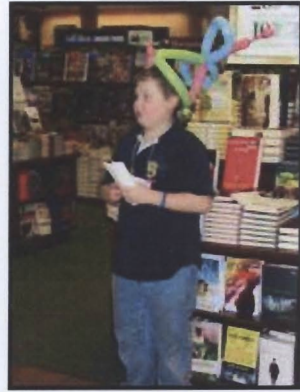


# Helping hands: United Way Imagination Library Day a success

Submitted by Jessica Johnson United Way of Central Minnesota

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On Dec. 9, United Way teamed up with Barnes & Noble to get donations for its Imagination Library program. Many special events took place during the day including holiday carolers, reading in the children's area, gift wrapping, a visit from Santa and clowns making balloon shapes.



Nik Wolinski, a Youth as Resources board member, makes a presentation during an event for the Imagination Library program.

The donation was tied to sales volume, and the high level of sales that day allowed Imagination Library to receive 25 percent of purchases — the highest rate available.

A total of \$3,115.14 went to United Way's Imagination Library program, with \$3,001.64 from voucher sales and another \$113.50 from gift-wrapping donations. There were 50 volunteers who helped make the day possible.

Imagination Library is a partnership between United Way of Central Minnesota's Success By 6 program and the Dollywood Foundation.

Success By 6 works to build community support for children during formative years.

Parents who live or work in United Way's service area with children under the age of 5 are eligible to sign up for this program. Upon enrollment, a new, age appropriate, selected book is mailed monthly directly to a child free.

Imagination Library is funded locally by The Gannett Foundation, The Bernick Family Foundation and individual donations from parents, community members, organizations, businesses and special grants.

Currently, 7,819 children are enrolled in Imagination Library. A child can be sponsored for \$35 per year.

For more information, call the United Way of Central Minnesota at 252-0227 or visit [www.unitedwayhelps.org](http://www.unitedwayhelps.org).



Photos submitted by Jessica Johnson, United Way of Central Minnesota Katie Pickett, an AmeriCorps member serving with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, reads to children on Dec. 9 at Barnes & Noble during an event for the Imagination Library program.