



MEDIA RELEASE



Sold Out and So Loved: Storybook Street Returns to Venice

SARASOTA COUNTY, JANUARY 26, 2026 -When stories come to life, the imaginations of little ones bloom. The Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County (ELC) is thrilled to announce the return of its 6th annual Storybook Street event: a beloved, free, literacy-meets-the-arts celebration designed for young learners. So beloved, that all 400 free tickets (one ticket per family) sold out faster than a toddler chasing bubbles, with the waitlist filling up just as quickly.

Saturday, February 7, 2026

10:00AM- 12:30PM

State College of Florida-Venice Campus

8000 Tamiami Trail S

Venice, FL 34293

Hosted outdoors on SCF's lush, park-like Venice campus, Storybook Street is designed for children ages birth to five. The immersive morning event blends books, music, art, dance, science, and sensory play. It brings stories off the page and into real life through engaging performances and interactive booths thanks to the many talents of 18 arts & science partners:

Sarasota Orchestra • Venice Theatre • Sarasota County Parks & Recreation • Gulf Coast Music Therapy • Sarasota Children's Museum • Future of Dance • All Faiths Food Bank • Big Cat Habitat • Sarasota Art Museum • State College of Florida • Little Medical School Suncoast • The Haven • UF/IFAS Extension • Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium • Sarasota County Libraries • Selby Gardens • Leaders Uplifted • Sarasota County Emergency Management

Each participating family will have the opportunity to visit literacy booths and leave with **20 new books**, a swag bag of goodies, and unforgettable moments that help foster a lifelong love of reading. Children are also encouraged to dress up as their favorite storybook characters, adding to the whimsy and wonder of the day.

"By welcoming families to our SCF Venice campus and involving our students as volunteers, we help spark a love of learning early and reinforce that higher education begins long before college," said SCF President Tommy Gregory. "We are honored to play a role in shaping bright futures from the very first chapter."

Following the overwhelming success of the 2025 event, ELC pivoted from a first-come, first-served model to a pre-registration system this year. Tickets were gone before the nonprofit could launch any real promotional efforts.

“Who knew books could go viral?” wonders Ana McClendon, ELC Chief of Community Impact and Storybook Street Coordinator. “I am so proud of our team. We turned early literacy into a can’t-miss, community-wide vibe, and the tickets flew. In a world full of tech and screens, this is a huge win. Storybook Street isn’t just an event, it’s a full-on magical adventure for little ones that doesn’t cost a thing.”

The ELC will distribute an all-new collection of books for Storybook Street 2026, ensuring families receive fresh titles not offered in previous years.

IMPORTANT NOTE: To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience, all attendees must have a ticket to enter. No walk-ins.

We appreciate and welcome any coverage of this unique, joy-filled community event. Storybook Street offers rich visuals, authentic family moments, and engaging soundbites. No shortage of candid, preschooler-approved commentary!

This book-themed wonderland is made possible through the generous support of our Event Sponsor Florida Blue, with additional support from Strategic Commercial Solutions – Spirit Movers. Both agencies share a commitment and understanding of the power of strong early literacy skills.

[Click here](#) to see the smiles, stories, and spark from our 2025 reel

[Click here](#) see photos from the 2025 event

2026 event details are [here](#) and on our social media channels.

About Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County

The Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County (ELC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the success of young children, their families, and early childhood educators. Through programs that promote high-quality early education, family stability, and workforce development, the ELC helps ensure every child in Sarasota County enters kindergarten ready to learn and thrive.

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