

APPLICATION PROCESS

How to Become a Reach Out and Read Program Site

If you have questions about the Application Process, please contact your regional or state [Reach Out and Read Coalition](#). If not located within a coalition, contact the Reach Out and Read National Center at 617-455-0614 or startup@reachoutandread.org.

To become an official Reach Out and Read program, there are a few simple steps to complete:

- 1) Determine who will be your Medical Consultant and Program Coordinator
- 2) Collect routine data (number well-child visits, poverty statistics, etc.)
- 3) Determine how your book supply will be funded
- 4) Submit an online application
- 5) Once approved, all medical providers who see children (6 months through age 5 yrs.) must complete the Reach Out and Read online CME training course (1.25 credits) on program delivery.

There are two important program roles to fill: *Medical Consultant* and *Program Coordinator*.

Medical Consultant: Medical Consultant: a pediatric primary care provider (MD, DO, NP, or PA) who is an enthusiastic champion of Reach Out and Read and endorses the critical importance of language development during the first 2,000 days of a child's life. While this is not a demanding or time-consuming role, the Medical Consultant will lead the practice in implementing the clinical components of the program:

- Ensure that Reach Out and Read best practices are implemented throughout the pediatric or family practice department;
- Foster discussion of and create support for efficient systems (book delivery to the exam room)
- Assure compliance of requisite online training by provider staff;
- Share relevant information on early literacy and language development that Reach Out and Read makes available from time to time;
- Act as the medical "face" to the program; connect with the executive leadership of the health center, clinic, or practice to champion the need for literacy promotion, books, and funding.

Program Coordinator*: any interested staff member familiar with the clinic, staff, and patient population. This role supports the Medical Consultant and is responsible for administrative aspects:

- Ordering the books;
- Implementing a system for tracking the number of books distributed;
- Completing the semi-annual Progress Reports;
- Ensuring a literacy-rich waiting room environment; coordinating volunteer readers (if any).

Both roles are typically voluntary and take very little time each month.

**A medical provider may fulfill both roles, particularly in small practices.*

Application Timeline:

1. Start an [online application](#). After you provide basic contact information, your program site will be issued a Site ID and password and redirected to www.myror.org, where the application is finished and submitted. During this time your site's status is "Application in Process." (*You may repeatedly log in and work on the application over time.*)
2. Along with the application you must also submit a letter of support stating your practice's commitment to on-going funding of the Reach Out and Read program, signed by the departmental head, clinic medical director, or executive director. (*Details on how to submit the letter and application are provided in the application.*) Once the Letter of Support is received, your site's status is "Application Complete."
3. Applications completed by the third Monday of each month are reviewed by the Reach Out and Read Application Review Committee during that week. You can expect to receive an email the following week. Approved applications become "Approved-Needs Training." **If your program site does not yet have the funding for a year's worth of books (100% of your Annual Book Commitment), your application will be placed on the waiting list.**
4. Once the medical providers at your practice have completed the required online training, and staff members have been oriented (more information below), your site becomes "Active" and you may begin implementing Reach Out and Read at your practice.

Required Application Information:

Contact information for:

- the designated Medical Consultant and Program Coordinator; and
- names and email addresses for all pediatric and family practice providers* seeing children ages birth **through** five years. (*Email addresses are used for CME course password purposes.*)

*This information must be complete and accurately reflect the TOTAL number of participating medical providers.

- **Accurate data on the annual total number of well-child visits** (age 6 months through age 5), as well as relevant insurance and demographic information.
- **Letter of Support:** A statement of **commitment** to the Reach Out and Read model and the **plan** for long-term financial sustainability of the program. Submit your Letter of Support by one of the following options:
 - Upload as part of the application
 - Email as an attachment to startup@reachoutandread.org
- **Sufficient books (or funds to purchase books)** equal to no less than your program site's annual book need. Your program's Annual Book Commitment (ABC) is calculated to ensure one book for each child's health supervision visit throughout the year, **for all children ages 6 months through 5 years**. **To estimate annual cost: ABC = # of well-child visits (6 months through 5 years) annually X \$2.75**, the average cost of a book in the Reach Out and Read catalog
- **List your Reach Out and Read "satellites,"** if any. These are any affiliated, off-site clinical locations of your health center, clinic or hospital which will also offer Reach Out and Read. Please remember to list all providers at satellite location(s) in your application, as well.

