

# Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

## Clinton Library

| DOCUMENT NO.<br>AND TYPE | SUBJECT/TITLE | DATE | RESTRICTION |
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| 001. fax | re: profile [Personally Identifiable Information] [partial] (1 page) | 04/14/1997 | b(6) |
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### COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records  
Speechwriting  
Lissa Muscatine  
OA/Box Number: 12080

### FOLDER TITLE:

HRC - Prescription for Reading Event 4/16/97

2017-1164-S

rc2744

### RESTRICTION CODES

#### Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
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- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
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C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

#### Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

American  
Academy of  
Pediatrics  
Thirteenth Street, N.W.  
c 400 North  
Washington, DC 20005



April 16, 1997  
3 p.m. (EST)

Marjorie Tharp  
202/347-8600  
800/336-5475

**PRESS STATEMENT**  
**on**  
**PRESCRIPTION FOR READING**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that pediatricians prescribe reading activities along with the other instructions given to parents at the time of well-child visits.

Pediatricians are uniquely educated and positioned, through regular health supervision visits with infants and children, to advise parents on ways to stimulate and support their child's cognitive growth and to evaluate their progress over time.

The American Academy of Pediatrics is pleased to join with First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and other key organizations in promoting reading skills as one of the building blocks to early childhood development (birth to age three). These are just a few of the ways the AAP will join the effort:

- \* providing a prototype prescription pad for AAP members that prescribes daily reading to children beginning at six months of age;
- \* providing models of community outreach programs, such as Reach Out and Read, whereby pediatricians can either distribute books or provide vouchers for books to families as appropriate;
- \* developing checklists for parents on developmental milestones so that they too, can measure growth and development of their child.
- \* encouraging pediatricians to heighten activities in their practice and/or teaching responsibilities so that they can increasingly become part of the standard of quality comprehensive care for our children.

-more-

## PRESCRIPTION FOR READING

2-2-2

- \* assuring that pediatricians are provided with current research and educational materials as it becomes available.

Normally, children visit their pediatricians or other provider for checkups at least 12 times during the first three years of life. Each of these office visits give pediatricians an important opportunity to consider the child's total health and well-being. Examining a child's vision, hearing, emotional and physical growth are extremely important developmental parameters to measure during these visits. Pediatricians can also advise parents on optimal parent-child interaction and other elements integral to a child's intellectual and personality development such as: nutrition; developmentally stimulating activities like reading; early identification of developmental problems; and a positive environment.

Parents of children older than 3 should also remember that opportunities abound throughout childhood to impact positively on their development and well-being, and that regular assessment of progress is essential.

###

*The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 53,000 pediatricians dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.*

Hillary Rodham Clinton

# Comfort and Joy

The First Mom suggests reading as an easy way to help a baby's brain grow

**T**HE NIGHT AFTER THE INAUGURAL, BILL AND I GATHERED with our family in the solarium on the third floor of the White House. After dinner our toddler nephews Tyler and Zachary climbed up on the couch with their Uncle Bill to hear him read a story. They accompanied him with words, sounds, pointed fingers and a few tussles over who would hold the book. As I watched them, I thought of all the times Bill and I used to take turns reading stories to Chelsea. Every night one of us (and occasionally both) would stretch out on her bed, hold her in our arms, and either read or make up new tales about imaginary characters who embarked on improbable but breathtaking adventures.

Bill and I did not know about brain cells or synapses or the newest discoveries in neuroscience. Reading to Chelsea became a daily ritual because it's what our own parents and grandparents had done with us, and because we wanted to spend quiet time with her every day. Bill's grandmother thought that reading to him would help him develop a strong vocabulary and the language skills he would need later on in school. My mother and father placed a similar premium on reading, and to this day I remember the feelings of security and comfort that I felt sitting in my grandfather's lap when he read stories to my brothers and me.

Today, thanks to advances in brain research, we know that reading with a child has intellectual, emotional and physical benefits that can enhance the child's development. The intimacy of sharing books and stories strengthens the emotional bonds between a parent and child, helps a child learn words and concepts, and actually stimulates the growth of a baby's brain.

As I discussed in my book, *It Takes a Village*, scientists have discovered that children whose parents read and talk to them during the first three years of life create a stronger foundation for future reading success. In other words, what our parents and grandparents knew instinctively is now backed up by hard scientific evidence.

That's why doctors and nurses are starting to prescribe reading to babies along with regular checkups and vaccinations. Recently I went to Georgetown University's Medical Center with Maurice Sendak, the renowned children's author and illustrator. His book *Where the Wild Things Are* was one of Chelsea's—and Bill's—favorites. Mr. Sendak read the story to children, and I announced, along with representatives of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Booksellers Associ-

ation and the American Library Association, a national campaign to put books in the hands of parents who bring their young children to the doctor, and to get doctors to prescribe daily reading. My husband and I will be discussing this and other activities to follow up on the latest findings about the brain at a White House conference in the spring.

It's important that we take to heart what the neuroscientists are telling us—without losing the heart of the reading experience. In today's high-tech world of E-mail and microchips, it is easy to forget the importance of human connections in our daily activities. Technology has brought many welcome conveniences to our lives. But it has the potential to create feelings of distance, detachment and isolation among us.

Reading to a child while touching, hugging and holding him or her can be a wonderful antidote to the im-

personal tendencies of the information age—for both the adult and the child. While critical to building brains, reading is equally important to building trusting and close relationships. That's why many of us remember the warm embrace or the comfortable lap that cradled us when we read books as children. And that's why reading should not be viewed solely as an intellectual proposition, particularly in the era in which we now live.

If Americans take away only one lesson from these

exciting scientific discoveries, I hope it's that reading to children is easy, affordable and feasible for parents no matter what their level of education or economic station in life. Children's books are available for free at public libraries in every community and can be found at reasonable prices in many bookstores. Doctors, librarians, teachers, book publishers, business leaders and the news media can help make books available to families and educate parents about the vital role that reading plays in our children's lives.

It isn't very often that we have before us such a simple, inexpensive and pleasurable way to improve our children's health and development and raise their prospects for a brighter future. Whether you lie down together on the rug, sit together in an old rocking chair or cuddle on your child's bed the way Bill and I used to with Chelsea, there is no better way to spend time than reading to your child.

And now we also know that there are few better ways to help your baby's brain grow.



Mrs. Clinton with her daughter in the crucial first three years

Remarks of Dick Robinson  
Chairman of Scholastic  
To be Given at the White House  
Prescription for Reading Partnership  
April 16, 1997

It is a great pleasure and honor to be invited to participate in this important program.

I want to thank the First Lady for providing the leadership on this critical issue. The White House's Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning, which is to start tomorrow, is an important step not only in drawing attention to the advances in science and our understanding of how children develop intellectually, but what each of us can do to help. Mrs. Clinton, I want to commend you and thank you for your strong leadership in making literacy an important part of every young child's life.

Also take a moment to single out Dr. Barry Zuckerman and Dr. Peri Klass for having recognized in 1989 not only how important it is for parents to read to children, but the critical role pediatricians can take in helping parents by prescribing reading and providing books.

We've been a supporter of Reach Out and Read for many years. In fact, here is a photo from our involvement at Bellevue Hospital in New York. We look forward to helping even more in the years to come.

When the First Lady's office called and asked if we might allocate some of the 1 million books we've committed to the President's America Reads Challenge, it was an easy decision.

One reason it was so easy to say yes is that we have long shared the belief that reading to young children can be one of the most important actions a parent can take to stimulate a child's learning capacity.

It is also one of the most pleasurable activities parents and children can share. Although my 10 year old son Ben loves to read on his own, there is wonderful magic that comes from sharing a book together, which Helen and I will soon be sharing with our eight month old, Reece.

So, when the First Lady asked if Scholastic would participate in the Prescription for Reading Partnership, it was with both a sense of shared responsibility and personal joy that I said yes.

In addition to the 100,000 books that Scholastic is committing and the challenge grant we have put forth, I'd like to share with you one piece we're very excited about. We're very proud to have here today the renowned children's author and illustrator, Rosemary Wells.

