

KC STAKE SELF-RELIANCE NEWSLETTER

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BYU Pathway Worldwide

The next block starts
August 31st

Apply by August 24th

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Literacy Classes: Strengthening Individuals & Families

The Kansas City, Missouri Stake is currently piloting a Church literacy program that has been tested by the Church internationally and with various church employees and service missionaries. Twelve participants and eleven dedicated mentors from our stake are actively involved in this pilot. The expectation is that the stake will be able to offer this class again in the winter and it will expand from our stake to other stakes.

This is an in-depth learning experience that starts with the foundational principles and through various methods, incorporates those principles and the subsequent principles in a way that changes lives. We are profoundly grateful for the participants and mentors in this pilot, which is the first of its kind in the United States.

The Church has partnered with a company that specializes in teaching literacy. It has developed the curriculum and the computer-based support exercises and reinforcement that the Church has adopted for its literacy course. They work together on improvements and upgrades and will learn from our pilot as our current students become more proficient readers and communicators during this multi-month session. Students meet with a teacher over Zoom twice a week, use their hardcopy workbook and meet one-on-one with their own mentor at least once a week. During the week the student also works on computer-based exercises. Students master each concept so there are no gaps; because of this, each student's experience may vary but classes will generally go for about six months.

This focus on the basics, together with one-on-one mentoring and online reinforcement, all done in a gospel-based environment opens the windows of Heaven for both the students and our wonderful mentors. Their dedicated focus on the "small" things, done consistently will produce great results for individuals, families and beyond. See Alma 37:6-7; Doctrine & Covenants 64:33.

Background

Many people in our communities quietly struggle with reading. Some find it difficult to complete forms, support their children's learning, study independently, or participate confidently in Church classes. Others simply wish they could read more easily and with greater confidence.

For more than eight years, the Church's literacy initiatives have helped adults strengthen their reading skills through literacy classes. These classes provide caring, one-on-one support and evidence-based instruction that helps learners progress at their own pace.

The results have been encouraging. Learners have improved their reading skills, increased the amount of time they spend reading, and gained confidence in their ability to learn and participate more fully in everyday life. Many have shared that improved literacy has helped them support their families, pursue educational goals, and engage more confidently in personal gospel study.

Success Example

One literacy success story is of an individual who joined the literacy class after struggling with reading his entire life due to dyslexia. After attending the classes, he was able to lead his family scripture study for the first time. The skills he has developed have helped him to participate more fully in Church service, communicate more confidently, and support other learners in his community.

Literacy Can Be Improved At Any Age

Literacy needs exist in every community. National literacy research indicates that nearly one in five adults perform at the lowest literacy levels. The good news is that literacy can be improved at any age. With encouragement, practice, and effective instruction, adults can make meaningful progress and experience lasting benefits. [\[nces.ed.gov\]](https://nces.ed.gov), [\[nces.ed.gov\]](https://nces.ed.gov)

Who Can Benefit?

Literacy classes may be helpful for adults who:

- Want to improve their reading or writing skills
- Struggle to read confidently in daily life
- Want to better support children or grandchildren in learning
- Want greater confidence in personal scripture study
- Are learning English and want to strengthen their reading ability

- Have experienced reading difficulties in the past and would like additional support

Benefits

The goal of literacy classes is simple: help individuals and families gain skills that lead to greater confidence, self-reliance, and lifelong learning. Participants often discover that improving literacy affects many areas of their lives, from family relationships and employment opportunities to service in the Church and personal gospel study.

If you know someone who might benefit from literacy instruction—or if you would like to strengthen your own reading skills—we invite you to watch for the next literacy session (early next year). A small investment of time can lead to lasting blessings for individuals, families, and future generations. There will also be a need for additional mentors for future classes as this pilot rolls forward. We encourage you to consider if this is something you are willing and able to do.



Phoenix Family

Help a Child Start the School Year with Confidence

By Michelle Truman, Stake JustServe Specialist

Every child deserves to begin the school year feeling prepared, confident, and excited to learn. For many families, however, the cost of school supplies can be one more challenge during an already difficult season.

Phoenix Family is helping change that.

Serving families, children, and seniors in affordable housing communities throughout the Kansas City metro, Phoenix Family provides more than temporary assistance. They build lasting relationships with families, offering support, coaching, and resources that help people move from crisis toward long-term stability. By meeting families where they live, Phoenix Family helps create stronger homes, brighter futures, and thriving communities.

This back-to-school season, you can be part of that mission.

Phoenix Family's Back-to-School celebrations bring families together for an evening of fun, encouragement, and hope. Children receive backpacks and school supplies while enjoying games, crafts, refreshments, and activities that help them look forward to the new school year.

Volunteers make these events possible. Whether you're welcoming families, helping with games and crafts, distributing backpacks, serving refreshments, or assisting with setup and cleanup, your kindness can help create a memorable experience for a child and their family. No special skills are required—just a willing heart and a desire to serve.

A few hours of your time can do more than hand out school supplies. It can remind a family that they are seen, valued, and supported by a community that cares.

Visit JustServe.org today to find volunteer opportunities to volunteer on the [Phoenix Family JustServe Organization](#) page. Together, we can help children start the school year with hope, confidence, and the knowledge that they are not alone.



12 Principles of Self-Reliance

The Lord has declared, "It is my purpose to provide for my saints" (D&C 104:15). This revelation is a promise that the Lord will provide temporal blessings and open the door of self-reliance. He has also declared that "it must needs be done in [His) way" (D&C 104:16). To receive the blessings of self-reliance, we must accept and live the principles of self-reliance, which include the following:

- Exercise Faith in Jesus Christ (D&C 104:15)
- Use Time Wisely (Alma 34:32)
- Be Obedient (D&C 130:20-21) Manage Money (D&C 104:78)
- Work: Take Responsibility (D&C 42:42; 2 Nephi 2:16, 26) Solve Problems (Ether 2:18-19 , 23; 3:1 , 4)
- Become One, Work Together (Moses 7:18; D&C 104:15-17) Communicate: Petition and listen (D&C 8:2)
- Persevere (Hebrews 12:1; D&C 58:4)
- Show Integrity (Mosiah 4:28; Job 27:5; Articles of Faith 1:13)
- Seek Learning and Education (D&C 88:118-119)
- Stay on Task, Receive Ordinances (D&C 84:20; D&C 136:4; 1 Nephi 18:2-3)

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KCStake.org/Self-Reliance

