



# **Lorain County Imagination Library Impact Report 2022**

# Executive Summary



## Satisfaction

The vast majority (95 percent) of respondents appreciated the **uniqueness, variety, and diversity** of the Imagination Library books.

The children receiving the books enjoyed them:

- All the time (60 percent)
- Usually (27 percent)
- Some of the time (5 percent)

## Increased Reading

Over half (54 percent) of the parents of children receiving the Imagination Library books noticed **their children asking to be read to more often**.

## Growth

Most respondents indicated that they both heard their **children using new words** learned from the imagination library books they were reading, and that they felt the Imagination Library was **helping their children better prepare for kindergarten**.

## e-Newsletter Opportunity

Just under half of the respondents reported not receiving the newsletter, and amongst those who did, very few reported engaging with any information, offers, or events. This represents an opportunity for future growth.

# About the Program

## In Lorain County

For more than 25 years, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) has been distributing free, high-quality books to children under the age of five. Children enrolled in the program receive one specially selected book in the mail once per month.



Operating since 2015, **Lorain County Imagination Library is now reaching more than 50 percent of eligible children** in Lorain County. The Imagination Library is collaboratively operated by The Community Foundation of Lorain County, The Stocker Foundation, The United Way of Greater Lorain County, and the Ohio Governor's Imagination Library. **More than 100,000 books are delivered to Lorain County children each year.**

## In the United States

Forty-one independent studies have shown that **Imagination Library has a positive and significant impact on family literacy habits**, kindergarten readiness and supporting grade level reading by third grade. This research comes from across the United States, from many different geographic locales. More information can be found on [www.imaginationlibrary.com/news-resources/research/](http://www.imaginationlibrary.com/news-resources/research/)



Recent research on the Imagination Library in Cuyahoga County from Case Western Reserve University has also identified **positive trends in kindergarten readiness for children who engage with the Imagination library books**. The positive trends were even more pronounced for children who had been in the program longer, however more research is necessary to confirm these findings.

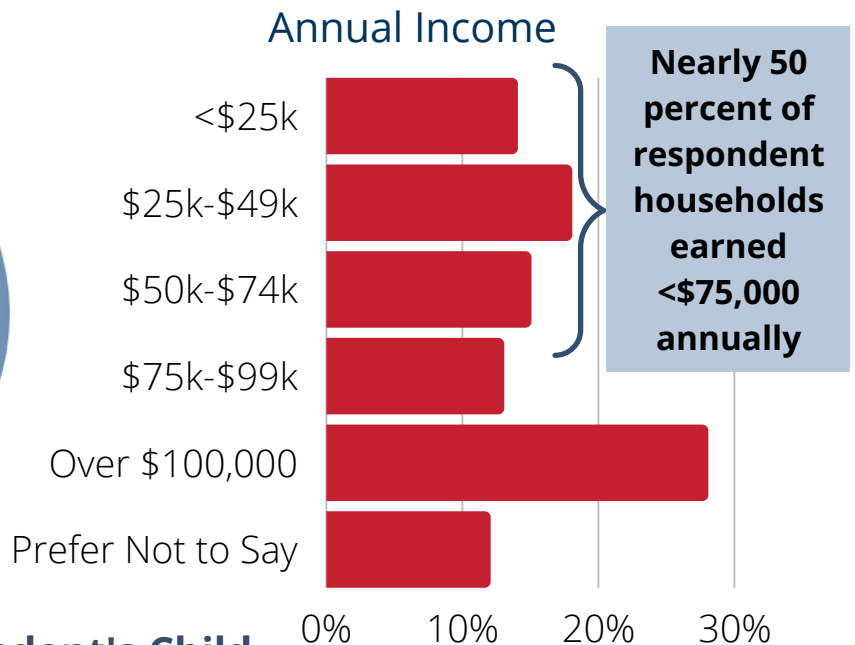
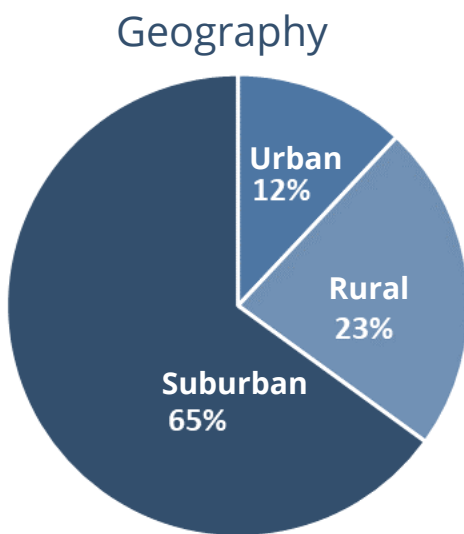
# The Research

\* Community Solutions worked closely with The Lorain County Imagination Library to survey current program participants.

