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## **Study Shows Children Read More When They Have Access to a Little Free Library**

*Little Free Library's impact is greatest among low-income schools, English language learners, and BIPOC students*

**St. Paul, MN (February 12, 2025)** – A new study released today by the nonprofit Little Free Library® (LFL) highlights the significant influence of Little Free Library book-sharing boxes on children's reading habits. Led by Pier Partners consultancy group in collaboration with The Education Foundation of Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), the research confirms a primary insight: When children have access to a Little Free Library, they spend more time reading.

The multi-site observational study, conducted from September to November 2024, examined the influence of Little Free Libraries on book access and reading frequency, particularly among underserved communities. Researchers surveyed 768 children in Baltimore County, Md., and found that increased book availability led to more frequent reading.

### **Key Findings:**

- **Greater Access to Books** – 92% of children reported having more access to books because of Little Free Library book-sharing boxes.
- **Increased Reading Time** – Children who visit a Little Free Library read an average of 1.1 additional days per week. Nearly half (49%) reported reading more frequently since they began using a Little Free Library.
- **Home Library Growth** – 88% of children said they now keep more books at home, helping them build personal libraries.

### **Impact on Critical Student Groups**

The study also revealed that Little Free Libraries are especially effective in increasing book access and reading frequency among key demographics:

- **Low-Income Schools** – In schools where 65% or more of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, 62% of children reported reading more when they visit a Little Free Library—double the rate of their peers in higher-income schools (32%).
- **BIPOC Students** – 63% of BIPOC students reported reading more in weeks they visit a Little Free Library, compared to 39% of non-BIPOC students.

- **English Language Learners (ELLs)** – ELL students experienced the most significant boost in reading frequency, with 72% reading more in weeks when they accessed a Little Free Library.

Beyond increasing reading time, the study found that children are discovering engaging, high-quality books in Little Free Libraries:

- **90%** reported finding high-quality books.
- **87%** found books that excited them.
- **75%** found books with relatable characters.

“Access to books is at the heart of Little Free Library’s mission,” said Greig Metzger, LFL Executive Director. “These findings confirm what we’ve long believed and known anecdotally—when children visit a Little Free Library and discover a book that brings them joy, or a book that they can connect with, they read more. And that act of reading opens up a whole wide world of opportunities.”

LFL recognizes that this is a small study focused on an urban setting and plans to expand future research to include rural and Indigenous communities. The Baltimore region was selected in this case because of the density of its Little Free Libraries, the diversity of geography and demographics served, and the strength of Little Free Library’s partner, The Education Foundation of BCPS.

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#### **ABOUT LITTLE FREE LIBRARY**

Little Free Library® (LFL) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that builds community, inspires readers and expands book access for all through a global network of volunteer-led Little Free Library book-sharing boxes. There are more than 190,000 registered Little Free Libraries worldwide in all 50 states, in 128 countries and on all seven continents. Through them, over 400 million books have been shared since 2009. LFL received the 2020 World Literacy Award as well as honors from the Library of Congress, National Book Foundation and others. The organization grants Little Free Libraries full of books to underserved areas through its Impact Library and Indigenous Library programs and champions diverse books through its Read in Color initiative. To learn more, visit [LittleFreeLibrary.org](https://LittleFreeLibrary.org).