



*Kristi Yamaguchi's*  
**ALWAYS DREAM**

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**Impact Report – Hawai‘i**  
**2025-26**

**Stories That Inspire.**



**Stories That Last.**



## ALOHA FRIENDS,

As we reflect on the stories that have inspired us over the past 30 years, I find myself thinking back to my own childhood.

Before I stepped onto the ice, I was a little girl discovering the world through books.

Reading introduced me to dreams bigger than the ones I could see around me. I imagine many of you have memories like that too — a favorite bedtime story or the comfort of reading with a caring adult.

Those moments shape us in ways we often don't realize. That's why family reading is at the heart of our work. When families read together, they build literacy skills, of course, but also confidence, connection, and a lifelong love of learning. Because of your

support, 2,835 keiki and family members across Hawai'i are creating those meaningful moments together today.

In this report, you'll see stories of growth, discovery, and joy from our Hawai'i communities, reminding us every child deserves the opportunity to dream. Mahalo for being part of our story over the past 30 years. Together, we're creating stories that inspire today and stories that will last for generations to come.

With gratitude,

*Kristi Yamaguchi*

Kristi Yamaguchi,  
Founder & Board Chair



## MEET OUR BOOK COACHES!



### **TERRIE TOGAFAU-TARPLEY**

*Lead Family Literacy  
Book Coach*

#### **FAVORITE BOOK**

*The Taste of Blackberries*  
by Doris Buchanan



← Look for these boxes throughout the report to get to know our Book Coaches!

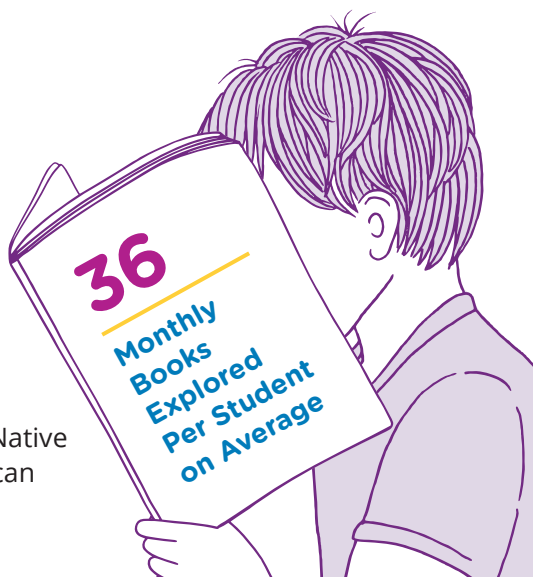


*"I love celebrating student reading success over the school year. Seeing the sheer number of books they collectively read throughout the year was amazing!"*

*- Partner Teacher, Hawai'i*

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

- 40% Native Hawaiian
- 20% Asian
- 18% Other Pacific Islander
- 9% White
- 5% Hispanic/Latinx
- 4% Other
- 3% Prefer Not to Answer
- 1% Black or African American
- 0% American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 0% Middle Eastern or North African

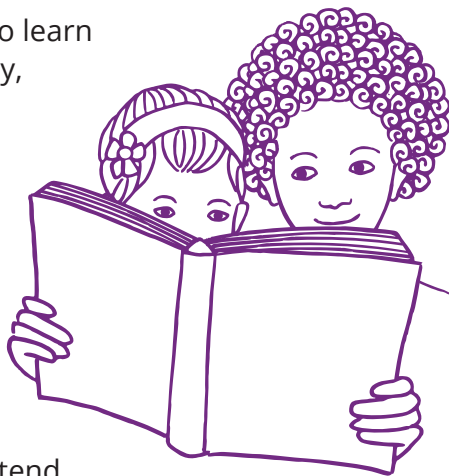


# WHY FAMILY READING MATTERS

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Keiki who arrive at school ready to learn are more likely to read proficiently, graduate on time, and pursue opportunities throughout their lives. One of the most powerful ways to build that foundation is also one of the simplest: **reading together.**

Reading just one book a day exposes a child to more than 78,000 words each year. But the benefits of shared reading extend far beyond vocabulary.



We believe families are a child's first and most important teachers, and many caregivers, especially those in under-resourced communities, face barriers including limited time, access to books, or confidence in supporting literacy at home. **Always Reading** helps each 'ohana overcome those barriers so they can experience the lasting benefits of reading together.

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Since participating in Always Reading...

97%

of caregivers see themselves as important in creating reading routines

81%

of caregivers report their child asks to be read to more often



**JEN SPENCER**

*Family Literacy Book Coach*

**FAVORITE BOOK** *Harold and the Purple Crayon*  
by Crockett Johnson

## BENEFITS OF SHARED READING:



**Builds social-emotional competence**



**Creates moments of connection**



**Supports cognitive development**

*"I enjoyed having easy access to a wide variety of books, and the Super Reader awards were helpful in motivating my child to read more."*

*- Caregiver, Chiefess Kapi'olani Elementary*



# THE ALWAYS READING JOURNEY

Through books, technology, personalized support, and evidence-based curriculum, families of pre-K and kindergarten students gain the tools they need to build reading routines at home. Here's what that journey looks like.