\* A total of **628** respondents filled out the survey, providing an excellent sample of the current Imagination Library users.



## About The Respondents



### Race/Ethnicity of the Respondent's Child

American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	Black	Hispanic/ Latino	White	Other
5	10	47	63	489	6
1%	2%	9%	11%	89%	1%

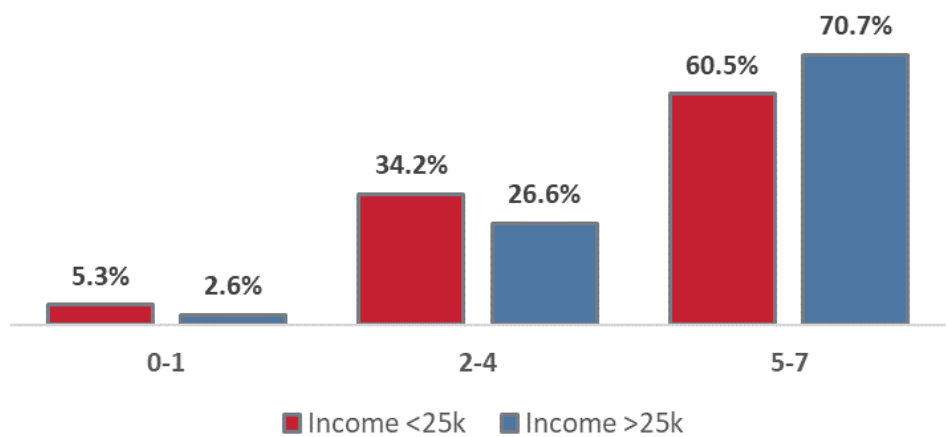
# Results



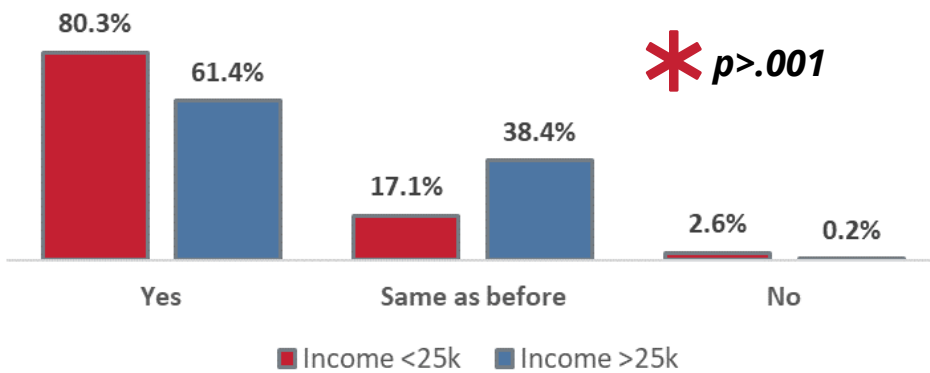
A **red asterisk** next to the findings of a data point indicates a **statistically significant difference** between respondents whose household income is **below \$25,000**, and respondents whose income is above \$25,000 annually.  
*Significance is determined using Welch's T-tests, with a p-value of .05.*

How many times have you or another adult read to your child in the last 7 days?

In a given week, the majority of respondents are reading to their children at least five times. Very few respondents were *not* engaging in reading in reading to their children.