Rosemary recently made time in her unbelievably busy schedule -- I believe her project schedule is fully booked until 2003 -- to write a book called Read to Your Bunny.

I'd like to share the book with you because I think it captures the spirit, the tone, and the importance of what the Prescription for Reading partnership is all about.

### Read to Your Bunny

I am very happy to say that we are committed to see this new book provided free to every parent participating in the Prescription to Read Partnership. And we expect to announce the underwriting of the first quarter-million free copies within two weeks.

Again, my thanks and congratulations to the First Lady, and to the marvelous Partnership she has put together is support of this critical goal. We look forward to working with you to make it a reality.



National Association of  
Community Health Centers, Inc.®

FOR RELEASE APRIL 16, 1997

CONTACT: DAN HAWKINS  
(202) 659-8008

**COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS PLEDGE TO BRING  
EARLY READING PROGRAMS TO 1 MILLION CHILDREN  
IN NEEDY INNER-CITY, RURAL COMMUNITIES**

WASHINGTON, DC. -- The National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) announced today that its member Health Centers throughout the country will work in partnership with other key literacy and health care organizations to establish Reach Out and Read programs reaching at least 1 million parents and children by the year 2000.

"It is crystal clear to us," said NACHC Policy Director Dan Hawkins, "that because of where Health Centers are located and whom they serve, their communities - and the children they care for - have the most to gain from early reading programs." Mr. Hawkins noted that 950 Community Health Centers serve nearly 10 million low income children and adults living in medically underserved urban and rural communities in every state and the District of Columbia. More than 2 million of their patients are pre-school children -- the target population for the President's *America Reads* challenge.

"The evidence is compelling that having parents read to infants and toddlers can make a huge difference in their intellectual development," stated Dr. Thomas Curtin, MD, Director of Health Professions and Clinical Affairs for NACHC, "and making this an integral part of our pediatric patient care makes eminent sense." Health Centers already use interdisciplinary teams of physicians, other health professionals, and community residents to offer a wide range of primary and preventive medical and dental care, as well as health education, community outreach, transportation, and support programs (including literacy and other educational programs) in collaboration with other organizations and agencies like schools, Head Start programs, and homeless shelters.

"We applaud the President and First Lady for their leadership in this vital undertaking," said NACHC National Chairman James Couch of Atlanta, "and we pledge to do all we can to make this an overwhelming success. We do so especially because it is the right thing to do, for our children and our communities." Mr. Couch added that Health Centers contribute to the strength and well being of their communities in several ways, keeping children healthy and in school and helping adults to remain productive at work. They employ more than 50,000 persons, many of whom are community residents, and help to retain other local businesses and stabilize neighborhoods by stimulating community and economic development. And they make a difference in the health of the people they serve, with studies crediting them for reducing infant mortality, improving immunization and prenatal care rates, and increasing the use of preventive health services among their patients.

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TO

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National Association of  
Children's Hospitals  
and Related Institutions

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Dr. Haecker is a pediatrician and Medical Director of the Reach Out and Read program at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and a member of the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions. Dr. Haecker helped start the ROR program at CHOP in September of 1996. It is now operating in CHOP's three urban primary care centers and is part of the residency training for all CHOP pediatric residents. Since the program's inception, Dr. Haecker has also helped raise more than \$100,000 to expand Reach Out and Read and purchase books. At the April 16 Prescription for Reading event, Dr. Haecker is representing NACHRI and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia where she is also medical director of primary care and medical director of children's health services.

# First Book

1319 F Street, N.W.  
Suite 500  
Washington, D.C. 20004  
Phone (202) 393-1222  
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**CHRISTINE BENERO**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Christine Benero is the Chief Executive Officer of First Book, a nation non-profit organization committed to giving disadvantaged children their own new books to read and to keep. First Book works with existing community-based tutoring, mentoring, and family-literacy programs to reach the hardest-to-reach children. In 1997 First Book will deliver nearly two million new books to children who need them the most.

Christine received her Masters of Education degree from Harvard University and currently serves as the Chair of the Coalition for America's Children.



recycled paper

**DR. ERNEST B. FLEISHMAN**  
**Senior Vice President, Education**

Dr. Ernest B. Fleishman is the Senior Vice President for Education for Scholastic Inc., one of the nation's largest publishers and distributors of children's books, classroom and professional magazines, educational software, and instructional materials.

Dr. Fleishman's role at Scholastic includes developing company-wide strategic initiatives with school districts, government agencies and corporations. He directs the Company's professional relations with the schools and with major educational organizations and carries out the Company's business/education partnerships including the connection with the National Alliance of Business. He oversees Scholastic's participation in the newly developed sponsorship of the National Teacher of the Year program, conducted by Scholastic and the Council of Chief State School Officers. In addition, Dr. Fleishman chairs Scholastic's National Advisory Council.

Dr. Fleishman is also Publisher of *America's Agenda*, Scholastic's publication for top leaders in education, business and government.

Previously at Scholastic, Dr. Fleishman supervised all creative and editorial efforts of Scholastic's 30 classroom magazines, and the Company's Educational Marketing Group.

Dr. Fleishman's background includes more than 30 years in education. He began as an English teacher in New High School, Newton, Massachusetts. Dr. Fleishman was the Assistant to the Superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools while also serving as the Director of Project Upward Bound and Lecturer in Education at Carnegie-Mellon University. From 1968-1976, he served as Superintendent of Schools for Ridgewood, New Jersey and the Central Bucks School District in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. He served as Superintendent of Schools in Greenwich, Connecticut from 1976-1989.

Dr. Fleishman received his B.A. from Williams College, and his M.A., Teaching of English, and Ed.D. in Administration from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Williams College in 1984.

The Most Trusted Name in Learning



 SCHOLASTIC





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Perri Klass, M.D. is a pediatrician who serves as Medical Director of Reach Out and Read at Boston Medical Center, where she is Assistant Professor of Pediatrics. She has trained pediatricians in Boston and around the country in literacy development, in how to counsel parents about books and looking at books with their children, and in how to integrate books and literacy into routine pediatric care. Dr. Klass also has a pediatric primary care practice at Dorchester House, a neighborhood health center in Boston, where she is part of an active health center Reach Out and Read program, giving books to patients at their well-child visits.

Dr. Klass is an extensively published writer, whose most recent books include Other Women's Children, a novel, and Baby Doctor: A Pediatrician's Training, a collection of essays. Her short stories have won five O. Henry Awards and have been widely anthologized, and her essays and journalism have appeared in The New York Times Magazine, Parenting, Discover, Esquire, American Health, and many other newspapers and magazines.

Through her work with Reach Out and Read, Dr. Klass has been able to integrate her commitment to the health care of young children with her love of books, stories, and the written word. In an essay on the program, she wrote, "When I think about children growing up in homes without books, I have the same visceral reaction as I have when I think of children in homes without milk or food or heat: It cannot be, it must not be. It stunts them and deprives them before they've had a fair chance."

**RICHARD ROBINSON**  
**Chairman of the Board, President**  
**and Chief Executive Officer**  
**Scholastic Corp.**

RICHARD ROBINSON, Chairman of the Board, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Scholastic Inc., who began his career as a high school English teacher in Evanston, Illinois, joined Scholastic in 1962 as an Assistant Editor of Literary Cavalcade magazine and then Editor of Scholastic's Literature Units. In 1964, he founded the company's most successful periodical, *Scope*, a high-interest English reading magazine, for which he served as Editor until 1966, when he became Editorial Director for Scholastic's English and Language Arts Department, including four magazines, text programs, and book clubs.

In April, 1971, he became Vice President and Publisher for Scholastic's School Division, comprising 80% of the company's business and was elected the company's President in 1974 and Chief Executive Officer in March, 1975. After the death of his father, M.R. Robinson, the company's founder in 1920, he was elected to the additional position of Chairman of the Board in March, 1982.

Since 1980, under Mr. Robinson's direction, Scholastic has moved substantially into the new technologies in education. The company now publishes two magazines in the computer field, *Electronic Learning* for educators and *Home Office Computing*, published for users of personal computers at home. The company is also the largest publisher of classroom magazines and children's books in the English-speaking world, as well as a leading publisher of supplementary texts and sponsored educational materials.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in May, 1937, Mr. Robinson is a magna cum laude/Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Harvard College and studied at St. Catherine's College, Cambridge University, England and Teachers College, Columbia.

