

IMPACT YOUR COMMUNITY

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

Y READERS

YMCA OF COASTAL GEORGIA ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

ADDRESSING CRITICAL COMMUNITY NEEDS

The Challenge: Children who are not reading at a third grade level by the end of third grade are four times more likely to leave school without a diploma than proficient readers. In a 2013 report published by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, *Early Warning: Why Reading Matters*, researchers summarized the basis for focusing on grade level reading proficiency as an essential step towards increasing the number of children from low-income families who succeed academically, graduate from high school on time and do well in life. This includes helping them to successfully enter the workforce and succeed economically in their lives and assisting the ability of individuals to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty which in turn effects the country's ability to ensure global competitiveness, general productivity and national security.

The report goes on to share that the gap that exists between struggling and fluent readers does not diminish over time. Early intervention in the area of literacy is key to the successful futures of these students.

How the Y is Helping: Supporting success in school and life are key outcomes demonstrated in our Y Readers program. The Y Readers program helps elementary school students (kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd grade) reading below grade level. The program focuses on phonics, writing, and reading to boost literacy skills, with enrichment activities to support physical and social emotional growth.

The Y Readers program is delivered via a certified teacher and a teaching assistant who work with the students on grade level appropriate curriculum and literacy activities to help the students enhance their reading ability. The teacher serves as a liaison between the YMCA and the school and works with the school principal and counselor to select the students who are in greatest need of the help the program can provide. The students receive instruction for three hours a day, two days a week during the academic school year. The ratio of students to teacher is 12:1. The YMCA of Coastal Georgia is working to be a leading catalyst for change in the way we help our local students succeed academically. Because of this, Y Readers is a FREE program offered at no cost to the students in the program or to the elementary schools. The program is currently running in six classes in five Chatham County elementary schools, East Broad, Hodge, Brock, Gould and Garden City and the Y is working to expand to serve more students.

Our Impact: Kassidy Silva is a 1st grader at Hodge Elementary. Prior to Y Readers, Kassidy was reluctant to read out loud and never sought out books on her own. Her parents were excited to register her for Y Readers because they knew it was her best shot at improving her reading level. After a few conversations with Lead Teacher Bynikini Frazier, they jumped on board and Kassidy was eager to start. Within weeks they noticed a change in Kassidy's willingness to try. She wanted to read! Kassidy's parents say that she is gaining confidence and is reading more at home and even on weekends. In fact Kassidy was challenged to read at least five books during the weekend, and she read ten!

Children who do not read at a third grade level by the end of third grade are four times more likely to leave school without a diploma than proficient readers.

The Y Readers program helps elementary school students (kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd grade) reading below grade level to hop the achievement gap and improve their reading skills.

How You Can Help: A gift of \$1000 can help a child read at grade level with a full school year of Y Readers programming.



THIRD-GRADE READING SKILLS predict high school graduation



Graduation rate among students who read proficiently by 3rd grade



Graduation rate among students who did not read proficiently by 3rd grade