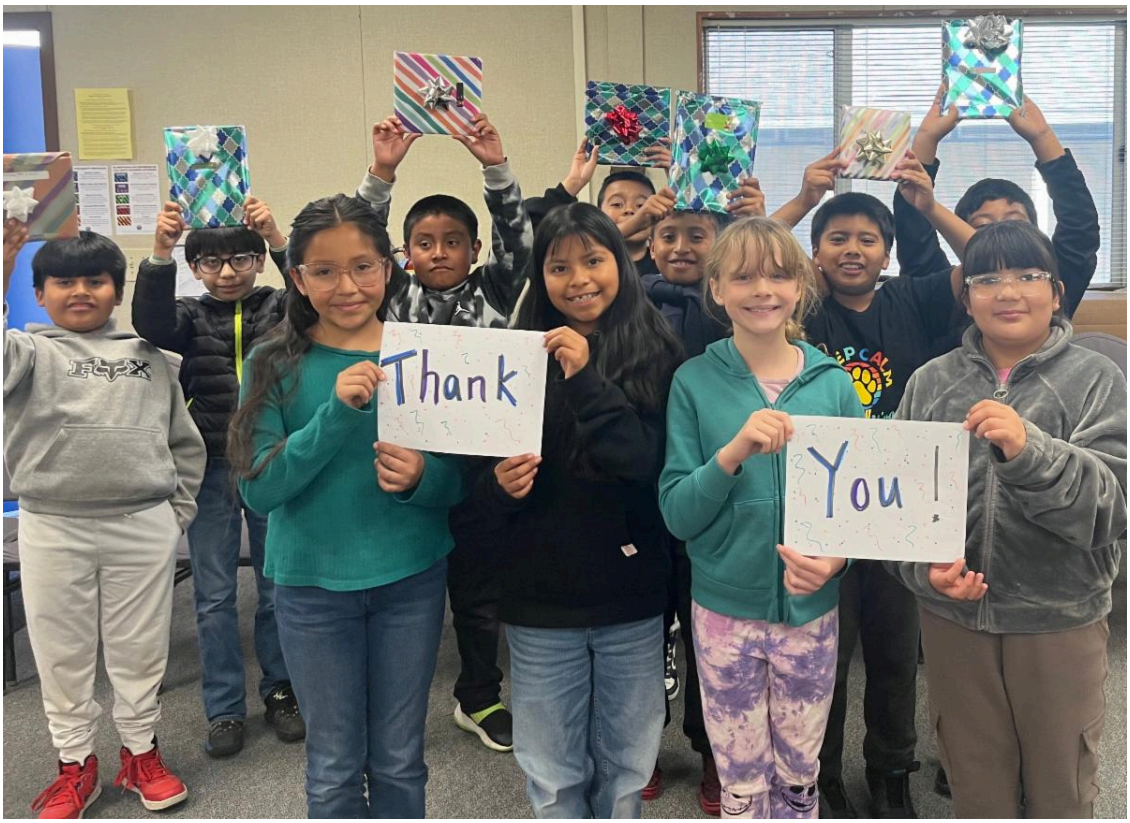
Sparking Literacy

Read to Me PROJECT
SIBLINGS READING SUCCEEDING

TOPLINE NEWS FROM READ TO ME PROJECT FEBRUARY 2025



A Match Made in Giving:
You Helped Us Reach New Heights!

We're thrilled to announce that the match has been made, helping us raise **a record total of $121,086.27** through the **2024 Monterey County Gives! campaign**. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed—your support is ensuring that the more than 3,500 children from low-literacy families we are serving in Monterey County this year **gain the skills they need to succeed in school and life**. This also helps us lay the groundwork for even more growth and impact in the 2025/26 school year. **We couldn't do this important work without you!**

A special thank you to the Monterey County Gives! partners—**Community Foundation for Monterey County, Monterey County Weekly**, and **Monterey Peninsula Foundation**—for facilitating the campaign and providing the very generous match that made this new height possible.



As shared in our December newsletter, our **Annual Book Wrap** was a huge hit! A total of 1,140 students in Monterey County gifted new books to their little ones, creating special moments of shared reading.