March 3, 1997

Mr. John M. Doe  
Address Line 1  
Address Line 2  
City, State 20001-Zip

Dear John:

We have long known the importance of reading to children for their emotional and intellectual development. For years I have explored various ways to encourage parents to read to their children. Recent research makes clear that reading to an infant or young child actually helps the brain to grow. Research by Dr. Barry Zuckerman and others shows that low-income parents who were given a book by a medical professional are four times more likely to report reading to their children.

As a mother, I know first hand the power of a medical professional's advice. I believe America's youngest children would benefit from a national effort to put books into the hands of parents when they bring their young children to the doctor. This national effort would involve encouraging medical professionals to "prescribe" reading, finding ways to put books into the hands of parents and children who visit a medical professional or purchase a medical prescription at a drug store, and ensuring that this "prescription for reading" reaches all parents of young children.

I recently discussed the importance of such a national effort when I visited Georgetown University's Medical Center with Maurice Sendak, the renowned children's author and illustrator, along with representatives of the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Booksellers Association, American Library Association, and Reach Out and Read. Each of these organizations is already involved in programs in which medical professionals "prescribe" reading to young children, and on which we can build our national effort. I addressed this initiative in the attached *TIME* Magazine column and the President referred to the initiative in his State of the Union's *Call to Action for American Education*.

I would like to invite you to join with me for a private working session with a small number of people, who represent health care providers, book publishers, book sellers, libraries, drug stores, and other potential partners, to discuss how we can build on existing efforts to make this

national effort a reality. The meeting will be held at the White House on Friday, March 7, 1997 from 2:30 p.m.- 4 p.m. I encourage you to come with specific ideas, suggestions, and ways in which your organization might participate.

Please contact Pauline Abernathy on my staff to confirm your attendance or to answer any questions you may have. She can be reached at (202) 456-5374. I look forward to seeing you on March 7.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Hillary Rodham Clinton

**Prescription for Reading Partnership  
Key Contacts**

Christine Benero, Chief Executive Officer  
**First Book**, 202-393-1222

Steve Cohen, Managing Director  
**Scholastic Books**, 212-343-6586

Barry Zuckerman, MD, Founder  
Perri Klass, Medical Director  
Elaine Grossman, Development Director  
**Reach Out and Read**, 617-534-5701

Dan Hawkins, Jr., Vice President for Policy  
**National Association of Community Health Centers**, 202-659-8008

Jackie Noyes, Associate Executive Director  
**American Academy of Pediatrics**, 202-347-8600

Lisa Tate, Vice President for Public Affairs  
**National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions**, 703-684-1355

Phil Schneider  
**National Association of Chain Drug Stores**  
703-549-3001

Oren Teicher, Director of Governmental Affairs  
**American Booksellers Association**  
914-591-2665 x267

Michael Levine, Program Officer  
**Carnegie Corporation of New York**, 212-371-3200

Susan Roman, PhD, Executive Director  
**Association for Library Service to Children, American Library Association**,  
312-280-2162

Debbie Fine  
**American Reads, U.S. Department of Education**, 202-401-8888



---

**ROBERT E. HANNEMANN, MD, FAAP**  
**1996-97 President**  
**American Academy of Pediatrics**

Robert Hannemann, MD, FAAP, of Lafayette, Indiana is the president of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

Dr. Hannemann currently practices general pediatrics at a multispecialty clinic in Lafayette, Indiana. He also holds visiting professorships in chemical engineering and child psychology at Purdue University and is an assistant in pediatrics at Indiana University Medical Center.

Dr. Hannemann is currently a member of the AAP Board of Directors and has served as Indiana chapter president and alternate district chairperson for AAP District V. He also has been active in many Academy committees and programs, including the Task Force on Promotion of Pediatrics, the selection committee for the Ronald McDonald Children's Charities Medical Award of Excellence and the Graduate Medical Education Advisory Committee.

Dr. Hannemann is a member of the AAP sections on Perinatology, Adolescent Medicine and Community Pediatrics. He also is associate medical editor of the AAP book, *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5* (Bantam).

A graduate of Indiana University's medical school, Dr. Hannemann served a rotating internship at Indianapolis Methodist Hospital. His pediatric subspecialty training was at Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis. In 1964, he was certified by the American Board of Pediatrics and became a member of the Academy.

The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 51,000 pediatricians dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.

'80s. I was recently in Cleveland and I can remember the kinds of things that were said about Cleveland not so very long ago. And going there is such an uplifting experience now because the business community, the religious community, the community leadership, individuals from every walk of life joined together to really rebuild that city. And not just in the visible way that we see with new construction, but really at the grass-roots level in reaching out to people.

So I'm very optimistic, although I'm realistic as well, I think.

Thank you all.

Q This is our "Born To Read" diaper bag. We don't get to give diaper bags to the First Lady -- (laughter.) And a little T-shirt maybe Socks could wear.

MRS. CLINTON: That is so cute. Thank you. Nobody thinks I'm trying it on. (Laughter.) Thank you very much.

END

## The Challenge

As part of a healthy childhood, the American of Pediatrics is recommending a "prescription" for daily reading become a standard of care at all healthy child visits for children ages six months to five years. Doctors will advise parents on ways to stimulate and support their children's cognitive growth and development, through reading and other activities.

Children who do not have access to their own first books will have their prescription filled by the cooperative efforts of Scholastic, Inc., The American Library Association, Reach Out and Read, the National Association of Community Health Centers, the National Association of Children's Hospitals, Random House Inc., Reading Is Fundamental, Mellon Trust, the National Association of Chain Drug Stores and First Book.

## The Commitments

- As part of their commitment to America Reads, Scholastic Inc. and their partner First Book will fill the prescription of 200,000 new books through a partnership with pediatricians and health care professionals participating in Reach Out and Read and Born to Read programs;
- For every \$100,000 raised in the support of Prescription for Reading, Scholastic will contribute an additional 5000 books; for every \$500,000 contributed, an additional 35,000 books and for every \$1 million, 100,000 new books;
- The American Library Association will work with the nation's 16,000 public libraries to establish Born to Read programs, promoting partnerships between librarians and health care professionals teaching the critical importance of reading and preschool learning to parents of the 4 million babies born each year;
- Random House Inc will contribute 5000 books a month for twelve months, totaling 60,000 new books to pediatric Reach Out And Read programs;
- Reading Is Fundamental has pledged that by the end of the year 2000, the organization will provide its reading services and books to an additional 200,000 of America's youngest children;
- Mellon Trust in Boston has announced a \$100,000 grant to Reach Out and Read and issues a challenge to other companies to match its \$100,000 contribution.
- The Reach Out and Read National Training Center at Boston Medical Center will train 10,000 pediatricians and pediatric residents by the year 2000 to implement Reach Out and Read programs in their local communities;

- The American Academy of Pediatrics will provide its 53,000 members a specially designed prescription pad to promote daily reading and appropriate activities stimulating a child's early learning. It will also distribute to its membership, checklists for parents and developmental milestones so that they can measure their child's growth and development.
- The National Association of Children's Hospitals will challenge its 150 member hospitals to serve as training sites for Reach Out and Read programs and to triple the number of Reach Out and Read programs currently operating in children's hospitals across the country by the year 2000. NACHRI will also disseminate information through its children's hospital members to parents about the importance of early reading and
- The National Association of Community Health Centers' 950 member health centers will implement Reach Out and Read programs, reaching 1,000,000 parents and children by the year 2000;
- The American Booksellers Association - through its 3700 member bookstore companies across the country - will recruit 50,000 reading tutors and other volunteers for the AMERICA READS CHALLENGE, linking volunteers to health care professionals working with early reading and literacy programs. The recruitment drive will be launched at BOOKEXP0 AMERICA the end of May. Additionally, any new children's books remaining following the convention will be distributed through First Book to Reach Out and Read Programs;
- The National Chain Drug Store Association, through their 3000 member community pharmacies, will distribute reading tips for parents and suggested book titles to parents coming to the pharmacy to obtain medicines for their children;
- ABC, Inc. will produce a special Children First public service announcement highlighting the importance of reading to children on a daily basis.

