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REACH OUT AND READ, DAIRY WEST LAUNCH PARTNERSHIP TO STRENGTHEN EARLY LITERACY, NUTRITION

*The Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds initiative will deliver 14,000 new books to families
at more than 500 clinics across Idaho, Oregon, Utah, and Washington*

BOSTON (Dec. 8, 2025) – [Reach Out and Read](#), the national nonprofit redefining pediatric care and championing early literacy and healthy early relationships, is partnering with Dairy West to launch Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds, an initiative providing thousands of families across the West with both books and healthy eating guidance during pediatric well-child visits. Through a \$95,000 investment, Dairy West will help deliver 14,000 new books to pediatric clinics in Idaho, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. Clinicians will share these books with families, offering resources on literacy, bonding, and nutrition, and reinforcing routines that nurture both strong bodies and strong minds.

Research shows that healthy eating and shared reading in the first five years of life boost brain development, strengthen parent-child bonds, and lay the groundwork for long-term academic success. This collaboration brings those two critical building blocks together, empowering families to create daily habits that will support their children for a lifetime. **Across the Dairy West region, more than 500 clinics and 5,600 medical providers implement the Reach Out and Read model, collectively supporting more than 650,000 well-child visits each year.** That scale gives the collaboration the potential to reach families in both urban centers and rural communities, with a footprint that stretches from the coastlines and cities of Oregon and Washington to the mountains and deserts of Idaho and Utah.

“Each time a clinician gives a child a book and offers a family guidance on shared reading, we’re doing far more than supporting language development. We’re sparking curiosity, nurturing empathy and resilience, and empowering caregivers to build healthy habits that last,” said Dr. Lynette M. Fraga, Ph.D., Reach Out and Read’s CEO. “By pairing literacy with guidance on healthy eating, our collaboration with Dairy West ensures families are supported in raising children who are ready to thrive in every sense of the word.”

It’s a vision Dairy West proudly shares.

“Our dairy farmers are deeply invested in the health and future of our communities,” said Jaclyn St. John MS, RDN, LD, Director of Nutrition Partnerships at Dairy West. “The first five

years of life shape a child's growth, learning, and well-being, and nutrition plays a vital role in that journey. By partnering with Reach Out and Read, we are uniting the strength of wholesome food with the power of books to give every child the foundation they need to succeed."

Dairy West's investment will be distributed strategically based on the number of well-child visits Reach Out and Read clinics perform in each state. **Washington**, which sees more than 245,000 annual visits, will receive approximately **5,300 new books**. **Utah** will receive more than **4,000 books** to serve over 182,000 annual well-child visits. **Oregon** will receive **3,700 books**, and **Idaho will get 1,000**. Books will begin arriving this fall and will be given to families during their child's regular checkups, turning routine doctor visits into opportunities for connection, learning, and healthier futures.

"At the heart of this partnership is a simple idea: Every child deserves the chance to grow up healthy," Dr. Fraga said. "When families leave a well-child visit with both a book and meaningful tips for nourishing their children — body and mind — we're giving them more than resources. We're strengthening relationships and offering hope for a brighter future.

To learn more about this initiative go to ReachOutandRead.org/HealthyReaders.

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About Reach Out and Read: As a 501(c)3 nonprofit, Reach Out and Read leverages the near-universal reach of the pediatric well-child visit to support caregivers in fostering healthy relationships with their young children through shared reading. In FY24, Reach Out and Read served more than 4.6 million children and provided 7.7 million free books across 9.3 million well-child visits. Around 70 percent of the children Reach Out and Read serves are from low-income families. The only national pediatric literacy model endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Reach Out and Read serves children in every state across the U.S., through 6,500 clinics and the expertise of 39,000 clinicians. Recent research in a [peer-reviewed study published in Academic Pediatrics](#) confirms the program's effectiveness in increasing the frequency of parental reading, which builds early language and literacy skills and strengthens family relationships.

About Dairy West: Dairy West represents dairy farm families in Idaho, Utah, Washington and Oregon to promote the dairy industry and products locally, nationally and globally. We are passionate about what we do, every day, because dairy farmers play a critical role in providing the world with safe and nutritious food. From forging industry partnerships to hosting community events, Dairy West seeks to deliver impactful information and experiences that can help secure a brighter future for us all. We thrive on big ideas, and strive to create an environment in which the dairy community is a positive change-maker. Our goal is to have the world see dairy the way we see it: as a key ingredient in the health and prosperity of our planet.