

Reading Legacies Book Bridges Program Description

Our Book Bridges program is designed to benefit children and youth who are experiencing a stressful lack of connection to a parent or other family member due to incarceration or substance addiction problems. These children are often confused about their parent's absence and this causes worry and fear about when they will see them again, etc. The need for healthy family ties is a critical need for these children who are innocent of any wrongdoing, but in many ways are forced to serve sentences characterized by long separations, meager communication with those they love, and even disapproval within the community.

Reading Legacies provides connections for these children by empowering their incarcerated parents (and other family members) to connect to the child in a positive manner through workshops while still separated from their children and then they are video-recorded reading a storybook for their child(ren) that is then mailed home with the book. By watching their parents read aloud to them, healthy parent-child interactions are provided at a time when this may be impossible in any other way.

Volunteer Responsibilities and Expectations

- You and one or two other volunteers will facilitate workshops inside correctional facilities where you will discuss with up to 10 participants about the importance of reading to their children (and younger family members). You will then help them select a children's book, coach them on how to read a story out loud on video, and help them personalize it by using the child's name and referring to experiences the children may remember that relate to the storyline of the book.
- Volunteers are required to attend a Reading Legacies training to learn our process and other information pertinent to this program.
- Volunteers are required to commit to participating in one workshop/taping event a month. These workshops usually last around two hours (with transportation to and from not included).
- It is our policy that Reading Legacies volunteers never work alone. You will always be with at least one other volunteer and a staff member from the facility is always available to you.
- You will need to provide your own transportation to and from the correctional facilities and show proof of valid and up-to-date auto insurance.
- Each volunteer is required to go through a criminal background check and facility clearance process by the Department who is responsible for the particular facility in which you will be volunteering. We will guide you through this process.
- Your experience as an important member of our team is of utmost importance to us, including your safety and "job" satisfaction.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO BE A VOLUNTEER, VISIT [READINGLEGACIES.ORG/VOLUNTEER](https://readinglegacies.org/volunteer)