The Prescription for Reading Challenge calls on business leaders, publishers, health care providers, literacy programs, publishers, and others to join in creating a healthy future for our youngest citizens.

**FAX****DATE:** Tuesday, April 15, 1997**TO:** Pauline Abernathy, The White House**FAX:** 1202 456-7028**FROM:** Steve Cohen**PAGES:** 4**MEMO**

Pauline- The latest set of commitments.  
I'm trying to e-mail, but having trouble  
converting to your format. Steve

This is the latest —  
for **Juan Shih**  
Scoop (rm 100)  
Pat Lewis (19?)

## The Initial Commitments

The following list of pledges reflects an initial, minimum set of commitments.

- As part of their commitment to America Reads, Scholastic Inc. and their partner First Book will fill the prescription of 200,000 new books through a partnership with pediatricians and health care professionals participating in Reach Out and Read and Born to Read programs;

For every \$100,000 raised in the support of Prescription for Reading, Scholastic will contribute an additional 5,000 books; for every \$500,000 contributed, an additional 35,000 books; and for every \$1 million, 100,000 new books;

- The American Academy of Pediatrics will provide its 53,000 members with a specially designed prescription pad to promote daily reading and age-appropriate activities to stimulate a child's early learning. It will also distribute to its membership checklists for parents and developmental milestones so that they can measure their child's growth and development.
- The Reach Out and Read National Training Center at Boston Medical Center will train 10,000 pediatricians and pediatric residents by the year 2000 to implement Reach Out and Read programs in their local communities;
- Mellon Trust in Boston has announced a \$100,000 grant to Reach Out and Read, and issues a challenge to other companies to match its \$100,000 contribution.
- The National Association of Community Health Centers' 950 member health centers will implement Reach Out and Read programs reaching one million parents and children by the year 2000;

415-52061

- The National Association of Chain Drug Stores, and the National Community Pharmacists Association, representing the nation's nearly 60,000 community retail pharmacies, will distribute reading tips for parents and suggested book titles to parents coming to the pharmacy to obtain medicines for their children;
- The National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions will challenge its 150 member hospitals to serve as training sites for Reach Out and Read programs, and is setting a goal of tripling the number of early reading programs currently operating in children's hospitals across the country by the year 2000. NACHRI will also disseminate information through its children's hospital members to parents about the importance of daily reading;
- Random House Inc. will contribute 5,000 books a month for twelve months, totaling 60,000 new books to pediatric Reach Out and Read programs;
- The American Library Association will work with the nation's 16,000 public libraries to establish Born to Read programs, promoting partnerships between librarians and health care professionals teaching the critical importance of reading and pre-school learning to parents of the 4 million babies born each year;
- Reading Is Fundamental, the nation's oldest and largest children's literacy organization, will reach nearly 4 million children this year ensuring that each receives at least three new books of their own. Among those served are many of the nation's youngest and neediest children in health clinics, immunization programs, hospitals, and Reach Out and Read programs.

- The American Booksellers Association -- through its 3,700 member bookstores across the country -- will recruit 50,000 reading tutors and other volunteers for the America Reads Challenge, linking volunteers to health care professionals working with early reading and literacy programs. The recruitment drive will be launched at BookExpo America at the end of May. Additionally, any new children's books remaining following the BookExpo convention will be distributed through First Book to Reach Out and Read Programs;
- The Association of American Publishers will provide the Reach Out and Read Training Manual and other ancillary materials used in ROR programs across the country. AAP is also making an initial contribution to help fund the start-up of a statewide Reach Out and Read initiative starting up in Texas.
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation has committed to a grant of \$150,000 to the Reach Out and Read National Training Center, bringing Casey's long term support to \$600,000. Original funding from the Casey Foundation was used to create the Reach Out and Read National Training Center to support the programs' expansion beyond Boston.
- Irving Harris and the Harris Foundation of Chicago are committed to a minimum of \$100,000 in grants to initiate a city-wide implementation of a ROR program in Chicago by 2000.
- The Dreyfus Corporation in New York City has announced a \$50,000 grant to Reach Out and Read for New York City programs.
- ABC Television will produce and air a special Children First public service announcement highlighting the importance of reading to children on a daily basis.

Draft

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON  
PRESCRIPTION FOR READING ANNOUNCEMENT  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
APRIL 16, 1997

I am delighted to welcome each of you to <sup>the</sup> White House. Today, I am pleased to announce the Prescription for Reading partnership, a new national effort which could make an <sup>enormous</sup> difference in the lives of children and families all across our country. Through this partnership, pediatricians, hospitals, health centers, book publishers, libraries and non-profit organizations, many of whom are represented in this room, have pledged to work together to encourage and enable more parents across our country read to their children regularly. <sup>we have</sup>

As many of you know, this <sup>is</sup> a crucial task. New research has shown that talking and reading to infants and toddlers is vital to their neurological, intellectual, and emotional development. Time spent sharing a favorite book not only strengthens the bond between a parent and child, it enriches a child's vocabulary, prepares him or her for reading, and literally helps a baby's brain grow. <sup>even w the younger child (?)</sup>

Unfortunately, too many children are still missing this early stimulation. Over the years I have met parents who have told me they never really talked to their babies because they thought the infants were too young to understand what they were saying. I've met parents who believed that they could not read well enough to read a book to a child. <sup>parents who want to do what's best for their child</sup>

We have to help parents understand that, <sup>what</sup> no matter their educational level or reading ability, they can stimulate their children's intellectual potential by talking to and reading to their children, even when they stumble over a few words here or there. Most likely, their children won't even notice. But they *will* notice the power of reading and books to take them on fascinating adventures and introduce them to interesting ideas. <sup>it's possible</sup>

Today's initiative was inspired by the national Reach Out and Read program and the American Library Association's Born to Read program. Both efforts recognized the vital roles our country's pediatricians could play in <sup>prescribing to</sup> convincing parents to read to their infants and toddlers. Doctors are often the first professionals our children see on a regular basis. While parents may not take a child to a library or a preschool program until he or she is three, they will most likely take that child to a doctor or nurse for vaccinations and checkups. These regular visits present <sup>medical prof's</sup> doctors with important opportunities to instill good reading and learning habits -- along with good health habits -- in parents and children. <sup>not that</sup>

So it makes sense for our doctors and health professionals to use the authority and influence of those white uniforms and stethoscopes to "prescribe" daily reading to patients and their parents during every visit. Research has shown that these prescriptions are followed: Parents and children who are given books by their doctors are more likely to read aloud at home. <sup>the</sup>

When I first heard about these efforts to "prescribe" reading and provide books to low-income families, I was very impressed. I realized that it was an idea that could easily be brought

to many more children and parents in communities all across our country. ~~So earlier this year, I~~ invited representatives from the health, library and publishing communities to come to the White House and discuss ways to take this idea nationwide.

The national Prescription for Reading Partnership is the result of these discussions. With the leadership of Reach Out and Read, Scholastic, Inc. and First Book, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing disadvantaged children with their own first books, we have built a diverse coalition of organizations who have pledged to make this idea a reality in doctors' offices, hospitals and health clinics across the country.

These commitments come from the worlds of publishing, medicine, health, and even, television. And I'd like to take a few moments to highlight some of them:

- (2) The Reach Out and Read National Training Center at Boston Medical Center will train 10,000 pediatricians and pediatric residents by the year 2000 to implement the program in their communities.
- Scholastic, Inc., has promised to contribute 100,000 new books to health care professionals and clinics participating in Reach Out and Read or Born to Read.
- (4) Scholastic's pledge is part of its already-announced commitment to provide one million books to the President's America Reads challenge. The company has also promised to match new donations to the Partnership with additional books.
- (6) First Book, who has been [Pauline: add praise and details here], has also pledged 100,000 books.
- (7) Another publishing company, Random House, this year will contribute 5,000 books a month to Reach Out and Read
- The American Academy of Pediatrics will formally recommend to its 53,000 members that they make prescribing reading part of standard pediatric care and well-child visits.
- (1) They have also agreed to provide their members with specially-designed reading prescription pads -- slightly smaller reproductions of the one in this room.
- The National Association of Community Health Centers' 950 members will implement Reach Out and Read programs in centers serving a total of one million parents and children by the year 2000. In a similar effort, the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions will challenge its members to triple the number of hospitals with Reach Out And Read programs.
- (3) The American Library Association will work with the nation's 16,000 public libraries to establish Born to Read programs with health professionals in their communities. And let me add my own call to our country's health clinics and libraries to work together to make sure every child has books to read and people to read to them.

