



December 1, 2007

Honorable Kenneth Sadler
Alderman
City of Savannah
407 King Arthur Lane
Savannah GA 31405

Dear Alderman Sadler:

This letter is being written to help make you and others aware of The First Foundation for Childhood Literacy and if possible, to bring this program to Chatham County, a program offering free books for children birth to 5.

A little background: I was visiting a Rincon childcare center when a promotional brochure caught my eye. It stated something about "free books". I thought with that caption, it was a way to get me to BUY a book because nothing is ever really free. After reviewing the brochure, I was intrigued by the fact that ALL children in Effingham County between the ages of birth and 5 years are eligible to receive a FREE book each month with no obligation on their part whatsoever!! That's a potential of 60 FREE books (depending on the age at registration.) Further investigation led me to The First Foundation website and ultimately to writing this letter. Here is an excerpt from the website:

Literacy in Georgia

A third of our children come to school unprepared to learn. Approximately 61% of low-income families do not have a single piece of reading material suitable for a child.

41% of Georgia's 4th graders do not read at grade level.

Several States plan how many jail cells they will build in the future by how many children are not reading on grade level by 3rd & 4th grade.

Georgia scored 46th on SATs in 2006.

One in four adults in Georgia operates at a low literacy level.

Low literate workers cost Georgia businesses \$7 billion a year.

People in the U.S. who are illiterate represent 75% of the unemployed, 33% of mothers receiving aid, 85% of juveniles who appear in court and 60% of prison inmates.

Georgia spends \$170 million a year on remedial education.

With your help, this can change...

I am sure you will agree these statistics are startling! With your help we can change them. Of 159 counties in Georgia, there were 41 participating in the program at the end of 2006. Let's move Chatham County into the *participating* column!

According to the initial information I received from Tera Cochran, Program Manager, Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy, "the first step to implement this program in Chatham County is to create a *buzz* in the community to build awareness of the program and invite local leaders to participate in a local Community Action Team (CAT) effort. The local CAT will consist of individuals with a vested interest in economic development, literacy and a passion for children!" The second step is grants, private donation and other funding.

Please take a moment to read the enclosures, visit the website and then consider being a part of the CAT; if not on the committee, financial support is necessary for the success of the program in Chatham County. Please pass this letter on to your associates. We must move forward for the sake of the future – our children.

My contact information is below for your convenience in reply. My hope is you will agree with me and help to kick this off in January 2008. I look forward to your support.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Jennelle, Chatham County Citizen

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Visit <http://www.ferstfoundation.org>



P.S. Also please see the article in December's edition of "Southern Living", Georgia Living Section, beginning on Page 32.