



Mission, Vision, and Principles
Adopted by the Board of Directors 2021

Vision: All children will have a love of books and strong language skills before beginning school.

Mission: Connecting families with young children to the joy of books and read-aloud experiences to expand their horizons.

Family Reading Partnership believes that:

- 1) Literacy, the ability to read, write, and communicate, is a valuable tool in advancing individual opportunity and societal growth.
- 2) The early years, from before birth through age 5, is the most crucial time for building the foundation on which all future learning relies.
- 3) The pre-literacy skills needed to learn to read are built through:
 - strong and early relationship building via back-and-forth communication, read-aloud interaction, and playtime with loving caregivers.
 - exposure to a wide variety of inclusive and diverse books that both provide representation and give children a wider view of the world,
 - positive examples and associations with books and reading,
 - the early opportunity to hear and practice with a wealth of vocabulary and language, and
 - physical movement and play in indoor and outdoor environments.
- 4) Equity in educational resources is crucial to ensuring that children in our community have the opportunity to learn.
- 5) Families are best served when formal and informal social services networks work as a team to empower community members.

We strive to stay true to these principles by:

- Distributing free new and gently used books to all young children in Tompkins County.
- Carefully selecting books to be diverse and age appropriate for children at each developmental stage from before birth to age five.
- Partnering with local medical practices, childcare providers, teachers, libraries, and social service agencies to determine need and connect families to resources.
- Offering free interactive Story Walks, updated seasonally and spaced across Tompkins County.
- Building special programs that focus on low resource families and young parents in order to interrupt the cycles of poverty and educational inequity.
- Hosting events and developing resources that encourage child/caregiver interaction with reading, music, and play.

Family Reading Partnership Anti-Racism Statement
Adopted by the Board of Directors June 2, 2022

Family Reading Partnership (FRP) embraces inclusiveness, diversity, and equal opportunity as core values. We aspire to be an inclusive and welcoming organization, where everyone regardless of who they are, is empowered to succeed. Racism in any form, from seemingly benign assumptions to the violent attacks that continue to occur across the country, adds to the unequal burdens some shoulder and runs counter to who we are.

We recognize structural racism/ethnic discrimination and other forms of oppression have contributed to persistent disparities. We understand that these disparities have existed in the past and persist into the present. We acknowledge that these inequities are the result of policies and practices that work to marginalize entire populations of people. We unequivocally denounce racism/ethnic discrimination because it undermines the well-being and vitality of our communities. (from [United Way's statement](#))

It is critical that we, as supporters of early child literacy, advance equitable solutions to break down systemic barriers for children, and address the intersectional impacts of racism, poverty, immigration status, gender and sexual orientation that prevent children from reaching their full potential. Going forward, we are committed to being even more explicit and purposeful in naming and dismantling the policies and practices that enable racial inequity for those that are marginalized and disenfranchised by systemic racism and social injustice. (Adopted from [Children Now statement](#) language)

We affirm to address those inequities that are within the scope and capacity of our organization to influence and change. We acknowledge that combatting racism and inequity is an ongoing commitment. The impact of economic, social, and environmental disparities, including the exposure to books in early childhood, may hinder the opportunity to build a strong foundation for learning. Thus, we remain devoted to addressing barriers to access, discrimination in reading materials, challenges to caregiver reading capabilities and other social and moral determinants of literacy, leading by example and educating our affiliates and communities. We stand united in support of racial justice and the intersection of early childhood literacy and the well-being of humanity.