

Prescription for Reading Partnership

January 14, 1998

PROTOTYPE
PRESERVATION

PROTOTYPE PRESERVATION



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Development Director
Reach Out and Read

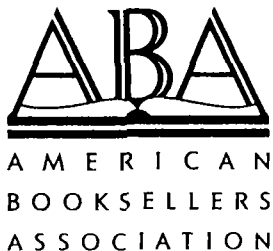
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American Academy of Pediatrics

Department of Government Liaison • The Homer Building
601 13th Street, NW, Suite 400 North • Washington, DC 20005

The American Academy of Pediatrics is committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.

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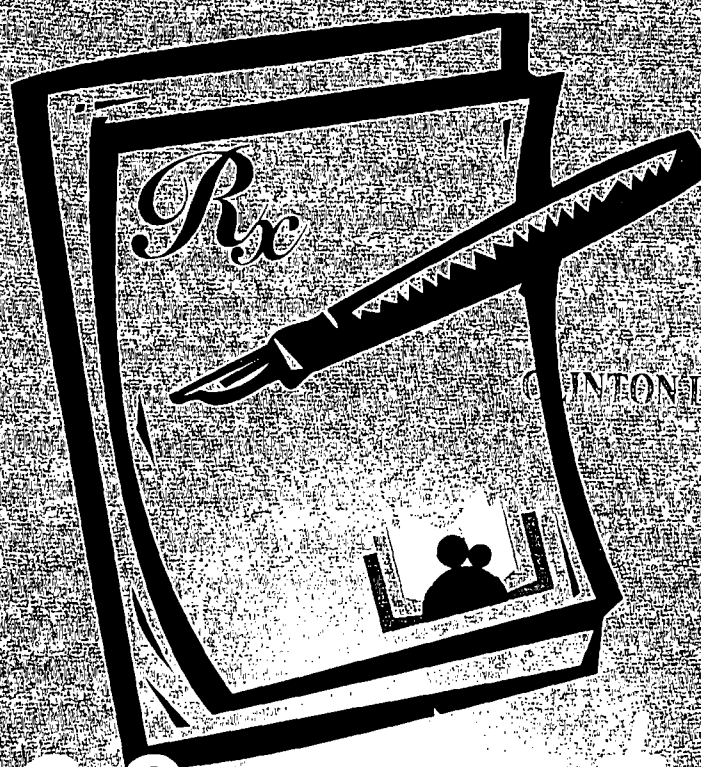
ALA American Library Association

Susan Roman, Ph.D.

Executive Director
Association for Library Service to Children
and American Library Trustee Association

<http://www.ala.org>

AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION



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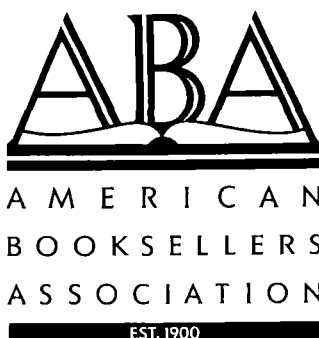
Prescription FOR READING MARKETING KIT

"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. ... That's why doctors and nurses are starting to *prescribe* reading to babies along with regular checkups and vaccinations. ... 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."

—Hillary Rodham Clinton
Time, February 3, 1997

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828 South Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591
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E-mail: ab-info@bookweb.org
Internet: <http://www.bookweb.org>

Prescription ^{FOR} READING



November 1997

Dear Bookseller:

On behalf of the American Booksellers Association and the Association of Booksellers for Children, we are delighted to welcome you to our Prescription for Reading/Read to Your Bunny campaign! You will be pleased to learn that you are one of almost fifteen hundred bookstores across the United States that will be distributing over 200,000 copies of *Read to Your Bunny* between now and March of 1998.

The Children's Issues Committee of ABA and representatives of ABC—in conjunction with Scholastic, Inc.—have worked hard to make this information kit as user friendly as possible. The kit includes your one hundred complimentary copies of *Read to Your Bunny* by Rosemary Wells, as well as accompanying posters, coupons/prescription forms, and other informational material. It has been designed to assist you in developing a working relationship with a local health-care provider and is directed toward encouraging parents and other care-givers to read to their very young children on a daily basis as a routine part of well-baby care. In addition to bringing new traffic into your store, this program puts you in the forefront of President Clinton's "America Reads Challenge" while demonstrating your strong commitment to promote reading and support literacy. We could not be more proud of the enthusiastic response of the bookselling community to this effort.

As you know, this innovative collaboration between ABA, ABC, and Scholastic, Inc., was created in response to the Prescription for Reading (PFR) partnership, launched in April 1997 by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton on the eve of the White House Conference on Early Childhood and Brain Development. The partnership encourages businesses, community organizations, and others to work with health-care providers to *prescribe* reading during "well-baby" checkups. PFR is based on the successful work of a Boston-based organization, Reach Out and Read, which corroborates that reading to very young children enhances the child's overall intellectual, emotional, and physical development. This specific PFR partnership will run from November 1997 through March 1, 1998.

The program guidelines, found elsewhere in this kit, are designed to provide overall suggestions as to how this program can work best. While we recognize that some bookstores may make modest adjustments to the program to tailor it for their own communities, we believe that our suggested approach is the best way to achieve maximum results. **Be sure to note, however, that our agreement with Scholastic specifically states that the enclosed books cannot be sold under any circumstance and that no books may be distributed after March 1, 1998.** Any books left after that date must be donated to an appropriate health-care facility.

If you have any questions about our Prescription for Reading program, please call Jill Perlstein of the ABA at (800) 637-0037, ext. 283. For additional materials or for information about a complementary ABC companion program—"The Most Important 20 Minutes of Your Day ... Read with a Child"—please contact the ABC national office at 4412 Chowen Ave. S. #303, Minneapolis, MN 55410, or call (800) 421-1665.

Thank you for taking part in this exciting initiative. Together, we will play a part in helping two hundred thousand children to a good beginning (their parents, too!) and start them down the road of becoming lifetime readers!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Bonds Thomas".

Barbara Bonds Thomas (Toad Hall, Austin, TX)
President
American Booksellers Association

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diane Etherington".

Diane Etherington (Children's Hour Bookstore,
Salt Lake City, UT)
President
Association of Booksellers for Children

P.S. We want to thank the Ingram Book Company for their generous assistance in the distribution of the *Read to Your Bunny* materials to participating bookstores. Among ABA, ABC, Rosemary Wells, Scholastic, Inc., and the Ingram Book Company, this has truly been a collaborative effort. Thanks to all!

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 3, 1997

Mr. Oren J. Teicher
Director of Government Affairs
American Booksellers Association
828 South Broadway
Tarrytown, New York 10591

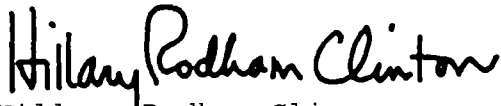
Dear Mr. Teicher:

Thank you for writing and updating me on the national campaign to encourage businesses, community organizations, and others to work with health-care providers to "prescribe" reading during well-baby checkups. Your program, in cooperation with the Association of Booksellers for Children and Scholastic, Inc., is a very important step in implementing the Prescription for Reading Partnership.

We all realize that modest investments in the sound development of our children, especially our youngest children, will lay the groundwork for an American future with increased prosperity, better health, fewer social ills, and ever greater opportunities for our citizens to lead fulfilling lives: Thanks to the work of Reach Out and Read, we know that reading to very young children enhances the child's overall intellectual, emotional, and physical development.

Thank you for your efforts in making a "prescription" for reading to our children a genuine national effort.

Sincerely yours,


Hillary Rodham Clinton

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 10, 1997

Mr. Oren J. Teicher
Director of Governmental Affairs
American Booksellers Association
838 South Broadway
Tarrytown, New York 10591

Dear Oren:

I commend you for taking a leadership role in supporting the American Reads Challenge. By joining the President's Coalition for the America Reads Challenge, you have made a commitment to the future of our nation and its success in the 21st century. We should all be concerned that more than 40 percent of our nation's fourth grade students read at or below grade level. Your willingness to commit your time and resources to ensure that every child reads well and independently by the end of third grade is a testimony to the importance you place on creating a literate society.

There are few greater gifts we can give than to open the world to a child through reading. I encourage you to remain diligent in your support of the America Reads Challenge and to share your enthusiasm with others so they might join in helping us reach the program's goal. Together we can create a nation of readers that will ensure a more prosperous and secure future for all Americans. Thank you again for your support of the America Reads Challenge.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

VIEWPOINT

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Comfort and Joy

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

THE 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

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

The success of this program depends on your ability to partner with a local health-care provider who is dedicated to the overall care of a child's physical health, including the child's emotional and intellectual development. Your partner can be a pediatrician, doctor, nurse, a Reach Out and Read center (see enclosed list), or any other organization that cares for a child's health. The distinguishing factor in choosing your partner should be their ability to influence a parent's behavior in caring for a child. We understand that in your community you may need to partner with a pre-school or similar organization; in this case, we would still recommend that the program be targeted toward the parent rather than the child. If you have any questions or concerns about how to administer this program, please contact ABA's Jill Perlstein at (800) 637-0037 or (914) 591-2665, ext. 283. In accordance with ABA's and ABC's agreement with Scholastic Inc., **you are not permitted to sell this special edition of *Read to Your Bunny* and must complete this program by March 1, 1998.** Any books not yet redeemed by that date, must be donated to a not-for-profit organization of your choice. Thank you for your cooperation.

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

Q: What is in the starter kit?

A: 100 *Read to Your Bunny* paperback books, 125 prescription coupons, two full-color posters (one for the health-care office and one for your store), one tent card (for the health-care office), one double-sided sign (for your store), one 11" x 17" poster (for your store), samples of press releases and letters to health-care providers, a list of Reach Out and Read centers, and copies of other information to guide you in running a successful campaign.

Q: What is in a booster pack?

A: 100 *Read to Your Bunny* paperback books, 125 prescription coupons, two full-color posters (one for the health-care office and one for your store), one tent card (for the health-care office), one double-sided sign (for your store), and one 11" x 17" poster (for your store).

Q: What do I do first?

A: Review the enclosed materials and contact a local pediatrician, clinic, health-care center, hospital, Reach Out and Read center (see enclosed list), or similar health-care provider. Review with your potential partner the findings from the research studies cited in the enclosed materials and on the 11" x 17" poster. Ask your partner to participate by *prescribing* reading to parents and guardians of very young children using the prescription coupons provided in this kit. (Use insert DR1 (fill-in-the-blanks) or DR2 (ready-to-mail) for contacting potential partners. Use SP for company background information. Refer to the 11" x 17" poster for statistical details.)

Q: How do I personalize the prescription coupons?

A: Use a sticker or a stamp to imprint your store's name and address on the coupon under "Get your free paperback copy of *Read to Your Bunny* at" and on the bottom of the bookmark under "Remember to sign up your child for a library card."

Q: How do I get the local media's attention?

A: Use the sample press releases in this kit or create your own press release. (Use insert PR1 (fill-in-the-blanks) or PR2 (ready-to-mail) to deliver to the media. Use SP for company background information. Refer to the 11" x 17" poster for statistical details.)

Q: What do I do if I have unclaimed books on March 2, 1998?

A: Donate the books to a local not-for-profit organization of your choice. Be sure to stamp your store's name on the inside cover or place your store's bookmark in each book.

NOTE TO BOOKSELLER: Recreate this sample letter on your store's letterhead, fill-in the underlined portions with your information, or develop your own version. Send this letter to potential partners for the program.

Today's date

Dear _____:
Health-care provider's name

I am delighted to extend this invitation to you to play an important role in an exciting initiative to encourage reading to very young children—the Prescription for Reading Partnership. This program, launched in April 1997 by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, is based on the successful work of a Boston-based organization, Reach Out and Read (ROR), which corroborates that reading to very young children enhances the child's overall intellectual, emotional, and physical development. The partnership encourages businesses, community organizations, and others to work with health-care providers to *prescribe* reading during “well-baby” checkups.

A 1991 study by ROR found that:

- parents who had been given a book and literacy counseling during a clinic visit were four times more likely to choose book sharing as an activity with their child.

And, prior to ROR's study, a 1985 National Commission on Reading study reported:

- children's experiences being read to were the single most important predictors of later reading success.

Prescription for Reading is an integral component of President Clinton's America Reads Challenge. The goal of the America Reads Challenge, to be met by the year 2000, is to ensure that all children learn to read well and independently by the time they enter third grade. Our bookstore, _____,

Your bookstore

in partnership with the American Booksellers Association (ABA), the Association of Booksellers for Children (ABC), and Scholastic Inc., will distribute over two hundred thousand free copies of *Read to Your Bunny* by Rosemary Wells. This new book is a colorful, vibrant, paperback edition that delivers the simple message that reading to a child is an important part of daily activities. _____ books will be

Number of books

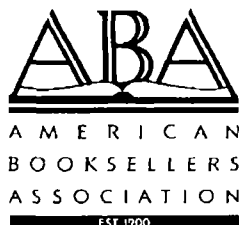
distributed free with your help through our store to parents and guardians of young children in our community. This stage of the partnership will run from November 1997 through March 1, 1998.

Insert specific plans

It is my hope that you, as the health-care expert, and myself, as the children's book expert, can work together to introduce adults and young children to the world of books available at both local bookstores and libraries in our community. It our vision that by working together, each in our respective role, we can produce lifelong readers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your signature



November 1997

Dear health-care provider:

I am delighted to extend this invitation to you to play an important role in an exciting initiative to encourage reading to very young children—the Prescription for Reading Partnership. This program, launched in April 1997 by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, is based on the successful work of a Boston-based organization, Reach Out and Read (ROR), which corroborates that reading to very young children enhances the child's overall intellectual, emotional, and physical development. The partnership encourages businesses, community organizations, and others to work with health-care providers to *prescribe* reading during “well-baby” checkups.

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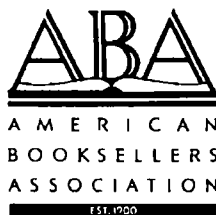
Prescription for Reading is an integral component of President Clinton's America Reads Challenge. The goal of the America Reads Challenge, to be met by the year 2000, is to ensure that all children learn to read well and independently by the time they enter third grade. Our bookstore, in partnership with the American Booksellers Association (ABA), the Association of Booksellers for Children (ABC), and Scholastic Inc., will distribute over two hundred thousand free copies of *Read to Your Bunny* by Rosemary Wells. This new book is a colorful, vibrant, paperback edition that delivers the simple message that reading to a child is an important part of daily activities. Books will be distributed free with your help through our store to parents and guardians of young children in our community. This stage of the partnership will run from November 1997 through March 1, 1998.

It is my hope that you, as the health-care expert, and myself, as the children's book expert, can work together to introduce adults and young children to the world of books available at both local bookstores and libraries in our community. It our vision that by working together, each in our respective role, we can produce lifelong readers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

The Prescription for Reading Partners

NOTE TO BOOKSELLER: Recreate this sample press release on your store's letterhead, fill-in the underlined portions with your information, or develop your own version. Send the press release to the local media. Include an appropriate photograph.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: _____

Contact name

Contact number

READ TO YOUR BUNNY BY ROSEMARY WELLS
INSPIRES NATIONAL READING PROGRAM AT _____

Your bookstore

SPONSORED BY THE AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOLASTIC, THE ASSOCIATION OF BOOKSELLERS
FOR CHILDREN, AND THE INGRAM BOOK COMPANY

(_____) More than two hundred thousand free copies of a new book, *Read to Your*
Your town, today's date
Bunny, have been distributed to participating bookstores across the nation through a cooperative initiative entitled Prescription for Reading. The Prescription for Reading Partnership, an integral component of the America Reads Challenge, was launched in April 1997 by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton on the eve of the White House Conference on Early Childhood and Brain Development. Prescription for Reading is based on the successful work of a Boston-based organization, Reach Out and Read, which corroborates that reading to very young children enhances the child's overall intellectual, emotional, and physical development.

