GFWC
est. 1890
GENERAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS
MASSACHUSETTS

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GFWC Education and Libraries Community Service Program

Unity Through Reading: Support School Systems and Libraries in Developing Reading Skills

Helping a child develop a love of reading and learning is the greatest gift. Many children learn to read on their parents' or grandparent's laps. But some do not.

With the invention of cell phones and other digital devices as well as social media, reading proficiency among children and young adults has suffered. However, these same digital devices offer opportunities for reading or audio books.

Children in early grades must be provided with the opportunity to learn to read and therefore develop the skills to become active learners. Reading programs encourage development of skills of all children, including those from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Early childhood reading development and education can help reduce educational gaps.

However, not all school systems are equal, and many are not equipped to fully help a child with their reading and education. It's important that members of the community become involved in any way that we can.

Establish a working relationship with the school system in your city or town. Contact the Superintendent's office and ask what services are needed and how your club can contribute. Many of the members of GFWC Women's Clubs are retired and can volunteer to read in classrooms, provide needed supplies for arts and crafts, provide books for children to take home or even host a library card sign-up drive.

Our Clubs should also reach out to our libraries and offer to assist them in any way possible. Clubs can offer to read to groups of children and aid them with any of the programs they currently offer.

Other ideas:

- Members can be classroom volunteers – with flexibility in time and skill level. Volunteers can help with projects, reading and many other activities

- Special Event Volunteers – schools and libraries often have parent nights and family fun nights. Club members help with planning and logistics, refreshments, etc.

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- Members can arrange for a local author of children's books to visit a school. Coordinate with teachers to arrange the best selection of authors.

- Host a Scholastic Book Fair, handling all the logistics or organizing the program and perhaps providing a book to each child.

- Middle and High school students also need assistance with reading and writing and learning. Helping schools provide dual-text books for Shakespeare's play is a way to encourage students to learn about drama.

- Helping with long-term projects or writing assignments.

- Many young people enjoy graphic novels and perhaps members could encourage students to write and draw their own graphic novels and even host a contest for the most creative and engaging novels.

"The more that you read, the more things you will know, the more that you learn, the more places you'll go." Dr. Seuss

To see the full GFWC Manual page for the Education and Libraires Community Service Program, go to gfwcma.org > About GFWC > What We Do~GFWC Manual > Scroll to Education and Libraries