



GrassROOTS Community Foundation (GCF) conceptualizes literacy as a community wellness practice. Social science and psychological research has demonstrated that reading is good for the heart and mind. We conceptualize reading as play that feeds curiosity and feeds on curiosity. Listening to stories tunes the ear and trains the mind to pay attention. Storytelling is one of the best ways to talk to young children, even when we are at a loss for words.



Our [#GreenRibbonWeek](#) campaign seeks to institutionalize positive mental health practices. We use literacy as a foundational part of the work. This year in partnerships with schools and community organizations, young people and their families are reading two books: *Harbor Me* by Jacqueline Woodson and *Parent Like It Matters* by Dr. Janice Johnson Dias.

*Harbor Me* offers as an opportunity to understand the value of youth wellness. Within the book young people demonstrate the importance of the green ribbon week themes: *breathe, move, and connect*. The book explores topics immigration, race, forgiveness, bullying, identity, friendship, and family. Such issues are critically and currently important for youth.

*Parent Like It Matters* by Dr. Janice Johnson Dias offers multiple examples for caregivers to practice their [listening](#) skills to help facilitate youth mental well-being. Each chapter concludes with a set of home assignments to help caregivers, guardians, teachers, and other caregivers begin the work of attending to their own mental wellness so that they are well-positioned to support youth people.

