



# 2024 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



GRAND  
RAPIDS  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

In a world run by dollars and cents,  
we believe people should be free.

Free to ask questions and access knowledge.  
Free to challenge and to be challenged.  
Free to write brand new pages in the story  
of their lives.

No matter your background or beliefs,  
Grand Rapids Public Library is a place where  
you can be free to have ideas collide,  
imaginations ignited, and paths made clear.

Whatever you need to move forward,  
we exist to help you find it.



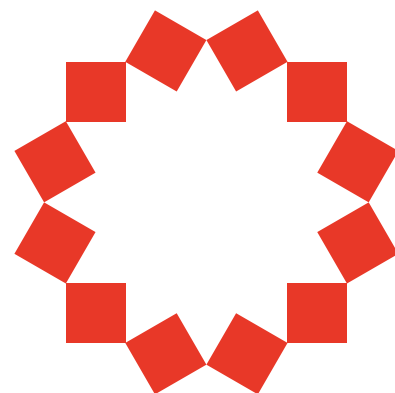
# Investing in life-skills

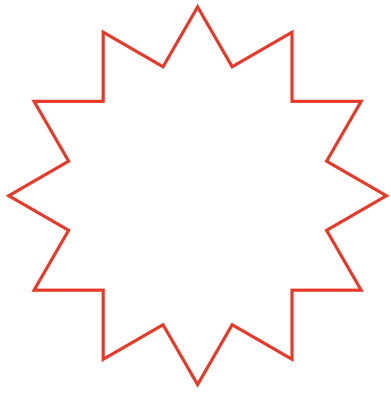
The Grand Rapids Public Library remains a primary destination for learning new skills and gaining basic knowledge at any stage of life.

We provide pathways for self-improvement and practical learning, such as instructional workshops, business consultations, one-on-one technology sessions, and remote resume reviews. In addition to supporting adult learners, GRPL is committed to early literacy initiatives that equalize opportunities for families.

Our storytimes and early childhood programs set a foundation for future academic success by developing a child's cognitive, social, and language skills as well as their alphabet knowledge, focus, and creativity.

At GRPL, we don't just offer resources; we ignite potential. By providing enriching experiences and tailored support, we prepare patrons of all ages with the essential skills needed to thrive in an ever-evolving world.





## Lifelong learning highlights

**73,356** picture books were checked out to Grand Rapids' households in 2024. The average retail cost of a picture book is **\$19.38**.

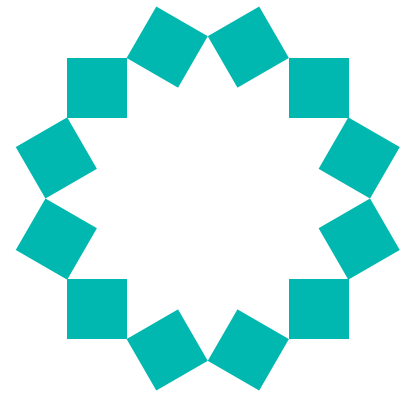
**171** storytimes offered to families last year.

**123** consultations provided to job seekers and entrepreneurs.

**93** instructional programs for all ages. Skills learned include: genealogy, computer skills, yoga, printmaking, internet privacy, grant writing, and bicycle repair.



# Connecting our community

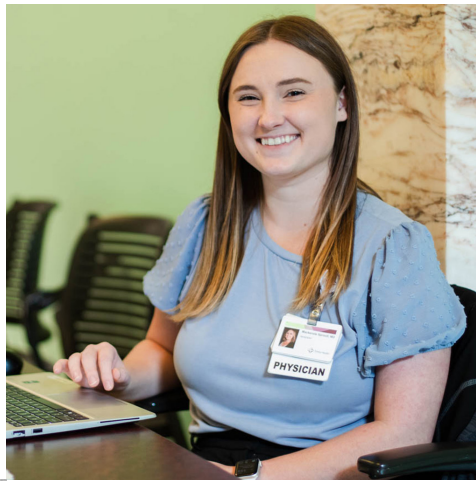
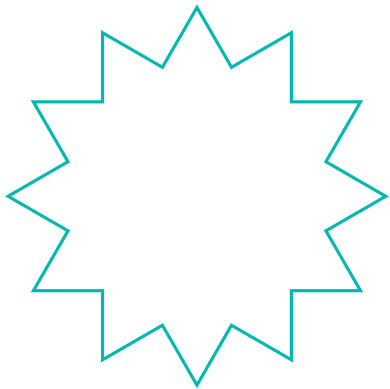