- (8) The National Association of Chain Drug Stores and the National Community Pharmacists Association will distribute reading tips and suggested book titles to parents who visit their pharmacies.

- (9) I'd also like to thank the Association of American Publishers, The American Booksellers Association, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Irving Harris and the Harris Foundation of Chicago, the Mellon Trust, the Dreyfus Corporation, Reading Is Fundamental and ABC Television for their individual commitments to support Reach Out and Read and to publicize the importance of daily reading.

Also help our children grow & learn

These commitments are just the beginning. I have no doubt the Partnership, which seems to be growing everyday, will bring us a giant step closer to answering the President's America Reads challenge to make sure that every child can read independently by the end of the third grade. Early reading at home, in the comfort of a parent's lap, is some of the most important preparation a child can have for reading classes in school. That's why the President has made the Parents as First Teachers Grants a vital part of the America Reads Challenge.

But let's remember that it won't take just parents, but all of us to make sure every child goes to school ready to learn and every child grows up able to read. I thank all of you for recognizing the important roles you could play in bringing books into more homes, preparing children for the future and serving your communities.

Tommorrow, leading neuroscientists, pediatricians, child development specialists, child care providers, business and religious leaders from across the country will be gathering here to discuss the new and exciting scientific discoveries about the brain and early childhood development. One of the primary goals of the White House Conference is to find ways to put the research practical use, to call upon all sectors of society make sure our children benefit from all this new knowledge. I believe that the Prescription for Reading Partnership is one of the best answers to that call. It is a wonderful way to begin our conference.

Now I'd like to introduce Dr. Robert Hanneman, President of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON**  
**PRESCRIPTION FOR READING ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
**APRIL 16, 1997**

I am delighted to welcome each of you to the White House. Today, I am pleased to announce the Prescription for Reading partnership, a new national effort which we believe will make an important difference in the lives of children and families all across our country. Through this partnership, pediatricians, hospitals, health centers, book publishers, libraries and literacy organizations, many of whom are represented in this room, have pledged to work together to encourage and enable more parents across our country read to their children regularly.

As many of you know, this is a crucial task. New research has shown that talking and reading to infants and toddlers is vital to their neurological, intellectual, and emotional development. Time spent sharing a favorite book with a child -- even a newborn -- not only strengthens the bond between a parent and child, it enriches a child's vocabulary, prepares him or her for reading, and literally helps a baby's brain grow.

Unfortunately, too many children are still missing this early stimulation. Over the years I have heard parents -- who clearly want to do everything they can for their children -- tell me they never really talked to their babies because they thought the infants were too young to understand what they were saying. I've met parents who believed that they could not read well enough to read a book to a child.

We have to help parents understand that, no matter their educational level or reading ability, they can stimulate their children's emotional and intellectual growth by talking to and reading to their children, even when they stumble over a few words here or there. Most likely, their children won't even notice. But they *will* notice the power of reading and books to take them on fascinating adventures and introduce them to interesting ideas.

Today's initiative was inspired by the national Reach Out and Read program and the American Library Association's Born to Read program. Both efforts recognized the vital role the medical community could play in encouraging parents to read to their infants and toddlers. Doctors are often the first professionals our children see on a regular basis. While parents may not take a child to a library or a preschool program until he or she is three, they will most likely take a child to a doctor or nurse for vaccinations and checkups. These regular visits present medical professionals with important opportunities to instill good reading and learning habits -- along with good health habits -- in parents and children.

So it makes sense for our doctors and health professionals to use their authority and influence -- yes, those white uniforms and stethoscopes -- to "prescribe" daily reading to young patients and their parents during every visit. Research has shown that these prescriptions are followed: Parents and children who are given books by their doctors are more likely to read aloud at home.

When I first heard about these efforts to “prescribe” reading and provide books to low-income families, I was very impressed. I realized that it was an idea that could easily be brought to many more children and parents in communities all across our country. So I wrote about it in my book, talked about it in visits to health centers, and, earlier this year, invited representatives from the health, library and publishing communities to come to the White House to discuss ways to make this a truly national effort.

The national Prescription for Reading Partnership is the result of these discussions. With the leadership of Reach Out and Read, Scholastic, Inc. and First Book, as well as the hard work of so many others represented here, we have built a diverse coalition of organizations who have pledged to make this idea a reality in doctors’ offices, hospitals and health clinics across the country.

These commitments come from the worlds of publishing, medicine, health, and even, television. And I’d like to take a few moments to highlight some of them:

- The American Academy of Pediatrics will formally recommend to its 53,000 members that they make prescribing reading part of standard pediatric care and well-child visits. They have also agreed to provide their members with specially-designed reading prescription pads -- slightly smaller versions of the one in this room.
- The Reach Out and Read National Training Center at Boston Medical Center will train 10,000 pediatricians and pediatric residents by the year 2000 to implement the program in their communities. Under the Reach Out and Read program, volunteers read to children in waiting rooms, health care providers prescribe reading, use books in well-child exams, and give books to children at the end of each visit.
- The National Association of Community Health Centers’ 950 members will implement Reach Out and Read programs in centers serving a total of one million parents and children by the year 2000. In a similar effort, the National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions will challenge its members to triple the number of hospitals using Reach Out And Read.
- Scholastic, Inc., has promised to contribute 100,000 new books to health care professionals and clinics participating in the Reach Out and Read or the Born to Read programs. Scholastic’s pledge is part of its already-announced commitment to provide one million books to the President’s America Reads challenge. The company has also promised to match new donations to the Partnership with additional books.
- In addition to working tirelessly to bring all of today’s groups together, First Book, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing disadvantaged children with their own books, has also pledged 100,000 books to the effort.
- Another publishing company, Random House, will contribute 5,000 books **a month** for twelve months to Reach Out and Read

- The American Library Association will work with the nation's 16,000 public libraries to establish Born to Read programs with health professionals in their communities. And let me add my own call to our country's health clinics and libraries to work together to make sure every child has books to read and people to read to them.
- The National Association of Chain Drug Stores and the National Community Pharmacists Association will distribute reading tips and suggested book titles to parents who visit their pharmacies.
- I'd also like to thank the Association of American Publishers, The American Booksellers Association, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Irving Harris and the Harris Foundation of Chicago, Mellon Trust, the Dreyfus Corporation, Reading Is Fundamental and ABC Television for their individual commitments to the Partnership.

These commitments are just the beginning. I have no doubt the Partnership, which seems to be growing everyday, will also help our children grow and develop their full potential to learn, to feel, to communicate and relate to others. It will also bring us a giant step closer to answering the President's America Reads challenge to make sure that every child can read independently by the end of third grade. Early reading at home, in the comfort of a parent's lap, is some of the most important preparation a child can have for reading in school. That's why the President has made the Parents as First Teachers Grants a vital part of the America Reads Challenge proposal.

But let's remember that it won't take just parents, but all of us to make sure every child reaches his or her full potential. I thank all of you for recognizing the important roles you could play in bringing books into more homes, preparing children for the future and serving your communities.

Tomorrow, leading neuroscientists, pediatricians, child development specialists, child care providers, business and religious leaders from across the country will be gathering here to discuss the new and exciting scientific discoveries about the brain and early childhood development. One of the primary goals of the White House Conference is to find ways to put the research to practical use, and to call upon all sectors of society to make sure our children benefit from this new knowledge. I believe that the Prescription for Reading Partnership is one of the best answers to that call. It is a wonderful way to begin our conference.