The American Booksellers Association (ABA), in partnership with the Association of Booksellers for Children (ABC), Scholastic Inc., and _____, has designed this program to encourage

Your bookstore

parents and guardians of very young children to make reading part of a daily routine. By working with local health-care providers to *prescribe* reading during "well-baby" checkups, we can work toward meeting the goal of the America Reads Challenge and ensure that all children learn to read well and independently by the time they enter third grade.

Read to Your Bunny, a new Scholastic picture book by acclaimed author and illustrator Rosemary Wells, is a colorful, vibrant story that delivers a simple message: Reading to a child is an important part of daily activities. The book will be published by Scholastic in March 1998 (U.S. price \$7.95).

_____ is distributing "prescription coupons" for free paperback copies of *Read to Your Bunny* to pediatricians, well-baby clinics, and other health-care facilities including _____, where they will be given to individual parents and guardians to be redeemed at _____.
Your bookstore Name of health-care provider Your bookstore

We will also provide these parents and guardians with special reading lists for babies, toddlers, and pre-schoolers. The promotion will run from November 1997 through March 1, 1998.

"Your program ... is a very important step in implementing the Prescription for Reading Partnership," wrote First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in a letter to the ABA. "We all realize that modest investments in the sound development of our children, especially our youngest children, will lay the groundwork for an American future with increased prosperity, better health, with fewer social ills, and ever greater opportunities for our citizens to lead fulfilling lives."

(Add a quote from the bookstore owner and/or health-care provider.)

(Insert background information about your store.)

The American Booksellers Association, founded in 1900, is a not-for-profit trade organization headquartered in Tarrytown, New York, and on the Internet at <http://www.bookweb.org/>. Its mission includes protecting the well-being of retail bookstores and promoting the availability of books. The ABA supports its members through education, research, and the dissemination of information.

For more than 75 years, Scholastic Inc., has been committed to creating quality educational materials for students, teachers, and families. The company is one of the leading publishers and distributors of children's books, magazines, and core curriculum materials. Scholastic also publishes educational software products and produces children- and family-oriented videos and television programs. The company's international operations include Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Mexico.

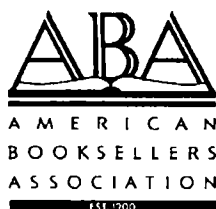
The Association of Booksellers for Children is a national membership association that offers a support network for professional children's booksellers who share the goal of encouraging quality and service within the children's book industry.

The Ingram Book Company is America's largest wholesale distributor of books, audiobooks, periodicals, and multimedia to booksellers, librarians, and specialty retailers.

#

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jill Perlstein, ABA
(914) 591-2665, ext. 283

***READ TO YOUR BUNNY* BY ROSEMARY WELLS
INSPIRES NATIONAL READING PROGRAM AT LOCAL BOOKSTORES**

SPONSORED BY THE AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOLASTIC, THE ASSOCIATION OF BOOKSELLERS
FOR CHILDREN, AND THE INGRAM BOOK COMPANY

(Tarrytown, NY, November 1997) More than two hundred thousand free copies of a new book, *Read to Your Bunny*, have been distributed to participating bookstores across the nation through a cooperative initiative entitled Prescription for Reading. The Prescription for Reading Partnership, an integral component of the America Reads Challenge, was launched in April 1997 by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton on the eve of the White House Conference on Early Childhood and Brain Development. Prescription for Reading is based on the successful work of a Boston-based organization, Reach Out and Read, which corroborates that reading to very young children enhances the child's overall intellectual, emotional, and physical development.

The American Booksellers Association (ABA), in partnership with the Association of Booksellers for Children (ABC), Scholastic Inc., the Ingram Book Company, and local bookstores across the country, has designed this program to encourage parents and guardians of very young children to make reading part of a daily routine. By working with local health-care providers to *prescribe* reading during "well-baby" checkups, we can work toward meeting the goal of the America Reads Challenge and ensure that all children learn to read well and independently by the time they enter third grade.

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The American Booksellers Association, founded in 1900, is a not-for-profit trade organization headquartered in Tarrytown, New York, and on the Internet at <http://www.bookweb.org/>. Its mission includes protecting the well-being of retail bookstores and promoting the availability of books. The ABA supports its members through education, research, and the dissemination of information.

For more than 75 years, Scholastic Inc., has been committed to creating quality educational materials for students, teachers, and families. The company is one of the leading publishers and distributors of children's books, magazines, and core curriculum materials. Scholastic also publishes educational software products and produces children- and family-oriented videos and television programs. The company's international operations include Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Mexico.

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#

NOTE TO BOOKSELLER: Add your store's history to this list of sponsoring organizations' histories. Include a copy with your correspondences to the media and to your potential partners.

Prescription for Reading Partnership

American Booksellers Association: The ABA, founded in 1900, is a not-for-profit trade organization headquartered in Tarrytown, New York, and on the Internet at <http://www.bookweb.org/>. Its mission includes protecting the well-being of retail bookstores and promoting the availability of books. The ABA supports its members through education, research, and the dissemination of information.

Association of Booksellers for Children: ABC is a national membership association that offers a support network for professional children's booksellers who share the goal of encouraging quality and service within the children's book industry.

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Studies Show Talking With Infants Shapes Basis of Ability to Think

By SANDRA BLAKESLEE

When a White House conference on early child development convenes today, one of the findings Hillary Rodham Clinton will hear from scientists is that the neurological foundations for rational thinking, problem solving and general reasoning appear to be largely established by age 1 — long before babies show any signs of knowing an abstraction from a pacifier.

Furthermore, new studies are showing that spoken language has an astonishing impact on an infant's brain development. In fact, some researchers say the number of words an infant hears each day is the single most important predictor of later intelligence, school success and social competence. There is one catch — the words have to come from an attentive, engaged human being. As far as anyone has been able to determine, radio and television do not work.

"We now know that neural connections are formed very early in life and that the infant's brain is literally waiting for experiences to determine how connections are made," said Dr. Patricia Kuhl, a neuroscientist at the University of Washington in Seattle and a key speaker at today's conference. "We didn't realize until very recently how early this process begins," she said in a telephone interview. "For example, infants have learned the sounds of their native language by the age of six months."

This relatively new view of infant brain development, supported by many scientists, has obvious political and social implications. It suggests that infants and babies develop most rapidly with caretakers who are not only loving, but also talkative and articulate, and that a more verbal family will increase an infant's chances for success. It challenges some deeply held beliefs — that infants will thrive intellectually if they are simply given lots of love and that purposeful efforts to influence babies' cognitive development are harmful.

If the period from birth to 3 is crucial, parents may assume a more crucial role in a child's intellectual development than teachers, an idea sure to provoke new debates about parental responsibility, said Dr. Irving Lazar, a professor of special education and resident scholar at the Center for Research in Human Development at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. And it offers yet another reason to provide stimulating, high quality day care for infants whose primary caretakers work, which is unavoidably expensive.

The idea that early experience shapes human potential is not new, said Dr. Harry Chugani, a pediatric

neurologist at Wayne State University in Detroit and one of the scientists whose research has shed light on critical periods in child brain development. What is new is the extent of the research in the field known as cognitive neuroscience and the resulting synthesis of findings on the influence of both nature and nurture. Before birth, it appears that genes predominantly direct how the brain establishes basic wiring patterns. Neurons grow and travel into distinct neighborhoods, awaiting further instructions.

After birth, it seems that environmental factors predominate. A recent study found that mice exposed to an enriched environment have more brain cells than mice raised in less intellectually stimulating conditions. In humans, the inflowing stream of sights, sounds, noises, smells, touches — and most impor-

Environmental factors seem to take over for genetic influence.

tantly, language and eye contact — literally makes the brain take shape. It is a radical and shocking concept.

Experience in the first year of life lays the basis for networks of neurons that enable us to be smart, creative and adaptable in all the years that follow, said Dr. Esther Thelen, a neurobiologist at Indiana University in Bloomington.

The brain is a self-organizing system, Dr. Thelen said, whose many parts co-operate to produce coherent behavior. There is no master program pulling it together but rather the parts self-organize. "What we know about these systems is that they are very sensitive to initial conditions," Dr. Thelen said. "Where you are now depends on where you've been."

The implication for infant development is clear. Given the explosive growth and self-organizing capacity of the brain in the first year of life, the experiences an infant has during this period are the conditions that set the stage for everything that follows.

In later life, what makes us smart and creative and adaptable are networks of neurons which support our ability to use abstractions from one memory to help form new ideas and solve problems, said Dr. Charles Stevens, a neurobiologist at the Salk Institute in San Diego. Smarter people may have a greater number of

neural networks that are more intricately woven together, a process that starts in the first year.

The complexity of the synaptic web laid down early may very well be the physical basis of what we call general intelligence, said Dr. Lazar at Vanderbilt. The more complex that set of interconnections, the brighter the child is likely to be since there are more ways to sort, file and access experiences.

Of course, brain development "happens" in stimulating and dull environments. Virtually all babies learn to sit up, crawl, walk, talk, eat independently and make transactions with others, said Dr. Steve Petersen, a neurologist at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. Such skills are not at risk except in rare circumstances of sensory and social deprivation, like being locked to a closet for the first few years of life. Subject to tremendous variability within the normal range of environments are the abilities to perceive, conceptualize, understand, reason, associate and judge. The ability to function in a technologically complex society like ours does not simply "happen."

One implication of the new knowledge about infant brain development is that intervention programs like Head Start may be too little, too late, Dr. Lazar said. If educators hope to make a big difference, he said, they will need to develop programs for children from birth to 3.

Dr. Bettye Caldwell, a professor of pediatrics and an expert in child development at the University of Arkansas in Little Rock, who supports the importance of early stimulation, said that in early childhood education there is a strong bias against planned intellectual stimulation. Teachers of very young children are taught to follow "developmentally appropriate practices," she said, which means that the child chooses what he or she wants to do. The teacher is a responder and not a stimulator.

Asked about the bias Dr. Caldwell described, Matthew Melmed, executive director of Zero to Three, a research and training organization for early childhood development in Washington, D.C., said that knowing how much stimulation is too much or too little, especially for infants, is "a really tricky question. It's a dilemma parents and educators face every day," he said.

In a poll released today, Zero to Three found that 87 percent of parents think that the more stimulation a baby receives the better off the baby is, Mr. Melmed said. "A parents have the concept that a baby is something you fill up with information and that's not good," he said.

TIMETABLE

The Growing Brain: What Might Help Your Infant

Dr. William Staso, an expert in neurological development, suggests that different kinds of stimulation should be emphasized at different ages. At all stages, parental interaction and a conversational dialogue with the child are important. Here are some examples:

FIRST MONTH A low level of stimulation reduces stress and increases the infant's wakefulness and alertness. The brain essentially shuts down the system when there is overstimulation from competing sources. When talking to an infant, for example, filter out distracting noises, like a radio.

MONTHS 1 TO 3 Light/dark contours, like high-contrast pictures or objects, foster development in neural networks that encode vision. The brain also starts to discriminate among acoustic patterns of language, like intonation, lift and pitch. Speaking to the infant, especially in an animated voice, aids this process.

MONTHS 3 TO 6 The infant relies primarily on vision to acquire information about the world. Make available increasingly complex designs that correspond to real objects in the baby's environment; motion also attracts attention. A large-scale picture of a fork, moved across the field of vision, would offer more

stimulation than just an actual fork.

MONTHS 6 TO 7 The infant becomes alert to relationships like cause and effect, the location of objects and the functions of objects. Demonstrate and talk about situations like how the turning of a doorknob leads to the opening of a door.

MONTHS 7 TO 9 The brain is oriented to make associations between sounds and some meaningful activity or object. For example, parents can deliberately emphasize in conversation that the sound of water running in the bathroom signals an impending bath, or that a doorbell means a visitor.

MONTHS 9 TO 12 Learning adds up to a new level of awareness of the environment and increased interest in exploration; sensory and motor skills coordinate in a more mature fashion. This is the time to let the child turn on a faucet or a light switch, under supervision.

MONTHS 13 TO 18 The brain establishes accelerated and more complex associations, especially if the toddler experiments directly with objects. A rich environment will help the toddler make such associations, understand sequences, differentiate between objects and reason about them.

Challenging the deep belief that lots of love is enough.

co-authored a book — "Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children."

The researchers studied 42 children born to professional, working class or welfare parents. During the first two and half years of the children's lives, the scientists spent an hour a month recording every spoken word and every parent-child interaction in every home. For all the families, the data include 1,300 hours of everyday interactions, Dr. Hart said, involving millions of ordinary utterances.

At age 3, the children were given standard tests. The children of professional parents scored highest. Spoken language was the key variable, Dr. Hart said.

A child with professional parents heard, on average, 2,100 words an hour. Children of working-class parents heard 1,200 words with parents on welfare heard only 800 words an hour. Professional parents talked three times as much to their infants, Dr. Hart said. More-

over, children with professional parents got positive feedback 30 times an hour — twice as often as working-class parents and five times as often as welfare parents.

The tone of voice made a difference, Dr. Hart said. Affirmative feedback is very important. A child who hears, "What did we do yesterday? What did we see?" will listen more to a parent than will a child who always hears "Stop that," or "Come here!"

By age 2, all parents started talking more to their children, Dr. Hart said. But by age two, the differences among children were so great that those left behind could never catch up. The differences in academic achievement remained in each group through primary school.

Every child learned to use language and could say complex sentences but the deprived children did not deal with words in a conceptual manner, she said.

A recent study of day care found the same thing. Children who were talked to at very young ages were better at problem solving later on.

For an infant, Dr. Hart said, all words are novel and worth learning. The key to brain development seems to be the rate of early learning — not so much what is wired but of the brain interconnected in those first months and years.

Reach Out and Read National Sites

139 SITES IN 38 STATES AS OF AUGUST 1997

Note to Bookseller:

For those of you who have not yet established a relationship with a local health-care provider, feel free to contact one of the Reach Out and Read centers listed here. Check your local directory for the telephone number. If you need further information, contact the national Reach Out and Read office located in Boston, MA, at (617) 534-5701.