The Grand Rapids Public Library serves a vital role in bringing people together to foster a sense of belonging and purpose. In times of individual or collective change, public spaces offer neutral ground where people can come together to learn and be heard.

Each of our 8 neighborhood locations acts as a community hub, promoting social interaction, the exchange of ideas, and civic cohesion—essential elements for maintaining a healthy social infrastructure.

The partnerships we've developed with local organizations and agencies makes us a destination for those seeking assistance. Beyond facilitating dialogue, the library becomes a bridge to a network of resources and social services across the city.

As an extension of our efforts, GRPL's Mobile Library delivers targeted services to neighborhoods with limited access to resources. Through strategic deployment, we can address early literacy gaps and deepen our engagement with the communities we serve.



## Community highlights

**495,245** library visits in 2024.  
That's over **1,400** visitors each day.

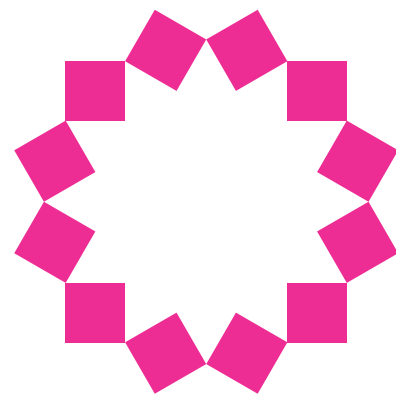
**15** local service agencies have regular presence or office hours at the library. Areas of focus include housing, healthcare, education, literacy, and mental health.

**241** residents were provided support by social service agencies through connections made at the library.

The Mobile Library engaged over **500** kids during the summer across the city.



# Celebrating our collection

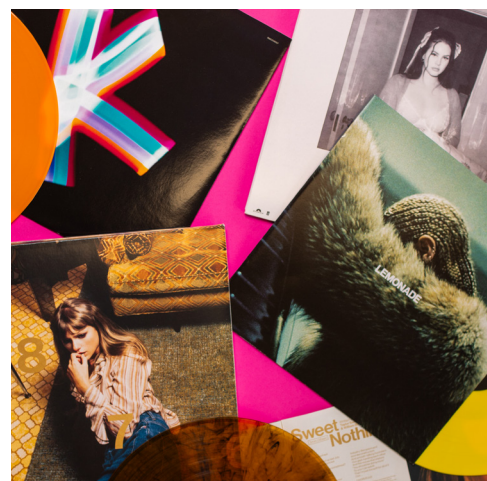


Our collection of books, movies, music, and databases are the bedrock of our institution. Over 1 million materials are checked out each year, regardless of format, which underscores the importance of our library's expansive collection to our community.

Our materials reflect the people within the neighborhoods we serve and through intentional acquisitions, we help our patrons discover new perspectives, explore real and imagined worlds, and stay informed. The connections we make to our collections through time honored traditions like our Summer Reading Challenge and book clubs, help inspire the next generation of readers.

In addition to our regular collections, the Grand Rapids History Center's archive features materials that can only be found here. Our historical resources, combined with our knowledgeable staff, are sought out by emerging and seasoned researchers, genealogists, artists, writers, and anyone with a curiosity for local history.

We are committed to providing open and free access to our collections. Through the preservation of our community's shared history and our dedication to building broad and diverse collections, we uphold the essential rights to education, literacy, and intellectual freedom for generations to come.





