New Haven Reads is closing achievement gaps for aspiring readers.

Founded to share the joy and power of reading, New Haven Reads partners with the community to provide free one-on-one tutoring, educational family support, and a book bank to empower aspiring readers to master the literacy skills needed to thrive in school and life.

Programs

One-on-one tutoring
A structured hour of individualized literacy help

Pre-K/ Kindergarten
Small classes of literacy instruction twice a week

Book bank
Distribution of gently used books throughout the community to school teachers, doctors' offices, soup kitchens, preschools, correctional facilities, etc.

“I feel welcome here and I like doing it because reading makes me smarter”

LILIANA, 6TH GRADE

All programs offered are free of charge to participants.
The New Haven Reads program is based in the science of reading. All of our students are reading below grade level when they join our programs. Our individualized, high quality interventions transform student outcomes.

“New Haven Reads really makes a difference to kids today so they can achieve great things tomorrow”

IRWING QUILES, PARENT OF JOSIAH, 6TH GRADE

Highlights

Faced with the pandemic, New Haven Reads successfully moved all of our programs online in April 2020. Along with our remote programming, we have introduced limited in-person tutoring and clubs for the summer of 2021.

A whopping 94% of our students tested improved their literacy scores despite the countless challenges of remote tutoring. Our students flourished during this time when many students suffered enormous educational setbacks.

With the local Department of Children and Families office, we created a new partnership called “Bonding through Books” to provide books to children in foster care.

We piloted a new, intensive program called RISE (Reading Intervention for Success Everyday) program for students with significant literacy decoding gaps.

Through “reverse field trips”, we supported local schools by delivering books to schools and connected with the students through Zoom.

We executed a strategic planning process to determine our priorities for the next two years.

THE NEED FOR NHR:

Connecticut continues to have one of the largest achievement gaps in the nation between low-income students and their peers.

Two thirds of New Haven third grade students are reading below grade level.

Over the last decade, the child poverty rate in New Haven has risen to 33% - and with it, the demand for NHR’s literacy and family supports.
Tutoring Program

The ability to read, in a very real way, determines a child’s ability to be successful in life. At New Haven Reads, our highly structured tutoring program opens the door to infinite possibilities for students.

“My reading skills went sky high!”

CAMILA, 5TH GRADE

Our online, one-on-one tutoring program served almost 300 students thanks to the dedicated support of 248 community volunteers.

We carried out a successful testing program. 94% of our students improved their literacy scores and 58% improved their independent reading level by at least one grade level in seven months.

To maximize the tutoring hour, it was critical to support our students’ needs. Working with community partners and donors, we provided student resources and books regularly throughout the year. We distributed over 100 laptops to families and helped with internet connectivity.

With over 210 students on our waiting list, our focus is to grow our program.

STUDENT ALUMNI RETURN AS “READERS TO LEADERS”

Nate was a student at NHR for five years, graduating from our program just before starting high school. He rejoined New Haven Reads two years ago, this time as a “Reader to Leader” tutor. This program brings student alumni back as one-on-one literacy tutors. They are mentored and guided by staff and, for many of them, this is their first paid job.

Now a student at UCONN, Nate loves the opportunity to connect with younger students and encourage them through tutoring.

“I feel I can really help them because I was once there. I understand what they are going through and can support them.”

We are proud to see how our Readers to Leaders inspire and motivate our students by returning as tutors!
Book Bank

Simply having as few as 20 books at home increases a child’s academic success. The New Haven Reads Book Bank continues to work to build home libraries by distributing thousands of gently-used books every year.

“I love it because we get to read books.”

KALEB, THIRD GRADE

Because of the pandemic, the Book Bank was closed for part of the year so we got creative! We turned our Bristol Street parking lot into an outdoor Book Bank. Volunteers helped us distribute books at food pantries and filled their neighborhood local little free library boxes with books from New Haven Reads. Teachers called in book orders for their classrooms and we joined their classes for virtual field trips. Your support for our summer Diverse Books Campaign allowed us to distribute thousands of brand new books by Black and Brown authors and books in other languages to children across the area.

“Bonding through Books” is a new partnership developed with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Milford Office. Together, we have created a book bank in the office for their clients with hundreds of books from our Book Bank. Case workers from DCF will give these books to children to build home libraries and also to children who are in the office awaiting foster placement. Importantly, this is an opportunity for parents and their children to connect. We look forward to sending regular book orders to DCF to grow the home libraries of the children in their care!

“One of the goals of the visits here in the office is to maintain and grow the child and parent bond. What better way to do that than to read books together!”

—RANDY BROWN
SOCIAL WORKER AND CREATOR OF THE DCF PROJECT
Community Approach

New Haven Reads is our community at its best. With our mission to share the joy and power of reading, we bring together generous supporters, community partners, and dedicated volunteers with our most important resource, our children! Together, we are bridging the opportunity gap, one reader at a time.

SARAH DICKERMAN
Sarah Dickerman began volunteering for New Haven Reads as a way to give back to her new community. “NHR appealed to me as it was clear that tutors were able to form a meaningful relationship with students, one that resembles more of a mentorship than simply a tutoring session. I could tell immediately that the other volunteers were proud of their work and were making a difference and I wanted to also be a part of that,” she explained.

Sarah enjoys seeing the immense growth in her student and his excitement to read and learn. “I know I am helping to make a difference and I think that helping to further education is one of the best volunteer pursuits one can take on.”

“We are grateful for Sarah and all of our amazing volunteers for their dedication to sharing the joy and power of reading with our students.”

JEREMIAH, 8TH GRADE

PARTNERING TO HELP OUR STUDENTS RISE

NHR is committed to ensuring every child in our program learns to read. Reading is not an innate ability, children must receive instruction and exposure to learn to read. Our regular program is very effective, yet some children require an intensive “Structured Literacy” approach which is systemic, cumulative, explicit, and includes diagnostic instruction.

New Haven Reads partnered with long-time collaborator, Literacy How, to pilot a new, 30-week pilot program for five students from October 2020 to May 2021. Literacy How provides training to teachers in the science of reading. The RISE (Reading Intervention for Success Everyday) program employs the latest scientific research and practice by providing specialized tutoring. Students worked three times a week with specially trained tutors.

RISE students saw an average 40% overall improvement in their test scores from October to May. This increase is especially significant given the challenges related to the pandemic and remote learning faced by our students during this time.
Because of you, we are closing the achievement gap for our aspiring readers. Thank you!

As a donor, you enable New Haven Reads to transform lives. Thank you for your generous support.

July 2020 to June 2021.

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Chase Foundation for Justice
City of New Haven
Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority
Fossa Foundation
Seedlings Foundation
State of CT
New Haven Board of Education

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Because of space constraints, we are unable to print all names. A full listing is on our website.

We made every effort to verify the names and dollar amounts. Please excuse any mistakes and please let us know.

Thank you to our staff and all of our volunteers who work so hard to build a community of readers.

2019-20 AUDITED FINANCIALS
Annual Cost to run New Haven Reads: $991,964

REVENUE
2019/20
Contributions 56%
In-kind 3%
Non-government grants 24%
Government Grants 12%
Fundraising/other 5%

EXPENSES
2019/20
Program 81%
Administration 14%
Fundraising 5%

All programs offered free of charge to participants

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Adrian Woltz
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Andrew Zehner and
Suzanne Whitty

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