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HEISING-SIMONS FOUNDATION MAKES BOOKS COUNT WITH REACH OUT AND READ
Nearly \$1M to Jumpstart Early Math Initiative for 10,000 children

Boston, MA (April 4, 2018): It is with great pleasure that the National Board of Directors of Reach Out and Read acknowledges the generous gift from the Heising-Simons Foundation of \$914,000 to fund an innovative enhancement to Reach Out and Read's award-winning model: Books Count - Reach Out and Read's Early Math Initiative. Heising-Simons Foundation's investment supports a five-state rollout of Books Count over the next two years. In that time, Reach Out and Read will reach 10,000 children, providing them and their families with the tools and guidance to foster crucial foundational math skills before the age of 5; the organization will then be well positioned to bring Books Count to the rest of its national network, benefiting over 5 million children by 2020. Books Count does not change the core of the Reach Out and Read model, it aims to expand the opportunities for parent-child interaction at the heart of our model by providing new concepts and ways to learn.

Understanding that early math ability is a strong predictor of later academic success, and that math achievement gaps appear at an early age, Reach Out and Read created its early math initiative with prior support from the Heising-Simons Foundation. Books Count will enhance Reach Out and Read's impact on the children and families it serves throughout the U.S.— in particular, low-income families. Reach Out and Read supports 1 out of every 4 low-income children nationwide. Reach Out and Read's objective is to promote positive parent-child interaction during the period of rapid brain growth and development between birth and age five.

Reach Out and Read is the only national literacy program delivered through pediatric care providers. More than 90% of children under age six have visited a medical provider for a check-up in the past year, and medical providers are highly trusted by parents, making them ideal ambassadors for the importance of reading with children, even from birth. With a network of over 32,000 providers and 6,000 clinical sites, Reach Out and Read provides 4.7 million children and their families with books, tips, and guidance for reading aloud together. Reach Out and Read families are two-and-a-half times more likely to read together every day.

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Thanks to the grant from Heising-Simons Foundation, Reach Out and Read will now be able to incorporate Books Count into its model and reach children in Arizona, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Texas.

“For nearly 30 years, the Reach Out and Read model has fostered parent engagement, literacy, and social and emotional development for millions of families nationwide,” said Brian Gallagher, Chief Executive Officer of Reach Out and Read. “We are eager to offer our families more, and thanks to the Heising-Simons Foundation, we are putting our scalable, cost-effective model of delivering essential interventions through pediatric providers to work in new and impactful ways. As an organization, we are thrilled to take this next step, and evolve to meet more of the needs of the children and families we serve.”

“Since 2014, the Heising-Simons Foundation has supported ROR’s Early Math Initiative in developing and testing an early math family outreach program that can be brought to scale,” said Kimberly Brenneman, program officer for Education at the Heising-Simons Foundation. “The expansion of ROR’s Early Math Initiative to five additional U.S. states could lead to increased provider and familial knowledge about the importance of early math for later school success, more time spent enjoying family math activities, and strengthening of children’s early math learning and attitudes.”

About Heising-Simons Foundation: The Heising-Simons Foundation is a family foundation based in Los Altos, California. The Foundation works with its many partners to advance sustainable solutions in climate and clean energy, enable groundbreaking research in science, enhance the education of our youngest learners, and support human rights for all people.

About Reach Out and Read: Founded in 1989 at Boston Medical Center, Reach Out and Read is a national nonprofit organization that gives young children a foundation for success by incorporating books into pediatric care and encouraging families to read aloud together. Headquartered in Boston, MA, Reach Out and Read currently serves 4.7 million children and their families, reaching 1 out of every 4 low-income children in the US. The Reach Out and Read network brings together 32,000 medical providers at over 6,000 program sites in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. The Reach Out and Read model is endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Learn more at www.reachoutandread.org; follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). Reach Out and Read is a registered 501c3.

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