When our Program Coordinators checked in with students in January, **they were excited to share how the gifting went:**

📖 *"My little one is now picking out colors from the book I gave her."*
— 4th grade student, Virginia Rocca Barton (Salinas), reading to their 3-year-old sibling
📖 *"My little one is now reading the book to me!"*
— 5th grade student, Oak Avenue (Greenfield), reading to their 5-year-old sibling
📖 *"It was the only book she wanted me to read her, over and over, the whole break!"*
— Student from Creekside (Salinas), reading to their 4-year-old sibling

These heartfelt moments highlight the power of early reading and the lasting impact of giving the gift of books!

The January edition of ***Monterey Bay Parent*** **magazine** highlights the importance of early literacy, with a **special spotlight on Read to Me Project**. Click **here** to read the article about how kindergarten readiness lays the foundation for brighter futures.
This is why we do what we do.

MPUSD Collaboration - Parent Education

Our ten-session parent education collaboration with **Monterey Peninsula Unified School District (MPUSD)** kicked off in January at **Ord Terrace Elementary School** in **Seaside**. RtMP Program Coordinator, **Esmeralda Carranco**, shared this about the first session:

*"MPUSD Parent Ed at Ord Terrace Elementary was **an A+ all around**—for the district, Read to Me Project and the community. Seven mothers joined our first Saturday morning session, **excited to be introduced to the Abriendo Puertas/RtMP curriculum**. Our session was taught in Spanish to support their home language and foster a sense of mutual encouragement. **We laughed, we learned, and we shared.** The mothers spoke about their challenges but also celebrated their victories, lifting each other up. **They left feeling reassured, knowing they weren't alone in their experiences.**"*



MPUSD Collaboration - Reading Partners

We're excited to return to **MPUSD** for both school-day and afterschool classes! Select 5th and 6th grade students at **Del Rey Woods** and **Ord Terrace Elementary** (both in **Seaside**) are reading to TK, K, and 1st grade students as part of our spring semester Reading Partners program. RtMP Program Director, **Kathy Tojaga**, shared:

*"MPUSD Reading Partners is off to an incredible start, showing **the power of community and mentorship**. Sixth graders, initially shy about reading to younger students, quickly discovered that not only was it easier than they expected—**it was fun! Laughter and excitement filled the room as they practiced engaging little ones through pictures and storytelling.***
*This energy and confidence spill over to the TK and Kinder students, who look up to their 6th-grade reading partners like older siblings. **Inspired by their mentors, these little ones are building a love for reading—one joyful story at a time."***







Community Connections - Greenfield's Resource Festival

We enjoyed connecting with local families and students through a read-aloud at **Greenfield's Annual PK, TK, and Kindergarten Resource Festival** earlier this month. It was wonderful to see so many students proudly showcasing their skills!



Calling All Volunteers…

We'd love your help with an important project! We're assembling medals and certificates for our end-of-year ceremonies, where we celebrate the achievements of our student readers. **By helping prepare these awards, you'll ensure that our 4th–6th grade students—who have spent the year reading to their little siblings at home to help get them kindergarten-ready—are recognized for their hard work.** Every bit of help makes a difference, and we'd love for you to be part of this meaningful effort!

Volunteer Details

📌 **What:** Preparing medals and certificates for our student awards
📅 **When:** Wednesday, March 19 (Noon–4:00 PM; join for an hour or more)
📍 **Where:** Read to Me Project office, Salinas, CA
✉️ **How to Sign Up:** To sign up or ask questions, contact Kam Lee at kam@readtomeproject.org

Can't make it on March 19th? We'll also need help with our book bin inventory in early summer. Let Kam know if you're interested, and she'll share details once they're finalized.



Next Up...

The school year is moving quickly, and there's still so much to look forward to—more in-classroom coaching sessions on the **9 Best Ways to Read to Young Children**, more book checkouts, and our Awards Ceremonies—where students are celebrated for inspiring **a love of reading** and helping promote **kindergarten readiness** and **school success** for their young siblings!

Every Child Entering Kindergarten Prepared to Succeed
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