Now I'd like to introduce Dr. Robert Hanneman, President of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

###

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON**  
**PRESCRIPTION FOR READING ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
**APRIL 16, 1997**

I am delighted to welcome each of you to White House. Today, I am pleased to announce the Prescription for Reading partnership, a new national effort which ~~could~~ <sup>you believe</sup> make a tremendous difference in the lives of children and families all across our country. Through this partnership, pediatricians, hospitals, health centers, book publishers, libraries and ~~non-profit~~ <sup>literacy</sup> organizations, many of whom are represented in this room, have pledged to work together to encourage and enable more parents across our country read to their children regularly.

As many of you know, this a crucial task. New research has shown that talking and reading to infants and toddlers is vital to their neurological, intellectual, and emotional development. Time spent sharing a favorite book not only strengthens the bond between a parent and child, it enriches a child's vocabulary, prepares him or her for reading, and literally helps a baby's brain grow.

Unfortunately, <sup>just to be what's best for</sup> too many children are still missing this early stimulation. Over the years I have met parents who have told me they never really talked to their babies because they thought the infants were too young to understand what they were saying. I've met parents who believed that they could not read well enough to read a book to a child.

We have to help parents understand that, no matter their educational level or reading ability, they can stimulate their children's ~~intellectual~~ <sup>full</sup> potential by talking to and reading to their children, even when they stumble over a few words here or there. Most likely, their children won't even notice. But they *will* notice the power of reading and books to take them on fascinating adventures and introduce them to interesting ideas.

Today's initiative was inspired by the national Reach Out and Read program and the American Library Association's Born to Read program. Both efforts recognized the vital roles our country's pediatricians could play in convincing parents to read to their infants and toddlers. Doctors are often the first professionals our children see on a regular basis. While parents may not take a child to a library or a preschool program until he or she is three, they will most likely take that child to a doctor or nurse for vaccinations and checkups. These regular visits present doctors with important opportunities to instill ~~good reading and learning habits~~ <sup>yes</sup> -- along with good health habits -- in parents and children. <sup>children's full potential well rounded</sup>

So it makes sense for our doctors and health professionals to use the authority and influence of those white uniforms and stethoscopes to "prescribe" daily reading to patients and their parents during every visit. Research has shown that these prescriptions are followed: Parents and children who are given books by their doctors are more likely to read aloud at home.

When I first heard about these efforts to "prescribe" reading and provide books to low-income families, I was very impressed. I realized that it was an idea that could easily be brought

**First Lady Announces National Partnership to Prescribe Reading to Infants and Toddlers**  
**DRAFT DRAFT**

*"There are few things that I believe could make a more dramatic difference over the next 10 years in this country than to persuade parents of all educational and economic levels to take this mission of reading to and talking with their young babies seriously."*

-- First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, January 10, 1997

**New Partnership to Prescribe Reading and Ensure That Children Who Come to the Doctor Have Access to Books.** The First Lady is pleased to announce that a new partnership is forming to prescribe reading to infants and toddlers. Pediatricians, hospitals, health centers, book publishers and libraries are coming together to make sure that infants and toddlers who come to the doctor have access to books and are read to regularly.

**The new partnership has already secured:**

- More than 250,000 books to be distributed through health clinics and centers around the country;
- Commitments to train 10,000 pediatricians and 950 community health centers to prescribe reading and provide books to children by the year 2000.

**The partnership, led by Scholastic Inc., First Book, and Reach Out and Read,** includes the American Academy of Pediatrics, National Association of Community Health Centers, National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions, American Library Association, Reading Is Fundamental, Random House, Mellon Trust, American Booksellers Association, and the National Chain Drug Store Association, and seeks additional partners.

**Reach Out and Read** is already being used in more than 80 health centers and hospitals around the country. Through this program, health care professionals are prescribing reading, using books in well-visits, and giving books to children -- often the first in their home.

**Call to Ensure That Every Child Under Age Five Is Read to Regularly by the Year 2000.** The First Lady is calling for every community to come together around its local library in partnership with local health providers to help encourage reading to young children and ensure that every child under age five is read to regularly by the year 2000. Today, less than half of all parents read to their children regularly [check]. Research shows that low-income parents who are prescribed reading and given books when they visit the doctor are *four times* more likely to report reading to their children [AMA, AJDC, 8/91].

**Response to the President's America Reads Challenge and The First Lady's Call For a National Effort to Prescribe Reading to Infants and Toddlers.** Today's announcement is in direct response to the First Lady's call in January for a national effort to build on the existing efforts to prescribe reading -- by programs such as Reach Out and Read and the American Library Association's Born to Read -- and to the President's America Reads Challenge to help parents be their children's first teacher and ensure that every child can read well by the end of third grade.

**The White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning Will Underscore the Importance of Reading to Infants and Toddlers.** *The White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children* will explore new research that shows that reading to children in their first few years actually helps their brain to grow in addition to enhancing their emotional and social development and laying the groundwork for vocabulary and later reading success. As a result, the American Academy of Pediatrics is announcing that it is making prescribing reading to infants and toddlers part of standard pediatric care and pediatric medical education.

to many more children and parents in communities all across our country. So earlier this year, I invited representatives from the health, library and publishing communities to come to the White House and discuss ways to take this idea nationwide. ~~to communities across the nation~~  
*to a truly nfi effort*

The national Prescription for Reading Partnership is the result of these discussions. With the leadership of Reach Out and Read, Scholastic, Inc. and First Book, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing disadvantaged children with their own first books, we have built a diverse coalition of organizations who have pledged to make this idea a reality in doctors' offices, hospitals and health clinics across the country.

These commitments come from the worlds of publishing, medicine, health, and even, television. And I'd like to take a few moments to highlight some of them:

- ② • The Reach Out and Read National Training Center at Boston Medical Center will train 10,000 pediatricians and pediatric residents by the year 2000 to implement the program in their communities. *Explain } This is a program in which vol. read to children*
- ④ • Scholastic, Inc., has promised to contribute 100,000 new books to health care professionals and clinics participating in Reach Out and Read or Born to Read. Scholastic's pledge is part of its already-announced commitment to provide one million books to the President's America Reads challenge. The company has also promised to match new donations to the Partnership with additional books.
- ⑤ • First Book, who ~~has been~~ *worked tirelessly to bring his group together* [Pauline: add praise and details here], has also pledged 100,000 books.
- ⑥ • Another publishing company, Random House, this year will contribute ~~5,000~~ *60,000* books a month to Reach Out and Read.
- ① • The American Academy of Pediatrics will formally recommend to its 53,000 members that they make prescribing reading part of standard pediatric care and well-child visits. They have also agreed to provide their members with specially-designed reading prescription pads - *slightly* ~~reproductions~~ *versions* of the one in this room.
- ③ • The National Association of Community Health Centers' 950 members will implement Reach Out and Read programs in centers serving a total of one million parents and children by the year 2000. In a similar effort, the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions will challenge its members to triple the number of hospitals with Reach Out And Read programs.
- ⑦ • The American Library Association will work with the nation's 16,000 public libraries to establish Born to Read programs with health professionals in their communities. And let me add my own call to our country's health clinics and libraries to work together to make sure every child has books to read and people to read to them.

- The National Association of Chain Drug Stores and the National Community Pharmacists Association will distribute reading tips and suggested book titles to parents who visit their pharmacies.
- I'd also like to thank the Association of American Publishers, The American Booksellers Association, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Irving Harris and the Harris Foundation of Chicago, ~~the~~ Mellon Trust, the Dreyfus Corporation, Reading Is Fundamental and ABC Television for their individual commitments to support ~~Reach Out and Read~~ *the Partnership* and to publicize the importance of daily reading.

These commitments are just the beginning. I have no doubt the Partnership, which seems to be growing everyday, will bring us a giant step closer to answering the President's America Reads challenge to make sure that every child can read independently by the end of the third grade. Early reading at home, in the comfort of a parent's lap is some of the most important preparation a child can have for reading classes in school. That's why the Parents as First Teachers Grants are *a* vital part of the America Reads Challenge *proposed.*

But let's remember that it won't take just parents, but all of us to make sure every child goes to school ready to learn and every child grows up able to read. I thank all of you for recognizing the important roles you could play in bringing books into more homes, preparing children for the future and serving your communities.

