

# ANNUAL REPORT



2021 was just like the Zoom picture above: unscripted, and no filter. At The Literacy Cooperative (TLC) we adapted, learned and grew our outreach amidst the chaos. Despite all of its challenges and all of the hardships people continue to face you still made a difference.

We cannot thank each and every one of our funders, donors, volunteers, friends, and Board of Trustees enough for all the support.

We need to continue to accelerate the preparation of young children for kindergarten and the building of literacy skills for adults to secure the skills and credentials that increase opportunities for meaningful employment. **Your gift makes this possible.**

We are all so thrilled to be able to advocate for literacy for another year.

**Thank you for your support!**



# Dolly Parton's Imagination Library



**346,921 books mailed to more than 31,000 children in 2021.**

**6,000 books donated to partner organizations to distribute to the families they serve.**

**Over 858,000 books mailed to more than 46,000 children since 2014.**

A report prepared by The Center for Community Solutions, with analysis from Case Western Reserve University, indicates families overwhelmingly enjoy the books and believe the books are better preparing their child for kindergarten. It also identifies a positive correlation between a child's enrollment in Imagination Library and Kindergarten Readiness Assessment score.



**LITERATURE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

## Family Engagement



***"They were interactive and fun for the kids, kept him busy and interested. The tips were helpful. We loved going through the activity packages and my son loved those."***

***- Parent Participant***

107 preschoolers' families in East Cleveland and Maple Heights School Districts attended 17 virtual family engagement workshops between February and May 2021. Each family received specially selected books and learning materials to complement the workshops.





A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

# Two Generational Approach

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TLC and the 2Gen Steering Committee participated in racial equity and inclusion training, which addresses system inequities, recommends processes for promoting inclusion, and reduces the burden of care coordination for families.

TLC conducted an assessment focused on the progress of the 2Gen initiatives and recognized the need for capacity-building around data collection, continued caregiver engagement in program design, opportunities for equitable access, and the need for continued collaboration and shared learning. The 2Gen Steering Committee responded with a 2021-2022 plan to develop progress indicators, advocate for funding and awareness of 2Gen programming, and formalize a Community of Practice to further develop the social capital of our partners and families.



TRAINING A BRIGHTER FUTURE

## Professional Excellence

Throughout 2021, 800 educators, administrators, volunteers, and other literacy stakeholders participated in 21 professional development sessions, a 2Gen Literacy Summit, a national adult education conference presentation, and the Literacy Dashboard data share event. Online programming enabled us to extend our reach beyond Cleveland to statewide and several out of state participants from Arkansas, California, Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. High-interest topics with excellent content and experienced trainers continue to be the reasons instructors, administrators, tutors, and others across the literacy spectrum come to our sessions. Overall, 96% would recommend the session to a colleague; 70%, ranked “receiving instruction on how to use a practical strategy” as the greatest benefit of the session, and 66% implemented what they learned into a training at their workplace.





# Career Pathways

TLC worked with our adult education partners to publish contextualized curriculum for healthcare, manufacturing, IT/digital literacy, construction, and hospitality. In 2021, TLC hosted six sessions focused on the use of the updated contextualized curriculum for adult education and workforce partners. One of the sessions was conducted as part of the Coalition on Adult Basic Education's (COABE) 2021 National Conference. This session hosted 75 educators and administrators across the United States.

During the past three years, subscribers of the curriculum were surveyed to gain insight on their experiences in the classroom using the curriculum. Of those surveyed, 90% are using the curriculum on a regular basis or as needed. The healthcare and manufacturing curriculum have been downloaded and used most. When asked what they valued about the curriculum, 3 out of 4 of the subscribers regularly using the curriculum indicated the following:

- The curriculum enables the instructor to create and maintain a positive atmosphere for learning
- Instructors use the curriculum to tailor the programs to the needs of the students
- The curriculum builds on students' strengths and skills (not deficiencies)



# Public Policy & Advocacy

## **"Employers: Advancing Literacy is Key to Advancing Your Workforce"**

Today's job market is changing rapidly. According to National Skills Coalition, 54% of in-demand jobs in Ohio require skills training beyond high school, but not a four-year degree.

Even with access to training, adults may struggle due to less than proficient literacy and numeracy skills, also known as foundational basic skills. Government, industries, and higher education institutions are planning how to prepare workers for the future, and foundational basic skills must be included in the conversation.

**[Click here for more information and to read the full report.](#)**





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**"By convening a continuum of early childhood to workforce partners from across our county, TLC has facilitated a safe and open space for idea sharing, relationship development, and problem solving around holistic family support. TLC's work has helped us all do our work better."**

**- Alyssa Swiatek, M.Ed, PC**

**Family Engagement Manager**

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**We cannot thank you enough for your support during an exceedingly challenging year. To all our donors, board members, partners, volunteers, families, and staff, we appreciate you and we look forward to working together to improve literacy outcomes.**

