

**Reach
Out and
Read®**

National Center



The Mission ■ Reach Out and Read® makes literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric primary care, so that children grow up with books and a love of reading.

Reach Out and Read trains doctors and nurses to advise parents about the importance of reading aloud and to give books to children at pediatric checkups from 6 months to

5 years of age, with a special focus on children growing up in poverty. By building on the unique relationship between parents and medical providers, Reach Out and Read helps families and communities encourage early literacy skills so children enter school prepared for success in reading.

The Reach Out and Read (ROR) Model

- In the exam room, doctors and nurses trained in the developmental strategies of early literacy encourage parents to read aloud to their young children, and offer age-appropriate tips.
- The pediatric primary care provider gives every child between the ages of 6 months and 5 years a new, developmentally-appropriate children's book to take home and keep.
- In the waiting room, displays, information, and gently-used books create a literacy-rich environment. Where possible, volunteer readers entertain the children, modeling for the parents the pleasures – and techniques – of reading aloud.

The Impact as of September 2008

- ROR programs are located in more than 4,121 hospitals and health centers in 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands.
- More than 3.5 million children participate in ROR annually.
- More than 5.7 million new, developmentally-appropriate books are given to families annually.
- More than 50,000 physicians and nurses have been trained in the ROR strategies of early literacy guidance.

The Challenge

- 35% of American children entering kindergarten today lack the basic language skills they will need to learn to read.
- Children who live in print-rich environments and who are read to during the first years of life are much more likely to learn to read on schedule.
- Fewer than half of parents (48%) in the United States read to their young children daily.
- Parents of children living in poverty may lack the money to buy books, may not have easy access to good children's books, and may not themselves have been read to as children, with the result that millions of children are growing up without books.

The Reach Out and Read National Center

- ROR is a national, nonprofit organization founded in 1989 at Boston City Hospital (now Boston Medical Center), through a collaboration of pediatricians and early childhood educators.
- Through both public and private funding, the ROR National Center provides start-up and sustainability funding for books, as well as training and technical assistance, to ROR programs nationwide.
- ROR is affiliated with the Department of Pediatrics, Boston Medical Center, Boston University School of Medicine.
- ROR is endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

For more information, contact the Reach Out and Read National Center

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ROR

**Celebrating
20
years**