development and success in life.

Raising A Reader works with organizations such as United Way and Head Start to implement many of its programs in cities across the country. Among the many companies and foundations that support Raising A Reader are Target, Deutsche Bank, Genentech, SanDisk, Cisco, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Hanna Andersson, one of the most popular manufacturers and retailers of quality children’s clothing, partnered with Raising A Reader last year and donated a portion of its profits to support the program.

Recognizing the increasing importance of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) programs, Raising A Reader has created enrichment curriculum and a STEM book collection that parents can use to help young children begin to develop their understanding of these critical subjects. The purpose of this effort is not only to ensure all children have the opportunity to be exposed to important themes around science, technology, engineering and math, but to help parents understand the importance of STEM and become partners in building their child's foundation of STEM literacy.

The Raising A Reader program is evidence-based, with more than 23 independent evaluations showing that Raising A Reader significantly improves language and literacy skills, school readiness, family reading behavior and parent-child bonding. Independent research firm Child Trends recently released a report on Raising A Reader that showed the program is grounded in a strong foundation of research that highlights the importance of family involvement in promoting children's literacy. In addition, studies showed parents who completed the Raising A Reader program were more likely to share books with their children more frequently, more likely to have established a reading routine and saw positive changes in their children's reading behavior and development.

Raising A Reader is a 501c3 charitable organization dedicated to helping families develop, practice and maintain literacy habits for children ages 0-8 that are critical for a child's success in school and in life. The Raising A Reader program is implemented through a network of community partners that comprise more than 2,500 locations across the country. Partners include public school systems, libraries, afterschool programs, community agencies and other organizations both public and private. Headquartered in Redwood City, Calif., Raising A Reader was founded in 1999 and has served more than 1.25 million families nationwide. More information is available at [www.RaisingAReader.org](http://www.RaisingAReader.org).

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