



Introduction to The Reading Connection

For over 25 years, The Reading Connection (TRC) has been sharing the magic of books with at-risk kids in metro DC. The Reading Connection improves the lives of at-risk kids by linking the magic of reading to fun experiences that inspire a passion for learning.

TRC's Programs

The *Read-Aloud Program* aims to share the joy and excitement books can provide with at-risk kids. Volunteers serve as role models and encourage children to discover the joy of reading and the knowledge found in books. They meet other volunteers who share their commitment to children and a love of reading. Parents consistently tell us that their kids are more interested in reading after participating in our program.

We Are Readers is an extension of the Read-Aloud program that intensifies kids' reading experiences over the summer. Kids attend two Read-Alouds per week, are visited by special guests and receive motivation and rewards for their reading.

The *Book Club* extends reading motivation to families with young children who are clients of social service agencies in the area. Once enrolled in the Book Club, families receive free new books by mail each month, along with suggestions of ways to encourage reading in the home.

Reading Families Workshops, offered in English, Spanish and bilingually, are designed to increase parents' confidence in sharing books with their children. TRC staff and volunteers model book-sharing techniques to parents in playgroup and adult class settings, providing useful tips on reading with kids of all ages.

At *Literacy Advocates Trainings* and *Launching Young Readers* trainings, partner staff and school staff learn to look for and reinforce literacy development milestones when working with children in their programs.



Read-Aloud Volunteer Position Description

Program Overview

The Read-Aloud Program lets kids experience the joy found in reading and books and helps them to see themselves as readers. Read-Alouds are held weekly at 14 different shelter, transitional housing and affordable housing communities. Teams of volunteers spend an hour reading with kids and engaging them in conversation and related activities. At the end of each Read-Aloud, children choose a new book to add to their personal library.

Volunteer Responsibilities

- Work with a team of volunteers to plan a one-hour monthly Read-Aloud consisting of themed readings and a related activity. This includes picking a theme, borrowing books from the library, pre-reading books and planning an activity.
- Arrive 15 minutes early to each session.
- Participate in each Read-Aloud by reading to the children, assisting with the activity and helping children select books to keep.
- Complete online follow-up report within 48 hours of Read-Aloud session.
- Find a substitute if you are unable to attend your scheduled session.

Orientation and Training

- Attend a two-hour orientation session.
- Each fall, attend your Read-Aloud site's annual meeting.
- Participate in at least one other TRC training event per year or complete four online trainings on the TRC Blog.

Time Commitment

- Volunteers read in teams and follow a set schedule, reading once a month.
- Two hours a month (including preparation, one-hour Read-Aloud and wrap up) in addition to training requirements as listed above.
- Minimum one-year commitment.

Qualifications

- 18 years of age
- Satisfactory background check.

Experience and Skills

- Comfortable working with children aged four to 12 in an informal setting.
- Ability to read aloud with expression.
- Creativity and flexibility.