



*NOTE: This is the ninth in a series of articles that were released monthly throughout 2017 as part of the celebration of the NH State Library's 300th anniversary. The State Library was founded in Jan. 25, 1717 and is the first state library in America.*

## **NH State Library Talking Books Services: That All May Read**

**September 12, 2017:** Did you read your newspaper over coffee this morning? Did you talk with co-workers or a neighbor about the latest book from your favorite author? Did you check out some gossip from a celebrity magazine? Fellow New Hampshire residents who are blind, visually impaired, or unable to hold a book or magazine are also able to enjoy these activities, thanks to the New Hampshire State Library's Talking Books Services division.

Talking Books Library Services is part of a national network of libraries that provides reading materials to those who might not otherwise be able to enjoy them. New Hampshire residents who are blind or who cannot see well enough to focus (even with eyeglasses), who are unable to handle print material or who have a reading disability because of an organic dysfunction, may be eligible to borrow books printed in Braille (a system of raised dots that can be read with the fingers) as well as audio recordings of popular books and magazines – delivered right to their door or mobile device – from Talking Books, free of charge and with no postage costs. Talking Book Services even provides the special players for the audio books.

More than 50,000 titles are available for all ages and interests, including bestsellers, fiction, nonfiction, and entertainment and news magazines. There are even combination print/braille books that can be shared by those who have sight challenges and those who don't, allowing a sighted teacher to read along with a visually impaired person who is learning Braille, or a sighted child to read a book with a blind parent.

Interested in music? Talking Book Services patrons can access a collection of Braille, large-print and recorded instructional materials about music and musicians, including musical scores and music appreciation materials.

Love using technology? Thousands of books, magazines and music scores can be accessed from the internet using the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) website. Materials are downloaded to a mobile device or to a cartridge that can be used with a digital talking book machine provided by the Talking Book Library.

Statistics for New Hampshire's Talking Books Services are strong: more than 2,700 individuals and institutions—including schools and healthcare institutions—borrow 88,000 books and magazines each year.

Here at the New Hampshire State Library, we're especially proud that our Talking Books Services was named the 2013 Network Library of the Year by the Library of Congress' National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped section. New Hampshire may be a small state, but we accomplish big things!

Just because people have reading challenges doesn't mean they shouldn't have the opportunity to enjoy reading and library services. If you or someone you know may be eligible for these services, please contact the New Hampshire State Library's Talking Books division at 603-271-3429. You can also learn more at our website, [www.nh.gov/nhsl/talking\\_books](http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/talking_books).

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