

# LAUNDROMAT LITERACY



## Optimizing Learning in Local Laundromats

### WHAT ARE LEARNING SPACES IN LAUNDROMATS?

Book Harvest's **Laundromat Literacy** initiative is an innovative partnership with community laundromats devoted to transforming the time families spend doing their laundry – often once a week or more – into content-rich, activity-filled, literacy-enhancing experiences. Part of a national movement to optimize learning everywhere families frequent, **Laundromat Literacy** engages children and families while their laundry spins and fosters language development and book ownership.



### WHY OUR WORK IN LAUNDROMATS MATTERS

- Laundromats are a “third space” – after home and school – where families convene. Not only are they community gathering centers, they provide a regular opportunity for families to engage in activities together. [1]
- Literacy spaces in laundromats help create an informal community learning environment to engage children in ongoing literacy activities. [2]
- Children engage in 30 times more literacy-rich activities in laundromats with literacy play spaces compared to other sites. [3]



### HOW WE PARTNER WITH LAUNDROMATS



Book Harvest partners with community laundromat owners to maintain cozy reading corners in laundromats, each filled with special furniture and activity centers to encourage parent-child reading and literacy activities, and a bookshelf filled with an abundance of high-quality, culturally diverse, and bilingual books free for the taking. A Book Harvest staff member or volunteer replenishes and refreshes the book corner regularly. Storytimes are also held to engage children in language-rich activities and to model reading behaviors for parents.

[1] <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/016146811611800108>  
[2] <https://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2019/march/laundromats-support-early-literacy--finds-nyu-steinhardt-profess.html>  
[3] <https://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2019/11/literacy-promotion-in-laundromats/>

#### ABOUT BOOK HARVEST

*Book Harvest's mission is to provide books every child, support for every parent, and literacy for every community. Since 2011, Book Harvest has provided more than two million books to families in North Carolina and beyond, ensuring that children grow up with abundant home libraries and parents have the tools and power to ignite and strengthen their children's literacy. With programs that are grounded in evidence, Book Harvest believes that literacy starts at birth, in the home, powered by parents, and nourished with books. For more information, contact Caitlyn B. Smith at [cailyln@bookharvest.org](mailto:cailyln@bookharvest.org).*