ALABAMA

Lower Alabama Pediatrics—Brewton
Marsha Raulerson, MD

ALASKA

Alaska Native Medical Center—Anchorage
Jerry Nasenbeny, MD; Christina Sanchez

ARIZONA

Kino Community Hospital—Tucson
Barbara Smith, MD; Elena D'Autremont; Candy Parsons
Phoenix Children's Hospital—Phoenix
Marcia Stanton, MSW; Jeffrey Weiss, MD
Sage Memorial Hospital—Ganado
Rebecca Kazal; Louis Kazal, MD
Sells Indian Hospital—Tucson
Angie Williams, PA; Margaret Trouard, MD

CALIFORNIA

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center Pediatric Clinic—Los Angeles
Neil Kaufman, MD, MPH; Jan Leal, MSW
Child Crisis Center/UCLA Medical Center—Torrance
James Williams, MD
Child Health and Youth Clinic—San Diego
Barbara Bale; Amethyst Cureg, MD
Children's Hospital Oakland—Oakland
Hilary Bethke; MD, Kim Kuehnert
North Orange County Youth & Family Resource Center—Anaheim
Sharon Latona; Deborah Stewart, MD
Packard Children's Hospital—Palo Alto
Suzanne Everett; Tamar Gershon, MD
San Francisco General Hospital/UC San Francisco
Elena Fuentes-Afflick, MD; Lois Epstein, MD
Sutter Merced Medical Center/Kids Care—Merced
Nancy McDonald, RN
UCSF Pediatric Primary Care Practices—San Francisco
Lucy Crain, MD; Elizabeth San Luis, PNP
Vacaville Community Clinic—Vacaville
Linda Hess; Stephen Boos, MD

COLORADO

Family Health Center Pediatrics—Denver
Larry Wolk, MD, MSPH
Sandos Westside Health Center—Denver
Steve Vogler, MD

CONNECTICUT

Bridgeport Hospital Primary Care—Bridgeport
Allyson Driggers, MD
Day Kimball Hospital—Putnam
Jane Rovaldi-Garfield Danenhower, MD
Fair Haven Community Health Center—New Haven
Laurel Shader, MD
Park City Primary Care Center—Bridgeport
Laura Buffone; Veronique James, MD
St. Francis Hospital & Medical Center—Hartford
Jennifer Bryant-Sevigny; Paul Dworkin, MD
Yale/New Haven Children's Hospital—New Haven
Sylvia Lavietes; Jody Platner; Janet Weiswasser, MD

FLORIDA

Cape Coral Pediatrics—Cape Coral
Sharon Landry; Ginny Blitzer, MD
Pearl Plaza Pediatrics—Jacksonville
Karen Toker, MD
Tampa General Hospital/University of S. Florida—Tampa
Sharon Dabrow, MD; Patricia Blanco, MD

GEORGIA

Hughes Spalding Children's Hospital—Atlanta
Linda Grant-Ready, Set, Read!
Northwest Grady Clinic—Atlanta
B.J. Steele, MD
Ware County Family Practice Center—Waycross
Brenda Landwehr, PA-C

HAWAII

Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Health Center—Honolulu
Chris Derauf, MD; Kili Kono

ILLINOIS

Community Health & Emergency Services—Cairo
Lynne Chambers, MSW; Jean Charlot, MD
Evanston Hospital Perinatal Family Support Center
Ronna Jacobson
Illinois Masonic Medical Center—Chicago
Lise Meryl Strom, MA; Dore Sobel, MD
University of Illinois—Chicago
Peter Neronha, MD; Marylou Schmit, MD

INDIANA

Three Rivers Literacy Alliance—Fort Wayne
Ginny Clark; Sarah Reinke-Read To Me

KANSAS

Kansas University Children's Center—Kansas City
Kathryn Veal, MD; Jean Harty, MD

KENTUCKY

Northern Kentucky Family Health—Newport
Joyce Huffer, ARNP; Carol Roark, MD
University of Kentucky Family Care Center—Lexington
Thomas Young, MD

LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge General Family Health Center—Baton Rouge
Kim Kuneffe, RN; Joan Carrone, MA; Dan Kalb, MD; Rachel Hausmann, MD
Medical Center of Louisiana/University Hospital—New Orleans
Ellen Beyer, BSN, MBA; Susan Berry, MD

MARYLAND

Druid Family Health Center—Baltimore
Delores Smith; Karen Nelson, MD
East Baltimore Medical Center—Baltimore
Shannon Wright, RN; Pasquale Bernardi, MD
Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center—Baltimore
Dawn Breon; Lauren Jansson, MD
Johns Hopkins Children's Center—Baltimore
Mary Ash, CCLS; John Andrews, MD; Teri Metcalf, MD
Matilda Koval Health Center—Baltimore
Heather Neblett, MD
St. Agnes Hospital—Baltimore
Barbara Burns; Michael Burke, MD
Shore Clinical Foundation—Easton
Cathleen McGrath, MD
Sinai Hospital/Greenspring Pediatric Associates—Baltimore
Rebecca Hartman, LCSW-C; Oscar Taube, MD
University of Maryland Pediatric Ambulatory Center—Baltimore
Alexa Cieslak; Virginia Keane, MD

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston Evening Medical Center—Boston
Carol Langford, MD; Ralph Schiff
Boston Medical Center—Boston
Bobbi Philipp, MD; Patricia Lawrence, PNP; Peter Schwartz, RN
Brockton Hospital—Brockton
Jacqueline Hochstin, RN, CLS; Lisa Downs, MD
Cambridge, Mt. Auburn, Somerville Hospitals
David Osler, MD
Children's Hospital—Boston
Jean Ciborowski, PhD; Rachel Salguero
Codman Square Neighborhood Health Center—Dorchester
Angela Goss
Dimock Street Neighborhood Health Center—Roxbury
Bonnie Hannibal
Dorchester House Multi-Service Center—Dorchester
Pam Kuzia-Russell; Erin McNaughton
Geiger Gibson Community Health Center
Yvonne Ruggles
Greater Lawrence Family Health Center—Lawrence
Elise Henricks, MD
Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center—Dorchester
Adine Latimore, PNP
Holyoke Health Center—Holyoke
Jane Cross, MD
Lynn Community Health Center—Lynn
Sandra Broughton; Marc Levine, MD
Manet Community Health Center—Quincy
Louise Quinlan; Vibha Bhatmagar, MD
Mattapan Health Center—Mattapan
Toni Wortham
Holyoke Pediatric Associates—Holyoke
Anne Nugent, MD

MGH Chelsea Health Center—Chelsea

Janice Lowe, MD
Medical Center of Central MA/Memorial Hospital—Worcester
Keith Dubois
North Shore Children's Medical Center—Salem
Phyllis Groskin; Owen Mathieu
River Street Health Center—Mattapan
Dianne Morris, MD
South Boston Neighborhood Health Center—South Boston
Cathy Callahan
Tauton Family Medicine—Tauton
Karen Shaker; Charles Walker, DO
Uphams Corner Neighborhood Health Center—Dorchester
Paul Geltman, MD; Robyn Souza, RN
Whittier Street Neighborhood Health Center—Roxbury
Yvonne Nelson-Langley

MICHIGAN

Children's Hospital of Michigan—Detroit
Teresa Holtrop, MD
Hurley Medical Center—Flint
Janie Bruen, CPNP
Kalamazoo Center for Medical Studies/MSU—Kalamazoo
Donald Greydanus, MD; Allan LaReau, MD

MINNESOTA

Children's Health Care Children's Clinic—Minneapolis
Nancy Almquist, CLS; Stephanie Bisson, CPNP
Community University Health Care Center/Variety Children's Clinic—Minneapolis
Kathie Cerra, PhD; Amos Deinard, MD

MISSISSIPPI

Jackson-Hinds Comprehensive Health Center—Jackson
Dana Carbo, MD; Eva Henderson, MD

MISSOURI

Children's Mercy Hospital—Kansas City
Michele Kilo, MD; Wendy Turnbull, PhD
Open Door Clinic—St. Louis
Dotti Kastigar; Helen Haney, MD

MONTANA

Crow/Northern Cheyenne Indian Health Service Hospital—Hardin
Lori Byron, MD

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Lamprey Health Care—Newmarket
Sarah Oxnard, MD; Priscilla Shaw
Nashua Child Health Clinic—Nashua
Christine Caron; Richard Slosberg, MD

NEW JERSEY

Beth Israel Medical Center—Newark
Judy Shooze, DO; Idressa Green
Osborn Family Health Center/Our Lady of Lourdes Medical Center—Camden
Deb Bokas, MSW; Georgiana Reynick

NEW MEXICO

Children's Hospital of New Mexico—Albuquerque
Julia Grimes, MLS; Barbara Small, MD
Farmington Community Health Center—Farmington
John Garretson, MD
Las Vegas Clinic for Children and Youth—Las Vegas
George P. Bunch, MD
Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital—Gallup
Herb Mosher; Mary Poel, MD

Reach Out and Read • National Sites

NEW YORK

Child Health Clinics—NYC
Carmen Ramos-Bonoan, MD
Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center—NYC
Wanda Lay; Mary McCord, MD
Court Street Diagnostic and Treatment Center—Utica
Charles McMahon; Thomas Clark, MD
East Harlem Child Health Clinic—NYC
Fort Greene Child Health Clinic—Brooklyn
Foster Care Pediatrics—Rochester
Elizabeth McMahon, MD
Gouverneur Diagnostic and Treatment Center—NYC
David Berger, MD; Miriam Rivera, MS; Ayman Mekhail, MS
Irving Avenue Child Health Clinic—Brooklyn
Junction Boulevard Child Health Clinic—Corona (Queens)
Metropolitan Hospital—NYC
Ruth Frank; Vidya Bhushan Gupta, MD
Montefiore Marble Hill Family Practice—Bronx
David Savarese, MD
Montefiore Medical Center—Bronx
Charlotte Shandley, MD; Iman Sharif-Hassen; Rose Ayers
Mount Sinai Medical Center—NYC
Marc Habert, MD; Leora Mogilner, MD; Mary Hogan
NYU Bellvue Hospital—NYC
Linda van Schaick, MS; Jane Burton
Open Book/Westchester Medical Center—Valhalla
Reva Greenburg, EdD; Karen Edwards, MD
Rochester General Hospital—Rochester
Randy Evans; Robert Byrd, MD; Michael Weissman, MD
Tremont Child Health Clinic—Bronx
Washington Heights Child Health Clinic—NYC

NORTH CAROLINA

Mulberry Pediatrics/Caldwell Memorial Hospital—Lenoir
Vicki Coffey; Duane Herold
Olson Huff Center for Child Development—Asheville
Adrian Sandler, MD
Wake Medical Center Special Infant Care Clinic—Raleigh
Cindy Callahan, MA; Melissa Johnson, PhD; Bethany Kelly

OHIO

Children's Health Clinic—Dayton
Terrie Kess, RN; Maria Nanagas, MD
Crossroads Health Center—Cincinnati
Katie Connelly
Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital—Cleveland
Robert Needlman, MD

OKLAHOMA

Children's Medical Center—Tulsa
Laura Taylor, DO

PENNSYLVANIA

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)
Trude Haecker, MD; Kate Wiggins, CCLS
C. Eve Kimball, MD—Reading

RHODE ISLAND

Thundermist Health Associates—Woonsocket
Brenda Whittle; Dennis Stanton; Laura Viehmann, MD

SOUTH CAROLINA

Greenwood Community Children's Center—Greenwood
William Allen, MD
Lowcountry Pediatrics—Beaufort
Sarah Anderson, RN; Francis Rushton, MD
Spartanburg County Health Department—Carole Bledsoe
Melody Wood, RN; Julie Kavanagh, MD; Joe Warren, MA
United Way of Greenville—Greenville
Jane Leo; Paul Catalana, MD

SOUTH DAKOTA

Lower Brule Clinic—Lower Brule
Peter Magnus, MD; Molly Anderson, MD
Rosebud Sioux Tribe Healthy Start—Rosebud
Lucy Reifel, MD

TENNESSEE

Memphis Family Care Center—Memphis
Gerri Cannon-Smith, MD

TEXAS

Scott and White Hospital—Temple
Don Wilson, MD; Jan Upchurch, MA, Msc, CCLS; Lisa Ehl, MD
University of Texas Medical School WIC Children's Clinic—Houston
Paige Atkinson, PNP

VERMONT

Community Health Center—Burlington
Ann Goering, MD; Sally Anderson; Abby Foulk
University Pediatrics—Burlington
Wendy Davis, MD; Sally Anderson; Abby Foulk
Upper Valley Pediatrics—Bradford
Nancy Foote, ARNP; Susan Farrell, ARNP; Mark Harris, MD

VIRGINIA

Eastern Shore Rural Health System—Onancock
Evan Clements, RNC; Linda Crumb
Healthy Families/CHIP—Arlington
Anne VorderBruegge
University of Virginia Children's Medical Center—Charlottesville
Linda Drake; Deborah Smith, MD

WASHINGTON, DC

Children's National Medical Center GPAC
Sandra Cuzzi, MD
Children's National Medical Center Child Protection
Lavdena Orr, MD
George Washington University Pediatrics
Leslie Meyers, MD; Marsha Spitzer, MD

WISCONSIN

Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center—La Crosse
Richard Strauss, MD; Cheryl Pearse ■

Reach Out and Read

Reach Out and Read

Reach Out and Read

Prescription **FOR** **READING**

This bookstore is working with **DOCTORS** to remind you that **READING TO A CHILD** can be one of the **MOST IMPORTANT ACTIONS** a parent, family member, or caregiver can take to stimulate a child's brain.

Spoken language has an astonishing IMPACT on an INFANT'S BRAIN DEVELOPMENT.



Research studies indicate that early positive exposure to children's books — especially through reading aloud — helps children learn to read.

Reading is learned and, therefore, must be taught, supported, and sustained. Reading does not come naturally as does speech, and relies heavily on how we hear and manipulate sounds even before we see printed words.



The 1985 National Commission on Reading reported that children's experiences being read to were the single most important predictors of later reading success.

Some researchers say the number of words an infant hears each day is the single most important predictor of later intelligence, school success, and social competence. There is one catch — the words have to come from an attentive, engaged human being. As far as anyone has been able to determine, radio and television do not work.



Reading aloud facilitates language and cognitive development.

Although the eyes make visual contact with the printed word, the critical work involves the sounds of language. Studies show that a reader's ability to remember, imitate, recall, manipulate, recode, and articulate sounds is essential to early reading.

Sources: "National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Research Supports the America Reads Challenge," 1997; *New York Times*, "Studies Show Talking with Infants Shapes Basis of Ability to Think," April 17, 1997; Reach Out and Read National Training Center.



REACH OUT AND READ (ROR) PROGRESS (Since Prescription for Reading 4/97)

Barry Zuckerman, M.D.
Professor and Chairman of
Pediatrics
Boston Medical Center
Founding Director
Reach Out and Read

ROR National Staff

Perri Klass, M.D.
Medical Director

Christine Angell

Nancy Berman

Pat Cowan, R.N.

Elaine Grossman, M Ed.

Abby Jewkes, Ed.M

Matthew Veno

Kate Williams

- ROR National Center has provided over \$400,000 in grants to beginning ROR programs
- First Book has devised a discounted book ordering system involving 13 publishers for all ROR sites
- Bantam Doubleday has donated 107,000 books
- Candlewick Press has donated 5,000 books
- ROR was spotlighted by President Clinton's America Reads Challenge
- Reader's Digest has donated 3,500 books
- Shaw's Supermarkets has donated 25,000 books
- American Booksellers Association distributed 200,000 free copies of Read To Your Bunny to families via independent bookstores and donated remaining books from their convention in May
- Contributions from Mrs. Clinton's "It Takes A Village" Foundation and the Paul Newman Foundation
- Dreyfus awarded funding to a New York City hospital, which served as a matching grant
- Ronald McDonald House Charities awarded funding for books to ROR and First Book
- Hasbro Foundation awarded funding for expansion to 17,000 children in Alabama
- Rhode Island Foundation awarded funding for expansion in Rhode Island hospitals and health centers
- Harris Foundation awarded \$110,000 to date for Chicago city-wide expansion
- State-wide expansions are also underway in Texas and South Carolina
- ROR programs in NYC have formed the first ROR City-Wide Coalition
- Training session by ROR and plenary session by Barry Zuckerman, MD at the American Academy of Pediatrics Annual Meeting in November
- Partnership with National Association of Community Health Centers to bring ROR to its 900 health centers; we are currently working to secure AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers to serve in 100 ROR programs
- National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions sent information on ROR to all its members; 21 are ROR sites and over 40 have requested additional information on the program
- ROR is working with Reading Is Fundamental on a collaborative state-wide project
- ROR is working with the Boston Public Library to develop volunteer training and on-site library card distribution
- Mrs. Clinton has kicked-off ROR programs in Baltimore, Chicago, and Washington, DC

1/13/98



REACH OUT AND READ (ROR) PROGRESS

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Boston Medical Center
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Abby Jewkes, Ed.M

Matthew Veno

Kate Williams

- 180 Reach Out and Read sites in 39 states serving over 500,000 children
- 2 million books have been distributed to 1 million children at hospitals, health centers, and pediatric offices throughout the United States
- 4,000 pediatricians and nurse practitioners have been trained in early literacy development
- ROR National Center has provided over \$550,000 in grants to beginning ROR programs since 1996
- Scholastic has donated 125,000 books
- First Book has donated 100,000 books
- Random House Children's Publishers has donated 30,000 books
- Mellon Trust awarded funding for expansion to 25,000 children at Boston health centers
- Casey Foundation awarded \$50,000 for Baltimore city-wide expansion

1/13/98

Health Clinic's One Rx for All: Books

By SARA RIMER



BOSTON, Dec. 25 — For those who think television and video games have

dampened children's enthusiasm for books, a visit to the pediatrics clinic at the Boston Medical Center is instructive.

