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REACH OUT AND READ DELIVERS THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS DIRECTLY TO MINNESOTA FAMILIES

The effort delivers shared-reading support, guidance on stress-reducing routines, and multilingual early-learning resources directly to homes as many families face disrupted access to care.

BOSTON (Feb. 9, 2026) – As families in Minnesota face disruptions to their routine care and daily life, the national nonprofit Reach Out and Read is providing nearly 10,000 children's books and caregiver resources directly to families, fostering connections beyond the pediatric exam room.

A November 2025 report from Physicians for Human Rights found that fear related to immigration enforcement is limiting families' access to health care, with 84 percent of health workers reporting moderate or significant declines in patient visits, and more than one in four saying patient care has been directly affected. Missed well-child visits are becoming more common, and clinicians in Minnesota report that young children are absorbing the stress during a critical period of development.

In response, Reach Out and Read is partnering with its Minnesota Affiliate to bring books and shared-reading support directly to families through community-based distribution. The effort begins with 1,000 new children's books, 500 donated each by All About Books and Scholastic, carefully selected to reflect families' languages, cultures, and lived experiences. The books are paired with simple, developmentally-appropriate resources that help caregivers use shared reading to comfort children, strengthen connections, and support early learning during stressful times.

Reach Out and Read has also committed \$25,000 to expand access to bilingual books and caregiver materials in English, Spanish, Somali, Hmong, and Burmese Karen, including in rural communities where resources are often limited. Additional support comes from Barefoot Books, which is donating 500 bilingual books across 10 titles that celebrate diverse cultures, spark conversation, and encourage bonding between caregivers and young children.

"Shared reading is not just about books," said Lynette Fraga, CEO of Reach Out and Read. "It is a moment of calm and connection that can ease stress for both children and families, help

regulate emotions, and strengthen the caregiver-child relationship at a time when so many families are navigating uncertainty, fear, and violence. We're thankful to the partners who stepped up to help make this work possible and ensure families can access books and shared-reading support, even when traditional points of care aren't accessible."

Reach Out and Read Minnesota is coordinating with local partners, including clinics providing in-home care, mutual aid groups, and other nonprofits completing home visits to deliver books and early learning materials directly to the homes of families.

"This effort is about meeting families where they are," said Kris Hoplin, Executive Director of Reach Out and Read Minnesota. "When daily rhythms are shaken and families have fewer chances to come into clinics, bringing books directly to homes and community gathering places helps preserve reading aloud as part of everyday life, something that strengthens not just early literacy but emotional well-being and family bonds."

Together, these efforts reflect Reach Out and Read's commitment to supporting families through routines, resources, and meaningful moments during times of disruption. While partners have helped fund this work, additional community support is needed to bolster these efforts, reach more families, and ensure shared reading remains available to Minnesota children who need it the most.

Anyone interested in donating or learning more about Reach Out and Read's efforts to support children and families can visit ReachOutandRead.org.

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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 FY25, Reach Out and Read served more than 4.8 million children and provided 9 million free books across 11.2 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.