Once Your Application Has Been Approved

1. Medical providers must receive official Reach Out and Read training before implementing the Reach Out and Read program. (Information below.)
2. Each Reach Out and Read program site receives a Reach Out and Read/Scholastic pre-paid account into which you can deposit funds for purchasing Scholastic books. After completing training, you will receive your Scholastic Account Number, the Reach Out and Read catalog, and additional information about how to take advantage of this helpful resource.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is this program for everyone? The Reach Out and Read model is designed to be implemented by medical professionals who provide primary care to children, ages 6 months through 5 years, as part of the well-child checkup. Both pediatric practices and family practices that see children may participate in Reach Out and Read.

2. How will our clinic, providers, and patients benefit from becoming a Reach Out and Read program? Reach Out and Read has become an essential part of pediatric practices across the country - from large, urban practices to small, rural clinics. By introducing a beautiful, new book at the beginning of a well-child visit, providers find they can better engage and calm the child, provide meaningful, positive literacy promotion messages to the parent or guardian, and build stronger connections with the family. Using the book in the exam room opens up the opportunity to talk about other relevant topics - sleep routines, the importance of a child's first 2,000 days, school readiness - and also offers providers a new and valuable tool for monitoring the child's development. And, Reach Out and Read encounters are often the nicest of the provider's day.

3. What is the Reach Out and Read model? The Reach Out and Read model for literacy promotion has three key elements:

- Primary care providers (doctors, NPs, PAs and RNs) are trained to deliver early literacy anticipatory guidance to parents of children 6 months through 5 years of age during each well-child visit. This age-appropriate guidance centers on the importance of: frequent and early exposure to language, looking at board books and naming pictures with infants, rhyme and repetition for gaining phonemic awareness during toddlerhood, and reading interactively (such as using open-ended questions) when reading with preschoolers.
- During well-child visits for children ages 6 months through 5 years, the provider gives the child a new, developmentally-appropriate book to take home, building a collection of 10 new books in the home before the child goes to kindergarten. The provider also repeatedly prescribes reading aloud, every day.
- Reach Out and Read program sites also create literacy-rich environments that may include gently-used books for waiting room use or for siblings to take home. In some waiting rooms, Reach Out and Read volunteers model for parents the pleasures and techniques of reading aloud to very young children.

4. How do we know Reach Out and Read is effective? Reach Out and Read is an evidence-based intervention. 15 peer-reviewed and published studies show that literacy promoting interventions by a pediatrician using the Reach Out and Read model have a significant effect on parental behavior, beliefs toward reading aloud, and receptive and expressive language scores of children. Studies also show that parents who receive books and literacy counseling from their pediatricians are more likely to read to their young children and bring more books into the home. Read a [summary of the research](#) that supports Reach Out and Read.

5. How many books do we need, and how much do they cost? Books are available for purchase, on average, for approximately \$2.75 per book, although quality books are available for less (or more!) Additionally, through the Reach Out and Read book catalog, Scholastic offers 10 free books for every \$100 spent, in addition to the already generously discounted book prices.

The number of new books your program site needs will depend on your Annual Book Commitment (ABC), which is equivalent to the annual number of well-child visits for children ages 6 months through 5 years. To determine the estimated cost for books, multiply your ABC by \$2.75.

6. How do we find support for our books - either new, donated books or funding for books?

Program sites should consider how they will provide for the books needed to sustain the program over time. Some practices write off book expenditures as a business expense. Others solicit private contributions from community service organizations such as Lions or Rotary Clubs, from professional societies and charitable foundations, and/or receive support from their parent organization or provider network. Some program sites hold an annual fundraiser. And still others hold a clinic-wide dress down day, bake sale, car wash, or pancake breakfast. Reach Out and Read offers program sites access to resources such as our customizable *Support a Site* brochure (and other materials) that can assist you with seeking funding from individuals or small business in your community.

Your fundraising plan will depend on the size of your population and your budget. If you have a development department, speak with them about your funding needs. Reach Out and Read offers templates for fundraising letters and grant applications (that you can personalize for your own program). Reach Out and Read coalitions can also assist with your fundraising efforts ([find a Coalition in your area](#)).