In the waiting room on Tuesday, a 5-year-old girl named Nada Maoumoud was looking at the pictures in Charles M. Schulz's "It's the First Day of School."

DeShaun Cash, 7, was reading aloud from "The Very Hungry Caterpillar."

Mariano Neris, 7, was holding tightly to "Circus!"

Pat Cowan, who directs the clinic's volunteer readers, was reading "Bedtime for Frances," about a hedgehog, to Uju Obejebi, a 4-year-old girl from Nigeria in a pink Barney jacket.

The chief of pediatrics, Dr. Barry Zuckerman, was showing the pictures in a miniature version of "The 12 Days of Christmas" to 9-month-old Tanya Brown. A smiling Tanya took the book from the doctor, and stuck it in her mouth.

Dr. Zuckerman beamed. His mission is to get children to love books, and reading. Chewing on them is one way to get started.

Nine years ago, Dr. Zuckerman and his colleagues were bringing their children's books from home into the clinic for the young patients to look at in the waiting room.

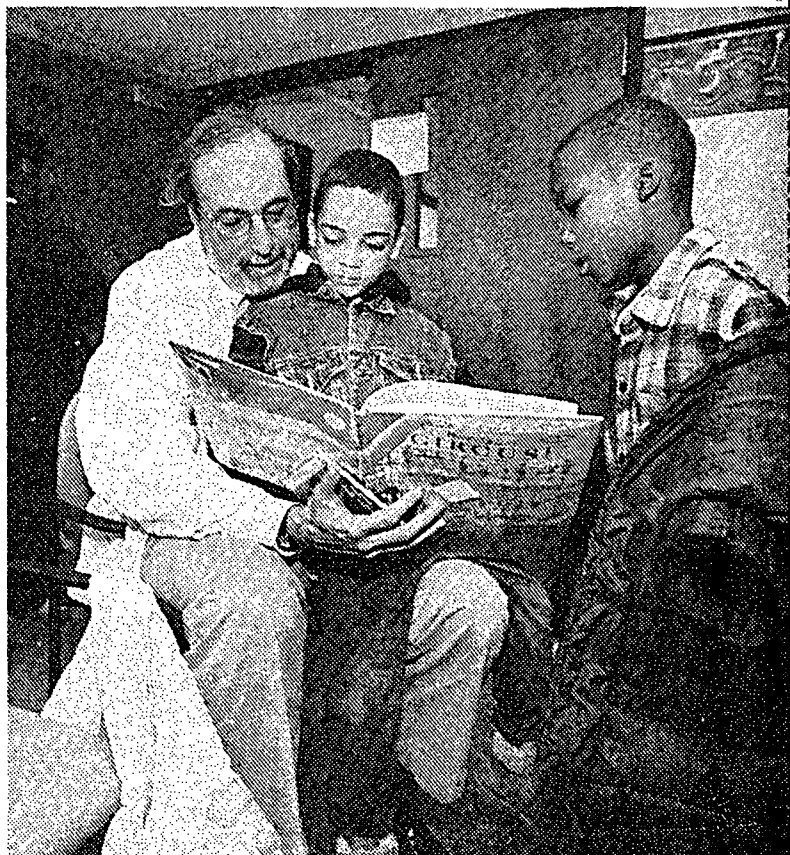
Then one of the doctors complained. "He said some of the parents and children were taking the books home," Dr. Zuckerman recalled. "I said, 'Great!'"

He decided to start giving books to the children who visited the clinic, which serves Boston's poor families. And so Reach Out and Read was born. The national program, cited as the model for the reading initiative the White House began last spring, makes books a part of pediatric primary care.

Starting at 6 months and continuing until age 5, children are given one new book at each checkup. By the time they start school, they own at least 10 books, a library that costs all of about \$30.

"Where can you get a better bargain than that?" said Dr. Zuckerman, a founder of Reach Out and Read, which is part of Read Boston, a citywide effort to insure that by third grade all children are reading at grade level.

Reach Out and Read, which relies on money from private foundations,



Ed Quinn for The New York Times

Dr. Barry Zuckerman dispenses free books and a love of reading to his young patients at the pediatric clinic of Boston Medical Center. The program he helped found has been cited as a national model.

gave away more than half a million books around the country last year. The books are crucial for children from poor neighborhoods, where bookstores and libraries are scarce and, Dr. Zuckerman says, "families don't have a lot of discretionary income for books."

In addition, many of the parents were not read to as children, and often they do not have the habit of reading aloud to their children. The pediatricians introduced the ritual by "prescribing" reading aloud.

"Given a choice, most kids would rather be with a parent reading a book than watching TV," said Dr. Zuckerman, who still has the biography of Buffalo Bill he won in a grade-school reading contest.

Carmela Rivera, 11, who had come to the clinic with her 2-year-old sister, Ingrid, agreed. "You get more things in your brain by reading books," said Carmela, whose personal favorite is "The Little Mermaid."

A 1985 study by the National Commission on Literacy found that reading aloud to children when they were young was the single most important tool in helping them learn to read.

More recent research has shown that stimulation, like reading aloud, is crucial to brain development in the early years.

The publishing industry has been slow to catch on, but this year several publishers have given thousands of remainder books to Reach Out and Read. Stacked on a table in the middle of the waiting room were beautiful new books.

More books lined the medicine cabinets of each doctor's office. The doctors make the books a part of the checkup. The idea is that literacy is as important to children as immunization and good nutrition.

"It's not about teaching the alphabet," said Dr. Zuckerman, a nationally known children's advocate. "It's about sharing books, and having books becoming familiar objects."

Alarmed by the rising tide of consumerism, with children barraged by television advertisements for toys their parents may not be able to afford, he said he wanted to start a movement in children's gift-giving for next Christmas. He already has the slogan: "Just give books."

Up for Discussion: The Language of Adoption

JULY 1997

School Library Journal

For Children's, Young Adult & School Librarians

A CARNER & BOLLER PUBLICATION



**Born
to Read**
Bringing Babies
& Books Together

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**Fun on the Web:
Where do YAs Go?**

**Public Library
Career Kit**

*Born
to Read*

Ooooh Baby, What a Brain!

By Cara Barlow

Born to Read works to reach children during the years most crucial to brain development.

No bite book!" is a common cry in our household. Anna, my 2 1/2-year-old daughter (on page 21), often gets so caught up in exploring her books that she not only looks at and handles them, but bites too. You can tell which books are her favorites by the toothmarks on the spine and the rumpled and taped pages.

Babies are hard on books, but they also need them. How else are they to learn how a book works, how to turn pages, and that books are to be enjoyed and read (but not bitten)!

Children's librarians have steadily lowered the age of children they serve at storytimes and through outreach programs to take advantage of this early developmental period. This spring, interest among the general public in the development of children from birth through age three intensified as Hillary Rodham Clinton chaired the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning. The "I Am Your Child" campaign that began in late April included an ABC television special and a special edition of *Newsweek* on the status of young children.

While research (see page 23) shows that the foundations of literacy are laid at a very early age, other studies show that infants and toddlers are simultaneously threatened by economic and social problems.



John Fortunato

Cara Barlow (cbarlow@empire.net) is a New Hampshire-based freelance writer and former Head of Children's Services at the Winchester (MA) Public Library.



Cara Barlow.

A 1994 Carnegie study called "Starting Points" (www.carnegie.org/starting-points/) provides evidence of the "quiet crisis" that confronts children under three. Among the problems the study found are inadequate prenatal care, parental isolation due to more divorces, substandard child care, and poverty. In fact, a full quarter of families with children under three live in poverty, according to the report. The findings also showed that only 50 percent of infants and toddlers are read to routinely by their parents, and many parents give insufficient attention to their child's intellectual development.

A Collective Brainstorm

Reaching at-risk parents, most of whom are not library users and may not be able to read themselves, is difficult. When I lived in Boston I volunteered for Boston City Hospital's Reach Out and Read pro-

The Early Impact of Books & Libraries

gram. I was incredibly excited to be a volunteer—I would be working with a segment of the population with which I'd had relatively little contact, and it would be in a hospital setting, not a library. The volunteers read to children in the waiting room and pediatricians give out a book to their young patients each visit.

But reading to sick children (or their restless siblings) who may not speak English or who have never handled a book before is no easy task. I often ended up just chatting with parents about their children and children's books. The books given out by the doctors,

though, were a huge hit with both parents and children. The American Academy of Pediatrics now encourages pediatricians to give books to their patients.

Similarly, Born to Read, a project administered by ALA's Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) and initially funded by the Prudential Foundation, has attempted to build partnerships between public librarians and health care providers to reach out to new and expectant at-risk parents. The hope is that together librarians and health care providers may be able to break the cycle of illiteracy, help parents improve their reading skills, impress upon them the importance of reading to their children, and promote awareness of the health and parenting resources available in libraries.

Born to Read is part of a decade-long collective brainstorm that links health care, children's reading, and family literacy. The project started by distributing five \$30,000 grants to sites in 1995, its

first year, and now serves as a model for similar projects, funded locally.

A Trio of Born to Read Sites

To see what the project entailed, I interviewed librarians at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and the Provo (UT) City Library. I also spoke with Deborah Halsted at the Houston Public Library, which ran a Born to Read program but used alternate funding. Each library approached its Born to Read project in a different way.

Pittsburgh Starts Early. Pittsburgh's Carnegie Library and its affiliate group Beginning with Books launched Born to Read in 1995 without waiting for the babies to arrive. They started by doing outreach to mothers-to-be.

Pregnant adolescents scheduled for checkups and parenting classes at the Magee-Womens Hospital participate in a program called the Read-Aloud Parent Club, which is designed to appeal to teens, according to Elizabeth Segel of Beginning with Books. In addition to an introduction to the library and discussions on topics like "the reading-writing connection" and "celebrating diversity," the facilitator includes activities to foster the teens' involvement in the program, such as creating homemade photograph albums or encouraging club members to compose greetings to their soon-to-arrive children.

After the Born to Read grant ran out, Pittsburgh's Drue Heinz Trust agreed to fund the Read-Aloud Parent Club for a year, through June 1997. Talking with young women about the importance of reading while they wait to see a doctor may not seem like much, but the message of why parents should prepare a story-filled home for their children got

Pittsburgh's Carnegie Library...doesn't wait for babies to arrive—they reach out to mothers-to-be.

"The younger you are, the less attention you get."—Virginia Mathews, Youth Advocate

through in a big way. One participant sent her husband to the club when she couldn't attend, and another came back to the hospital for a session just days after giving birth.

Provo Targets Dads. Utah's Provo City Library has the largest audience in the nation for children's programming: 34 percent of its population is under 18, and 6,000 babies are born each year in the county. Provo's population is highly educated, but low income levels exist due to a large student population at Brigham Young University that marries young and has large families.

"Our focus is infants," says Head of Children's Services Carla Morris. "We have 16 storytimes a week, nine of which are infant programs. We have a lot of kids and want to make sure that people know the library is welcoming to children."

Another of the original Born to Read sites, Provo's program continues today. During the first year, the library distributed 3,000 Born to Read packets to two area hospitals, purchased materials for infants, and expanded infant programming: Book Babies for infants, Mother Goose for 12- to 24-month-olds, and Toddler Times for two-year-olds. Born to Read funding also provided postnatal nursing care for at-risk families. "A child needs to be nourished in his body, but also his spirit and soul need

to be nourished and enriched by reading," said Morris.

Provo's first-year Born to Read programming also included Time with Dad, a feature that Morris hopes to return to in the future. For fathers and their children, Time with Dad sessions featured visits with author Dean Hughes, who writes sports books for children, and with Brigham Young University basketball players, who talked about what books they liked to read when they were kids. Also included in the mix were storytelling, puppets, and magic.

"Dads liked it," said Morris. "They liked having their own night, and they were just like the moms—they enjoyed meeting each other and talking about their kids. I think it made them feel like they were good dads." Despite the emphasis on sports, Morris said that the fathers brought both sons and daughters.

Because of the success of Born to Read, the library won a \$4,800 Federal Community Development Block Grant to continue distributing hospital packets. The Book Babies, Mother Goose, and Toddler Times programs have all been funded and staffed as permanent programs.

Houston Models Reading. The Born to Read program at the Houston Public Library is designed to reach at-risk African-American and Hispanic parents through local health clinics. But unlike

Pittsburgh and Provo, Houston used \$8,350 from a U.S. Department of Education Title I grant.

Children's librarians visit two clinics twice a week to model reading to children and use ethnically correct dolls, according to Deborah Halsted HPL's Coordinator of Programming. The program, which started in October 1996, offers coupons for free board books in both Spanish and English, redeemable at the branch libraries. Participants attending at least three sessions receive a Born to Read bib, a board book, a book for themselves about reading to their children, and informational packets. Because the program is so new, Halsted said they are still ironing out wrinkles.

No Easy Task

At-risk parents are one of the toughest groups for librarians to reach, and the fact that most librarians are white, middle-class, English-speaking women does not help. Reaching parents who do not share the same background without seeming condescending or patronizing is a constant concern. And if there's a language barrier, reaching them can be literally impossible. Selecting the correct time, place, and staff for outreach programs is essential. If anything shows that we need a more ethnically diverse profession, it's the need to more easily reach minority and immigrant families with infants who are not accustomed to using public libraries.

"There's mounting evidence, too strong to be refuted, that relates to brain development and literacy," said Virginia H. Mathews, a well-known advocate for library services to youth and author of "Kids Can't Wait...Library Advocacy Now" (*SLJ*, March 1997, pp. 97-101). "We've never paid much attention to young children—the younger you are, the less attention you get. Now that's been turned upside down."

For more information

- Butler, Dorothy.** *Babies Need Books* (Atheneum, 1982)
- Greene, Ellen.** *Books, Babies, and Libraries*. (ALA, 1991)
- Judge, April.** "Nurturing a Baby's Love of Learning." *American Libraries*. (December 1995): 1134
- Klass, Perri.** "For Children's Good Health, a Book at Every Check-Up." *Boston Globe* (October 27, 1996): D1

To Attract More Babies

Here are resources to help you create infant- and toddler-centered services.

To start a Born to Read program

Born to Read

Association for Library Service to Children

50 East Huron St.

Chicago, IL 60611

(800) 545-2433 or (312) 280-1398

lbostrum@ala.org

www.ala.org/alsc/born.html

Born to Read demonstration sites

H. Leslie Perry Memorial Library, Henderson, SC

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Provo (UT) City Library

Sutter County Library, Yuba City, CA

Memphis/Shelby County (TN) Public Library and Information Center



Building Blocks for Literacy: What Current Research Shows

By Steve Herb

The foundation for literacy is in preschool language experiences.

What is it about the preschool years that make them so important in the development of future reading skills?

Although young children may learn many concepts and skills from books—e.g., the range of blues that make up “blue” and, at an even earlier age, which publisher produces the tastiest book covers—the foundation for emergent literacy is in preschool experiences with language. And the only sound means of transmitting those experiences is through human interaction, the social aspects of learning.

We’ve learned that the roots of literacy appear to be strongly grounded in orality (speaking and listening) and playfulness. In fact, playful oral language experiences prepare children to understand and experiment with written language. In his book *A Is for Ox* (Pantheon, 1994), cultural historian Barry Sanders makes a passionate call for society to reinvest in our children’s literacy. He speaks of a growing number of violent and illiterate young people as “post-illiterates...at home neither in orality nor in literacy.”

