

WHO WE ARE

Raising A Reader Massachusetts aims to give every child an equal opportunity for achievement by engaging low-income parents in a routine of daily book sharing from birth through age six, fostering healthy brain development, parent-child bonding, and the early literacy skills essential for school success.

We partner with early care and education providers and other agencies that work with families with young children to serve families across nine Massachusetts Gateway cities and Boston.



“Before this program, my child and I would often read together but he seemed disinterested. I admit I became disheartened and thought he did not enjoy books as much as I have, but he genuinely seems to have grown to love storytime now.”

- Everett Parent

WHAT WE DO

One core component of RAR MA is book access through red bag rotation. The rotation provides every participant a bright red bag filled with four different, high-quality, developmentally and culturally appropriate children’s books to bring home each week in up to 8 different languages.

The second core component of RAR MA is parent/caregiver education about **Dialogic Reading** strategies, a specific type of interactive reading that encourages adults to prompt children with questions and engage them in discussions while reading to them.

THE NEED

- Third grade reading is a critical benchmark that strongly predicts children's chances of success in school and beyond.
- In 2014, **63% of third graders in Malden are not proficient in reading.** The primary cause is that these children arrive at school lacking critical pre-literacy and school readiness skills.
- Children that are not proficient by third grade are **4 times more likely** to drop out of high school. Children who are not proficient, poor and of color are **8 times more likely** to drop out of school.
- On average, low-income communities have a ratio of **one book for every 300 children**, compared to 13 books per child in middle - income communities.
- **In Everett, 40.8% of public school students identified as low-income.**



“As a working parent, time is limited and we don’t get to the library often enough. Having new books weekly made it exciting and we spent more time reading together than we may have otherwise.”

– Malden Parent

Year Launched: 2008 | Families Served: 1,394 | Partners: 9

PARTNERS

- ABCD Head Start
- Adams School
- Eliot Early Intervention
- Everett CFCE
- Housing Families Inc.
- Malden CFCE
- Malden Early Learning Center
- Malden YMCA Early Learning Center
- Webster School



Parent workshop graduates at the Malden YMCA.



THE IMPACT

In 2014-2015...

- **39%** of parents reading fewer than three times a week increased their reading frequency after one year in our program.
- **51%** of parents added at least one dialogic reading strategy to their regular repertoire.
- **69%** of children showed a greater interest in books and reading at the end of the year.

“Thanks to this program I have a routine with my daughter and she likes to read.”

- Parent (Translated from Spanish)



Red bag rotation at Everett CFCE.



“Thanks for the wonderful program! Great books, a lot of them bilingual, which I took advantage of. I get them free and without going to the library?! Amazing!”

- Parent