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Atlanta Metro Launches ‘Read in Color’ Initiative, Sharing Thousands of Diverse Books in Little Free Libraries

The Little Free Library nonprofit, Family Literacy of Georgia and Fathers Incorporated teamed up to distribute little libraries and books that amplify BIPOC and LGBTQ+ voices.



Atlanta (October 30, 2021) – The Little Free Library® (LFL) nonprofit organization launched their **Read in Color** diverse-books initiative in the Atlanta metro area today in partnership with Family Literacy of Georgia and Fathers Incorporated. Through the initiative, 20 new Little Free Library book-sharing boxes will be established in high-impact areas and more than 3,500 diverse books will be distributed to help promote understanding, equity and inclusion.

The launch of Read in Color was announced with a video featuring the Atlanta Drumline Academy, author Meg Medina, Chairman Jeffrey Turner of Clayton County and other special guests. Watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9QusiAoWN4>

"What an honor to be selected to partner with the Little Free Library organization on Read in Color, a program to intentionally place book-sharing structures in communities of color," said Shavawn Simmons, Executive Director for Family Literacy of Georgia, a nonprofit based in Morrow, GA. "For me the cherry on the pie is the fact that each of our stewards will receive a year of free new diverse books: diverse authors, diverse topics, and characters centered on people of color."

Fewer than 25% of children's books depict non-white characters, according to a recent study from the Cooperative Children's Book Center. This lack of diversity in kids' literature makes the Read in Color initiative a vital resource.

"Our mission at Family Literacy of Georgia is perfect for the Read in Color program," Simmons said. "We seek to deliver literacy resources to communities of color that will inspire kids and their families to 'look forward' to reading! We seek to build enthusiasm for reading outside of the classroom setting where kids often see reading as work. Through our agency, we are really trying to provide children and their families another experience with reading. We want them to read for pleasure!"

A National Diverse Books Movement

LFL has launched the Read in Color initiative in Minneapolis, Boston, Washington, D.C., New York, Detroit, Kalamazoo, MI, Tulsa, OK, Ferguson, MO, and now Atlanta. This year alone, more than 100 Read in Color libraries and 20,000 diverse books will be shared.

"We are proud to work alongside such incredible community-centered organizations as Family Literacy of Georgia and Father's Incorporated to improve book access and build community through the sharing of diverse books in Little Free Libraries," said Shelby King, Director of Programs at LFL. "It is our hope that through these new libraries, books that provide perspectives on racism and social justice; celebrate BIPOC, LGBTQ, and other important voices; and incorporate experiences from all identities for all readers will make their way into the hands and homes of people all over the city."

Support for Read in Color in Atlanta was generously provided by HarperCollins Publishers and their Read in Full Color program and Scholastic and their Power of Story program. Community nonprofit organizations Read 4 Unity and Everybody Wins! Atlanta are bringing their expertise to the project as well.

Read in Color is poised to become part of the fabric of Greater Atlanta and beyond. "This is just the beginning of our efforts to promote these little libraries," said Simmons. "Our future fundraising efforts will be targeted to raise money to purchase and stock Read in Color Little Free Libraries to install across the metro region, then the state."

LFL's national **Read in Color** initiative, which was introduced in Minneapolis last year in response to George Floyd's murder, has four key components:

1. **Little Free Library installations** full of culturally relevant books, placed in high-need communities.
2. **Free diverse books** for applying LFL stewards, purchased from independent and BIPOC-owned bookstores when possible. (See Atlanta offer below!)
3. **Recommended reading lists** representing Black, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Indigenous, Latinx, Muslim, LGBTQ+ and other communities.
4. **Read in Color pledge**, allowing everyone to show their support for diverse books and access downloadable resources.

Get involved!

Atlanta LFL stewards can apply to receive a free bundle of diverse books: bit.ly/2Y1vfTw

To learn more and sign the Read in Color pledge visit LittleFreeLibrary.org/Read-In-Color.

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About Little Free Library:

Little Free Library® (LFL) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that builds community, inspires readers, and expands book access for all through a global network of volunteer-led Little Free Libraries. LFL received the 2020 World Literacy Award as well as honors from the Library of Congress and National Book Foundation. There are more than 100,000 registered Little Free Library book-sharing boxes worldwide in all 50 states, 110 countries and 7 continents; through them, more than 200 million books have been shared. LittleFreeLibrary.org.