

ReadingPals is a **statewide early literacy initiative** of The Children's Movement of Florida that provides volunteer mentors for pre-K to 3rd grade students who may need extra help.

Early Literacy

To improve students' vocabulary and understanding of the fundamental building blocks of early literacy



Mentorship

To strengthen confidence, self-awareness, and empathy through a consistent relationship between mentors and students



Love of Reading

To reinforce a love of reading with high-quality books and engaging activities



Thanks to local partners and volunteers, ReadingPals now spans:

15 Regional Programs

23 Participating Counties

419 Classrooms

210 Locations

For every dollar invested in ReadingPals base grants, **local programs leveraged \$1.27 more** from other funders and partners—more than doubling the reach of the statewide investment.



ReadingPals mentors supported **2,796 students** this year from pre-K through 3rd grade. Each student took home an average of 17 books for their home libraries.

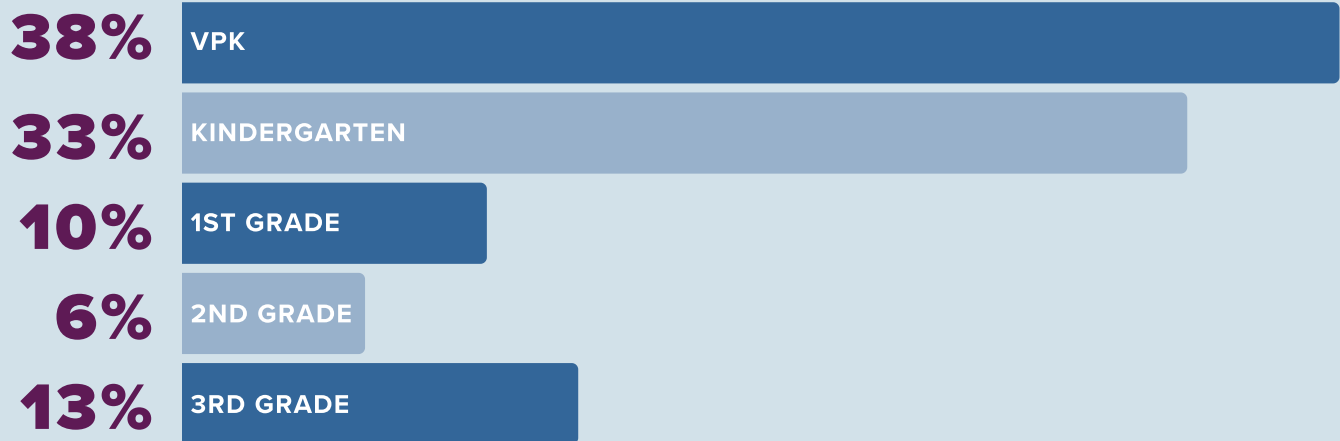
2,796

Students Matched



Student Participation by Grade

2024-2025



Nearly three-quarters of ReadingPals students are in VPK or kindergarten. These are the years when children's brains are most receptive to language and literacy growth—**making early intervention a powerful way to close learning gaps** before they start.

15

Average Reading
Sessions Per Student

17

Average Take Home
Books Per Student



1,622

Volunteer Mentors

62%

Returning Volunteers

35%

Returning Volunteers
3+ Years in Program

Volunteer Demographics

42%

RETIRED

35%

WORKING

17%

STUDENTS

5%

OTHER



YOU can be part of this impact.
Volunteer as a ReadingPal or help
spread the word so more children have
the chance to read, learn, and thrive.



Scan the QR code or click
the link below to learn more.

CLICK HERE



Learning and Connecting from Coast to Coast



Coordinators across 15 regional programs gathered at the **2026 ReadingPals Celebration Dinner** to share common successes and challenges, celebrate the program's 14-year legacy, and prepare for the next school year. Together, the group honored early literacy mentors and regional programs who are actively shaping children's futures through reading and relationships.

Congratulations to our 2026 ReadingPals Impact Award Recipients!



*Thank you for sharing the joy of reading while building the
confidence of young readers.*



For the 5th consecutive year, we held our statewide virtual conference & celebration as we concluded our 14th year of ReadingPals!



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Kent S. Johnson

Chief Executive Officer
Highlights for Children, Inc.

Kent S. Johnson has served as Chief Executive Officer of Highlights for Children for more than 20 years and is a passionate advocate for children, especially in their earliest years. Highlights for Children's vision is to help create a more optimistic and empathetic world where all children can become their best selves: curious, creative, confident, and caring. Along with its subsidiary, Zaner-Bloser, Highlights reaches millions of children, families, and educators at home, at school, and in many places in between.

[VIEW THE FULL 42-MINUTE PROGRAM](#)



The Children's Movement proudly joined **Children's Week 2026** connecting with hundreds of families, educators, advocates, and lawmakers throughout Tallahassee. Outside the Capitol, the ReadingPals booth welcomed visitors of all ages to explore early learning resources, share stories, and celebrate the joy of reading together.

