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**REACH OUT AND READ NAMES
DR. MELANIE BERRY RESEARCH FELLOW**

Clinical psychologist and Senior Fellow at the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard will help deepen the evidence on shared reading, early relationships, and child development.

BOSTON - (Oct. 1, 2026) - Reach Out and Read has named Melanie Berry, Psy.D., its new Research Fellow, bringing more than 20 years of experience in early childhood development, clinical psychology, and research to the national nonprofit. Through the pediatric well-child visit, more than 41,000 Reach Out and Read clinicians use shared reading to help families with young children strengthen early literacy and relationships.

In her new role, Berry will work with Reach Out and Read's Research and Evaluation team and researchers across the network to study the program's impact on children and families and use those findings to strengthen and expand the organization's work. She will focus especially on how shared reading supports caregiver-child relationships, beginning in a baby's first months of life.

"Melanie brings a deep knowledge of both the science of early childhood development and what it takes to turn that science into meaningful support for children and families," said Nikki Shearman, Chief of Research and Evaluation. "Her experience leading complex research initiatives and bringing together researchers, clinicians, community leaders, and parents will be invaluable as we deepen the evidence behind our work and continue strengthening our impact."

Berry began working with Reach Out and Read as a consultant in early 2026, helping launch the Early Relational Health Measurement Task Force. The collaborative effort brings together researchers, health and social service leaders, community organizations, parents, and others to develop a strategy for advancing the measurement of Early Relational Health.

"I have spent my career exploring how children's earliest experiences shape their development, and Reach Out and Read brings that science to life for millions of families," Berry said. "I am especially excited to explore the impact of reaching families during a baby's first months, when simple moments between children and their caregivers can make such a lasting difference."

Before joining Reach Out and Read, Berry held several leadership positions at the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. She led the Center's Pediatric Innovation Initiative, a national collaboration focused on developing biological and behavioral measures of stress and resilience in young children and supporting their equitable use in pediatric and community settings. She also directed Frontiers of Innovation, an international initiative that applied the science of early childhood development to the design, testing, and improvement of programs and services for children facing adversity.

Earlier in her career, Berry worked as an intervention scientist and postdoctoral research associate with the Stress Neurobiology and Prevention Lab at the University of Oregon and the Oregon Social Learning Center. There, she helped develop and evaluate interventions for young children and the adults who care for them. Her work included clinical services, research, and training for practitioners in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Berry earned her Doctor of Psychology in clinical psychology through the Palo Alto University-Stanford PsyD Consortium and her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of California, Berkeley.

To learn more about Reach Out and Read 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.