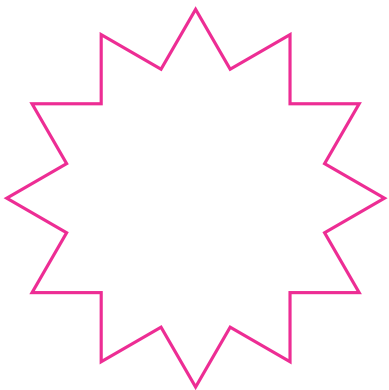
## Collection highlights

On average, borrowers check out **40** items each year, a savings of **\$1,161** per person.

**2,295** archival items were viewed by local patrons as well as people from 86 cities, 20 states or provinces, and 100 zip codes.

**8,772** kids and adults participated in the Summer Reading Challenge.

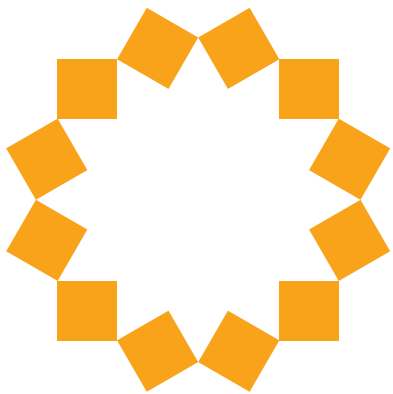
Checkouts of digital materials increased by **17%**.





# By the numbers

Total items  
borrowed  
**1,389,275**



Physical  
circulation  
**771,163**

Digital  
circulation  
**618,113**

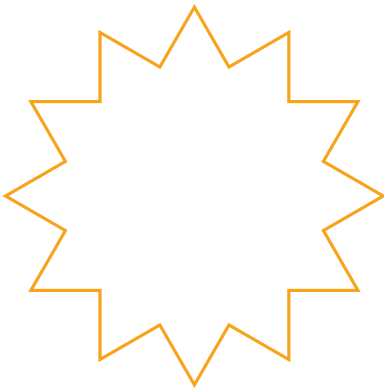
Items in the  
collection  
**1,077,529**

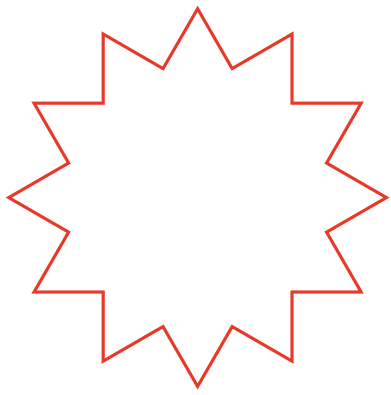
New items  
added  
**40,867**

Archival  
requests  
**2,295**

Number of  
cardholders  
**52,547**

New  
cardholders  
**10,127**

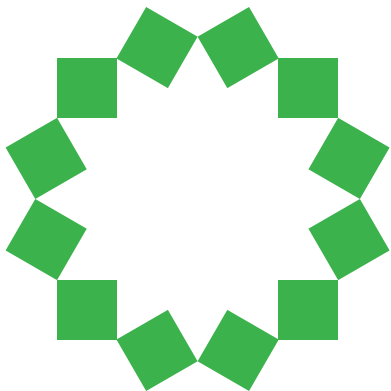




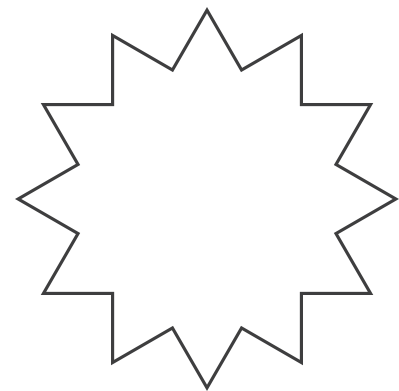
Library  
visits  
**495,245**

Programs  
& classes  
**529**

Outreach  
events  
**107**



Tours/class  
visits  
**90**



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