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PNC Foundation awards \$250,000 grant to expand early literacy at Louisville Free Public Library

Grant supports weekly storytimes, outreach to families, and the newly renovated Children's Area at Portland Library

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Feb. 4, 2026) – Just ahead of National Take Your Child to the Library Day on Saturday, February 7, Mayor Craig Greenberg joined with the PNC Foundation to announce a major investment in Louisville's youngest learners, awarding a \$250,000 grant through PNC Grow Up Great® to the Library Foundation to expand early literacy programs at the Louisville Free Public Library (LFPL).

Through the two-year grant, families are already experiencing enhanced storytimes, new learning materials, and a vibrant Children's Area at the newly renovated Portland Library. The expanded programming focuses on serving families in west, central, and south Louisville, helping ensure more children have access to early learning experiences that support school readiness.

"When young children and their caregivers read and learn together, they are building a foundation for success in school and life," said **Kristen Byrd, PNC regional president for Kentucky**. "Through this grant, PNC continues our longstanding collaboration with LFPL to help remove barriers to early learning and ensure more Louisville families have access to high-quality learning experiences and literacy resources."

Programming supported by the grant will take place at Fairdale, Iroquois, Main, Newburg, Parkland, Portland, Shawnee, Shively, and Western libraries, with support extending to the new Fern Creek Library when it reopens. Families will encounter welcoming storytimes, hands-on learning tools, and special guest performers designed to spark curiosity and a love of reading.

Mayor Craig Greenberg emphasized the long-term impact of investing early.

"Strong cities are built by investing in our children from the very beginning," said Mayor Greenberg. "When we support libraries, early literacy and family learning, we help change

Louisville's trajectory by giving every child a strong start. Collaborations like this one ensure families across our city can access the tools, programs, and welcoming spaces that help Louisville grow stronger for generations to come."

For library leaders, the impact is visible every day. "When young children come to the library, they're not just hearing stories – they're building language, social skills, and confidence that form the foundation for kindergarten readiness," said **Heather Lowe, director of the Louisville Free Public Library**. "Libraries level the playing field by offering access to books, technology, and joyful learning experiences that all children deserve, and National Take Your Child to the Library Day is a perfect time for families to discover just how powerful those early visits can be."

Chandra Gordon, executive director of the Library Foundation, highlighted the role of collaboration in making that impact possible. "Multi-stakeholder collaborations like this one are essential to building a stronger community," said Gordon. "The PNC Foundation's support allows us to expand early literacy programs, reach more families, and create welcoming spaces where children can thrive. When we work together, we give kids the strong starts they need and Louisville the future it deserves."

This grant builds on the PNC Foundation's longstanding support of early literacy in Louisville, including past efforts to place books directly into children's hands and bring learning resources into neighborhoods, including through the Book Bike.

Families are invited to celebrate **National Take Your Child to the Library Day on February 7**.

Find a storytime and learn more at LFPL.org.

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The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The Foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through PNC Grow Up Great®, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a bilingual \$500 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. For more information, visit <http://www.pncgrowupgreat.com>.

Louisville Free Public Library connects the residents of Louisville and Jefferson County to knowledge and information at our library locations and on the web at LFPL.org. Come on in, the whole world's inside.

The Library Foundation strives to ensure every Louisvillian has the tools, resources, and information they need to flourish in their community and their lives by opening the doors for

community members to engage with, advocate for, and dedicate time and treasure to the Louisville Free Public Library. Learn more at [LFPLfoundation.org](https://www.LFPLfoundation.org).

The Library – at the crossroads of knowledge and know-how. Visit www.LFPL.org to learn more.