

Spreading Joy Through Books



Starter Toolkit



change X

Introduction

Get [beautiful Book Dash books](#) (in English and/or Italian) to children in your community to bring them joy, support their health and happiness and build their future -- all you have to do is send our book files to a copy shop or printer and they will do the rest!

Spreading Joy Through Books is a Book Dash project to further their vision that “Every child should own a hundred books by the age of five”. Book Dash provides beautiful and relevant children’s books that you can select, print, and distribute to young children in your community, to own.

Through working together, the project combines:

- Existing beautiful and relevant Book Dash books in electronic format, ready to print
- You, a positive and passionate community changemaker
- Guidance, support, and funding to enable you to print and distribute up to 1,000 picture books to children in your community to own

Are you a passionate member of your community, interested in spreading the magic of book ownership and all its benefits? Do you have basic project management skills and are you a good communicator? Can you keep track of your progress and give us feedback throughout? Then you’ve come to the right place - let’s get loads of Book Dash books to children in your community!

Research shows that giving engaging, relevant and home language books to children between birth and 5 is a proven way to ensure they do better at school, are healthier and happier, and have better access to future income opportunities. In South Africa, there are about 3 million children under five without any books in their homes - and some of them are in your community. By working with Book Dash and ChangeX to get books to children and families to own, you’ll help the young children in your community to fall in love with books, and give them a bright future.



Welcome

We're so glad you're here and we can't wait to work together and spread the magic of books in your community! Now it's time to stop only imagining young children in your community with books in their hands and smiles on their faces and actually work towards making it a reality.



The Book Dash team will guide you in selecting a few Book Dash books that reflect the context and realities of the children in your community and help you find a local printer that can print up to 1,000 books. You will also receive the necessary resources to identify partners in your community so that the children receive these books to own, absolutely free.



A bit more about Book Dash

Let's start off with watching this happy 5-minute video that was made when we reached the one millionth Book Dash book in children's hands: [Book Dash: One Million Books in Children's Hands](#)



If you, like us, can't get enough of a good thing, continue reading to learn more about Book Dash and see our social media handle and links below to follow and tag us!

@bookdash

- <https://www.instagram.com/bookdash/>
- <https://twitter.com/bookdash>
- <https://www.facebook.com/bookdash>
- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9YLGDF2hyHR3V2DUGaTwPA>

Book Dash was started with a vision that “Every child should own a hundred books by the age of five”. Spreading Joy Through Books is an example of one of the ways we work with partners to see this vision become a reality.



A bit more about Book Dash

How we do it:

Making the books

Our unique 12-hour publishing model vastly reduces the time and costs associated with creating relevant, quality books. We gather creative professionals who volunteer to create beautiful new, African storybooks in just one day!

Sharing the books online

Then, we share them with the world so that anyone anywhere can then freely translate, print and distribute high-quality books to children.

Distributing the physical books into children's hands

We work with partners to provide physical copies in abundance to hundreds of thousands of children and families to own. And now, YOU, by starting a Book Dash early-years book-gifting programme, can ensure another way of distributing Book Dash books into the homes of children and families.

Evidence

A large body of research shows that owning books is a key factor in holistic early development and lifelong academic and economic success. A 2019 study published in the Journal of Global Health found that "Having at least one children's book at home almost doubled the likelihood of the child being on track in literacy and numeracy..."

Making children's books available to children is a cheap and feasible intervention that could change home dynamics to improve the future economic fortunes of children especially in the poorest countries. A new study published by Book Trust in March 2023, also indicates that children who read are more likely to overcome disadvantages caused by inequalities, be healthier and happier with better mental wellbeing and self-esteem, do better at school and develop creativity and empathy.

By increasing the number of books in very young children's homes, we could effectively disrupt a cycle of inequality, for good.



Who you are and what you'll need

Who is it for?

