REACH OUT AND READ WISCONSIN
PROGRAM UPDATE
2016 IN REVIEW
The power of a clinician and a book

The first five years of a child’s life offer a critical window for brain development and Reach Out and Read Wisconsin seizes this opportunity.

Clinicians, trained in our evidence-based model, encourage parents to talk, sing, play and read aloud with their babies from birth. Clinicians often model this interaction during the visit. Children ages 6 months through 5 years leave the well-child visit with a new, developmentally- and culturally-appropriate book.

This two generation approach empowers parents as their child’s first and most important teacher and inspires a love of books to last a lifetime.

Books build better brains

Reach Out and Read Wisconsin is a statewide affiliate of the national, evidence-based program. Fifteen independent, peer-reviewed, published research studies show:

• Parents involved with our program are 2.5 times more likely to read to their children and enjoy reading together
• Children’s language development is improved by 3 to 6 months
• Families are 2.5 times more likely to have books in the home

The need continues

More than 30 percent of Wisconsin children enter kindergarten without the skills they need to learn to read. Studies show 88 percent of these children never catch up.

Children living in low-income families are particularly at risk. Learning to read impacts more than just a child’s school performance. Literacy impacts rates of youth school retention, juvenile delinquency, teen risk behaviors and adult long-term health outcomes.

Our mission

Reach Out and Read Wisconsin gives young children a foundation for success by incorporating books into pediatric care and encouraging families to read aloud together.

Donate online at www.chawisconsin.org/ror-donate or by mailing a check, payable to Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, to 1716 Fordem Ave., Madison, WI 53704. Write Reach Out and Read Wisconsin in the check’s memo section.
In 2016, 31 clinics launched Reach Out and Read programs bringing early literacy guidance and books to an estimated 10,000 more children in Wisconsin.

In 2016, Reach Out and Read was a standard of care in 10 health systems in Wisconsin: Access Community Health Centers, Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin, Milwaukee Health Services, NorthLakes Community Clinic, Progressive Community Health Centers, Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers, Vernon Memorial Healthcare, UW Health, Watertown Regional Medical Center and Wildwood Family Clinic.

The New York Times released an article entitled, “The Good News About Educational Inequality,” which credits programs like Reach Out and Read for contributing to narrowing the achievement gap.

Three legislative leaders visited Reach Out and Read clinics in their districts; Sens. Leah Vukmir, Shelia Harsdorf and Rep. Chris Taylor gained valuable insight about the program and also read to young children while visiting.

Developed a four-year growth and sustainability plan to present to potential funders and diversify our funding sources.

Reach Out and Read Wisconsin’s Medical Director, Dipesh Navsaria, MPH, MSLIS, MD, was named to the Board of Directors of Reach Out and Read National Center.

Reach Out and Read 2016 highlights

What we do

- Provide technical assistance and support to clinics wanting to develop a Reach Out and Read program
- Oversee program implementation to ensure high quality early literacy promotion that remains true to our evidence-based model
- Utilize quality assurance tools to engage clinics in adopting best practices
- Provide regular communication on program management, best practices, research, and state and national activities
- Develop strategic alliances with organizations to promote state and community collaborations
- Fundraise to assist clinics with book purchases and support our growing infrastructure needs
- Convene clinic representatives annually to provide education, offer networking opportunities, promote program implementation strategies and recognize accomplishments
- Support clinicians to become early literacy advocates at the community and state level

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Testimonials

“Reach Out and Read has completely transformed the way I do well-child visits. The program empowers parents to direct and promote the development of their child’s brain. Reach Out and Read, along with immunization, is clearly the most important thing we do for young children in our practice.”

Jeff Britton, MD, FAAP
Aurora Children’s Health - Sheboygan

“I learn things that my brain will always know.”
Naja
Age 5

“I think it’s amazing to introduce this at checkups, as maybe some parents don’t think to read to their child during infancy.”
Parent of 6 month old at Aspirus Doctors Clinic

Advisory Council

Emilia Arana, MD, Pediatrician, Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers
Matt Crespin, MPH, RDH, Associate Director, Children’s Health Alliance of Wisconsin
Jessica Doyle, Instructor, Edgewood College and Former First Lady of Wisconsin
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Richard Strauss, MD, Pediatrician, Gundersen Health System
Earnestine Willis, MD, MPH, Kellner Professor of Pediatrics and Director, Center for the Advancement of Underserved Children, Medical College of Wisconsin

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