Local community groups can help your Reach Out and Read program site with fundraising for books, volunteer recruitment, community visibility, and publicity. Reach Out and Read program sites often work with the following groups:

- High school and college community service groups
- Civic groups (e.g., Lions Club, Rotary Club, Kiwanis, Junior League)
- Municipal literacy initiatives
- Libraries
- Faith-based organizations

7. Who is in charge of running Reach Out and Read at our program site? There are two primary roles in each Reach Out and Read program site, the Medical Consultant and Program Coordinator. See above (Start a Program).

8. We want to become a Reach Out and Read Program site - what steps should we take now?

- Review information and steps (above) on how to Start A Program
- Find out if you are located within a Reach Out and Read state or regional coalition and contact its Program Director before making your application. View the list of [coalitions](#).
- Develop and implement a fundraising plan to generate support for your books.
- Complete the online application at www.myROR.org.

9. How will our staff gain orientation to the Reach Out and Read model? Medical providers will complete the Reach Out and Read online CME Course, which offers 1.25 level one CME credits. Once your program site has been approved, each participating provider at your program site will receive his or her individual login information to complete the course.

- Your program coordinator is encouraged to attend the Webinar for new Reach Out and Read Coordinators, scheduled monthly on the third Thursday at noon eastern. When your site is approved, you'll receive notification of upcoming dates.
- Many sites find it helpful to orient the entire practice, including medical assistants and non-medical personnel, during an all-staff meeting. This builds enthusiasm for, commitment to, and understanding of the Reach Out and Read program and model. It also includes them in discussions about which systems are best put into place for: getting the books to the exam rooms, the practical issues such as book storage and a tracking system, as well as ideas for creating your literacy-rich waiting room.

10. What books should we choose for our families? The Reach Out and Read model calls for the provider to give a new, age- and culturally-appropriate book in the exam room at each well-child visit. There are a number of ways that you can procure books for your program site.

Reach Out and Read partners with Scholastic to publish a book catalog available exclusively to approved programs. The books are offered at substantially discounted prices. The catalog is organized by age, making book selection easy. Reach Out and Read programs may also choose to purchase high-quality children's books from book specials offered by publishers and book distributors. We routinely post such offers on myROR.org. You can also ask local individuals, service organizations and booksellers to hold new, age-appropriate book drives for your program site.

The Reach Out and Read Program Coordinator Manual has a chapter devoted to identifying quality children's books for use in the intervention, as well as suggestions for ordering, tracking, and storing your book supply.

Many Reach Out and Read programs also like to have gently-used donated books available in the waiting areas for parents to share with children as they wait, for siblings tagging along to the checkup, and/or for sick visits. Gently-used children's book drives can be hosted by school children, scouting troops, faith-based groups, Rotary and Lions Clubs, etc.

11. How do we create literacy-rich environments? Reach Out and Read recognizes that children and parents spend time in the waiting room. To take advantage of this time, the Reach Out and Read model recommends using the waiting room to promote the joy of reading aloud and to provide

related information such as read-aloud tips and information on the local library. All new program sites receive Reach Out and Read posters to hang. In some Reach Out and Read waiting rooms:

- Volunteers provide children with positive reading experiences and help parents understand that a picture or storybook is an easy, portable way to keep a young child engaged in almost any situation.
- Volunteers model read-aloud techniques that show parents by example that reading with children is a vigorous, enjoyable process.

Not all program sites have waiting rooms or wait times suitable for volunteer reader programs. However, all Reach Out and Read programs can develop a literacy rich environment.

For example, Reach Out and Read program sites can:

- Ask volunteers to collect gently-used books, sort them, and put them out on shelves in the waiting room so children of all ages can read in the waiting room and take them home (if quantities allow).
- Develop displays about the local library or post short poems, photos of their families (or providers!) reading aloud, and laminated posters in the waiting area.
- Provide posters and pamphlets about health literacy and family literacy opportunities available in the community.

12. How do programs interact with the National Center? Reach Out and Read staff members are available at info@reachoutandread.org or 617-455-0614 to provide ongoing technical assistance to our program sites.

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