Sanders’s historical research leads him to conclude that children need to be immersed in an oral culture intimately connected to their families before they can absorb text later on.

Literacy and Learning Theory

The personal and social interactions of an adult and child with a book are well covered in a variety of learning theories.

One excellent example is from the work of psychologist Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky proposes that children’s mental abilities originate from social interactions with members of the child’s culture. Learning first occurs within this social context, and only later does the child internalize it.

He further distinguishes between development and learning. Learning takes place when a more competent person gives the child the support needed to engage in a task that would be too difficult to do alone at the child’s present developmental level. Vygotsky calls this area in which learning occurs the Zone of Proximal Development. Examples of enhancing literacy learning through the Zone of Proximal Development are:

- a parent who remembers that her four-month-old baby squeals excitedly at a particular page in a cardboard book, keeps track of the book, and reads it to the baby regularly; and
- a librarian who notices a two-year-old say “pumpkin-eater” when he touches a jack-o-lantern at the library and takes a moment to squat down to chant the whole rhyme with the child, perhaps repeating it at storytime.

Notice that in both examples there is a shared cultural context between child and adult: the mother who can “read” her

baby’s emotions and pairs that with a cultural idea of a favorite book, and the librarian who knows the songs and rhymes taught by families. This cultural sharing is necessary for learning because it provides continuity between what is already known and the new learning offered.

By examining the learning theories of Vygotsky and his fellow psychologists Jerome Bruner, Urie Bronfenbrenner, and Albert Bandura, we understand that literacy learning is facilitated when children have:

1. opportunities to participate in literacy activities that are guided and paced by a more skillful member of the child’s world;
2. opportunities for learning that enable the child to actively participate;
3. opportunities for intimate learning: that is, learning with support from someone who knows the child well enough to make appropriate judgments about when and what the next learning steps should be—the distinct advantage of the parent as a child’s first teacher; and
4. support for learning that resides not just in families and schools, but across a range of cultural contexts—e.g., libraries—that directly and indirectly influence children’s development.

Research Findings on Books

In this age of the Internet and an overwhelming emphasis on technology, the 32-page picture book is still the best means of linking an adult and a child in those social bonds that produce a literate human being. Research findings regarding children’s books indicate that:

- children’s early experiences with books directly relate to their success in learning to read in school. Specific aspects of these books make the experience even more effective, such as the interest level and ease of understanding and remembering the story;
- children are more motivated to request being read to, and to “read” or explore on their own books with which they are already familiar;
- there is a relationship between how much children have been read to and how well they will read; and
- storybook reading is a more effective influence on literacy development when children have opportunities to engage in conversation about the story.



Provo (UT) Library



Steven Herb is Education Librarian at Pennsylvania State University in University Park, PA, and outgoing President of the Association for Library Service to Children

This material is based on research conducted for a paper-in-preparation entitled “Preschool Education Through Public Libraries,” by Steven Herb and Sara Willoughby-Herb for Westat/American Library Association.

the next three years (1997-1999). First Book's commitment caught the attention of The Oprah Winfrey Show, which highlighted First Book in an edition of the show featuring General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.), Chairman of the Board for America's Promise. In reaching the 1.0 million book distribution mark, First Book successfully fulfilled its first year goal in its pledge to America's Promise and aspires to double its success in 1998.

Exciting New Initiatives

Great things are on the horizon for First Book in 1998, including:

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES Congressman Danny K. Davis and Ronald McDonald joined 175 local mentors and volunteers in Chicago, IL on November 14, 1997 to launch First Book-Chicago Local Advisory Board. The event also celebrated Ronald McDonald House Charities' \$125,000 grant award to First Book for the distribution of 50,000 new books to children across America.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES YOUTH PARTNERSHIP The Philadelphia Eagles Youth Partnership issued a challenge grant of \$50,000 to the First Book-Philadelphia Local Advisory Board. The grant strongly increases First Book's impact in the Philadelphia area and also serves as a challenge for other NFL teams to support local First Book activity in their communities.

HOUSING OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT On December 22, 1997 Vice President Al Gore and Housing Secretary Andrew Cuomo announced a program to distribute a half-million new books to homeless children nationwide. 205,000 books have already been donated for distribution by First Book. Participating publishers include *Disney Publishing*, *Simon and Schuster, Inc.* and *Time Warner, Inc.*

BARNES & NOBLE COLLEGE BOOKSTORES, INC. In December 1997, Barnes & Noble College Bookstores, Inc., a privately held company associated with Barnes & Noble, Inc., selected First Book as the recipient of an annual donation made in honor of their customers.

THE URBAN LIBRARY COUNCIL First Book has committed to new partnership initiatives with the Urban Library Council, an association of 132 urban public libraries throughout the country. The partnership will focus on local and national literacy efforts.

Establishing First Book's Web Site

The First Book web site is officially "under construction" and will become fully operational in early 1998. The site is being designed on a pro-bono basis by *Intervisage*. The web site is expected to appeal to and service First Book's many audiences, including donors, local board volunteers, national partners, media contacts, and local advisory board members. The First Book site domain will likely be www.firstbook.org. Until the web site construction is complete, you can email First Book's national office at fbook@aol.com.

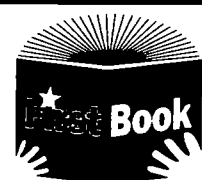
Unsurpassed National Board Leadership

First Book's national Board of Directors provides the organization with the fund-raising expertise and program guidance imperative to its success. The Board includes: Peter Gold, Chairman, President, The Gold Group, Chartered; Kyle Zimmer, President, First Book; Elizabeth Arky, Attorney; Louis Harris, Founder, Harris Polls; Richard Krinsley, Executive Vice President, (Ret.), Scholastic, Inc.; Eleanor Lewis, Senior Associate, Bass and Howes; Melissa Moss, President, Women's Consumer Network; Carolynn Reid-Wallace, Senior Vice President, Education and Programming, Corporation for Public Broadcasting; Sally Susman, Vice President, International Public Affairs, The American Express Company; Tom Tolworthy, President, Barnes & Noble Bookstores; and Judith Zimmer, Deputy Director, Street Law Inc.

First Book is pleased to share information regarding its mission and related activities across the country. First Book has available: *a local advisory board handbook, brochures, press packets, and a short video*. To request information or discuss opportunities, contact First Book's national office: 1319 F St., NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC, 20004, Phone: 202-393-1222, Fax: 202-628-1258, Electronic mail: fbook@aol.com.



FIRST BOOK



1997 Annual Report

January 1998

First Book Distributes 1.0 Million Books

First Book, a national nonprofit literacy organization, celebrates the distribution of over 1.0 million new books to children in more than 170 cities, towns, and counties throughout the United States in 1997. The mission of First Book is simple: to work with its local volunteer board members and national partners to provide new books to disadvantaged children participating in existing community-based tutoring, mentoring and family literacy programs. In this way, First Book leverages its national resources at the local level to facilitate and support the heroic work of teachers, mentors, tutors, parents and others working to ensure the success of our nation's youth.

Books and reading have the power to change lives and the simple gesture of giving a child new books creates a wonderful ripple effect of joy, learning and success. First Book distributes books to at-risk children in local literacy programs through on-going book grants, special events in bookstores and several national literacy initiatives.

Local Advisory Boards (LABs) Strengthen Communities

The cornerstone of the First Book model is a network of volunteer local advisory boards (LABs), which work to distribute books and develop resources to support book distributions in their communities. A local advisory board consists of volunteers who work as a team to distribute new books to area literacy programs.

The composition of First Book Local Advisory Boards is as diverse as the communities they serve and volunteer board members come from a variety of backgrounds including people from the business, educational, political and nonprofit fields. The common thread among members is that they feel strongly about children and the power of books and reading, and are able to devote time, talent, contacts, and energy to making First Book books available in their community.

As of December 1997, First Book has 51 existing First Book local boards and 119 local boards in various

developmental stages (total 170). First Book expects to develop an additional 100 local boards in 1998.

Regional Offices Launched with AmeriCorps*VISTA

This year, in partnership with the Corporation for National Service, First Book established four of a planned six additional "First Book Regional Community Outreach Offices." These offices, led by AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers, are responsible for working with the national office to build, manage and support First Book Local Advisory Boards in their respective states.

As local boards require nurturing in the developmental and early phases, the six AmeriCorps*VISTA regional coordinators are essential in ensuring that First Book increases its network and distribution capacity. The new regional offices are in: Elmsford, NY; Nashville, TN; Jackson, MS; Chicago, IL; Houston, TX; and Sacramento, CA.

Northwest Project Achieves Early Success

In June 1997, First Book received a \$1.0 million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Education. The funds are being used to conduct an intensive regional First Book program in the states of Washington and Oregon. The program is headquartered in Portland, OR, which serves as the seventh regional First Book office.

Thus far, the project has enlisted 170 volunteers who are serving on 18 First Book Local Advisory Boards and over 120 organizations have been receiving deliveries of an initial round of new books. Two additional local boards are slated to begin operation in early 1998, which will complete the grant goal of establishing 20 local boards.

The Northwest Project is expected to distribute a total of 300,000 books to children whose families have been adversely affected by the economic downturns in the fishing and timber industries. The grant also contains an extensive model-evaluation component, headed by Louis Harris, which will provide First Book with an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of its locally-driven book distribution model. First Book has begun discussions with several corporate partners to ensure that the established local boards continue to flourish long after the federal project ends.

National Partners Fuel Outreach

First Book has assembled a sustaining network of strategic national partnerships that have been vital to the organization's growth and outreach to our nation's most vulnerable children. Each of these partners work nationally and through their local representatives to build upon the strength of the First Book model. Highlights from 1997 include:

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION (ALA). The American Library Association, through the Association for Library Service to Children and the *Born To Read* program, supports First Book by including information on the ALA Internet home page. A large and growing number of public librarians also serve on First Book Local Advisory Boards, providing expertise on children's literature and community literacy activities.

BARNES & NOBLE, INC. Barnes & Noble, Inc. supports First Book in a myriad of ways. All of the programs are designed to help coordinate Barnes & Noble booksellers, First Book Local Advisory Board members, national literacy program liaisons, and local literacy program representatives to collect and distribute new books to disadvantaged children.

First Book Parties In 1997, First Book benefitted from Barnes & Noble "Preview Nights" at all new bookstore locations. The funds raised through the new store opening promotions are used to host First Book Parties for children participating in programs with local First Book recipient groups. Since launching the initiative in 1996, approximately 30,000 books have been distributed to more than 9,600 children.

First Book Story Time In September 1997, Barnes & Noble launched First Book Story Time, a monthly event during which a pre-selected children's book is read to customers and their children. The publisher of each book highlighted during First Book Story Time makes a donation to First Book's national office, which allows First Book to continue to expand its outreach efforts.

Holiday Book Drives During the 1997 holiday season, Barnes & Noble stores had the opportunity to have a First Book "giving tree," or similar display, in their stores to benefit First Book local recipient groups. During the in-store promotion, customers were invited to select an "ornament," detailing the age of a child, and buy a special new book for that child. The promotion resulted in thousands of children receiving new books to read during the holiday season.

In New York City, Barnes & Noble bookstores held the "1997 Children's Holiday Book Drive" to benefit First Book and metropolitan area recipient groups. From November 1 through December 31, 1997, customers were encouraged to donate a new children's book to First Book. Each book donation was matched 1:1 by Barnes & Noble and participating customers received an extra incentive -- a free pint of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream. As a result, it is expected that 30,000 new books are being distributed in more than 100 community programs throughout the greater New York area.

First Book Liaison In January 1998, a full-time "First Book Liaison" staff member, sponsored by Barnes & Noble, begins working with First Book to assist with the coordination of Barnes & Noble/First Book partnership initiatives. The staff member will reside in First Book's national office and will be dedicated to helping design, promote, and facilitate First Book promotions with the more than 469 Barnes & Noble bookstores. In addition, the staff member will support the participation of Barnes & Noble staff on First Book Local Advisory Boards.

B. DALTON BOOKSELLER. Throughout 1997, B. Dalton Bookseller stores held in-store promotions to benefit First Book. The promotions centered on the sale of special ties depicting favorite Dr. Seuss characters. In addition, B. Dalton stores continued to host in-store First Book Parties for over 3,000 children and 30 B. Dalton employees participate on First Book Local Advisory Boards in their neighborhoods.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING - (CPB). First Book continues to participate as a partner with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in the Ready To Learn Service initiative. Through this national outreach, free books in English and Spanish are provided to children of low income families in tandem with educational programming on public television stations, a bimonthly family magazine and workshops to help parents and caregivers connect television to reading, language and learning skills.

One-hundred-and-twenty-five Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) stations around the country anchor and provide the Ready To Learn Service to their local communities. Funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the Ready To Learn Service is an initiative developed by public broadcasting in response to the national educational goal that all American children begin school ready to learn.

In 1997, First Book began processing all Ready To Learn Book orders, previously managed by the CPB staff. During this transition, CPB staff members and local PBS station liaisons provided tremendous support to First Book. First Book also provided extra incentives to participating PBS affiliates. For example, 38% of First Book Parties benefitted local literacy programs associated with Ready To Learn. Also, 35 Ready To Learn coordinators participate on First Book Local Advisory Boards. In addition, First Book participated in both the CPB and the PBS annual conferences.

NATIONAL SCHOOL SUPPLY AND EQUIPMENT ASSOCIATION (NSSEA). The NSSEA continued its support of First Book's literacy efforts by making donations of products, holding book and supply parties, and encouraging their membership to serve on local First Book boards. First Book works closely with NSSEA's Education Excellence Foundation to continue to develop outreach activities which best engage the association's 1,600 member organizations on behalf of literacy.

REACH OUT AND READ (ROR). First Book launched a book-buying service in partnership with Reach Out and Read, a nationally recognized program designed to engage the pediatric health community in early literacy efforts. Through this program, all parents receive a "prescription for reading" for their children during regular well-baby visits. In cases where the family is of

low-income, First Book, in partnership with the pediatricians and other health center staff, help "fill" the families' prescription by giving new books to the children. In 1997, 180 health centers were a part of the ROR initiative, which was founded by Dr. Barry Zuckerman, Boston City Hospital.

SCHOLASTIC INC. Scholastic Inc. is a long-standing First Book publishing partner. In addition to providing substantial discounts on thousands of children's soft cover books, the publisher provides each new First Book Local Advisory Board with an initial free set of "community-starter" books. The starter books provide a great incentive to local volunteers and help new First Book boards immediately begin the local book grant process.

SHARE OUR STRENGTH (SOS). First Book was again selected by Share Our Strength as one of the national beneficiaries of its 1997 Writers Harvest: The National Reading promotion. Writers Harvest is an annual event that brings together hundreds of novelists, essayists and poets to college campuses and bookstores across the country. Participants in Writers Harvest hold in-store readings and other activities to help raise the awareness of the problem of hunger and its causes. On behalf of Writers Harvest, Share Our Strength is expected to make a donation of \$45,000 to First Book, in support of its efforts to fight illiteracy nationwide.

In cooperation with Share Our Strength, First Book held a Children's Writers Harvest event at the Barnes & Noble bookstore in Tacoma, WA. Seattle Seahawk quarterback, John Friesz attended the event where he read several books to children, signed autographs, and challenged parents to purchase books in support of First Book and SOS. Share Our Strength is the nation's largest hunger relief organization.