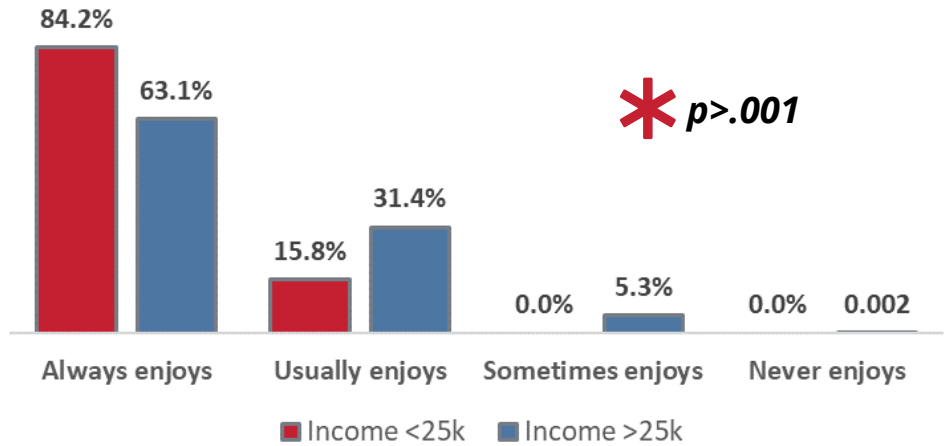
Do you, or other family members, read to your child more often since you began receiving Imagination Library books?



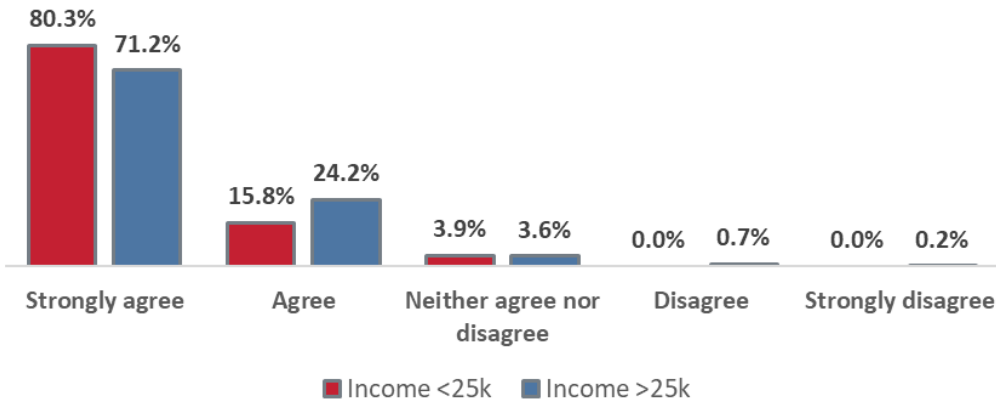
Upon receiving Imagination Library books, **respondents reported reading to their children more often**. This effect was significantly more pronounced amongst lower income respondents, of whom 80 percent reported reading more upon receiving the Imagination Library books, compared to 61 percent of higher income respondents.

### Does your child enjoy the Imagination Library books?

Overwhelmingly, children enjoyed the Imagination Library books, especially those in lower income families.



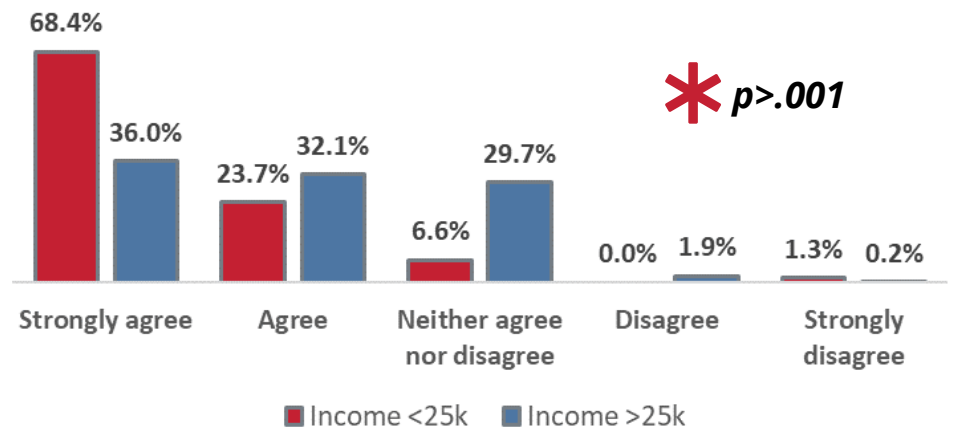
### I appreciate the uniqueness, variety, and diversity of the characters in the Imagination Library books.