- Someone who is passionate about books and young children
- Someone with access to a computer and has basic computer skills
- Someone with experience starting/managing a community project
- A very good communicator and comfortable to speak and write in English
- Someone with connections to local organisations that care for young children, like crèches, clinics or organisations that promote literacy (or is able to find such organisations)

Time commitment

You can manage the project at your own pace: it is adaptable and doesn't have to be a full-time commitment, but we suggest allowing for:

- 3-7 days to understand the Book Dash printing process and map out your plan
- 3-7 days to find a reliable printer in your area
- 7-14 days to visit local organisations to decide where/how to distribute the books and agree on a plan with them
- 7-14 days to allow for the books to be printed and distributed
- 14-21 days to document your process, get feedback from the organisations, and give feedback to Book Dash

(This doesn't mean that you'll need many months working only on this, as some of these stages overlap or can be done in fewer days. This is just a rough estimate of the commitment each of the stages might involve between you and your team member/s)

Resources

- Reliable access to electricity, a computer, and the internet and a cell phone with mobile data
- Ideally, already an understanding of the centres/organisations in your community working with young children
- A local printer or copy shop that you can access
- Reliable transport to and from partner organisations who will receive the books



Who you are and what you need

Step overview

Step 1: Book Dash introduction

- Let Book Dash know that you're ready to start!
- 30-minute introduction call to explain the process, timelines, resources you'll need
- This will also be an opportunity for you to ask all the questions you might have

Step 2: Select the Book Dash books

Book Dash will provide you with guidelines/help/training to best:

- select the language of the books to print (English and/or Italian)
- download the electronic files and prepare the books for printing

Step 3: Select a printer

Book Dash will provide you with guidelines/help/training to best:

- search for and select potential printers
- get quotes from different printers and sign a contract with the best-suited one
- organise a visit with your printer to meet them and see how they work
- checking the first printed books before giving the go-ahead for the big print run

Step 4: Select a distribution partner/s

Book Dash will provide you with guidelines/help/training to best:

- select distribution partners to get the printed books to the children
- creating a tracking system to document the process

Step 5: Distribute the books and initiate some training

Book Dash will provide you with guidelines/help/training to best:

- make sure that the printed books reach the children
- initiate some training based on best practices around book sharing



Step 1:

Book Dash introduction

Let Book Dash know that you're ready to start! We will set up a 30-minute introduction call where we will explain the process, timelines, resources you'll need and what to get in place in order to document every step of the process so that you can replicate the programme again and again. This will also be an opportunity for you to ask all the questions you might have.

Once you've:

- completed a 30 day challenge with the ChangeX team, and
- gone through this document, watched the [video](#), and explored our [website](#), and
- thought of a name for your book-gifting programme or of your team:

Get in touch with us via email (team@bookdash.org) and include the following information:

Subject line:

ChangeX: Spreading Joy Through Books - your project/team name (Step 1)

Email text:

1. Your name and surname.
2. Your cell phone number.
3. Why you applied and why you think you were selected.
4. What excites you the most about taking on this challenge.
5. Anything else you'd like Book Dash to know about you or how you're planning on taking on this project.
6. Suggest four time slots you are available for a 30-min video call with Book Dash.

(Please complete the information above for every member of your team and make sure everyone can attend the video call.)

Are you ready? Let's get started! With our support, you'll soon:

- print up to 1,000 Book Dash books, and
- deliver and gift them to children in your community!



Step 2: Select the Book Dash books

Once you've:

- have had a look at the Book Dash books on [our website](#), and
- have clicked to get access to and:
 - look at the [Book Dash wordless books catalogue](#) where you'll find lots of books to choose from (14 original Book Dash books in English, and the same 14 books in Italian)
 - read about the benefits of [wordless children's books](#),
 - look at the [Book Dash themes](#) all our books are categorised into and the topics these themes cover

Get in touch with us and include the following information in your email:

Subject line:

ChangeX: Spreading Joy Through Books - your team name (Step 2)

Email text:

1. A shortlist of books you have selected from the available wordless Book Dash books.
2. Suggest four time slots you are available for a 30-min video call with Book Dash so we can finalise the route you're taking, the books you've decided on and send you the book files to continue with the process.



