

## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

***Wednesday 24 November 2021***

### **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library gets a boost thanks to Port of Portland**

Port of Portland has awarded \$2,500 to United Way Glenelg to be used for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, providing an additional 240 books for local children.

Over 300 children are currently enrolled in the program, each receiving one book per month for the first five years of their lives, providing each child with 60 age-appropriate books as they grow. Each book includes parent engagement tools to encourage young readers to predict, infer, draw conclusions and expand their vocabulary and comprehension.

Port of Portland CEO Greg Tremwean, said reading regularly with children is probably one of the biggest advantages a child can be given towards a successful start at school.

"I don't think there can ever be too many books in a child's life. The program provides equitable access for book ownership, giving disadvantaged children the same opportunities as their peers.

This was backed up by United Way Glenelg Executive Officer Nicole Carr who reiterated how the program positively touches many young lives.

"Low-income and special needs families, those who may have difficult and busy schedules, transportation barriers or live far from local libraries are given the same access to book ownership, said Ms Carr.

The National Literacy Trust research found children and young people who have books of their own at home are three times more likely to read above the level expected for their age compared with their peers.

United Way Glenelg currently has around 30% of eligible children in the Glenelg Shire who receive books through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

"Our goal, by the end of 2022 is to reach 50%, making the number of children receiving books as 500."

The Imagination Library has mailed over 35,000 books to registered children from birth to age 5 since its inception in 2013, helping children in the Glenelg Shire prepare for school and a lifetime of reading and learning.

For more information on donating to United Way Glenelg Dolly Parton Imagination Library please visit <https://www.givenow.com.au/uwgimaginationlibrary>

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*Photo: Greg Trewmean, CEO Port of Portland checks out one of the books from the Imagination Library.*

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