

August 31, 2020

Letter to the Editor:

Children need access to books and to libraries.

As schools reopen, we want to remind parents and residents how the school and public libraries are community resources with more than physical books and digital resources. Friendly librarians are ready to assist you.

Whether in-person, hybrid, remote learning, or homeschooling, children need time to read stories for pleasure. Reading literacy is fundamental to success in school, work, and life. Books build empathy by giving children a mirror to see themselves and a window into the lives of others. Be assured that physical books and learning materials are safely circulated through time quarantines and/or disinfecting processes at school and public libraries. Many school and public libraries offer hold-and-pickup or curbside service, and many resumed full library services.

All Hoosiers have FREE access to digital resources through the INSPIRE, Indiana's virtual library, at [inspire.in.gov](http://inspire.in.gov), with special access to [teachingbooks.net](http://teachingbooks.net). Most school libraries and public libraries offer a range of ebooks and audiobooks, and librarians to teach you how to use on your personal or school-provided device. *Don't have internet?* Visit your local public library branch—where Wi-Fi is likely available even in the parking lot. *Need a tutorial?* Librarians are available in person, online, and by telephone.

September is Library Card Sign-up Month. A library card provides access to millions of print and digital resources. Check with your school. Or visit this map, to find the library branch nearest you: [www.ilfonline.org/page/wi-fi-map](http://www.ilfonline.org/page/wi-fi-map)

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