



Early Language & Literacy Coalition Update



Caring and Connected

As we prepare to end this year, it is a good time to reflect on all that has been accomplished and learned during 2020. The past year brought many unexpected changes and challenges. With those things came increased partnerships, new ways of connecting and communicating, and innovative ways of doing what is essential, both personally and professionally. We have a lot to be proud of this year. We've also seen heightened stress and feelings of anxiety throughout this year, and these can increase over the holiday season.

During the upcoming weeks, we encourage you to take time to care for yourself and those around you. Consider how you can reach out to family and friends, and check on others who may be isolated, lonely, or going through a tough time. Take time to practice self-care whether it's reading a book, cooking, or simply sitting quietly.

If you find you still need help, reach out to [211](#) for mental health resources. We hope this holiday season brings you much health, peace, and joy. We look forward to working with you in 2021. Happy Holidays!



Visit The Basics

Holiday Reading

The holidays are an exciting time of year for adults and kids alike! Stories and traditions are an important part of this season, and you and your little ones can read some fantastic books to learn more about the holidays celebrated in our community. Why not check out some books from

Website

your local branch of the Chattahoochee Valley Library or Phenix City Library to read about different holiday traditions?

Find Us on
Facebook

- Hanukkah, December 10-18: *How Do Dinosaurs Say Happy Chanukah?* by Jane Yolen, *Little Red Ruthie: A Hanukkah Tale* by Gloria Koster, and *Hanukkah: A Counting Book in English, Hebrew and Yiddish* by Emily Sper.

Find Us on
Instagram

- Christmas, December 25: *Celebrating Christmas* by Shelly Nielsen, *The Christmas Gift/El Regalo de Navidad* by Francisco Jimenez, or *The Legend of the Poinsettia* by Tomie de Paola.

- Kwanzaa, December 26-January 1: *Seven Spools of Thread: A Kwanzaa Story* by Angela Shelf Medearis, *K is for Kwanzaa: A Kwanzaa Alphabet Book* by Juwanda G. Ford, or *My First Kwanzaa Book* by Deborah M. Newton.

For questions, contact Grace Nagel at gnagel@unitedwayofthecv.org



Book Drive

Got Books? Volunteers are needed to help build the home libraries of students at Community Schools United. Key indicators in whether a child is successful in school are access to books in the home. Studies have found that children with greater access to books and other print materials express more enjoyment of reading and academics. On average, children in economically depressed communities have 0-2 age-appropriate books in their homes. In efforts to support students at Community Schools sites, we are accepting donations of new or gently used books for ages 4-11 years (Grades PreK-5th).

Please contact Pam Romero at promero@unitedwayofthecv.org for more information or to schedule pick-up or drop-off.



2020 Georgia Runoff Election

The Georgia Runoff Election Day is January 5, 2021! If you want to skip the lines and vote early, locations are currently open until December 31st from 7AM to 7PM.

Exercise your right to VOTE! If you have questions or concerns, contact City Services at 706-653-4392 or 311. [See voting flyer.](#)



Energy Assistance & Enrollment

Do you have clients with children between the ages of 6 weeks to 4 years old? Or those with need for assistance with utility bills? Enrichment Services Program, Inc. is accepting appointment calls and looking to enroll students every Wednesday.

Energy Assistance inquiries are being accepted for residents of the following Georgia counties: Chattahoochee, Clay, Harris, Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Stewart, and Talbot. Please note that appointments for Muscogee County have been filled. [See flyer for location information for your county.](#)



Caring for Each Other

A health emergency brings many changes and much uncertainty for young children and their families. In response to the unprecedented uncertainty facing young children and families, Sesame Workshop's Caring for Each Other initiative marks the beginning of a commitment to support families throughout the COVID-19 health crisis with a broad variety of free resources. The resources on [this page](#) can help families cope during challenging times. Discover printables, videos, and more on topics to help the families you work with.

WEBINARS



America's Paid Leave Crisis

ZERO WEEKS provides a powerful pre-pandemic snapshot of paid family leave's impact on American families, employers, and communities. Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS) and 9to5 Georgia invite you to join a screening and panel discussion on paid leave. Policymakers, business leaders, families, as well as early care, health, and senior care professionals are encouraged to join us for this important conversation. Mark your calendars for Thursday, January 7th from 6 PM to 8 PM.

[View the trailer & learn more.](#)

[Register here.](#)

We Want to Hear From You



Share your joys and challenges with us as you care for yourself, the people around you, and the families you serve. Let us know what resources you find helpful. We're here to listen, support, and strengthen our community. [Email our team today.](#)

Common Agenda

The Early Language and Literacy Coalition works to create a community where all children thrive. Our collective impact approach supports, promotes, and complements community wide initiatives of Get Georgia Reading, The Basics Chattahoochee Valley, and Columbus 2025. We engage with a cross-sector of community partners to ensure all children become proficient readers by the end of third grade, paving the way to improved outcomes throughout school and life.

Early Language and Literacy Coalition Background

Early Language and Literacy partners in the Chattahoochee Valley recognize that literacy is much more than an education issue. Our efforts to change long-term outcomes must begin early—long before children enter kindergarten. We are focused on the root causes of why a child might not be reading. Root causes include early brain development and language-rich interactions with infants and toddlers, school attendance, summer learning loss, and the influence of physical and mental health on all aspects of learning and development. Far too many children in our community lack access to quality health care, housing, nutrition, and supportive learning environments. And far too many children experience the trauma of stress and violence in their homes and neighborhoods, inhibiting their ability to learn and grow. Children cannot learn when they are hungry, sick, or scared.



[View as Webpage](#)

United Way fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in every community. We have one life. To live better, we must LIVE UNITED®.