

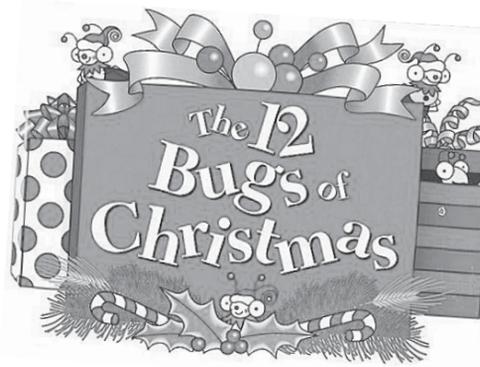
# Cuddle up with your child and a book for the Holidays

By Yvonne Ward

Chatham County Partnership for Children encourages everyone to read to your children this Holiday Season! One of our newest programs, Raising a Reader, is a national non-profit evidence-based early literacy program that improves the reading readiness skills of children from birth to age five. Raising a Reader in Chatham County is funded by Smart Start, United Way and the Chatham County government.

The Raising the Reader program partners with child cares and preschools to rotate bright red bags filled with award-winning books into children's homes on a weekly basis, exposing each child to approximately 100 books per year. Beyond the rotating of book bags, the Partnership works to help teachers and parents in learning interactive "read-aloud" techniques and increase reading at home. This holiday season is a perfect time for "book cuddling" with young children. Here are a few tips to get your holiday reading started off right.

Read together every day: Make this a special time when you and your children can cuddle close.



**Be interactive:**  
Discuss what's happening in the book, point out things on the page, and ask questions.

Read it again and again: Children learn from repetition; so go ahead and read your child's favorite book for the 100th time!

For more tips about reading to children of all ages please [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org).

*Yvonne Ward is the Raising A Reader coordinator in Chatham County. For more information about Raising A Reader or to make a donation, please visit [www.chathamkids.org](http://www.chathamkids.org).*

## Holiday books for young children

Look for these at your public library or local bookseller.

**Corduroy's Christmas**  
By Don Freeman

**The Sound of Kwanzaa**  
By Dimitrea Tokunbo

**Olive the Other Reindeer**  
By Vivian Walsh

**The 12 Bugs of Christmas**  
By David A. Carter

**The Mitten**  
By Jan Brett

**Dream Snow**  
By Eric Carle

**Pete the Cat Saves Christmas**  
By Eric Litwin

**Daddy Christmas & Hanukkah Mama**  
By Selina Alko

**The Snowy Day**  
By Ezra Jacks Keats

**Yoon and the Christmas Mitten**  
By Helen Recorvits



For more holiday book ideas, ask your local librarian or visit: <http://www.slj.com/category/reviews/december-holiday-books>

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community. She credits her family, friends, church, and others around her as helping her get through his illness and eventual death. The people around me lifted me up and showed me that we can help each other out," Meredith says.

Community also led Meredith to her second husband, Ray. They met at a lecture by Joel Salatin, a sustainable farm pioneer, and quickly formed a connection. At the time Ray was living at Blue Heron Farm, an intentional community in the area, and this widened her understanding of what community meant even further.

This, combined with the healing power of putting her hands in the soil, has inspired the next phase in Granite Farm's metamorphosis: an agrarian intentional community and ecovillage. The Granite Springs Farm Community will be a small farm community whose members will share the work,



Meredith Leight at the wheel of her tractor.

responsibilities, and rewards of an agrarian, environmentally-friendly, human, and socially-just way of life. Their aim is to create an agricultural way of life through thoughtful, simple lifestyle choices and localizing a greater percentage of their needs closer to home.

Their goals are able to connect to the source of our sustenance, goods, and gifts; co-exist with the natural cycle of seasons; protect natural wildlife and conserve fragile resources; promote healthier lifestyles; reduce fossil fuel use; and make more proactive choices about how/if/when to spend money.

The Granite Springs Farm Community is in its formative stage. Interested people are encouraged to attend monthly information get-together or contact the farm through their website: <http://granitespringsfarm.com>

*One of Adrienne Bashista's many hats is manager of the Chatham Mills Farmers' Market: [chathamillsfarmersmarket.com](http://chathamillsfarmersmarket.com). You can contact her at [cmfmanager@gmail.com](mailto:cmfmanager@gmail.com).*



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