



**THE SANTA FE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
PARTNERS WITH THE UNITED WAY OF SANTA FE COUNTY
TO BRING THE DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY TO SANTA FE**

**February 5, 2015 kick-off event brings together families and children,
local elected officials and local authors to celebrate reading to young children**

What: The **Dolly Parton Imagination Library** will be launched with a kick-off event at **United Way of Santa Fe County's Early Learning Center at Aspen Community Magnet School**.

The **Dolly Parton Imagination Library** program was founded by Dolly Parton in 1995 to increase reading among young children. The program provides a carefully selected book that arrives in the mailbox, each month from the day the child is born until he/she is 5 years old. Books are selected by a national panel of experts.

For enrollment in the Imagination Library, please call 505-216-2984.

When: The **Dolly Parton Imagination Library** kick-off event is on Thursday, February 5, 2015 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Where: **United Way of Santa Fe County's Early Learning Center at Aspen Community Magnet School**, 430 La Madera Street, on the campus of the Aspen Community Magnet School. (See attached map and directions).

Who: The **Santa Fe County Community Services Department** has released \$50,000 to partner with the **United Way of Santa Fe County (UWSFC)** to bring the **Dolly Parton Imagination Library** to the children and families of Santa Fe County.

Families and children who attend the event will be encouraged to register to join the **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**. Local elected officials and authors will read to the children.

Background:

"Less than half of the 13,000 students in Santa Fe school district read at grade level," states Rachel O'Connor, Santa Fe County Community Services Department Director. "We are pleased to be partnering with United Way of Santa Fe County and Imagination Library to see if we can help increase reading scores amongst our young children."

The United Way will serve as the "local champion" to assist the County in registering and enrolling children and publicizing the program. "We are looking forward to working in our community to enroll children across the county," said Katherine Freeman, CEO of United Way of Santa Fe County. Freeman continued, "It is a natural fit with our early childhood and home visiting programs." The United Way expects to enroll 525 children countywide in 2015.

According to a 2013 “Kid Count” profile, in Santa Fe County 46 percent of fourth grader students in Santa Fe County are proficient in reading. Research has shown that when families have more books at home, kindergartners arrive at school with higher early language scores.

Santa Fe County also provides funds to local libraries in Santa Fe, Espanola, Edgewood and Eldorado.

United Way of Santa Fe County is committed to helping children succeed in school and life by working to change the conditions that challenge in Santa Fe County and create lifelong, positive change for children and families striving to succeed in Santa Fe County. Its early childhood education and care programs use research, strategy and expertise to help give children a strong start in life and school. For more information: www.uwsfc.org