Keeping America's Promise

First Book made a major commitment to the Presidents' Summit For America's Future, which was held in Philadelphia, PA in April 1997. America's Promise-The National Alliance for Youth is the nonprofit organization established to ensure that organizations fulfill their pledges to the President's Summit. First Book pledged to provide two million new books and establish 100 additional First Book Local Advisory Boards over

the next three years (1997-1999). First Book's commitment caught the attention of The Oprah Winfrey Show, which highlighted First Book in an edition of the show featuring General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.), Chairman of the Board for America's Promise. In reaching the 1.0 million book distribution mark, First Book successfully fulfilled its first year goal in its pledge to America's Promise and aspires to double its success in 1998.

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Great things are on the horizon for First Book in 1998, including:

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The First Book web site is officially "under construction" and will become fully operational in early 1998. The site is being designed on a pro-bono basis by *Intervisage*. The web site is expected to appeal to and service First Book's many audiences, including donors, local board volunteers, national partners, media contacts, and local advisory board members. The First Book site domain will likely be www.firstbook.org. Until the web site construction is complete, you can email First Book's national office at fbook@aol.com.

Unsurpassed National Board Leadership

First Book's national Board of Directors provides the organization with the fund-raising expertise and program guidance imperative to its success. The Board includes: Peter Gold, Chairman, President, The Gold Group, Chartered; Kyle Zimmer, President, First Book; Elizabeth Arky, Attorney; Louis Harris, Founder, Harris Polls; Richard Krinsley, Executive Vice President, (Ret.), Scholastic, Inc.; Eleanor Lewis, Senior Associate, Bass and Howes; Melissa Moss, President, Women's Consumer Network; Carolynn Reid-Wallace, Senior Vice President, Education and Programming, Corporation for Public Broadcasting; Sally Susman, Vice President, International Public Affairs, The American Express Company; Tom Tolworthy, President, Barnes & Noble Bookstores; and Judith Zimmer, Deputy Director, Street Law Inc.

First Book is pleased to share information regarding its mission and related activities across the country. First Book has available: *a local advisory board handbook, brochures, press packets, and a short video*. To request information or discuss opportunities, contact First Book's national office: 1319 F St., NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC, 20004, Phone: 202-393-1222, Fax: 202-628-1258, Electronic mail: fbook@aol.com.



FIRST BOOK



1997 Annual Report

January 1998

First Book Distributes 1.0 Million Books

First Book, a national nonprofit literacy organization, celebrates the distribution of over 1.0 million new books to children in more than 170 cities, towns, and counties throughout the United States in 1997. The mission of First Book is simple: to work with its local volunteer board members and national partners to provide new books to disadvantaged children participating in existing community-based tutoring, mentoring and family literacy programs. In this way, First Book leverages its national resources at the local level to facilitate and support the heroic work of teachers, mentors, tutors, parents and others working to ensure the success of our nation's youth.

Books and reading have the power to change lives and the simple gesture of giving a child new books creates a wonderful ripple effect of joy, learning and success. First Book distributes books to at-risk children in local literacy programs through on-going book grants, special events in bookstores and several national literacy initiatives.

Local Advisory Boards (LABs) Strengthen Communities

The cornerstone of the First Book model is a network of volunteer local advisory boards (LABs), which work to distribute books and develop resources to support book distributions in their communities. A local advisory board consists of volunteers who work as a team to distribute new books to area literacy programs.

The composition of First Book Local Advisory Boards is as diverse as the communities they serve and volunteer board members come from a variety of backgrounds including people from the business, educational, political and nonprofit fields. The common thread among members is that they feel strongly about children and the power of books and reading, and are able to devote time, talent, contacts, and energy to making First Book books available in their community.

As of December 1997, First Book has 51 existing First Book local boards and 119 local boards in various

developmental stages (total 170). First Book expects to develop an additional 100 local boards in 1998.

Regional Offices Launched with AmeriCorps*VISTA

This year, in partnership with the Corporation for National Service, First Book established four of a planned six additional "First Book Regional Community Outreach Offices." These offices, led by AmeriCorps*VISTA volunteers, are responsible for working with the national office to build, manage and support First Book Local Advisory Boards in their respective states.

As local boards require nurturing in the developmental and early phases, the six AmeriCorps*VISTA regional coordinators are essential in ensuring that First Book increases its network and distribution capacity. The new regional offices are in: Elmsford, NY; Nashville, TN; Jackson, MS; Chicago, IL; Houston, TX; and Sacramento, CA.

Northwest Project Achieves Early Success

In June 1997, First Book received a \$1.0 million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Education. The funds are being used to conduct an intensive regional First Book program in the states of Washington and Oregon. The program is headquartered in Portland, OR, which serves as the seventh regional First Book office.

Thus far, the project has enlisted 170 volunteers who are serving on 18 First Book Local Advisory Boards and over 120 organizations have been receiving deliveries of an initial round of new books. Two additional local boards are slated to begin operation in early 1998, which will complete the grant goal of establishing 20 local boards.

The Northwest Project is expected to distribute a total of 300,000 books to children whose families have been adversely affected by the economic downturns in the fishing and timber industries. The grant also contains an extensive model-evaluation component, headed by Louis Harris, which will provide First Book with an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of its locally-driven book distribution model. First Book has begun discussions with several corporate partners to ensure that the established local boards continue to flourish long after the federal project ends.

National Partners Fuel Outreach

First Book has assembled a sustaining network of strategic national partnerships that have been vital to the organization's growth and outreach to our nation's most vulnerable children. Each of these partners work nationally and through their local representatives to build upon the strength of the First Book model. Highlights from 1997 include:

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION (ALA). The American Library Association, through the Association for Library Service to Children and the *Born To Read* program, supports First Book by including information on the ALA Internet home page. A large and growing number of public librarians also serve on First Book Local Advisory Boards, providing expertise on children's literature and community literacy activities.

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First Book Parties In 1997, First Book benefitted from Barnes & Noble "Preview Nights" at all new bookstore locations. The funds raised through the new store opening promotions are used to host First Book Parties for children participating in programs with local First Book recipient groups. Since launching the initiative in 1996, approximately 30,000 books have been distributed to more than 9,600 children.

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First Book Liaison In January 1998, a full-time "First Book Liaison" staff member, sponsored by Barnes & Noble, begins working with First Book to assist with the coordination of Barnes & Noble/First Book partnership initiatives. The staff member will reside in First Book's national office and will be dedicated to helping design, promote, and facilitate First Book promotions with the more than 469 Barnes & Noble bookstores. In addition, the staff member will support the participation of Barnes & Noble staff on First Book Local Advisory Boards.

B. DALTON BOOKSELLER. Throughout 1997, B. Dalton Bookseller stores held in-store promotions to benefit First Book. The promotions centered on the sale of special ties depicting favorite Dr. Seuss characters. In addition, B. Dalton stores continued to host in-store First Book Parties for over 3,000 children and 30 B. Dalton employees participate on First Book Local Advisory Boards in their neighborhoods.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING - (CPB). First Book continues to participate as a partner with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in the Ready To Learn Service initiative. Through this national outreach, free books in English and Spanish are provided to children of low income families in tandem with educational programming on public television stations, a bimonthly family magazine and workshops to help parents and caregivers connect television to reading, language and learning skills.

One-hundred-and-twenty-five Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) stations around the country anchor and provide the Ready To Learn Service to their local communities. Funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the Ready To Learn Service is an initiative developed by public broadcasting in response to the national educational goal that all American children begin school ready to learn.

In 1997, First Book began processing all Ready To Learn Book orders, previously managed by the CPB staff. During this transition, CPB staff members and local PBS station liaisons provided tremendous support to First Book. First Book also provided extra incentives to participating PBS affiliates. For example, 38% of First Book Parties benefitted local literacy programs associated with Ready To Learn. Also, 35 Ready To Learn coordinators participate on First Book Local Advisory Boards. In addition, First Book participated in both the CPB and the PBS annual conferences.

NATIONAL SCHOOL SUPPLY AND EQUIPMENT ASSOCIATION (NSSEA). The NSSEA continued its support of First Book's literacy efforts by making donations of products, holding book and supply parties, and encouraging their membership to serve on local First Book boards. First Book works closely with NSSEA's Education Excellence Foundation to continue to develop outreach activities which best engage the association's 1,600 member organizations on behalf of literacy.

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low-income, First Book, in partnership with the pediatricians and other health center staff, help "fill" the families' prescription by giving new books to the children. In 1997, 180 health centers were a part of the ROR initiative, which was founded by Dr. Barry Zuckerman, Boston City Hospital.

SCHOLASTIC INC. Scholastic Inc. is a long-standing First Book publishing partner. In addition to providing substantial discounts on thousands of children's soft cover books, the publisher provides each new First Book Local Advisory Board with an initial free set of "community-starter" books. The starter books provide a great incentive to local volunteers and help new First Book boards immediately begin the local book grant process.

SHARE OUR STRENGTH (SOS). First Book was again selected by Share Our Strength as one of the national beneficiaries of its 1997 Writers Harvest: The National Reading promotion. Writers Harvest is an annual event that brings together hundreds of novelists, essayists and poets to college campuses and bookstores across the country. Participants in Writers Harvest hold in-store readings and other activities to help raise the awareness of the problem of hunger and its causes. On behalf of Writers Harvest, Share Our Strength is expected to make a donation of \$45,000 to First Book, in support of its efforts to fight illiteracy nationwide.

In cooperation with Share Our Strength, First Book held a Children's Writers Harvest event at the Barnes & Noble bookstore in Tacoma, WA. Seattle Seahawk quarterback, John Friesz attended the event where he read several books to children, signed autographs, and challenged parents to purchase books in support of First Book and SOS. Share Our Strength is the nation's largest hunger relief organization.

Keeping America's Promise

First Book made a major commitment to the Presidents' Summit For America's Future, which was held in Philadelphia, PA in April 1997. America's Promise-The National Alliance for Youth is the nonprofit organization established to ensure that organizations fulfill their pledges to the President's Summit. First Book pledged to provide two million new books and establish 100 additional First Book Local Advisory Boards over

the next three years (1997-1999). First Book's commitment caught the attention of The Oprah Winfrey Show, which highlighted First Book in an edition of the show featuring General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.), Chairman of the Board for America's Promise. In reaching the 1.0 million book distribution mark, First Book successfully fulfilled its first year goal in its pledge to America's Promise and aspires to double its success in 1998.

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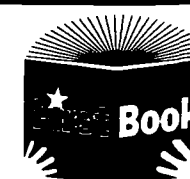
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★ First Book

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MEDIA ALERT ● For Immediate Release, January 1, 1998

Contact: Kyle Zimmer, President, First Book, 202-393-1222

FIRST BOOK DISTRIBUTES OVER 1.0 MILLION NEW BOOKS TO AT-RISK CHILDREN IN 170 COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, DC – First Book, a national nonprofit literacy program, celebrates the distribution of over *1.0 million new books* to disadvantaged children in 1997. Active in 170 of America's cities, towns, and counties, First Book facilitates community-based solutions to illiteracy and supports the heroic work of teachers, mentors, tutors, parents and others working to ensure the success of the next generation.

First Book works through a network of local volunteer boards and national partners to distribute new books to disadvantaged children participating in existing community literacy programs. First Book brings strength to local literacy initiatives by providing communities with the benefits of its national partnerships, including those with: the American Library Association; Association of Junior Leagues International; Barnes & Noble, Inc.; B. Dalton Bookseller; Barnes & Noble College Bookstores, Inc.; Corporation for National Service, AmeriCorps*VISTA; Corporation for Public Broadcasting; U. S. Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Education; National School Supply and Equipment Association; Mondo Publishing; Reach Out and Read; Scholastic Inc.; and Share Our Strength.

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First Book was established in 1992 in recognition of the central role played by underdeveloped literacy skills in many social problems including poverty, hunger, drug addiction, and crime. For more information on First Book, call Kyle Zimmer, at 202-393-1222.

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ASSOCIATION OF
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FACT SHEET ON THE IMPORTANCE OF READING TO INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN

American families need relevant, focused, timely information concerning their children's well-being. Most parents know that it is nice to read to children every day, but are unaware of the newest discoveries in neuroscience showing that reading aloud actually stimulates the growth of a baby's brain. The AAP has put together a short list of citations to help adults understand that reading aloud to children is as important as fastening their seat belts and providing good nutrition.

A burst of research activity in the past few years is giving us a whole new understanding of how the brain develops and the crucial role of early language experiences, including reading. Extraordinary advances in neuroscience have been facilitated by the development of sophisticated research tools such as brain imaging technologies, making it possible to study the actual growth and workings of the brain.

These technological advances have come at a time of growing concern about the health, well-being and academic achievement of America's children.

Several important conferences, including a White House Summit in the Spring of 1997, have focused not only on the scientific findings but on their public policy implications as well.¹

What the research shows:

- ◆ An infant's brain structure is not genetically determined. Early experiences have a decisive impact on the architecture of a baby's brain.²
- ◆ "A child care provider reads to a toddler. And in a matter of seconds, thousands of cells in these children's growing brains respond. Some brain cells are 'turned on,' triggered by this particular experience. Many existing connections among brain cells are strengthened. At

¹*Brain Development in Young Children: New Frontiers for Research, Policy and Practice*, University of Chicago, June 1996; *White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning*, April 1997.

²*Rethinking the Brain: New Insights Into Early Development*, Report of the Conference on Brain Development, University of Chicago. (This report is available from the Families and Work Institute, 330 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001).

the same time, new brain cells are formed, adding a bit more definition and complexity to the intricate circuitry that will remain largely in place for the rest of these children's lives."³

- ◆ The development of early literacy skills through early experiences with books and stories is critically linked to a child's success in learning to read.⁴
- ◆ Development of literacy is a continuous process that begins early in life and depends heavily on environmental influences.⁵
- ◆ Children who are read to from an early age are more successful at learning to read.⁶
- ◆ "...reading aloud to children is the single most important intervention for developing their literacy skills," according to a 1985 study by the National Commission on Reading⁷
- ◆ Early reading experiences are now recognized as being of such importance that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that "pediatricians prescribe reading activities along with other instructions given to parents at the time of well-child visits." The President of the Academy, Dr. Robert E. Hannemann, stated: "We strongly recommend daily reading to children from six months of age."⁸

³*Ibid*

⁴Snow, C.E. & Ninio, A. (1988) "The Contracts of Literacy: What Children Learn from Learning to Read Books," in W.H. Teale & E. Sulzby (Ed.) *Emergent Literacy: Writing and Reading*, Norwood (as cited in Reach Out and Read Program Manual)

⁵Schickendanz, J.A. (1986), *More Than the ABCs: The Early Stages of Reading and Writing*, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Washington, DC

⁶Teale, W. (1988). "Emergent Literacy as a Perspective for Examining How Young Children Become Readers and Writers," *Emergent Literacy*, Norwood.

⁷As quoted in "A Pediatric" Early Literacy Program," the Program Manual for Reach Out and Read.

⁸Press Statement, American Academy of Pediatrics, April 16, 1997 (for additional information, American Academy of Pediatrics, Chicago, IL-- 847-981-7131)



National Association of
Children's Hospitals
and Related Institutions

LAWRENCE A. McANDREWS, FACHE
President & Chief Executive Officer

N A C H R I

January 8, 1997

Mrs. Hillary R. Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

I hope you and your family enjoyed a joyous holiday season, and we look forward to working with you in the coming year. Already, it appears that it will be a busy year and, as always, we appreciate the leadership roles you and the President are taking on child care, children's health coverage and other key children's issues.

To start the year off on a promising note, I want to update you on the significant progress the children's hospital community has made in just one year in promoting early reading to parents and children.

When you launched the national Prescription for Reading effort in April, 1997, NACHRI and the nation's children's hospitals took an active role in the effort to increase early exposure to books and encourage a love of reading among our nation's children. Since then, NACHRI has stepped up its efforts to promote the establishment of early reading programs at children's hospitals, and we have delivered the message of the importance of early reading directly to parents. Specifically:

- NACHRI's summer 1997 edition of *Children's Hospitals Today* magazine carried an article promoting early reading programs to its readership of children's hospital CEOs, administrators, trustees, clinicians and community supporters (circulation – 5,000).
- A special NACHRI publication, "Healthy Children in Healthy Families," featured a nuts and bolts article on how to establish a Reach Out and Read program at a children's hospital. This publication was sent to community education directors, child advocacy directors and clinicians at children's hospitals nationwide.