Tommorrow, leading neuroscientists, pediatricians, child development specialists, child care providers, business and religious leaders from across the country will be gathering here to discuss the new and exciting scientific discoveries about the brain and early childhood development. One of the primary goals of the White House Conference is to find ways to put the research/practical use, to call upon all sectors of society make sure our children benefit from all this new knowledge. I believe that the Prescription for Reading Partnership is one of the best answers to that call. It is a wonderful way to begin our conference.

Now I'd like to introduce Dr. Robert Hanneman, President of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

**SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON****WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 1997****FINAL****WASHINGTON, D.C.**

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|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| <b>LEAD ADVANCE:</b>  | <b>DAVID NESLEN</b>    |               |
| <b>ADOPTION EVENT</b> | <b>WHCA</b>            | <b>4101</b>   |
| <b>PRESS ADVANCE:</b> | <b>SAM MYERS, JR</b>   |               |
| <b>ADOPTION EVENT</b> | <b>703/591-0333</b>    | <b>Home</b>   |
| <b>SCHEDULER:</b>     | <b>JOHN FUNDERBURK</b> |               |
|                       | <b>202/456-5315</b>    | <b>Office</b> |
|                       | <b>202/456-5340</b>    | <b>Fax</b>    |
|                       | <b>202/244-7969</b>    | <b>Home</b>   |
|                       | <b>WHCA</b>            | <b>4461</b>   |

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|                  |                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>PREV RON</b>  | <b>The White House</b>                |
| <b>1:30 pm -</b> | <b>PRIVATE MEETING</b>                |
| <b>1:50 pm</b>   | <b>Map Room</b>                       |
|                  | <b>CLOSED PRESS\NO WH PHOTO</b>       |
| <b>2:00 pm -</b> | <b>PRIVATE MEETING</b>                |
| <b>2:30 pm</b>   | <b>Map Room</b>                       |
|                  | <b>CLOSED PRESS\NO WH PHOTO</b>       |
| <b>3:00 pm -</b> | <b>PRESCRIPTION FOR READING EVENT</b> |
| <b>3:30 pm</b>   | <b>Roosevelt Room</b>                 |
|                  | <b>OPEN PRESS\NETWORK POOL</b>        |

**FORMAT:**

- HRC opens and introduces Dr. Robert Hannemann (President, Academy of Pediatrics)
- Dr. Robert Hannemann makes brief remarks and introduces Barry Zuckerman (Founder, Reach Out & Read)
- Barry Zuckerman makes brief remarks and introduces Dick Robinson (Scholastic Representative)
- Dick Robinson makes brief remarks and closes.
- HRC departs.

**SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON****WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 1997****PAGE 2**

3:40 pm - **PRIVATE MEETING**  
4:15 pm Residence  
**CLOSED PRESS\NO WH PHOTO**

4:25 pm **PROCEED** to Old Executive Office Building

4:30 pm- **COUNCIL FOR JEWISH FEDERATION EVENT**  
4:45 pm Room 450, OEOB  
**CLOSED PRESS\WH PHOTO ONLY**

**FORMAT:**

- Lynn Lyss, Chairperson, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, introduces HRC.
- HRC makes brief remarks from podium.
- Following remarks, HRC departs.

**PARTICIPANTS:** Approximately 200 Federation Leaders

5:00 pm **BRIEFING**  
5:30 pm Map Room  
**CLOSED PRESS**

5:30 pm **BRIEFING**  
6:00 pm Map Room  
**CLOSED PRESS**

7:25 pm **DEPART** South Portico  
**EN ROUTE** Korean Ambassador's Residence  
4801 Glenbrook Road, NW  
[drive time: 15 minutes]

7:40 pm **ARRIVE** Korean Ambassador's Residence

**Greeters:**

- Ambassador Park Kun-Woo
- Mrs. Park
- Al Hunt
- Bill Pierce, President, National Council for Adoption

**SCHEDULE FOR HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON****WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 1997****PAGE 3**

7:45 pm - **NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ADOPTION DINNER**  
8:05 pm Korean Ambassador's Residence  
**OPEN PRESS**

**FORMAT:**

- Al Hunt will open and introduce Mrs. Lou Davidson.
- Mrs. Lou Davidson makes brief remarks, introduces HRC and presents HRC with the ~~the~~ Bully Pulpit Award.
- HRC makes remarks.
- Following remarks, HRC departs.

8:10 pm **DEPART** Korean Ambassador's Residence  
**EN ROUTE** The White House  
[drive time: 15 minutes]

8:25 pm **ARRIVE** South Portico

**RON** The White House

**WASHINGTON, D.C. EVENTS:****KENNEDY CENTER**

- Shear Madness
- The King and I
- Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival

**ARENA STAGE**

- Sunday in the Park with George

**FORD'S THEATER**

- Paper Moon

**NATIONAL THEATER:**

- Chicago

**WEATHER FORECAST FOR WASHINGTON, D.C.**

- Increasing clouds with a chance for rain showers by evening.  
Wind south at 10 to 18 knots. Low 46 High 68.

# First Lady Announces National Partnership to Prescribe Reading to Infants and Toddlers

April 16, 1997

*"There are few things that I believe could make a more dramatic difference over the next 10 years in this country than to persuade parents of all educational and economic levels to take this mission of reading to and talking with their young babies seriously."*

-- First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, January 10, 1997

**New Partnership to Prescribe Reading and Ensure That Children Who Come to the Doctor Have Access to Books.** The First Lady is pleased to announce that a new national partnership has been created to prescribe reading to infants and toddlers. Pediatricians, hospitals, health centers, book publishers, libraries and others are coming together to make sure that infants and toddlers who come to the doctor have access to books and are read to regularly. The American Academy of Pediatrics is recommending that pediatricians prescribe reading to infants and toddlers as part of standard pediatric care.

## **The New Partnership Has Already Secured:**

- More than 250,000 books to be distributed through health clinics and centers around the country;
- Commitments to train 10,000 pediatricians and 950 community health centers to prescribe reading and provide books to hundreds of thousands of children by the year 2000.

**The Partnership, Led by Scholastic Inc., First Book, and Reach Out and Read,** includes the American Academy of Pediatrics, National Association of Community Health Centers, National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions, American Library Association, Random House, Irving Harris and the Harris Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, American Booksellers Association, Association of American Publishers, Mellon Trust, Dreyfus Corporation, ABC Television, Reading Is Fundamental, National Association of Chain Drug Stores, and the National Community Pharmacists Association, and seeks additional partners.

**Under the Reach Out and Read program,** volunteers read to children in waiting rooms, health care providers prescribe reading, use books in well-visits, and give books to children at the end of a visit. This model program is already being used in more than 80 health centers and hospitals around the country.

**Call to Ensure That by the Year 2000 Every Child Under Age Five Is Read to Regularly.** The First Lady is calling for every community to come together using its local library in partnership with local health providers to help encourage reading to young children and ensure that every child under age five is read to regularly by the year 2000. Today, only 39% of parents with children under three read to their children daily [Commonwealth Fund, 1996]. Research shows that when doctors prescribe reading and give books to low-income parents and their children, these parents are *four times* more likely to read to their children [AMA, AJDC, 8/91].

**Response to the President's America Reads Challenge and the First Lady's Call for a National Effort to Prescribe Reading to Infants and Toddlers.** Today's announcement is in direct response to the First Lady's call in January for a national effort to build on the existing efforts to prescribe reading -- by programs such as Reach Out and Read and the American Library Association's Born to Read -- and to the President's America Reads Challenge to help parents be their children's first teachers and ensure that every child can read well by the end of third grade.

**The White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning Will Underscore the Importance of Reading to Infants and Toddlers.** *The White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children* will explore new research that shows that reading to children in their first few years actually helps their brain to grow in addition to enhancing their emotional and social development and laying the groundwork for vocabulary and later educational success.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON  
PRESCRIPTION FOR READING KICK-OFF  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
APRIL 16, 1997**

I am delighted to welcome each of you to White House. Today, I am pleased to announce the Prescription for Reading partnership, a new national effort which could make a tremendous difference in the lives of children and families all across our country. Through this partnership, pediatricians, hospitals, health centers, book publishers and libraries, many of whom are represented in this room, have pledged to work together to encourage and enable more parents across our country read to their children regularly.

and non-profit organizations

As many of you know, this a crucial task. New research has shown that talking and reading to infants and toddlers is vital to their neurological, intellectual, and emotional development. Time spent sharing a favorite book not only strengthens the bond between a parent and child, it enriches a child's vocabulary, prepares him or her for reading, and literally helps a baby's brain grow.

