



Editor's Note The Awakening

By Sharon Verbeten

Mothers may know best, as the saying goes, but grandmothers and librarians are a close second. Put them together and, *well*, it's a recipe for early literacy success.

Heidi Gustafson, a library associate of mine at Brown County (WI) Library in Green Bay, couldn't wait to be a first-time grandma this year; she began collecting book favorites old and new even before little Grady, pictured on our cover, was born.

On a weekend trip to the family cabin, young Grady woke—as infants do—very early, so Heidi offered to let his parents sleep in. She excitedly began reading to him, but later, the others in the lofted cabin told her she had woke them up by reading too loudly! I guess she took author Paula Fox's adage a little too literally: "When you put a book in a child's hands . . . you are an awakener."

Literacy won out over lack of sleep in the end, and later, Grady's mom, Rachel, snapped this shot (on our cover) of Grady enjoying some tummy time, content to "read" on his own.

As a longtime library employee, Heidi knows the value of reading—she raised three young readers of her own. But now, books seem just a little bit more important, as she welcomes young Grady into the fold.

"Reading to your children is full of joy and expectation for who they will become," she says. "But reading to your grandchild takes that just one step further—knowing you have fostered the joy of reading for several generations." &

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