

***Celebrating the  
ONE  
MILLIONTH  
BOOK  
Milestone the  
beginning of  
2026***



**“This is a wonderful program that gets kids interested in reading. We love getting new books and read them over and over.”**

*- Parent of a  
Wisconsin Bookworms Participant*

# Wisconsin Bookworms: Building children’s literacy since 1998

Wisconsin Bookworms has been providing FREE books to preschool children since 1998. We will be reading to 4000 children this year. At the end of the 2025-2026 school year, a total of 1,017,000 books will have been given to 112,155 children since 1998. More than ONE MILLION BOOKS – how incredible!

For America’s low-income families, the biggest obstacle to literacy is the scarcity of books and appropriate reading material for young children.

The Wisconsin Bookworms reading program was developed in an effort to provide free books to children who may not otherwise be able to own them. Wisconsin Bookworms promotes reading by giving pre-school children the experience of having someone read to them and giving them a copy of the book to take home to create their own in-home library.

When Wisconsin Bookworms first started in 1998, a total of 16,500 books were distributed through the partnership efforts of UW-Extension Family Living Programs, Wisconsin Public Television and the Wisconsin Association for Home & Community Education (WAHCE).

Teachers report that having volunteers share their love of reading and interact with the classroom are key outcomes of the program. The children are excited to receive a free copy of the book to take home and spend hours reading and looking at the book with family.

## **Role of WAHCE in Wisconsin Bookworms**

The Wisconsin Association for Home and Community Education (WAHCE), a nonprofit educational organization plays a unique and vital role in the success of the Wisconsin Bookworms program.

WAHCE’s goals include providing education to strengthen families and communities and building coalitions with organizations and agencies that have similar aims. Local WAHCE groups raise funds to cover the cost of books for the Wisconsin Bookworms program in their counties.

Wisconsin Bookworms receives educational support from the UW Madison-Division of Extension for development of activity sheets that extend the books’ educational value.

## **The three most important components of the Wisconsin Bookworms program are:**

- ♦ **Having volunteers read the book in the classroom**
- ♦ **Doing an activity that pertains to the story, and**
- ♦ **Providing free books to the children to take home to create their own in-home library.**

*Early Literacy Program Helping Wisconsin’s Preschool Children Develop a Life-Long Love of Reading*