



A literacy program helping incarcerated parents stay connected with their children

IN THE NEWS

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

100 Women Who Care



In recent months, **Remain in Touch** received monetary support from two separate *100 Women Who Care* organizations: one in Grand Traverse/Leelanau Counties (where the funds are designated between the two counties) and one in Antrim County. We are especially fortunate to have been chosen by both of these chapters, whose members found our literacy program to be valuable and compelling.

At each *100 Women Who Care* gathering, the names of three nonprofit organizations are randomly drawn from among a number of vetted nominations. A representative from each of the three organizations gives a five minute presentation regarding their organization and its needs. Each presentation is followed by a five minute question and answer period. Members then vote, and award their contributions to the nonprofit that received the most votes ... which, in our case, was **Remain in Touch!**

The generous funds will allow us to further expand our program to an even greater number of incarcerated parents and their children.

Many thanks to *100 Women Who Care!*

From Kristin Marinoff - *100 Women Who Care Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties*:

"These personalized recordings, along with the books, are then sent directly to the children, fostering a sense of presence and connection despite physical separation."

The most important thing you can do to ensure your child's academic success is fun for both parent and child and it's free - READ!

We are now partnering with **Before, During, and After Incarceration (BDAI)** in the Grand Traverse County Jail



Before, During and After Incarceration (BDAI) seeks to promote alternatives to incarceration, including restorative programming and support for those incarcerated and their families. Through our partnership with BDAI, **Remain in Touch** is delivering an adaptation of its literacy program to inmates at the Grand Traverse County Jail.

The feedback from our inaugural visit at the Grand Traverse Jail was phenomenal:

- "You guys are changing lives with programs like these."
- "I loved the way of choice and the ability to personalize in the beginning and end of the book. Thank you my daughter will love this."
- "I appreciate you so much, this was so nice. Thank You!!!"
- "Thank you for this it means sooo much."
- "Thank you for this gift!! Very grateful for this class!"

The opportunity to engage with inmates in the Grand Traverse County Jail expands our services to four counties: Leelanau, Benzie, Antrim, and Grand Traverse. And there's more on the horizon!



Feedback from Anna, the mother of a participating inmate:

"What a thoughtful program! My granddaughter loved hearing her dad's voice reading the book. Having the ability to hear a parent's voice and see the book gives the kids something to hold on to. Thank you."

Why Reading Aloud to Children Boosts Literacy

The Commission on Reading has said that "the single most important activity for building knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children" (Fisher et al., 2004, p.1)

Here are some of the top benefits of reading aloud to children—of all ages:

- **Language Development:** new vocabulary; sentence structures; ways of expressing ideas
- **Listening skills:** rhythm, flow and nuances of language
- **Memory retention:** recall of details, sequences and narratives
- **Imagination and creativity:** envisionment of new worlds and scenarios
- **Empathy:** insights into diverse experiences; connection with others' feelings; problem solving
- **Emotional regulation:** recognition and management of feelings
- **Quality time:** family bonds; sense of security and love
- **Improves focus:** longer attention spans - a skill critical to success
- **Fluency development:** expressive reading models good habits, fluency and rhythm
- **Positive associations:** a source of pleasure, not a chore
- **Independent reading**
- **Pure joy:** laughter, excitement, wonder, and a lifelong appreciation for books
- **Global understanding:** Different places, cultures and diverse experiences foster open-mindedness and appreciation of the world

Carol Anne St. George, Sheila Konar Professor and director of the literacy teacher education program at the University of Rochester's Warner School of Education and Human Development



When Suttons Bay Congregational Church donated a book cart like this one to **Remain in Touch** it functioned so beautifully in the jail that we decided to purchase one for each of the jails where we deliver our literacy program. The right tools make a big difference! Our facilitators are delighted!

After nearly 10 years in partnership, **Remain in Touch** is sad to say goodbye to Brilliant Books of Traverse City, which closed its store to transition to an online only format. We are grateful for all the discounted books and supplies they offered to our program these many years. Their generosity has meant the world to us, and we wish them the best of success in their online venture.



MORE CARING CONTRIBUTORS:

- Zonta Club of Traverse City
- Cherryland Electric Cooperative
- Garden Theater in Frankfort, MI
- Father Lovett Foundation/St. Philip's Episcopal Church
- Northport Lions Club
- Antrim Women's Alliance
- St. Andrews Presbyterian Church
- Bay Books of Suttons Bay
- All the individual donors who generously contribute to the Remain in Touch literacy program.



THANK YOU!

As of September 30, 2025



401 incarcerated parents have selected and recorded books for their children.



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



1,929 brand new books, along with recordings, have been delivered to children of incarcerated parents.

Feedback from Jorja, the wife of a participating inmate:
 This program is the coolest thing ever!
 My daughter Nora is obsessed with books and the fact she can have her dad read them to her still just warms my heart. ... In a way he is still with us [when] we listen to him read a few times a day. Thank you so much for this opportunity.
 With warm regards, Jorja

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

or make your check payable to Remain in Touch and mail it to:

Remain in Touch
 P.O. Box 553
 Suttons Bay, MI 49682
 Ph: 231-499-0606

Email:
contactus@remainintouch.org

Visit our [website](http://www.remainintouch.org) for:

- a complete list of our partners & supporters
- the latest news about Remain in Touch
- a description of our program
- numerous ways that you can help
- secure online donation via PayPal

