



A literacy program helping incarcerated parents stay connected with their children

# IN THE NEWS

Summer 2020

Vol. 4, No. 2

"Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope." —Kofi Annan

## P Q P Q P Q P Q Pandemic P's and Q's Q P Q P Q P Q P

### Patience

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic curtailed the activities of **Remain in Touch** in the Leelanau and Benzie County Jails in March of this year. For the safety of the inmates, their families, jail staff and program providers, **all** programs in the jails were temporarily suspended. Every assurance is being offered by the jail administrators that they are eager to resume our program once it is safe to do so. We patiently await authorization and our own readiness to spring into action once the go-ahead is received and safety protocols are in place.

### Presence

In addition to our presence on Facebook  and Instagram , **Remain in Touch** is active in spite of the restrictions caused by the pandemic. Our Board of Directors continues to meet bi-monthly without interruption, our book carts are restocked, and book titles continue to be researched and added. Communications with our facilitators and funding organizations are on-going. The presence of **over 1000 books & recordings** from **Remain in Touch** in the homes of children of incarcerated parents continue to promote literacy and strengthen family ties.

### Programming

After witnessing the success of our program for incarcerated parents and their children ages 0-12, it was exciting to launch the expansion of our program in January of this year to include teens ages 13 to 18. We are eager to resume both of these programs in both jail facilities, and regain momentum in serving a greater number of children and inmates. The promotion of literacy and support of parent/child relationships remain our top priorities.

### Provision

**Remain in Touch** continues to apply for grants and has received funding during the ongoing pandemic. A report of recent activity may be found on page 2.

### Quality

**Remain in Touch** is fortunate to have on its board professional educators who devote extensive time and scrutiny to stocking our book carts with age-appropriate books for children. The book carts are organized by subject and grade level, and the carts are wheeled into the jail for inmates to peruse. Our trained facilitators help the inmates select books tailored to the interests of their children. Book lists and descriptions are available on the Brilliant Books website: <http://www.brilliant-books.net/RemainInTouch>.

### Quarantine

By now, we all know a little bit about self-quarantining and many of us have experienced it first hand. As challenging as this pandemic has been, we are thankful for the commitment of our board and jail administrators to "safety first" for all participants.

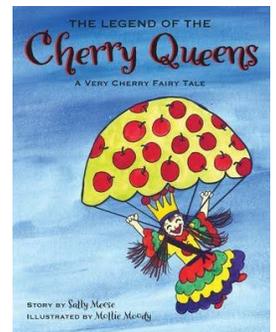


### Questions

- When will **Remain in Touch** resume its activities in the jails? Answer: As soon as we safely can do so. We continue to assess the situation in ongoing communication with the jail administrators.
- Will your program for older children ages 13 to 18 be offered in both Leelanau and Benzie County Jails? Answer: Yes! We piloted the program in Leelanau County with overwhelming success. Benzie County is eager to include the expanded program there once we resume activity.

### Queens (of the cherry kind)

Thanks to the generosity of author Sally Meese and illustrator Mollie Moody, proceeds from the sale of their new book, *The Legend of the Cherry Queens*, will go to nonprofits focused on children's literacy, including **Remain in Touch**! Thank you, Sally and Mollie! What a special treasure!



- Children develop literacy skills long before they read.
- Young children who are read to regularly have a larger vocabulary, a stronger foundation of language awareness, and literacy skills at a younger age.
- Children who are read to regularly by family members experience social-emotional gains and an increased likelihood of overall school success.

**Just the facts, ma'am ...**

Since our program began in 2016, **YOU** have helped **Remain in Touch** achieve the following:



**191**

incarcerated parents have selected and recorded books for their children.



**322**

children have received new books and recordings from their incarcerated parents.



**1006**

brand new books, along with recordings, have been delivered to children of incarcerated parents. Thank you for helping us reach the **milestone of 1000 books with recordings** in January 2020.

**Did you know?**

**Remain in Touch** was a nominee among the top 10 "Favorite Non-Profits" for the Red Hot Best award in Leelanau County for 2020. Thanks to all of you who voted for us on social media!



**FUNDING REPORT**



**Thank you Bookstock!**

In February of this year, **Remain in Touch** received a Bookstock grant of **\$1,000!** This grant is being used to stock the book cart for our teen program, ages 13 to 18, which is ready to launch when our services resume at the Benzie County Jail.

**Remain in Touch** is in grateful receipt of a **\$100** matching grant from the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation. We extend a wholehearted "thank you!" to the donors who made match-eligible contributions enabling us to receive this grant.



**Remain in Touch** received a grant of **\$250** this summer from Walmart. In light of the strain and uncertainty that the global pandemic has created for businesses worldwide, we are especially thankful to be a repeat recipient of their financial support.

**FUNDING REPORT (continued)**

Individual donors play an important role in our ability to stock our book carts, purchase packaging, and mail new books and recorded CDs to children of incarcerated parents. Thank you to all who have supported our efforts!

In addition to monetary support, **Remain in Touch** would like to acknowledge the recent contributions of brand new children's books (gifts in-kind) for our book carts from individual donors.



And remember, during this pandemic if you are shopping online, you can

continue your support of **Remain in Touch** by designating us as your nonprofit recipient through [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). Thank you so much!

Two well-documented predictors of how well children function later in life are:

1. How many words a child has experienced before Kindergarten; and
2. How many books a child owns.

In addition to staying connected with their incarcerated parents by listening to CD recordings of the parents reading out loud to them, children experience other advantages when they receive books through the **Remain in Touch** program.

Our **booklist** is available online at



Your Long Distance Local Bookstore

<http://www.brilliant-books.net/RemainInTouch>. Brilliant Books offers a 20% discount on books purchased for the **Remain in Touch** program.

**Donate**

Your generous support provides hope for incarcerated parents and their children! Please invest in a better future by donating online at [www.remainintouch.org](http://www.remainintouch.org) or make your check payable to **Remain in Touch** and mail it to the address below.

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- a description of our program
- numerous ways that you can help
- secure online donation via PayPal
- a link to our booklist at Brilliant Books