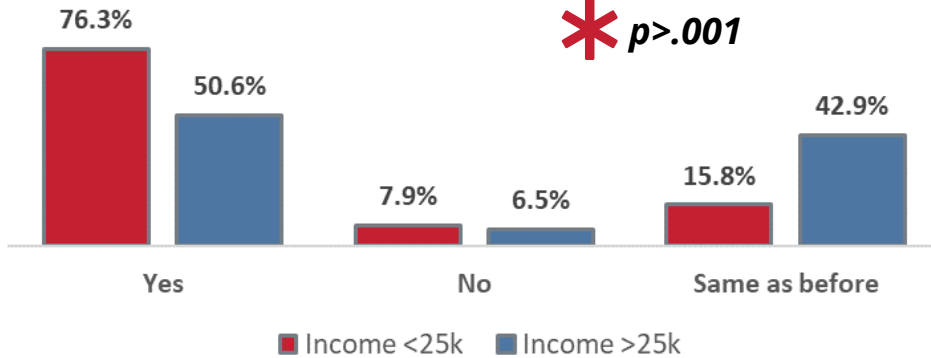
Respondents reported appreciating the uniqueness, variety, and diversity of the Imagination Library books.

### I find the reading tips included on the inside flap of the Imagination Library books to be useful.

A much larger share of lower income households (92 percent) agreed that the reading tips were helpful, compared to higher income households, of whom only 68 percent agreed.



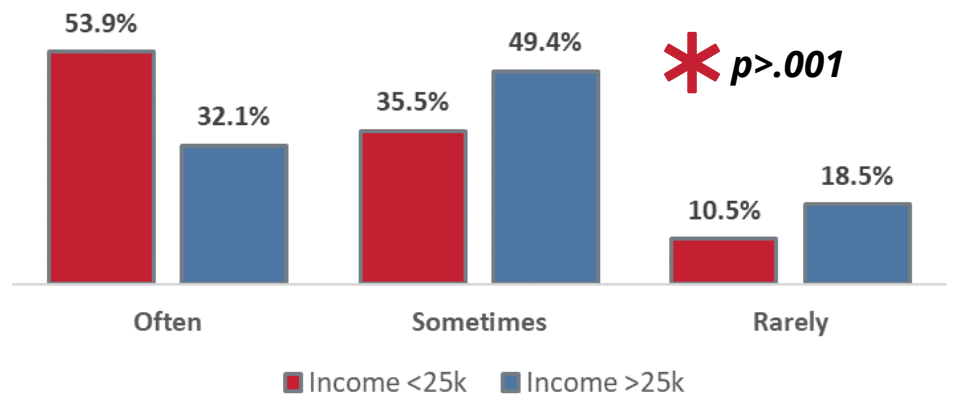
Since you've been receiving Imagination Library books, is your child asking you to read to them more often?



About half of higher income parents and three-quarters of lower income parents reported their children asking to be read to more often.

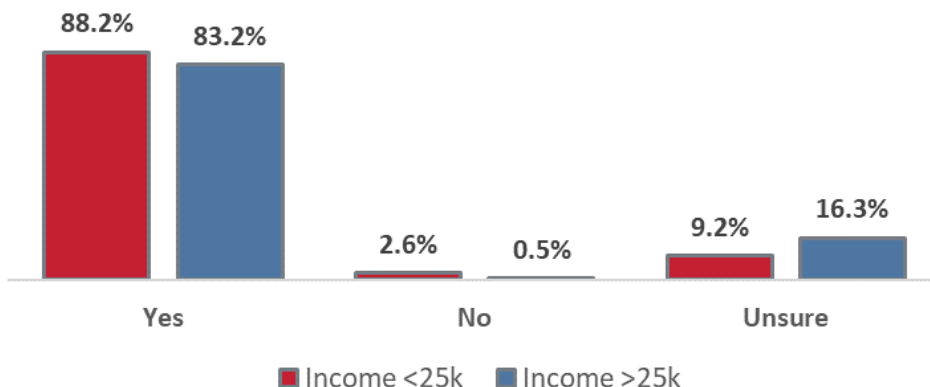
How often do you find your child using new words they have learned from books you have read?

