

Toys for Tots Literacy Program's Operation Turn the Page is Unlocking Futures Through Books

TRIANGLE, VA, UNITED STATES, August 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As millions of children across the Nation prepare to head back to school, they look forward to a new year filled with opportunity, discovery, and promise. But for far too many children, the school year begins with a disadvantage: limited access to books and educational resources that are essential for academic success.



The Marine Toys for Tots Literacy Program is working to change that through Operation Turn the Page, a nationwide back-to-school initiative built on one simple but powerful belief: Give a Book, Unlock a Future.

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A single book may seem like a small gift, but for a child impacted by summer learning loss, it can open the door to possibilities they never knew existed.”

*Lieutenant General Jim Laster,
President and CEO*

Since 2008, the Toys for Tots Literacy Program has distributed more than 63 million books and educational resources to children who might otherwise go without them. By putting books into the hands of disadvantaged children, the Program helps strengthen literacy skills, encourages a lifelong love of reading, and gives young learners the tools they need to succeed in school and beyond.

The need has never been greater. In low-income

communities, there is only one age-appropriate book available for every 300 children. Without access to books, many students struggle to build critical reading skills, and summer learning loss can make the transition back to the classroom even more difficult. Operation Turn the Page helps bridge that gap by ensuring children continue reading, learning, and growing throughout the summer so they return to school ready to thrive.

"A single book may seem like a small gift, but for a child impacted by summer learning loss, it can open the door to possibilities they never knew existed," says Lieutenant General Jim Laster, U.S. Marines (Retired), President and CEO of the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation. "When children living in low-income communities have access to books throughout the summer, they return to school more confident, engaged, and prepared to learn. When you give a book, you unlock a future."

While Operation Turn the Page is recognized each August and September, its impact begins months before the first school bell rings. Through spring and summer book distributions, disadvantaged children across the country receive the resources they need to keep reading, learning, and building the confidence that will carry them into a successful school year.

The true impact of Operation Turn the Page is measured not only by the millions of books distributed, but by the lives those books help change.

At Freedom Trail Elementary, students received books that inspired a lifelong love of reading. For many, it marked the beginning of something even more meaningful—their very first home library.

"For many of our students, receiving these books means more than just reading—it's the beginning of their first home library and a lifelong love of learning," said a Freedom Trail Elementary teacher.

At United Elementary, more than 400 books found new homes with students, creating excitement that extended well beyond the classroom.

"With over 400 new books in the hands of our students, we're seeing excitement, pride, and a growing love of reading both in school and at home," staff shared.

Sometimes, the impact of a single book says everything. At Entheos Academy, one special moment captured the power of connecting a child with the right story.

"One student's face lit up with pure wonder when she found a book about baseball—proof that the right book can spark a lifelong love of reading," said a teacher from Entheos Academy.

These moments reflect the heart of Operation Turn the Page: ensuring disadvantaged children have access to books so they can enter the classroom with confidence, stronger literacy skills, and a solid foundation for lifelong success.

As children prepare to return to school, supporters have the opportunity to help write the next chapter of their success stories. A single book can inspire a love of reading, strengthen literacy skills, and help a child begin the school year ready to learn. By supporting Operation Turn the Page, donors do more than provide books—they help children overcome summer learning loss, build brighter futures, and discover opportunities that can last a lifetime.

Because when supporters Give a Book, they Unlock a Future.

To learn more or donate, please visit toysfortots.org/programs.

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