

Reading To A Better Future: Starting 2021 Off Right!

New Jersey's Largest First Night Offers Complimentary Passes to Children Who Complete Holiday Reading Challenge

Reading to A Better Future is the newest edition to New Jersey's and the Mid-Atlantic's First Night Celebration, First Night Morris County's Year-Round Community Development Program, FNM365. Reading to A Better Future is part of the organization's Literacy Initiative which aims to use early literacy to help provide a better future at school, greater career opportunities, and enhance overall quality of life.

Participants are pre-school through middle school students, who must read for at least 140 minutes from December 16 to December 30. A Parent or Guardian submits a basic form on [First Night Morris County's Website](#) certifying completion. After a successful review, First Night will send a link to register for a complimentary ticket to First Night Morris County on December 31, 2020 featuring over 40 Performances, 100+ Artists via their Streaming and On-Demand Platform.

First Night Morris County Advisory Board Member and Director of the Morristown & Morris Township Library, Chad Leinaweaver, oversaw the development of the program. "The Holiday Reading Challenge is a great opportunity for kids and teens, especially during this pandemic", stated Leinaweaver.

Often many parents focus on the 'summer slide' (for which library Summer Reading programs help to alleviate), but there can be a less-publicized 'winter slide' too, especially during a time where many students suffer from 'screen fatigue', explained Leinaweaver. "A program such as this challenge not only shows them what an escape reading can be, but it also installs in them a love of reading and an ability to succeed in academic and career areas," stated Leinaweaver.

With 1 in 3 American children starting Kindergarten without the skills they need to read, they are put at a significant disadvantage as they are more likely to fall behind in school, making First Night's program is both timely and relevant.

"It's about making an impact," stated Board Chair, Walter Deutsch. "Each year, we do just that on New Year's Eve with our trademark New Year's Eve program, First Night Morris County. By creating harmony with our innovative FNM365 programs, such as Reading To A Better Future and our annual event, we create a powerful combination, which produces a greater positive impact", explained Deutsch.

To learn more about First Night Morris County, FNM365, the Literacy Initiative, Reading to A Better Future, and more, please visit [FirstNightMorris.com](#).

This release was written by a First Night Morris County FNM365 High School Intern under the Mentorship of President, Craig Schlosser, and Supporting Advisory Board Members.