



# Change a child's story

Give books. Give time.

## WHY?

**61%** of children in poverty don't have children's books at home.

The Campaign for Grade Level Reading

**8,947** Iowa 4th graders were not proficient in reading on 2012 state tests – roughly 1 in 4.

Des Moines Register

Students not proficient in reading at 3rd grade are **4 times** more likely to drop out.

Annie E. Casey Foundation

**86%** of children with parents who didn't graduate high school live in low-income families.

Nation Center for Children in Poverty

**55%** – Iowa children under age 6 whose low-income parents don't have a high school diploma.

Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy

**Last** – Iowa's rank when it comes to improving reading scores over the past 19 years.

2012 Harvard study

One million books and a million hours of reading with children – that's the goal of Iowa United Methodists in the next two years in a new initiative called, "Change a Child's Story."

In 2012, roughly 1 in 4 Iowa fourth-graders scored below proficient level on the state reading test. Research indicates that a quarter of kids who are behind in reading by the 4th grade will eventually drop out of school, making them more likely to experience other hardships, including jail time. The academic and economic futures of almost 90,000 young Iowans are at risk.

## TOGETHER, WE CAN CHANGE THEIR STORY

- Collect books and provide them to children living in poverty
- Reach out to local schools, libraries, community, and non-profits to discover specific needs and ways your church can help
- Involve everyone—almost anyone can take part in providing books and reading
- Be multicultural—include multiple languages
- If your church already has a program, find ways to strengthen and grow that program

## GET INVOLVED

- **Educational Development Corporation (EDC)** - a non commercialized children's publishing company with nearly 2000 engaging fiction and nonfiction books. EDC is providing an easy grant matching program. 60% match with \$200 order for every church in Iowa! Contact local Des Moines area Educational Consultant Erin McGargill by: 414-426-0455 or [erinmcgargill@gmail.com](mailto:erinmcgargill@gmail.com)
- Start your own **Little Free Library**.
- **Campaign for Grade Level Reading** has lots of information about children's literacy. Watch their featured video to call your congregation to action!
- **Iowa Public Television** has many resources including lesson plans, video clips for teaching, information on classes for daycare workers, and much more.
- **Reach Out and Read** - Is this happening in your community? Doctors can be trained to help provide early literacy support at well-child visits.
- **Reading Rockets** is a great source for information about reading related issues.

## CONTACT

- **Matthew 25**, Clint Twedt-Ball at [clint@hub25.org](mailto:clint@hub25.org)
- **Children and Family Urban Movement**, Carmen Lampe-Zeitler at [carmen@cfum.org](mailto:carmen@cfum.org)
- **MUMMs** is already available to help southern districts with afterschool programs and would love to help you incorporate literacy! Cherie Miner at [cminer5068@gmail.com](mailto:cminer5068@gmail.com)

## TELL YOUR STORY AND READ OTHERS

- Read how others are getting involved and share your story and ideas at <http://www.iaumc.org/tellustyourstory>
- Like [Change a Child's Story Facebook page](#) where you will find resources and ideas.

## THE GOAL

Give one million books and read one million hours to children over the next two years.





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## SETTING A GOAL

### Who are we reading to? How many books? How much time?

Change a Child's Story is about setting audacious goals that stretch congregations to give and connect in new ways. Change a Child's Story is about creating new partnerships in the community and new relationships with struggling kids.

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**First, try to pinpoint how to connect with kids in your community or surrounding communities that need help with reading.**

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**1.** Based on your congregation and community, make a list of ideas and ways you can connect with children in poverty.

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**2.** Make a list of community organizations that are actively engaged in children and education. Start out by having members of your church visit with those organizations. Remember to listen and ask questions about how they'd like to see you support children. Begin developing or expanding your programs based on what is already working and what is expressed as a need.

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**3.** Now, find out your church's average worship attendance. Your pastor should know this. An easy goal to set is:

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Average Worship Attendance/week \_\_\_\_\_ x 10 books/person = Book Goal

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Average Worship Attendance/week \_\_\_\_\_ x 10 hours/person = Hours Goal

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Looking at your number of books and hours should feel like a stretch. If you need creative ideas on how to inspire the congregation, please reach out to us for help. We want you to be successful.

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**Fill out and return the pledge card below:**



## Change a Child's Story Pledge Card

\_\_\_\_\_ is for reading!

(Church name and city)

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**In the coming year, our church pledges to:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Donate new books to children in our community.

\_\_\_\_\_ Spend time reading to children in our community.

**We'd like to know....**

\_\_\_\_\_ In the past year, has your church given books to children in your community?

\_\_\_\_\_ In the past year, has your church had a formal program to read to children in your community

Questions/comments? \_\_\_\_\_

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Fill out the Pledge Card and email to: [jmgerot@lakeodessa.net](mailto:jmgerot@lakeodessa.net)  
Or mail it to:  
Marsha Gerot  
20858 T Avenue  
Conesville, Iowa 52739