Unfortunately, too many children are still missing this early stimulation. Over the years I have met parents who have told me they never really talked to their babies because they thought the infants were too young to understand what they were saying. I've met parents who believed that they could not read well enough to read a book to a child.

We have to help parents understand that, no matter their educational level or reading ability, they can stimulate their children's intellectual potential by talking to and reading to their children, even when they stumble over a few words here or there. Most likely, their children won't even notice. But they *will* notice the power of reading and books to take them on fascinating adventures and introduce them to interesting ideas.

Today's initiative was inspired by the American Library Association's Born to Read and the Reach Out and Read programs. Both efforts recognized the vital roles our country's pediatricians could play in convincing parents to read to their infants and toddlers. Doctors are often the first professionals our infants and toddlers see on a regular basis. While parents may not take a child to a library or a preschool program until he or she is three, they will most likely take that child to a doctor or nurse for vaccinations and checkups. These regular visits present doctors with important opportunities to instill good reading and learning habits -- along with good health habits -- in parents and children.

program

So it makes sense for our doctors and health professionals to use the authority and influence of those white uniforms and stethoscopes to "prescribe" daily reading to patients and their parents during every visit. Research has shown that these prescriptions are followed: Parents and children who are given books by their doctors are more likely to read aloud at home.

When I first heard about these efforts to "prescribe reading" and provide books to low-income families, I was very impressed and thought it was an idea that could easily be used to

help children and parents in every community across America. So <sup>earlier this year</sup> in March, I invited representatives from the health, library and publishing communities to come to the White House and discuss ways to take this idea nationwide.

The national Prescription for Reading Partnership is the result of these discussions. We have built a diverse -- and growing -- coalition of organizations who have pledged to make this idea a reality in doctors' offices, hospitals and health clinics across the country.

The Reach Out and Read National Training Center at Boston Medical Center will train 10,000 pediatricians and pediatric residents by the year 2000 to implement the program in their communities.

The American Academy of Pediatrics will formally recommend to its 53,000 members that they make prescribing reading part of standard pediatric care and well-child visits. They have also agreed to provide their members with specially-designed reading prescription pads.

The publishing company of Scholastic, Inc., along with First Book, a non-profit organization which works to provide disadvantaged children with their own books, have promised to contribute 200,000 new books to health care professionals participating in Reach Out and Read or Born to Read. Scholastic's pledge is part of its already-announced commitment to provide one million books to the President's America Reads challenge. <sup>Similar to the one here (one used)</sup> But they have also increased it, ~~and will match other~~ <sup>But they have also increased it, and will match other</sup> contributions with additional books. Another publisher, Random House, has pledged to donate 60,000 books this year to Reach Out and Read.

The National Association of Community Health Centers' 950 members will implement Reach Out and Read programs in centers serving a total of one million parents and children by the year 2000. In a similar effort, the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions will challenge its members <sup>to triple the number of hospitals</sup> to bring Reach Out And Read to their patients.

The Mellon Trust in Boston <sup>and Mellon Trust</sup> has announced a \$100,000 grant to Reach Out and Read. <sup>challenging other financial institutions to do the same.</sup>

The American Library Association will work with the nation's 16,000 public libraries to establish Born to Read programs with health professionals in their communities.

And the National Association of Chain Drug Stores and the National Community Pharmacists Association will distribute reading tips and suggested book titles to parents who visit their pharmacies.

CONCLUSION: So I thank all of these organizations for recognizing the importance of early childhood reading and for recognizing the important roles they could play in this effort. Tomorrow, leading neuroscientists, pediatricians, child development specialists, child care providers, business and religious leaders from across the country will be gathering here to discuss the best ways of making use of the new and exciting scientific discoveries about early

childhood development. Today's initiative is a wonderful example of putting this knowledge to good use.....

\* → Introduce Dr. Hannerer, President of Amer Academy of Pediatrics.

— Need to give a special thanks to First Book for leadership in organizing this effort

— Recognize Dr. Cuygi who was at Georgetown + will be starting a program at Children's in D.C. ? (optional)

— Need to mention all the other partners by name? (include w/ Melanne?)

— ~~Need to do same~~

\* — Very Important: need to do call for every community to have libraries partner w/ health care providers to insure that every child < 5 is read to regularly by 2000 + has access to books.

\* — Need to link to America Reads → can't have all ready by 3rd grade if ~~parents don't read to their child~~ not stimulated before get to school.

\* — Need to link to (Volunteerism) Summit Service

That's why POTUS proposal has parents as first Teachers Grants (see email!)

April 15, 1997

## **PRESCRIPTION FOR READING PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT**

**DATE:** April 16, 1997  
**TIME:** 3:00-3:30 pm  
**LOCATION:** Roosevelt Room  
**FROM:** Pauline Abernathy

June

### **I. PURPOSE**

To announce the formation of a new national partnership involving pediatricians, hospitals, health centers, book publishers, and libraries to prescribe reading to infants and toddlers and to make sure that children have access to books and are read to regularly.

### **II. BACKGROUND**

This announcement of a national partnership to prescribe reading to infants and toddlers and ensure that children who visit the doctor have access to books is in direct response to your call for such an effort and to the President's America Reads Challenge. You first called for this effort in January at Georgetown Medical Center with Maurice Sendak, then again in your TIME Magazine column, and then in February you kicked off a Reach Out and Read program at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City. You subsequently held a meeting in the Map Room to develop this partnership with most of the members of the Partnership.

Your briefing book contains a 1-page fact sheet announcing the Partnership, and a document from the Partnership detailing the individual commitments of books, health centers, hospitals, and training for doctors and the call for local libraries to partner with local health care providers to encourage reading. The Partnership will replicate and build on Reach Out and Read, and help build a community network around each Reach Out and Read program. Scholastic, Reach Out and Read, and First Book -- an organization dedicated to giving low-income children their first books -- have led the group and secured and coordinated the commitments by the different parties.

There is no formal federal role at this point, although many of the partners receive federal funding, such as the libraries and health centers, and AmeriCorps members who work at the health centers could help recruit volunteers and tutor parents. In addition, the Partnership could be eligible for funding under the America Reads Parents as First Teachers Challenge Grants. [We will likely hold an event next week to transmit the America Reads legislation to the Hill.]

As you may know, Scholastic donated 1 million books to America Reads under the rubric of the Philadelphia Summit. Scholastic agreed to allocate 100,000 of the 1 million to this Partnership, and to match cash contributions to Reach Out and Read or First Book with additional books over and above the 1 million donated to America Reads. Scholastic and Carol Rasco have not yet determined where the other 900,000 of the 1 million books will go.

The group will not form a new 501(c)(3), but have instead formed a steering committee to coordinate its different members activities, and will develop a strategic plan over the next month. For now, they are calling themselves the Prescription for Reading Partnership.

### **III. PARTICIPANTS**

#### Remarks:

- HRC
- Dr. Robert Hannemann, President, American Academy of Pediatrics
- Dr. Barry Zuckerman, Founder, Reach Out and Read,
- Dick Robinson, Chairman of Scholastic, Inc.

#### Audience:

Almost 40 people, most of whom are members of the partnership who have made specific commitments to the partnership. Attached is the list of people in the audience, including health care providers, book publishers, libraries, book sellers, foundations, and banks.

### **IV. SEQUENCE**

- HRC opens and makes remarks, and introduces Dr. Hannemann
- Dr. Hannemann makes brief remarks and introduces Dr. Zuckerman
- Dr. Zuckerman makes brief remarks and introduces Mr. Robinson
- Mr. Robinson makes brief remarks
- HRC closes and departs

### **V. PRESS**

Open press.

### **VI. REMARKS**

Prepared by June Shih.