Over 80 percent of all respondents indicated that they found their children using new words they learned while reading the Imagination Library Books at least some of the time.

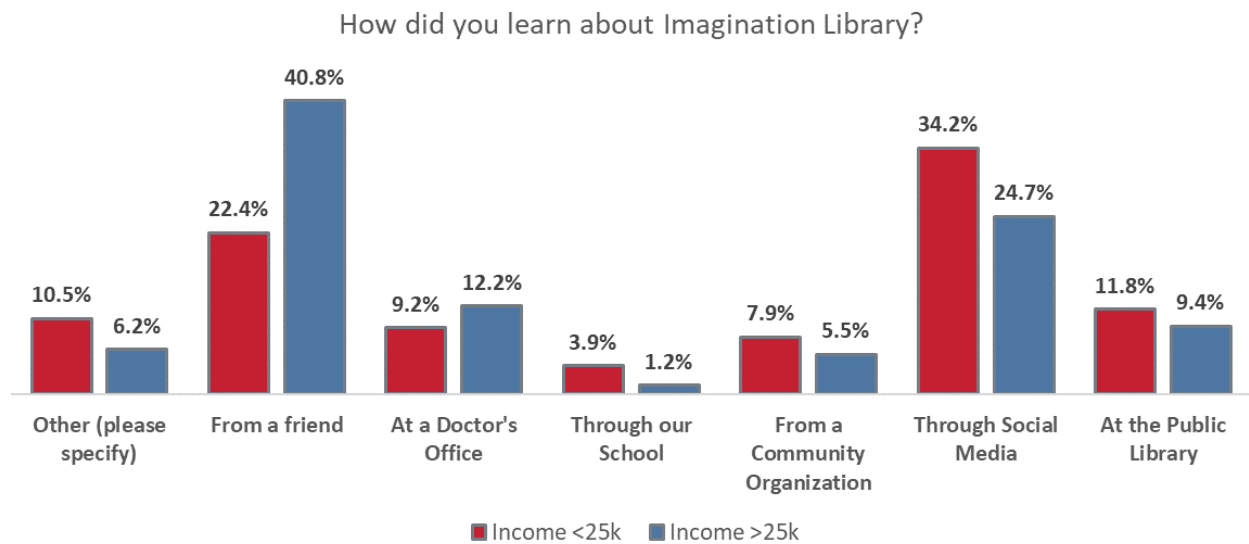


Do you believe participation in Imagination Library is helping your child better prepare for kindergarten?

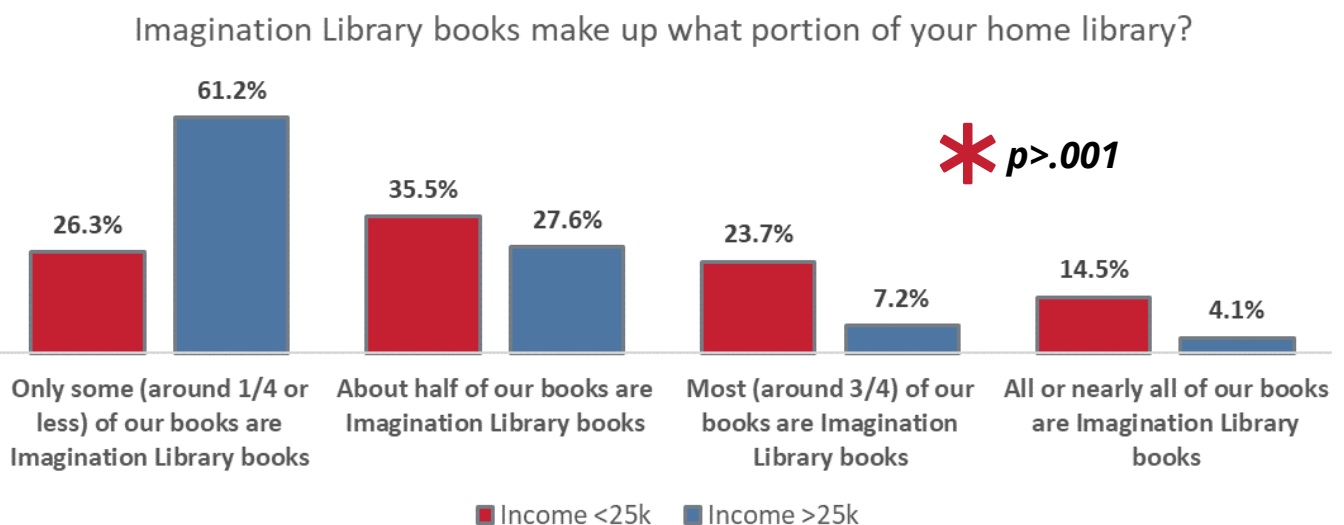
Regardless of income, over 80 percent of all respondents believed that participation in the program has been helping their child better prepare for kindergarten.



