

Jumpstart Kids Announces Partnership with Penguin Young Readers and Book Selection for 2027 Read for the Record

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Jumpstart Kids today announced its partnership with Penguin Young Readers for the 2027 "Read for the Record" Day campaign and the selection of its book for this year, *Brave Like a Lion! How a Puppeteer Found Her Voice*, by Megan Piphus Baptist, illustrated by Niña Mata, published by Dial Books, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers.



"I am deeply honored that *Brave Like a Lion* has been selected for Jumpstart Kids: Read for the Record. This story reminds children that courage doesn't mean never feeling afraid—it means discovering the brave voice already living inside of you. I'm thrilled to join families, educators, and young readers around the world for a shared reading experience that celebrates literacy, imagination, and the lionhearted potential in every child." — Megan Piphus Baptist, author, Emmy-winning puppeteer, ventriloquist, and singer, and the first full-time Black woman puppeteer on *Sesame Street*.

Jumpstart Kids: Read for the Record® is the world's largest shared reading experience and the signature annual campaign of Jumpstart Kids, the leading early childhood literacy nonprofit organization. In its 21st year, the campaign continues to connect families, classrooms, libraries, and community partners through the simple, powerful act of reading aloud together. Through Read for the Record, Jumpstart Kids distributes hundreds of thousands of high-quality picture books each year, supplies free educator and family activity guides, and supports a global movement for early literacy.

This year's campaign follows more than two decades of successful literacy advocacy that has united more than 32 million voices across 50 states and 43 countries. What began as an ambitious dream to break a world record has grown into a global movement, distributing more than three million books to children over the last 21 years.

"*Brave Like a Lion! How a Puppeteer Found Her Voice* celebrates courage and finding your voice,

and Megan Phipus Baptist brings her deeply personal story to life in a way that will inspire our youngest learners. Paired with Niña Mata's beautiful illustrations, it's a story that helps teachers, librarians, early educators, and families raise strong early readers, and we're honored to feature it in this year's Jumpstart Kids: Read for the Record," said Crystal Rountree, CEO, Jumpstart Kids.

The 21st year brings together Jumpstart's massive network and Penguin's publishing power. By coming together, the partnership aims to create a lifelong love of learning and build the foundational literacy skills children need to succeed in classrooms while enjoying their time in libraries and family living rooms.

Rhiannon Hendrickson

Jumpstart Kids

+1 303-748-4808

[email us here](#)

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