## STEP 1:

### Meet Your Always Reading Book Coach

Every Always Reading 'ohana is paired with a dedicated Book Coach who provides encouragement, guidance, and practical literacy tips throughout the school year.

Welcome to Always Reading! ✨ We will send you ideas and easy tips to help you read books aloud with your child. Watch for texts each Tuesday and Thursday afternoon.



**SOFIA CASTAÑEDA**

*Family Literacy  
Book Coach*

#### FAVORITE BOOK

*Giraffes Can't Dance*  
by Giles Andreae

## STEP 2:

### Build Your Home Library

Families receive a tablet and digital library of 40,000+ engaging books, culturally relevant stories, and hard-copy books that make reading possible anytime, anywhere.

**78%**

of caregivers report their child looks at books more times per week with them since participating in Always Reading



### STEP 3: Learn... Together!

Always Reading leads families through our curriculum, providing tools, tips, and encouragement for at-home reading.

#### Module 1: Picture Walking

Children use **illustrations** to make predictions and build understanding before even reading the words.



#### Module 2: Asking Questions

**Questions** help children stay engaged, think critically, and connect more deeply with stories.



#### Module 3: Making Meaning

**Reflection** helps children build comprehension and connect stories to their own experiences.



95%

of caregivers report using the strategies taught to them in the Always Reading program

### THE ALWAYS READING DIFFERENCE

Many literacy programs focus on children, but Always Reading focuses on **families**. Through Book Coach support, access to books, and research-based literacy practices, caregivers become confident partners in their child's learning.

# THE HEART OF OUR WORK: ALWAYS DREAM BOOK COACHES

At the heart of Always Reading is a person. Our Book Coaches are former teachers, early childhood educators, and social workers who bring both professional expertise and a deep understanding of the communities and families we serve.

Book Coaches help families turn book access into a lasting reading habit. By meeting families where they are, they build genuine relationships with caregivers and provide individualized support each step of the way.

Book Coaches also partner with teachers, sharing reading data and connecting classroom learning with at-home reading experiences. We bridge the gap between school and home, and help create a circle of support around each child.





## VALDEANE ODACHI

*Family Literacy Book Coach*

**FAVORITE BOOK** *Moo, Baa, Lalala*  
by Sandra Boynton

# 7,827

**family support  
touchpoints by our  
Hawai'i Book Coaches  
this year**

Hi there, Aiden achieved the Super Reader goal this month! Great job!

Thanks, Ms. Val! Aiden's love of reading has united us as a family together with incorporating reading somewhere in our busy day daily 🧡

**90%**

**of caregivers report  
they found their  
Book Coach to be a  
valuable part of the  
program**

**98%**

**of principals and  
teachers report that  
their Book Coach  
was valuable in  
supporting parent  
engagement goals**



## SARA CARRILLO

*Family Literacy  
Book Coach*

**FAVORITE BOOK**  
*The Napping House*  
by Audry Wood

*"Before this program, my son did not care to read books. He would lose interest quickly. Now he loves searching for books that he wants to read. One of his favorite series is Scribbles and Ink."*

*- Caregiver, Wai'anae Elementary*



# TURNING PAGES TOGETHER

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Families are a child's first and most important teachers. When caregivers have access to our Always Reading program, reading becomes a shared family experience that strengthens literacy, confidence, and connection.

## KELVIN'S STORY

After our Book Coach learned about Kelvin's interests through conversations with his mother, she created personalized book collections on the digital library just for him. Soon, mother and son were reading together, exploring new topics, and even building a volcano inspired by a book they discovered on the digital library. What began as reading practice became quality time spent learning side by side.



**CHARA RODRIGUES**

*Family Literacy  
Book Coach*

**FAVORITE BOOK**  
*Wemberly Worried*  
by Kevin Henkes

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Since participating in  
Always Reading...

**85%**

of caregivers say  
the books they read  
were relevant to  
their family's culture,  
experiences, or needs

**91%**

of caregivers feel  
better able to help  
their child develop a  
love of reading

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## READING COMES TO LIFE



Throughout the school year, Ka'ūmana student Kenzo returned again to books about battleships, tanks, and World War II in his digital library. His enthusiasm showed an important part of the Always Reading approach: helping children discover books that speak to their interests and inspire them to keep learning.

That curiosity soon carried Kenzo beyond the book.

During a summer trip to Japan, Kenzo and his mom visited the Yamato Museum, where they explored the history of shipbuilding and saw subjects he had read about come to life.

Interest-driven reading can deepen a child's understanding of the world and inspire discoveries that last well beyond the school year. By following Kenzo's interests and exploring alongside him, his mom extended his learning beyond reading time and encouraged his curiosity in a meaningful, experiential way.

***"Love this real-life making-meaning moment!"***

*- Kristi Yamaguchi*

***"I barely used to read with my kids. Now with the tablet, it was more encouraging for both me and my kids!"***

*- Caregiver, Nānāikapono Elementary*





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**ALWAYS DREAM**

Mahalo nui loa for helping children and families discover the joy of reading together. Your support builds confidence, sparks imagination, and opens doors to opportunity — one story at a time.

**DONATE  
TODAY**



## **CONTACT US**

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