Mrs. Hillary R. Clinton
January 13, 1998
Page Two

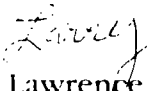
- NACHRI's consumer newsletter for parents, *Starting Out Healthy*, brought the message of the importance of early reading to more than 400,000 parents this summer.

These efforts, along with our ongoing work with Barry Zuckerman, M.D., and the Reach Out and Read staff, have generated dozens of inquiries from hospitals, physicians and parents, and resulted in a significant increase in the establishment of early reading programs at our member hospitals. Specifically:

- The number of children's hospitals with established Reach Out and Read programs has doubled since last year, bringing the total to 21.
- Forty-five additional children's hospitals have expressed interest in establishing an ROR program in the near future.
- In 1997, NACHRI hospitals in Baltimore, New York City and Kansas City, MO hosted ROR training conferences for physicians that were attended by 410 individuals from 50 health care organizations.
- In 1998, several Reach Out and Read training conferences will be conducted at NACHRI hospitals in New Haven, Birmingham, Atlanta, Cleveland and Salt Lake City.

I am pleased that Lisa Tate from my staff will be joining you and your staff on January 14 to discuss our progress and how we might move forward. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 703-684-1355 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Lawrence A. McAndrews

cc: Jennifer Klein
Barbara Woolley

Enclosures

Scholastic Parent Involvement Materials

Translated in the following languages:

Arabic
Cambodian
Chinese
English
French
Korean
Portuguese
Russian
Spanish
Vietnamese

Scholastic Multi-lingual books

Translated in the following languages:

Arabic
Cambodian
Chinese
English
Haitian-Creole
Korean
Portuguese
Russian
Spanish
Vietnamese



Read together. Your Child will love It!



No matter how young or old your child is, read together often.



Babies love hearing your voice, enjoy looking at pictures, and can understand more than you think.



Older children – even if they are starting to read on their own – *love to be read to.*





To get the most out of reading together, try some, or all, of these suggestions:



- ♥ Put your child on your lap and look at the book together.
- ♥ Turn off the TV, the radio, or any music. Your child will concentrate without any distractions.
- ♥ Don't worry about reading every word. You can add or leave out things to make the story more interesting for your child.
- ♥ Turn the pages slowly. Talk about the pictures and encourage your child to do the same—and praise her efforts!
- ♥ Try changing your voice when you read different parts. It really brings the story to life.
- ♥ Read a book over and over again! You are telling a story that your child wants to hear – and will want you to tell over and over again. Children love repetition and learn from it.
- ♥ Make reading together a special time for you and your child – every day!



Show Your Child That Reading is Important To You...

- ♥ Make sure your child sees you reading. No matter what you like to read – newspapers, magazines, romance novels, comic books – it is important that your child knows that you enjoy reading too.
- ♥ Keep books, magazines, and newspapers around the house.
- ♥ Read in any language. If you don't read in English, don't worry. Read to your child in the language you're most comfortable with! What's important is that your child sees that you enjoy reading together.
- ♥ Take children's books with you wherever you go: to the doctor, to the market, on the bus, anywhere. Restless children love having a book to keep them busy.
- ♥ Let your child have his own special place to keep his books — a shelf, a milk crate or a corner of a bookshelf.
- ♥ Encourage your child to sit with a book, to look at and talk about the pictures; or just to pretend she is reading.



**Encourage your child
to read anything
and everything!**



Make It Fun!

Reading to your child takes time and energy. But it should be a special activity for you and your child to share every day. And it should be fun. How do you do this?

- ♥ Listen to your child. She'll tell you what stories she wants to hear – and she'll let you know when she is tired of a book.
- ♥ Don't make reading a chore! If your child is just learning how to read and asks you for help reading a word, give him a hint, or even the answer. Don't simply say "Sound it out." Children need lots of support and encouragement when they're first starting out.
- ♥ Children learn to read in many different ways. Some kids like to sound out words, others like to memorize whole words, while still others "guess" at the meaning of sentences, and often use the pictures in a book to give them hints. Whichever way your child likes is OK! Just try to keep it fun.
- ♥ Take your child to the local library. It is a wonderful place for kids. The library is safe, quiet, free, and filled with books, storytelling, and events that make books special. Most libraries let kids have their own library card when they can write their name.
- ♥ Encourage your child to read anything — cereal boxes, trading cards, signs, magazine ads, pictures in the newspapers.





Reading Games are Fun Too!

Story time – After you have finished reading a book together, encourage your child to retell the story; or make up a new ending or character together. Sometimes you might want to make up whole new stories together. Children especially love to tell stories about a special imaginary friend, and they love telling the same story over and over again.

Favorite Words – Ask your child to find pictures of his favorite food, color, toy, etc. When he does, write the word or words that best describe the picture, and encourage him to save it in a special “scrapbook.”

Sound & Pictures – Look at a magazine with your child. Ask her to find a picture that starts with the “A” sound. Then find a picture that start with the , “B” sound. And so on.

I Spy – As you travel around the city with your child, point to a store sign, and ask him to guess what it says.

Shopping & Reading – When your child goes to the market with you, ask her to find, or point out certain items that you need: milk, cereal, bread.

Make a Book Together – Your child can create his own book, using family photos and drawings he has made. Staple sheets of paper together, paste or tape in the pictures, and then let your child tell you words to write on the pages. Read the story together over and over.

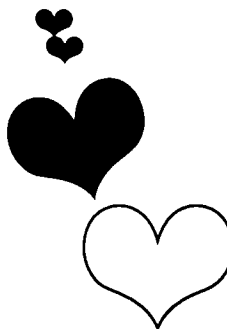
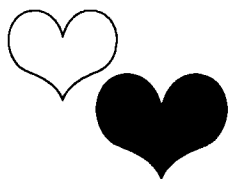
Some Last Thoughts

Children love books. They love being read to, and they love just looking at books. The most important thing you can do to help your child’s reading and learning is to encourage his/her excitement about books.

Try to spend time with your child and a book every day. Your child learns from the pictures and words that she sees. And the joy that the two of you share from books will be something you will remember forever.

To grow up loving books is probably the most important “school” skill your child can ever get. Now is the time to start!





Read together – Your Child Will Love It!

No matter how young or old your child is, read together. To get the most out of your reading time, try some, or all, of these suggestions:

- ♥ Put your child on your lap and look at the book together.
- ♥ Turn off all distractions: the TV, the radio, or any music.
- ♥ Don't worry about reading every word. You can add or leave out things to make the story more interesting.
- ♥ Turn the pages slowly. Encourage your child to talk about the pictures.
- ♥ Set aside a special reading time with your child – every day!

Reading Games

Try these easy games to put more fun and variety into your reading times!

- ♥ **Story time –**
After you have finished reading a book together, encourage your child to retell the story — or make up a new ending or character together. Sometimes you might

want to make up a whole new story together. Children especially love to tell stories about a special imaginary friend, over and over again.

- ♥ **Favorite Words –**

Ask your child to find pictures of his favorite food, color, toy, etc. When he does, write the word or words that best describe the picture, and encourage him to save the labeled picture in a special “scrapbook.”

- ♥ **Sound & Pictures –**

Look at a magazine together. Ask your child to find a picture that starts with the “A” sound. Then find a picture that starts with the “B” sound. And so on.

- ♥ **Make a Book Together –**

Your child can create his own book, using family photos, drawings he has made. Staple sheets of paper together, paste or tape in the pictures, and then let your child tell you words to write on the pages. Read the story together over and over.



READ TOGETHER. Your Child Will Love It!

To get the most out of reading with your child, try these suggestions:

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- Don't worry about reading every word.
- Turn the pages slowly and encourage your child to talk about the pictures.
- Make reading together a special time for you and your child – every day!



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Read to Your BUNNY



ROSEMARY WELLS

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by Rosemary Wells

Prescription **FOR**
READING

TO BE COMPLETED BY
A HEALTH-CARE PROVIDER:



Child's Name: _____

Parent or Guardian: _____

Address: _____

Pediatrician or Other Health-Care Provider: _____

Offer expires March 1, 1998.
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READING

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BABIES

Clap Your Hands

Lorinda Bryan Cauley, Putnam

Fuzzy Yellow Ducklings

Matthew Van Fleet, Dial

* *Goodnight, Moon*

Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by

Clement Hurd, HarperCollins

My Very First Mother Goose

Iona Opie, illustrated by

Rosemary Wells, Candlewick

Pat the Bunny, Dorothy Kunhardt

Golden Books/Western Publishing

Time for Bed, Mem Fox, illustrated by

Jane Dyer, Harcourt Brace

TODDLERS

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

Bill Martin, Jr., and

John Archambault, illustrated by

Lois Ehlert, Simon & Schuster

Good Night, Gorilla

Peggy Rathmann, Putnam

In the Small, Small Pond

Denise Fleming, Henry Holt

"K" Is for Kiss Good Night

Jill Sardagna, illustrated by Michael

Hays, Bantam Doubleday Dell

* Available in Spanish

Prescription **FOR** **READING**

suggested reading list:

TODDLERS (con't)

More, More, More... Said the Baby,
Vera B. Williams, Greenwillow

So Much, Trish! Cooke, illustrated
by Helen Oxenbury, Candlewick

When I'm Sleepy,
Jane R. Howard, illustrated by
Lynne Cherry, Dutton

PRE-SCHOOL

Angus and the Ducks, Marjorie
Flack, Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Blueberries for Sal,
Robert McCloskey, Puffin

Is Your Mama a Llama?
Deborah Guarino, illustrated by
Steven Kellogg, Scholastic

Mama Do You Love Me?
Barbara M. Joosse, illustrated by
Barbara Lovelle, Chronicle

*Read Aloud Rhymes for the Very
Young,* Jack Prelutsky, illustrated
by Marc Brown, Knopf

Sheep in a Jeep, Nancy Shaw,
Houghton Mifflin

Where the Wild Things Are,
Maurice Sendak, HarperCollins

Available in Spanish.

Remember to sign up your child
for a library card.

Prescription **FOR** **READING**

Scientific research has shown that
reading to a very young child can
enhance the child's overall intellectual,
emotional, and physical development.
A daily regime of reading to your child
for 20 minutes a day will reap
a lifetime of rewards.



"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. That's why doctors and nurses are
starting to *prescribe* reading to babies along with regular
checkups and vaccinations. 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."

—Hillary Rodham Clinton
Time, February 3, 1997



AMERICAN
BOOK EXCHANGE





This bookstore is a participant in the
Prescription for Reading partnership.
Redeem your "prescription" coupon here or ask how
reading to your child for 20 minutes a day
can make a difference in your child's life.

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READING CHECKUP GUIDE

“Read me a Story”

HELPING YOUR CHILDREN
BECOME BETTER READERS



BROUGHT TO



YOU BY VISA

This health-care office is a participant in the
Prescription for Reading **partnership.**
Ask us how reading to your child for 20 minutes a day
can make a difference in your child's life.

—First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, January 10, 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 to their young babies seriously."



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"I am so glad you gave me this book so I could read it over again. My little sister love[s] it and I do like it too. I am a book reader lover."

—Child participating in a literacy program supported by First Book's Philadelphia chapter.

"My parents never read to me, and I want to make a difference in my daughter's life. I am using these books to do that."

—Father of a child participating in an El Paso First Book/Ready To Learn program.

"The First Book program not only encourages parents and kids to read together, it gives them the tools they need to do it."

—Nancy Grasmick, State Superintendent, Maryland Public Schools

"First Book provides the tools to assist programs like our D.C. Family Literacy Project, which teaches prisoners to read with their children."

—Richard L. Roe, Professor of Law
Director, Street Law Program,
Georgetown University

"First Book is an outstanding organization that believes in people and in the power of books to transform the lives of children."

—Carolynn Reid-Wallace,
Senior Vice President, Education and
Programming, Corporation for Public
Broadcasting



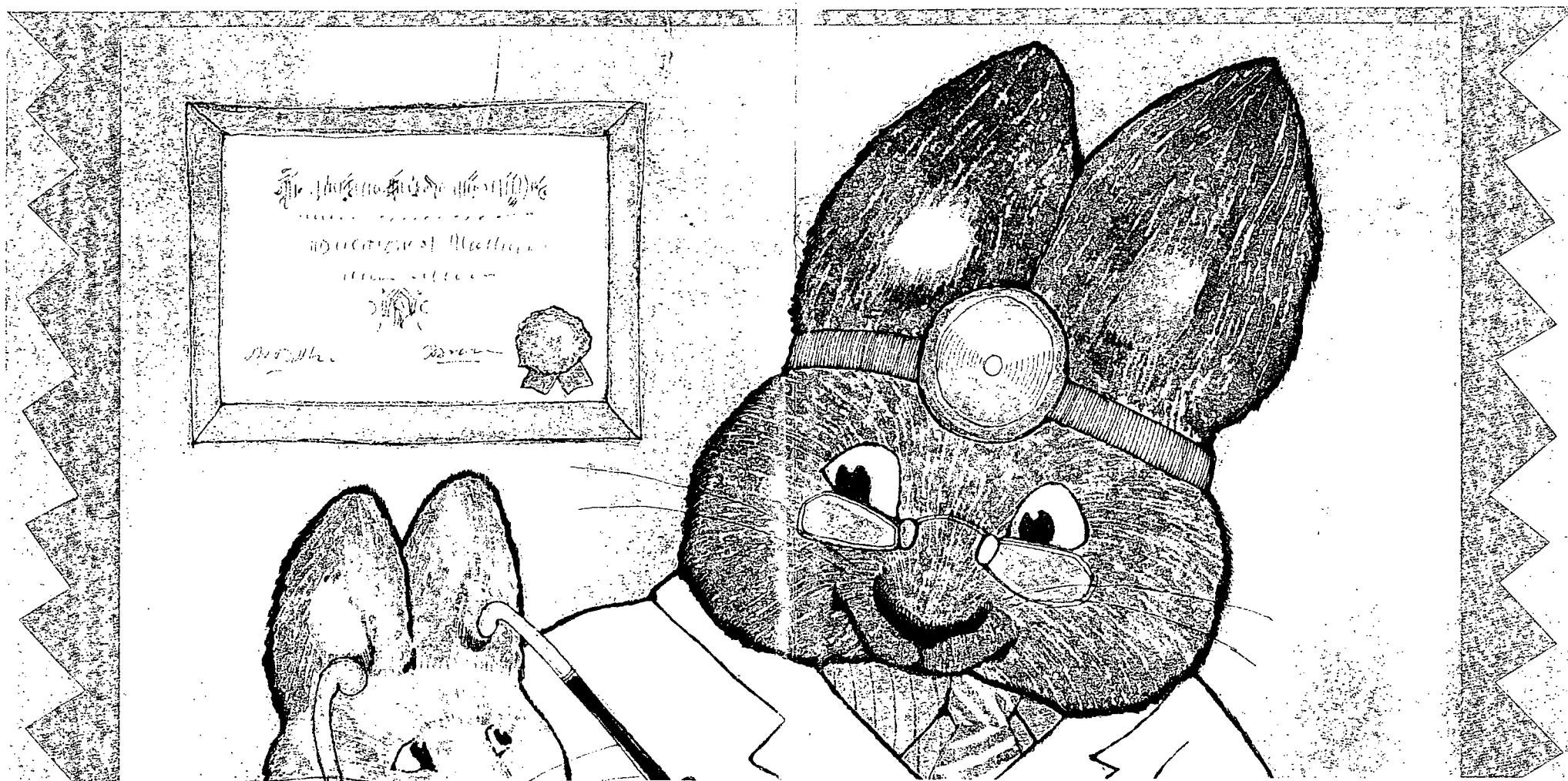
First Book wishes to thank Barnes & Noble for its generosity in printing this brochure.