The most common ways of learning about the Imagination Library program were hearing about it **from a friend**, or through **social media**. Roughly twenty percent of the respondents also reported learning about the program through the **public library**, or at their **doctor's office**.



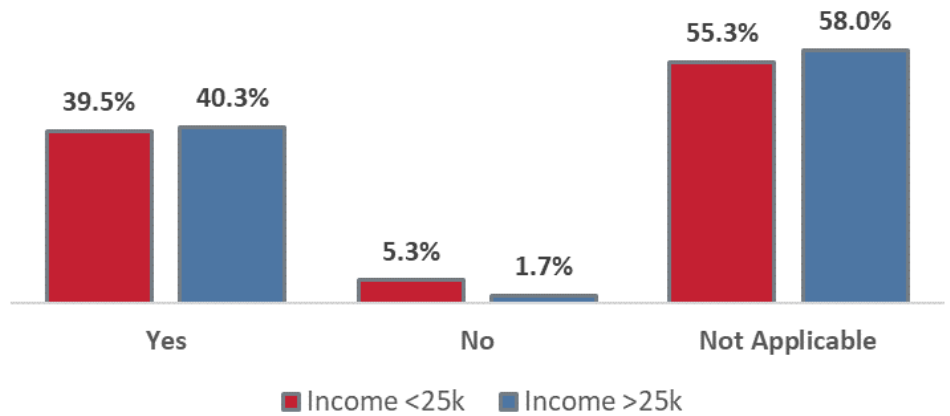
Over a third of low-income households said that "most" to "all or nearly all" of the books in their home were Imagination Library books. In general, a greater proportion of the books in lower-income households came from Imagination Library compared to higher income households.



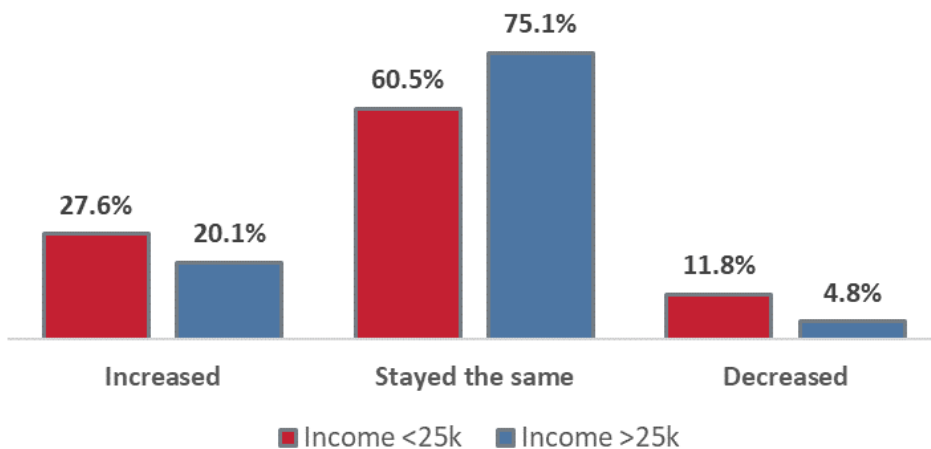


Roughly 40 percent of all respondents reported their older children who were not enrolled in the program also enjoyed the books. If you remove the participants who indicated that this question is not applicable to them, the percentage of older siblings who also enjoy the books jumps up to 94 percent!

Do older non-enrolled brothers or sisters also read and enjoy the books?



