I am excited to share our Annual Report for Reach Out and Read Northwest. Reflecting on our 2021-22 program year, we are grateful and proud of our community of supporters, volunteers, medical champions, and all our partners who helped Reach Out and Read Northwest thrive in a time when children and families need us most.

As you’ll read in the following pages, we have a lot to celebrate about the last year! We continue to positively impact the healthy development of hundreds of thousands of children and their families. Despite the uncertain times, our focus has remained steadily on our mission of providing children with a foundation for success – ready to grow into their best selves.

Looking to our next chapter, we know encouraging families to spend more time reading together makes a big difference in nurturing a safe, stable relationship – a secure base from which children can go out and explore the world.

Thank you for being our partner in this critical work – helping families foster healthy habits and a high-quality book collection from day one.

Thank you,
Jessica Mortensen
Executive Director, Northwest

I have the privilege of seeing the magical program you will read about daily in my clinic, the work you support with your generosity. I hope you continue partnering with us this year – your investment makes it possible for my colleagues and me to care for families with a book in hand. Thank you for supporting this organization that makes a world of difference.

Mary Ann Woodruff
Co-Medical Director, Northwest
Our Vision
Reach Out and Read champions the positive effects of reading and engaging in other language-rich activities with young children. Reading together promotes healthy brain development, furthers language acquisition, and helps families build meaningful bonds.

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

Program Model

1. **Introduce a new book** that is appropriate developmentally and culturally for the child to take and keep

2. **Talk with parents** about the importance of reading aloud, reflect on their child’s developmental progress, and tell them what to expect next

3. **Show parents** how to look at books and talk about the stories with their children and offer individualized advice for language-rich engagement

4. **Encourage families** to cuddle up and read together at home and build routines around books
Reach Out and Read is built on and backed by science. Our effectiveness is consistently supported by independent, peer-reviewed research. Over 20 studies show that our model has a significant effect on parental behavior and attitudes toward reading aloud, and that children who participate in our program demonstrate higher language scores. Our impact has been documented in ethnically and economically diverse families across the country.

**OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN**

- Children’s language development is improved by **3-6 months**
- Children’s language ability **improves** with increased exposure to Reach Out and Read

**OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES**

- Parents are **2.5X more** likely to read to their children and **2X more** likely to read to their children more than **3X a week**
- Families are **2.5X more** likely to enjoy reading together

**OUTCOMES FOR CLINIC ENVIRONMENTS**

- Clinics see improved relationships with patients
- Participating clinics report **improved** clinic culture and commitment to local communities
REACH OUT AND READ NORTHWEST

336,723
annual books distributed
WA 174,459
OR 162,264

407,939
annual well-child checkups
WA 227,591
OR 180,348

3,258
providers
WA 2,011
OR 1,247

403
total programs
WA 245
OR 158

62%
families with low-incomes
WA 64%
OR 59%

46%
families of color
WA 53%
OR 37%

21%
home language other than English
WA 26%
OR 14%
Early Relational Health describes something we know from experience and research: children thrive when a loving adult spends time with them. Strong, nurturing bonds can buffer and even undo some of the harm caused by adverse childhood experiences (ACES). They create more resilient families and improve children's health outcomes and well-being, especially those who face systemic barriers to their ability to thrive. Medical providers who incorporate Reach Out and Read into their practice have a built-in strategy to support families and strengthen essential foundational relationships.

Reach Out and Read supports the widescale promotion of Early Relational Health through training that equips pediatric primary care providers to promote positive parent/caregiver-child interactions through early literacy. Starting in April 2021, Reach Out and Read’s continuing medical education course was updated to include the following:

- The wealth of evidence for the importance of promoting ERH
- The critical role that pediatric care clinicians can play in promoting ERH because of their near-universal access to families with young children
- Guidance about how to enhance the promotion of ERH through ROR by encouraging parents/caregivers to find moments of connection with their infants, toddlers, and preschoolers through shared reading

Since its launch in April 2021, and as of October 2022, 990 Oregon and Washington medical providers are among the 10,000 across the country who have completed this training. The effectiveness of this training was demonstrated in our post-training evaluation where:

- 92% of clinicians agreed that the training provides useful information about the importance of ERH in a child’s development
- 78% agreed that the training changed how they considered their role as a pediatric primary care provider in the promotion of ERH

In 2019, ROR recognized our value in promoting ERH and launched our Next Chapter strategy to maximize pediatric primary care’s potential to promote positive interactions that foster healthy development during the critical early years of a child’s life.
PROGRAM QUALITY AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Reach Out and Read’s professional staff provide responsive, proactive support that enables medical clinics to deliver a high-quality program with fidelity to our program model.

