Laundromat Library League

What is it?
The Laundromat Library League is a collection of diverse organizations that are making children's books available to homes in which there may be few or none. We do this by placing small "Library Boxes" of children's books in Laundromats with signs affixed that invite adults to choose a book, borrow it for awhile to read there and to take home, and eventually to return it for someone else to enjoy. The 50-60 books in each decorated box are an assortment that includes board books for toddlers, picture books, early reader and chapter books, and books for youth.

How does it work?
Owners of participating laundromats that allow placement of "Library Boxes" know that at least twice a month the contents will be refreshed, and that only children's books will be placed in the box. They know that it is OK if books aren't returned—the LLL simply wants the books to be used.

Participant organizations have at least one liaison that receives electronic updates on the LLL's progress and needs and shares them with others in the organization that have interest. At least one member of the organization assists in LLL needs, usually by delivering fresh books to a specific Laundromat on a regular basis. Some organizations might have a periodic book drive or otherwise contribute books, but that is not a prerequisite to be a participant organization. Individuals without organizational affiliation are most welcome to participate as well.

Where do the books come from?
Many books come from used book sale leftovers and from libraries or schools that have duplicates and discards. Others come from specific "drives," especially for board books (for toddlers) and books in Spanish that are less likely to come from other channels. Donated funds and modest grant-writing are used to purchase additional books in Spanish. The inventory is maintained at West Chester Friends School, which also is the drop-off/pick-up site for Library Boxes and replacement books.

Where are the Laundromats?
When the LLL began in 2014 we sought laundromats in the West Chester area, but by 2016 we had expanded to include sites in Philadelphia, Coatesville, Oxford, Parkesburg—any locality to which we have a participant that can deliver and a willing Laundromat owner.

Who can I contact to get involved?

Karen Iacobucci: responsible for inventory maintenance library/box assembly
kiacobucci@wcfriends.org or 610-696-2820
Arlene Rengert: responsible for driver and site coordination and organization outreach
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See our Laundromat Library League page on Facebook.