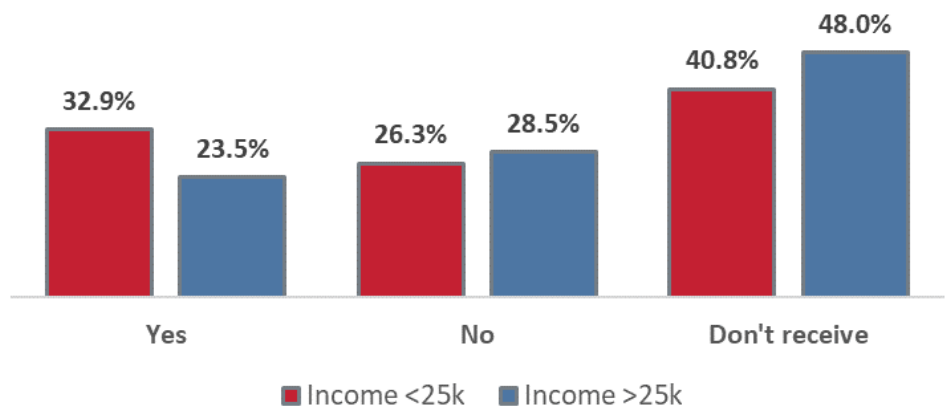
Since participating in Imagination Library, our public library use has:



There was modest increased library usage as a result of receiving the Imagination Library books. For the majority of respondents however, library usage remained consistent.

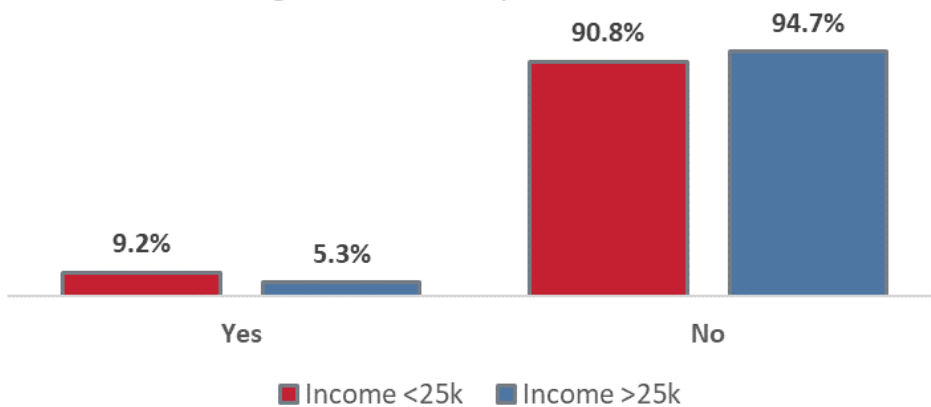
A large portion of the respondents indicated not receiving the e-newsletter, and amongst respondents who *did* receive the letter, roughly half of the respondents reported regularly reading it, while half did not.

### Do you regularly read our Imagination Library e-newsletter?



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### Have you taken advantage of any of the information, offers, or events included in our Imagination Library e-newsletter?



Overwhelmingly, respondents indicated that they did not take advantage of the e-newsletter's offerings.

# In their own words...

I love the Imagination Library. My children love their books. I read at least one book from the Imagination Library each day. -44028

I'm thankful for the bilingual books and ethnic diversity!  
-44035

I appreciate you sending books especially during hard times when I can't afford new ones or damaged ones.  
-44028

It is such a wonderful resource for families, especially as books are so expensive! Kids shouldn't suffer if parents can't afford books or the time to take them to a library. -44012



I love the diversity. Being a white, middle income family, I enjoy sharing books about other cultures. It helps broaden my child's interests and understanding. -44011

Thank you for sending books with Spanish and English!  
-44074

As a parent I'm super appreciative of this program and how it is promoting positivity in reading for now and years to come! It's essential thing for kids to learn. -44053

This is an excellent program. I wish you allowed the older kids to receive them too.  
-44039

## Summary

The vast majority of respondents had particularly positive things to say about the Imagination Library Program. Common themes included: appreciation for not having to spend money on books; the diverse nature of the books' content; their children being excited to receive something in the mail every month. Many respondents reported wishing the program extended to children older than five.

Constructive criticisms were few, but they primarily focused on receiving duplicate offerings when households had multiple children in the program, and the occasional irregularity with which books were delivered, with a handful of respondents reporting not receiving books some months.