Cover photo courtesy of M. B. Marks. Special thanks to Kam Moriarty, Julie DeAtley and ATS Inc. for brochure design and development.

REMEMBER THE



Listen to your doctor.



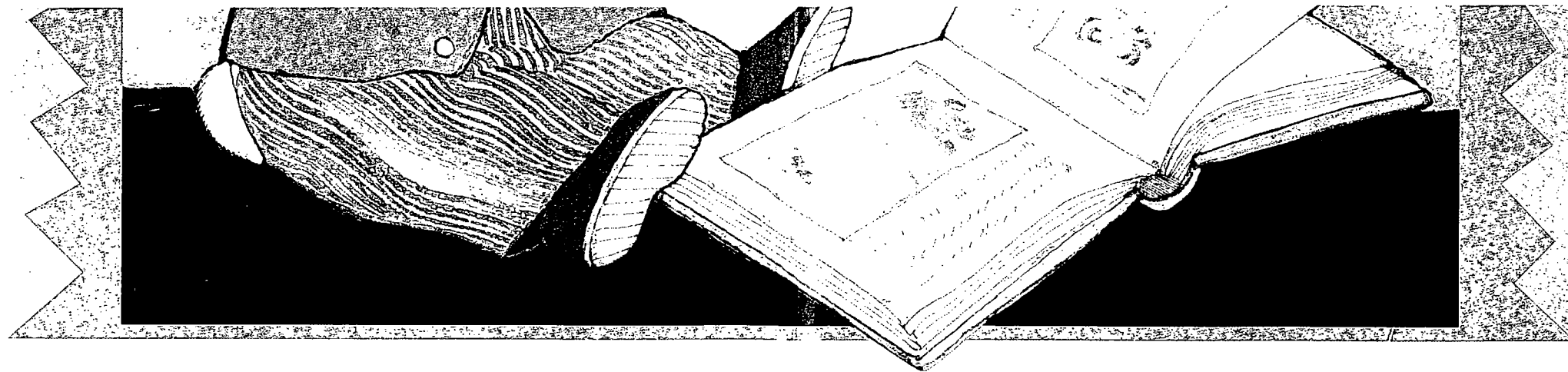
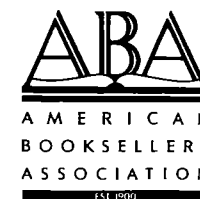
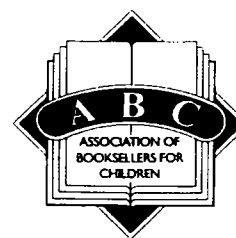


Illustration © 1997 by Rosemary Wells

R_x Read to your bunny
twenty minutes
every day.



SCHOLASTIC



Reading Is Fundamental Prescribes Family Reading

Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) is a national nonprofit organization that works for literacy where it begins -- with America's children. RIF involves children in reading-related activities, encourages families to get involved in their children's education, and enables children to select books to own -- some 173,000,000 to date -- at no cost to them or their families.

Founded in 1966, RIF is now the nation's largest children's literacy organization, serving some 3.7 million children annually at 17,000 locations throughout the U.S. and its territories. Over 218,000 volunteers bring the RIF program to children in schools, libraries, early childhood centers, and community recreation centers, as well as in at least 21 hospitals and clinics (where over 1,000 volunteers bring the RIF program to 93,000 children).

RIF provides technical assistance on volunteer recruitment, publicity, book selection and ordering, and development of effective reading motivation activities, as well as other services; book discounts from over 200 book companies nationwide; and often funding for books (from federal and/or private sources when available) to the local volunteers to help them run effective RIF programs.

The simplicity of the RIF program makes it a natural partner to other literacy efforts. RIF's basic elements of reading activities, parent involvement, and books for children complement many existing programs focused on promoting a love of reading in children and encouraging family reading. Hospital and clinic literacy efforts naturally fit into the RIF model, as attested by the existing RIF programs successfully reaching children either in in-patient programs for chronically ill children or through well-child visits to health clinics. Attached are descriptions of 21 such programs from across the country.



Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) and the Mississippi State Department of Health Immunization Program

When the Mississippi State Department of Health decided to provide some sort of incentive for parents to bring their children for their initial and follow-up shots as well as WIC certification, they considered t-shirts or tote bags as opposed to the historic candy incentive before they hit on a book. To Mississippi Department of Health officials, literacy and health are a natural partnership in the developmental life of the children in her state.

Under the name "Healthy Start/Smart Start," the Mississippi State Department of Health Immunization Program began a partnership with Reading Is Fundamental. Our goal was to provide a books to children during their two-, six- and 12-month immunization visits at all 110 Mississippi State Department of Health clinic sites. Now the children served include older children who come for immunizations or come with younger siblings. Virtually any child who comes to a clinic can choose a book as part of the program.

Mississippi, which has the lowest per capita income in the nation, the highest teen pregnancy rate, the highest school drop out rate, the lowest literacy level, and one of the highest infant mortality rates, also has one of the most active and accessible public health systems. The MSDH provides at least 85% of all childhood immunizations and pre-natal care in the state. Because clinics are located statewide and can be found in especially rural areas, the program is reaching the neediest of Mississippi's children. Most health clinic patients have little or no money to purchase books. Many are unaware of the importance of reading to children at an early age and its link to success in school.

Before the program was put into place, focus groups were conducted to ensure books would be an effective incentive for parents to bring their children in to get their shots. Health clinic clients are encouraged to take part in the process of reviewing titles and play an active role in the book selection process.

The program recently began its second year with an increase in state funding--up to \$350,000. The Mississippi Department of Health expects to serve up to 60,000 children throughout the state during the year. Every child who receives an immunization receives a RIF book and every child who enters a clinic is offered a book. To emphasize the link between a healthy and smart start for children, a video of Mrs. Pat Fordice, First Lady of Mississippi reading *Itchy, Itchy Chicken Pox* plays in the waiting rooms of the clinics.

The Mississippi Department of Education, Rotary, and the Governor's office provide volunteers for this statewide RIF program. Volunteers read with patients, share books and fun activities, and talk with parents about the importance of reading.

Reading Is Fundamental Programs at Reach Out and Read Sites

The Child Development Project	10,000 kids birth - 5 years	(6,000 birth-2)
Boston City Hospital	50,000 books	
Boston, MA	30 volunteers	
	1 location	

This original ROR site pulls volunteers from local universities, the junior league, local business partners, and others to read to children waiting for their pediatrician at the outpatient clinic. Celebrity guest readers come in on special occasions. They hold periodic family read-aloud contests, and literacy-related art activities. They are committed to involving parents as much as possible.

Rhode Island Hospital	2,600 kids pre-k -6th grade	(468 birth-2)
Pediatric Primary Care Center	14,000 books	
Providence, RI	200 volunteers	
	2 locations	

This project reaches children from low-income communities who receive primary care in its clinic. In many homes, Spanish is the primary language. Pediatricians and educators developed their "Read to Me" program, based on the Boston "Reach Out and Read" program. 150 reading volunteers from the community (students, teachers, librarians, service club members, health care/social workers, and community business people) come into the hospital and read to the children while they are waiting to see their pediatrician. Research shows a significant increase in parents reading with their toddlers after only two visits where the children selected books, volunteers modeled reading aloud, and parents received handouts encouraging home reading.

St. Agnes Health Care	1,200 kids six months-11 years	(408 birth-2)
Baltimore, MD	6,600 books	
	34 volunteers	
	1 location	

Located in Southwest Baltimore city, St. Agnes also serves patients from Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Howard counties in its pediatric clinic. Most of the patients are from low-income families. Volunteers (healthcare/social workers, teachers, librarians, and other community members) read to the children as they wait for their pediatrician.

Fair Haven Community Health Center New Haven, CT	1,450 kids six months-5 years 12,250 books 18 volunteers 1 location	(290 birth-2)
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Fair Haven is in an inner-city neighborhood with an increasingly racially diverse population. The health center is the sole source of health care in an isolated neighborhood. Children waiting for their routine pediatric check-ups participate in the program. Volunteers include senior citizens, "celebrity readers" and healthcare workers.

Fulton-Dekalb Hospital Authority Ready, Set, Read Program Pediatric Appointment Clinic Atlanta, GA	1,265 kids birth-5 years 7,000 books 15 volunteers 1 location	(823 birth-2)
---	--	----------------------

Ready, Set, Read serves low income families in the Pediatric Appointment clinic of a publicly funded hospital. Many of the patients live in public housing and receives AFDC. A survey of the parents coming the clinic revealed that 48% had never been read to at home. Waiting room activities include reading with each family, demonstrating appropriate shared reading techniques for different ages and distribution information about the public library. Pediatric residents also provide parents with guidance about reading with their children at home. Other volunteers include foster grandparents and hospital personnel.

Navaho Reach Out and Read Sage Memorial Hospital Ganado, AZ	2,000 kids birth-5 years 4,000 books 56 volunteers 1 location	(600 birth-2)
--	--	----------------------

The population reached at this pediatric clinic is over 99% Navajo. Children coming for routine check-ups participate in the program. Parents play a substantial role in the program, including selecting and ordering books and helping other parents learn how to encourage family reading. Other volunteers include hospital employees, teachers, students, and volunteers from the Navajo Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

Brockton Hospital Reach Out and Read Brockton, MA	3,000 kids birth-5 years 35,000 books 79 volunteers 1 location	(2400 birth-2)
--	---	-----------------------

Brockton Hospital reaches children who come in for well-child visits. They just began their RIF program in February 1997.

**North Shore Children's Hospital
Neurological Development Ctr.
Salem, MA**

**1,000 kids pre-k -12 grade (500 birth-2)
5,500 books
15 volunteers
1 location**

In addition to reaching children at their health clinic, the North Shore Children's Hospital also does outreach into the community as a way to encourage families to come to the clinic for well-child visits and to make them less scary to the children.

Other RIF Programs Serving Children at Hospitals/Clinics

**Kunsberg School at
National Jewish Hospital
Denver, CO**

**100 kids k-8 grade
350 books
44 volunteers
1 location**

Students at Kunsberg school all have chronic illness and a majority also live in extremely poor financial situations. This project has just signed on to run RIF (effective date 4/97). They plan to engage the kids in reading-related art activities, reading challenges, and to involve the parents.

**Telamon Corp.
Summer Migrant Program
Lansing, MI**

**20 kids birth-5 years
40 books
5 volunteers
1 location**

Telamon reaches children of migrant farmworkers across the state at community centers, migrant camps, summer Head Start programs, and other summer centers. One site reaches children at a migrant health clinic.

**Lights of Jewish
Special Needs Society
St. Louis, MO**

**300 kids pre-k-10 years (6 birth-2)
1,175 books
12 volunteers
2 locations**

This service club provides RIF for young patients staying at Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children and Ranken-Jordan Children's Rehabilitation Center. Volunteers from their group engage the children in storytelling. Parents are encouraged to read with their children.

RIF of St. Louis	1,000 kids 3-15 years
St. Louis, MO	3,000 books
	1 location

RIF of St. Louis, in addition to going into St. Louis schools, reaches children staying at the Children's Hospital in St. Louis. Community volunteers read to the children on a monthly basis.

Allendale County Health Dept	530 kids 3-7 years
Allendale, SC	1,749 books
	17 volunteers
	3 locations

This program serves a low income community through outreach in an elementary school and through a program at the health department. Parents of the children are actively involved in the program, selecting books, acting as guest readers, and helping plan activities. Other volunteers include teachers and administrators.

Mississippi Dept of Health	60,000 kids birth-18 years (45,000 birth-2)
Immunization Program	150,000 books
Jackson, MS	242 volunteers
	110 locations

Now in its second year, MSDH's goal is to reach every child in the state through their visits to state clinics for immunizations. This program serves the dual purpose of acting as an incentive to get families into the clinic to get their children immunized and to encourage family reading. The governor's wife has videotaped a reading of "Itchy, Itchy Chicken Pox," which plays in the waiting room. Volunteers include parents, teachers, and healthcare workers.

RIF in Chicago	4,200 kids
Chicago, IL	12,600 books
	1 location

RIF in Chicago just this year started up a RIF program at Children's Memorial Hospital. A core of volunteers wheels a cart from clinic to clinic within the hospital and reads stories to any children they find. The volunteers reach children at the hospital for out-patient care as well as patients in the hospital for long-term care. The program is so successful after only one year that other hospitals in the area plan to get involved.

**Hospital Education Program
Richmond, VA**

**90 kids pre-k-12th grade
500 books
5 locations**

Patients at Richmond Children's hospital in obstetrics, pediatrics, neo-natal intensive care, and AIDS clinics all participate in this program. Volunteers include "Hospital Grannies" parents and family members of the children, teachers, and health care workers. Children participate in reading-related art activities, see a puppet show, and other activities.

**Lovelace Clinic Foundation
Albuquerque, NM**

**1,000 kids birth-5 years (500 birth-2)
3,250 books
20 volunteers
1 location**

All children who participate in the program are Medicaid recipients visiting the clinic for well-child visits. Parents are actively involved, including a small core group who help select books and read to children (some volunteers are videotaped & then the tape is shown in the waiting room). Healthcare workers, librarians, and other community volunteers read to the children. Many of the books and activities are done in Spanish.

**The Child Life Program
of SUNY
Brooklyn, NY**

**450 kids pre-k-12th grade
3,000 books
8 volunteers
1 location**

The University Hospital serves chronically ill children from the New York Metropolitan area. RIF reaches these children as they stay at the hospital. Patents, teachers, students, and healthcare workers volunteer for the program. Guest readers and a poetry writing contest are favorite activities.

**Child Development
at Cornell Medical College
New York, NY**

**3,600 kids birth-12 years (1260 birth-2)
20,050 books
25 volunteers
6 locations**

Most of the children served are eligible for Medicaid. Children are reached when they come into the walk-in pediatric clinic through a program called "Heads Up!". Parents are given a "prescription for reading" containing three important points of literacy development corresponding with the age of the child. Volunteers read stories and poetry to the children and help the children create their own books. They model activities for the parents and discuss further reading activities that can take place at home.

MCV's Children's Medical Center	1,000 kids
Arthur Ashe	3,000 books
Reading Is Fundamental Room	20 volunteers
Richmond, Virginia	1 location

This project provides a reading room located adjacent to the waiting room of the Randolph Minor Pediatric Group Practice, for a comfortable place for families with children to read with and to their children. Books are available for reading while the approximately 22,500 children who visit the clinic are waiting for appointments, and some young children are able to select books of their own to keep. The informal setting of the waiting room library provides a unique opportunity to model appropriate speaking and listening experiences important to literacy development. Volunteers staff the library and hold regular story times.

Harlem Hospital	500 kids
Arthur Ashe	2000 books
Reading Is Fundamental Room	20 volunteers
New York, New York	1 location

This project provides a reading room in the adolescent wing of Harlem Hospital. It consists of approximately 4 bookcases stocked with books suitable for adolescent youth 12-15 years of age. The Reading Room, run by the staff of the St. Aloysius Education Clinic in cooperation with parents and the community at large, provides services and materials which enrich and enhance the intellectual lives of the children and adolescents in Harlem Hospital. Books were provided to all the children and adolescents in the hospital four times a year as part of the RIF Program.

RIF Projects at Reach Out and Read Clinics

9 locations reaching
22,515 kids with
134,350 books and
447 volunteers

RIF Projects at other Hospital/Clinic Locations

134 locations reaching
72,790 kids with
201,714 books and
908 volunteers

Totals:

143 hospitals/clinics reaching
95,305 kids with
336,064 books and
1,355 volunteers