346 Clinics given technical assistance
681 Quality assessments completed
221 Virtual site visits
524 New providers completed training
77 Health systems engaged
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

Collaboration is the cornerstone of our model, and partnerships are central to our program. Our work depends on the 3,250 volunteer medical providers across the Northwest who make our intervention so powerful. Our community partnerships help sustain and enhance our impact—by partnering with library systems and community organizations across Oregon and Washington, we advance healthy child development and parent-child engagement.

Reach Out and Read clinics partner with their local libraries as an additional way to engage families with resources to support their child’s early language development and love of books. Reach Out and Read and library partners further enhance foundational relationships by providing resources to all families that include:

- Library brochures with branch locations and hours
- Library card applications
- Reading lists
- Story time hours
- Gently used books for families to take home
- Summer learning program materials
- Access to culturally- and language-appropriate books, language learning courses, and technology and writing classes

Clinic staff provide an introduction to libraries for many families who might not otherwise be aware of our programs and services, such as early literacy support, free programs like story times and summer reading, collections (both print and online), and more. Libraries can reinforce Reach Out and Read’s message that children benefit from reading and other language-rich experiences starting at birth. When KCLS and Reach Out and Read collaborate at a local level, we have a collective impact on the lives of the children in our communities.

Maren Ostergard,
Early Learning/Outreach Librarian,
Children’s Services, King County Library System
Our funding strategy is to cultivate a diversified and balanced portfolio comprised of public, foundation, and corporate grants and donations from individual donors. Our goal is to sustain the existing Reach Out and Read programs and add new programs strategically as resources allow. Below is a list of our key funders from the past year.

**Key Funders (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)**

**Northwest Funders**
- All About Books
- Individual Donors
- Indian Health Service
- Scholastic, Inc.
- Wildhorse Foundation

**Oregon Funders**
- CareOregon
- Health Share of Oregon
- John and Ginger Niemeyer Foundation
- Kaiser Permanente Northwest
- Lora L. and Martin N. Kelley Family Foundation Trust
- Northwest Permanente PC
- Oregon Community Foundation
- The Permanente Federation
- State of Oregon – Department of Administrative Services
- State of Oregon – Department of Education
- The Boyd Family Foundation
- The Collins Foundation
- The Ford Family Foundation
- Westwind Fund of Oregon Community Foundation

**Washington Funders**
- Bezos Family Foundation
- BNSF Railway Foundation
- Community Foundation for Southwest Washington
- Community Foundation of North Central Washington
- Grays Harbor Community Foundation
- King County Employee Giving Fund
- Kiwanis Club of Centralia-Chehalis
- Kiwanis Club of Pullman
- Love, Tito’s
- MultiCare Community Partnership Fund
- Nora Roberts Foundation
- Olympia Rotary Foundation
- Pitney Bowes Corporation
- Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe
- Skagit Community Foundation
- Stolte Family Foundation
- Suquamish Tribe Foundation
- The Discuren Foundation
- The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound
- Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund
- United Way of Pierce County
- United Way of Skagit County
- Valley Medical Center
- Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families
- Weyerhaeuser
There are 400 active programs and 7 programs in training. Programs are located in 29 of Oregon’s 36 counties and 31 of Washington’s 39 counties.
Giving a child a book and seeing their delight is so fun to see, and it is also a great way to open up the conversation about the importance of daily reading routines. I think this program is especially important now, given the pandemic has impacted families economically and socially. Many families feel uncomfortable visiting libraries currently, and many are struggling financially. Giving a child a new book is a simple gesture which provides a gateway to a healthy routine that fosters learning, family bonding, and stress reduction.

Anna Kate Bires, PA-C
Stevenson, WA

To see the looks on the faces of the children who receive the books is like looking at sunshine. The Reach Out and Read program provides connection between ourselves, our patients, and by extension, our community. In a rural health district, we find families in need of our attention. Many of our patients come from families that do not speak English. It is not uncommon to find patients whose parents are illiterate. The books provided by Reach Out and Read opens the doors to reading, to understanding the connection between letters, words, language, and communication. These books provide a link between these families and finding more within the community they share with us.

Frank Day, LPN
Shelton, WA

Our clinic has been affiliated with the Reach Out and Read program for years and I could not speak more highly of the program. As a Pediatric Physician Assistant, I have found it to be an extremely important and worthwhile program for our patients. It has been an absolute pleasure and joy to watch the excitement that these kids and parents have when presented with a book. Some cannot wait to read it and most enjoy diving into the pages while I am engaging with parents during my visit or while undergoing the physical exam. Giving these books during visits allows me the opportunity to talk about the importance of reading at home and promote healthy brain growth. I hope the program can continue for years to come.

Jessica Sanderson, PA
The Dalles, OR
Staff Team

Kelsey Gallagher, Program Manager
Alayna Herr, Regional Development Director
Jessica Mortensen, MLIS, Regional Executive Director
Kristin Marina Rünzi, MPH, Program Manager
Hannah Slaughter, Regional Program Director
Mary Ann Woodruff, MD, Regional Co-Medical Director

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