



**Family HealthCare Network has long supported the promotion of children's literacy.**

**With the opening of its very first bookstore, The Book Nook, FHCN is taking its literacy programing to new heights.**

# Local Literacy Rates A cause for concern

- According to the National Center for Education Statistics, California has consistently rated in the bottom five states in terms of literacy rates.
- Among counties with the worst literacy rates, Tulare County regularly ranks lowest**
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation recently published evidence that students who struggle to read proficiently in 3rd grade are 4-5 times less likely to graduate high school than their classmates who read proficiently.





# FHCN's Reach Out & Read Program



- The program was launched In 2015.
- FHCN created reading areas in health centers and encouraged children to take a free book.
- We began providing children 0-5 free age-appropriate book during their well child visits.
- FHCN has distributed approximately 81,166 books since 2015.





The future of literacy for FHCN







# Bookstore Opening

- The Book Nook fills a desperate need in the heart of Tulare County, by offering a central location that provides children and adults access to over 5,000 book titles from various genres.
- The early responses from the community have been very positive, and we are equally excited about The Book Nook's long-term impact on literacy rates.
- Located in a Property and Business Improvement District (a busy downtown retail and restaurant corridor) and within walking distance from FHCN and large bus depot.



# Reading Rx Program

- The Reading Rx Program will serve as a complement to our Reach Out and Read Program and increase the promotion of early childhood literacy.
- FHCN Providers can issue a “Reading Rx” to parents for redemption of a free age-appropriate reading book from the bookstore.
- Books will be available based on relevance to age appropriate education and the development of early foundational language skills.
- Referrals for the Reading Rx program will be tracked in the electronic health record.



Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Age Group:

### 6 months – 9 months

- ☐ Language/Communication (large
- ☐ Range of textures (tactile, touch

### 12 months – 15 months

- ☐ Social/Emotional
- ☐ Language/Communication (rhyme
- ☐ Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)
- ☐ Physical Development

### 18 months

- ☐ Interactive (color, trace)
- ☐ Social/Emotional (forgiveness, kindness)
- ☐ Language/Communication (body parts, animals)
- ☐ Manners

### 2 years – 3 years

- ☐ Interactive (color, trace, chores)
- ☐ Social/Emotional (emotions)
- ☐ Language/Communication (shapes, fruits, veggies)
- ☐ Manners (sharing, please, thank you)

### 4 years – 5 years

- ☐ Interactive (color, trace, chores)
- ☐ Social/Emotional (emotions)
- ☐ Language/Communication (grammar, spelling, reading)
- ☐ Manners
- ☐ Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)



# Current & Future Endeavours

## Building Relationships

An important aspect of the bookstore's operations includes the building of relationships with local schools, libraries, and County literacy program staff. This work will allow us to develop activities designed to enrich the love of reading in students. We are currently recruiting members for our local book club.

## Building our Inventory

Bookstore staff seek feedback from local educators to ensure we curate books that complement the curriculums used in the classroom. In addition, we are exploring the ability to host bookfairs at school sites in rural areas.

## Supporting Local

The Book Nook has positioned itself as a space for local artist to showcase their work. We are actively acquiring books by local authors and illustrators to sell in the store. We are also working with local photographers and other artists to develop special book related merchandise to enhance our store's local section.





# Art Walk

Featuring Local Teen Author  
Donya Hassanshahi

In the month of March, we hosted a local teen author during the local art walk. The author shared selections of poetry from her first published book, "The Fairy Without Wings".





## **Timeline: May - October 2022**

- The bookstore project was assigned to our Director of Special Programs in May 2022.
- A bookstore consultant was identified to support us through the business planning process.
- Interdepartmental collaboration was initiated to identify priority needs. (purchasing, facilities, HR, recruitment, finance, & marketing)
- We worked with an interior designer to bring our vision to life and a local web designer was hired to develop our website.
- Vendors were identified and the opening book & merchandise inventory was created. At the same time, new positions were created, and we began the hiring process in September 2022.
- The bookstore opened for business on October 27, 2022.

# Successes & Challenges



- Positive reception from community members, educators, and students.
- Providing children the experience of discovering a bookstore with a diverse selection of books.
- Quickly developing customer loyalty and generating interest in books for non-active readers.
- Supporting the local downtown area by adding diversity to the business line-up



- Curating the starting book inventory & finding the right book to shelf ratio.
- Finding a point-of-sale system that supports a large inventory selection & off-site sales.
- Finding qualified staff for unique positions.
- Getting the community to understand the tie between FHCN & The Book Nook



# Revenue Report

November 2022 – February 2023

- Sales have demonstrated a positive response from local patrons.
- The bookstore is averaging over 400 sales transactions monthly.
- We are currently tracking key performance indicators such as client retention rates, etc.
- Based on sales reports we have identified the need to extend business hours on select days.



# Building A Healthy Community One Reader At A Time



# Thank You