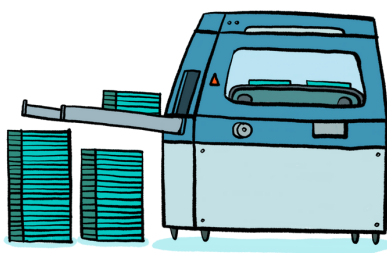
Step 3: Select a printer

Important to take note of:

Don't wait to finish Step 3 before looking at Step 4 for the first time. Both are ongoing tasks and should be initiated and worked on over the same period!

Once you've:

- downloaded the open source book files you've received via email, and
- downloaded and printed out the [Print Spec Document](#), and
- searched for printers in your area and/or ask around/research and find ideally three, but at least two printers that you can contact
- emailed your selected printers and ask them for a quote/print estimate (this can be a very simple email, it doesn't need to explain anything about the Book Dash ChangeX program, you are just asking them for a quote for a print job, so write a short introduction and attach the print spec document that you downloaded and completed). Don't sign anything yet! If you want your print spec document to be double checked or need any help at this stage you can get in touch with us.



Get in touch with us and include the following information in your email:

Subject line:

ChangeX: Spreading Joy Through Books - your team name (Step 3)

Email text:

1. List the two/three printers that you found and asked for quotes and attach the quotes they provided.
2. Suggest four time slots you are available for a 30-min video call with Book Dash so we can talk about the print quotes you received and compare them to determine the best fit, the process of signing the quote and moving forward with the selected printer, and when to start with the printing process. We will also discuss what to look out for when receiving the test copies for the first time from the printer and how to negotiate payment times with the printer.

If you'd like to use the Book Dash logo in social media posts, or print pamphlets to give away together with the books, you can find the logo over [here](#).



Step 4: Select a distribution partner/s

Once you've:

- read the Distribution Partner Application Requirements below, and
- researched your area to gather data on potential organisations you'd like to donate the Book Dash books to

Get in touch with us and include the following information in your email:



Subject line:

ChangeX: Spreading Joy Through Books - your team name (Step 4)

Email text:

1. A shortlist of distribution partners you are considering to distribute the Book Dash books to.
2. Suggest four time slots you are available for a 30-min video call with Book Dash so we can talk about and help you make a final distribution partner selection and share with you a tracking document to record your progress and make sure you have everything well documented: from sending the files to the printers, to where they finally are in the childrens' hands.

Distribution Partner Application Requirements

In order for an organisation to be considered as a distribution partner for Book Dash books, we need some information to ensure that our goals align. This information is a way to identify and finally select potential distribution partners with whom impactful relationships can be forged.

Other than a focus on book ownership, factors that we normally consider when evaluating applications of organisations interested in receiving and then gifting Book Dash to children are:

1. it has to be an organisation that works with preschool children
2. it has to be a well-run and well-managed organisation
3. the organisation has to agree to give the books to the children to take home and own (i.e. book ownership) and just keep a few copies in the classroom
4. the organisation has to commit to work with the parents in at least 1 session to explain the benefits of reading with young children, and to model what to do with the books that are being sent home



Step 5:

Distribute the books and initiate some training



Once you've:

- read the [Best Practice Reading Tips](#) on our website, and
- gone through and checked again that you've completed all the different elements of Steps 1-4

Get in touch with us and include the following information in your email:

Subject line:

ChangeX: Spreading Joy Through Books - your team name (Step 5)

Email text:

1. An update on where you are, how confident you are feeling, what you are struggling with, what is still outstanding, or what you need more help with.
2. Suggest four time slots you are available for a 30-min video call with Book Dash so we can talk about everything up to date and share with you some feedback templates for you to send to the distribution partners as well as some book-specific activities that you might want to include and send to your distribution partners to help them with training or shared reading.



Spreading Joy Through Books

Well done and thank you for
being part of the solution!

Wonderful people like you
help to give the children in our
communities the bright futures
they deserve!



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