



raising *excitement*, raising *success...*

raising a reader

mission

60%

of third graders from low income households in Massachusetts do not read proficiently.



RAISING A READER MA is an evidence-based early literacy program that helps families of young children (birth through age six) develop, practice, and maintain habits of reading together at home. Our core program model, which both increases access to books and offers support for strengthening the culture of reading at home. Our approach is driven by more than 25 years of research that shows one of the most significant factors impacting a child's academic success is being regularly read to by a parent or other primary adult caregiver before starting kindergarten.





**LETTER FROM BOTH THE BOARD CHAIR
AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

How we read to children is just as (if not more) important as *what* we read to them. The foundation of Raising A Reader is built on research that shows children learn most from storytime when they are actively involved in the experience. Who better to include the child in shared reading than a child’s first teacher—a parent or caregiver?

Our dual intervention, which provides families access to high quality children’s books as well as parent educational opportunities, is the key to preparing families for successful shared reading interactions, and eliminating childhood illiteracy in Massachusetts. We focus on Gateway cities, where many low-income families have never established reading habits at home.

We are not on this quest alone. Our work is only possible because of you—our core supporters. From our program partners on the front lines, to our dedicated and passionate Board of Directors, our countless donors, supporters and volunteers...we thank you for your commitment to helping build family bonds, foster a love of reading and ensure children have the literacy skills for lifelong achievement.

We look forward to staying in touch with you about our progress.

With gratitude,

Lisa Thompson
Board Chair

Randy Houk
Executive Director

thanks

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GreenLight Fund



**parent
education
workshops**

70% of parents who attended three or more workshops shared books three or more times per week.

12,000 families served

core communities

- Boston
- Brockton
- Chelsea
- Everett
- Lawrence
- Lowell
- Lynn
- Malden
- Revere
- Springfield

local affiliates

- Adams
- Arlington
- Brewster
- Cambridge
- Eastham
- Newton
- North Adams
- Oxford
- Plymouth
- Somerville
- Southbridge
- Truro
- Waltham
- Wellfleet
- West Springfield
- Woburn
- Worcester



“I’ve learned that the content of the story can be changed to be appropriate for my child. The **specific words are not important**. The identifying of objects in the story, gaining his attention and sharing time together are more important.”

—SPRINGFIELD PARENT

celebrating 10 years of raising readers

In 2006, Raising A Reader was brought to Massachusetts by the GreenLight Fund, an organization that identifies innovative, high-performing nonprofits in cities across the country and supports their successful expansion into the local community. The GreenLight Fund chose Raising A Reader for its demonstrated success and efficacy in fulfilling a critical need, the academic readiness gap between low income and middle/upper income children. Launched in Chelsea, with one office serving 1,000 families and distributing 4,000 books, Raising A Reader MA has grown statewide over the past 10 years to serve 27 communities and 12,000 families, and distributing over 48,000 books.

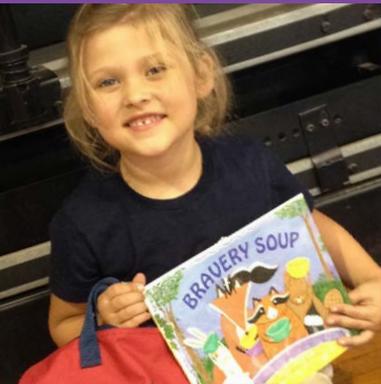


Meet Our Executive Director
Randy Houk

Randy began her career as a reading curriculum specialist and then Senior Editor for Addison-Wesley, working on a reading readiness program with Pleasant Rowland, founder of American Girl, and with Children’s Television Workshop. She was a Director of Publishing with National Public Radio, and later was founder and CEO of The Benefactory, a children’s publishing company that produced original true stories about animals of all kinds, in conjunction with nonprofits such as The Humane Society of the U.S. and Green Chimneys.

Prior to joining RAR-MA, she served in executive management for More Than Wheels, a small nonprofit serving New England low-income families with financial literacy and low-cost auto loans. It is with a sense of ‘homecoming’ that she returns to her roots in children’s literacy. Randy has authored 11 children’s books (one the winner of the NAPPA award) and illustrated five. Her favorite children’s book is *Charlotte’s Web* (eradicating a previous terror of spiders).





“It is awesome when we are reading a book in class and a child shouts out **‘I know that book! It was in my bag!’** They get super excited—and that is what its all about!”

—CHELSEA PROGRAM PARTNER



48K



books circulated

The proportion of families who shared books three or more times a week increased



27%

“Being a single working mother, it is not always easy to go to the library. The red bags provide me the **opportunity to read with my child** books that we normally would not have.”

—LAWRENCE PARENT



program highlights

Parent Ambassadors

Parent Ambassadors are our greatest champions. These are parents who have participated in our our program, continue to be committed to our efficacy and success, and want to share this passion with new parents within their communities. The Parent Ambassador initiative continues to grow and expand. This year two parent ambassadors, in Springfield and Greater Boston, were hired to be part of our professional team. In addition, we piloted a new dialogic reading certification for parent ambassadors, with four new ambassadors certified and prepared to facilitate workshops and lead community storytimes.

Gateway Communities

To help address economic and community development in Massachusetts, 26 communities have been designated “Gateway cities.” These medium sized metropolitan areas have struggled with a decline in manufacturing and a loss in population. The state has committed to revitalizing these communities by investing in education, innovation, infrastructure, and economic growth. Raising A Reader MA recognizes the importance and potential of these cities. Gateway cities are a priority as we continue to grow and expand. Our most recent program launched in 2015 in Lynn, making it our ninth Gateway community.

REVENUE

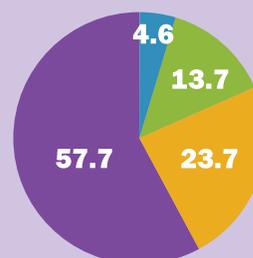
■ Restricted and Unrestricted Gifts, Grants and Contributions:	\$664,658
■ Special Fund Raising Event net Direct Cost:	\$273,516
■ Program Revenue:	\$157,450
■ In-Kind:	\$52,860
■ Other:	\$3,447
TOTAL:	\$1,151,931

*While multi-year funding commitments can sometimes skew the appearance of financial strength in a given year, we are geared to thrive in the long term. We had over 20% growth in FYE 2015 and expect an even greater impact on the lives of Massachusetts children as we continue to expand our reach, build our resources, and evolve our strategy for a sustainable and successful future.

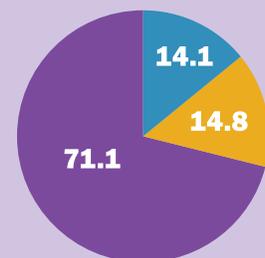
EXPENSES

■ Program Services:	\$904,031
■ Administrative:	\$187,378
■ Development:	\$179,622
TOTAL:	\$1,271,031

REVENUE %



EXPENSES %





“Raising A Reader is one of the ***most impactful programs*** in our city.”

— MARTIN J. WALSH, MAYOR OF BOSTON

“I think all kids should do Raising A Reader... They’ll learn that it’s not just reading, but really understanding what it means and learning something new.”

— ALEXANDRA, AGE 9
FORMER RAISING A READER MA PARTICIPANT



Raising A Reader MA
9B Hamilton Place, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-292-2665
Email: info@raisingareaderma.org

 [raisingareadermassachusetts](https://twitter.com/raisingareadermassachusetts)

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Raising A Reader MA is an independent affiliate of the California-based Raising A Reader. Raising A Reader MA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (EIN 80-0297898). All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed under the law.