



REACH OUT AND READ CONNECTICUT AND MASSACHUSETTS

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Reach Out and Read's Proposal to Framingham State University Nonprofit Giving Course

March 2018

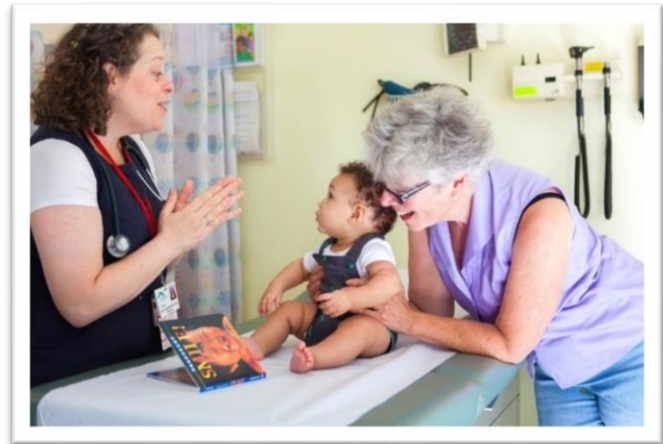
Organizational Overview & Mission

Reach Out and Read is grateful for the opportunity to submit this proposal to the Framingham State University Nonprofit Giving course. With this proposal, we respectfully request a grant of \$10,000, which would provide 500 of Massachusetts' most disadvantaged children and families with a full year of our evidenced-based program.

Reach Out and Read was founded in 1989 at Boston Medical Center by pediatricians and educators who recognized the profound significance of early childhood in setting the stage for social-emotional health and achievement. Headquartered in Boston, today, more than 6,000 clinical locations nationwide implement our model. Our team of 31,700 medical providers distribute 7.2 million new books to 4.7 million children each year, reaching one in four low-income families. Reach Out and Read has been the subject of more than a dozen independent studies, which show that children served by our program are read to more often, have better expressive and receptive language skills, and are better prepared for success in school. In 2014, the American Academy of Pediatrics cited research on Reach Out and Read in calling literacy promotion "an essential component of primary care pediatric practice."

Reach Out and Read's three-part model is delivered during children's routine pediatric checkups, which typically occur at 2/3 days; 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, and 24 months; and 3, 4, and 5 years:

1. Trained doctors and nurses speak with parents about the importance of reading aloud, at least 20 minutes a day, starting in infancy. Strategies for language development and promotion of early literacy are modeled for parents, and techniques and materials are modified for adults who have limited literacy skills or speak another language at home.
2. At each regular checkup from six months through five years of age, the child receives a new book to take home and build their home library. Books are chosen to be developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate. During the visit, the doctor also uses the book to evaluate the child's development by her ability to turn pages, recognize numbers and letters, and engage in other age-appropriate reading activities.
3. Following their medical provider's advice, parents read aloud with their children more often and engage them in literacy activities like visiting the library and museums, far extending the program's impact outside of the exam room.



Codman Square Health Center (Dorchester, Massachusetts)

This model of integrating literacy into routine pediatric care is designed to meet families where they are; while less than one-third of children are enrolled in any childcare setting, more than 90% have received a well-child check-up



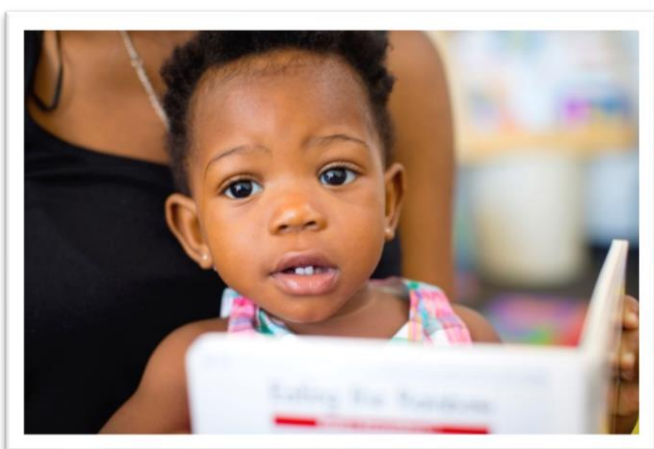
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in the past year (Child Trends, 2014). This means that Reach Out and Read has a distinctive ability to reach nearly all families. Leveraging the pediatric health care system builds on parents' trust in doctors and nurses as expert advisors on child development and helps us minimize our costs. Because Reach Out and Read makes reading aloud a "doctor-recommended" activity, parents are far more likely to make it part of their daily routine. As a result, young children from at-risk families build their literacy and oral language skills and become better prepared for school – as they learn the joy of reading.

Our Request

A grant of \$10,000 from the Framingham State University Nonprofit Giving Course would be used primarily for direct program expenses, including personnel and benefits for Massachusetts program staff (Program Director and



Codman Square Health Center (Dorchester, Massachusetts)

Program Coordinator); program training, evaluation, and support; books, other program materials including bookmarks and parent handouts, and supplies to create literacy-rich clinic environments; professional services (State Medical Director); travel to and from programs for quality assurance visits and conferences; and equipment and communication expenses for program staff.. A small portion would also be allocated for support services provided by the Reach Out and Read National Center (Finance, IT, Human Resources, Marketing, Research) and for office supplies, postage, and other administrative expenses.

Your investment would support the following:

1. Reach Out and Read will purchase at least 1,000 new books for our partner medical providers to distribute to young children in Massachusetts during well-child visits.
2. Medical providers will speak with parents about the importance of reading aloud to their children and offer tailored tips and strategies to support early literacy.
3. All medical providers at new program sites will complete Reach Out and Read's recently updated Continuing Medical Education-accredited training to ensure their knowledge of the latest research related to emergent literacy, best practices in promoting literacy within the primary care visit and Reach Out and Read's model.
4. Reach Out and Read program staff will promote fidelity to and high-quality implementation of our model by conducting regular check-ins with our medical clinics, providing ongoing technical assistance, and creating action plans to address any obstacles to successful implementation.

Goals and Evaluation

Our objective is to improve emergent literacy and social-emotional health during the span of rapid brain growth and development between birth and age five, particularly in economically disadvantaged families who are at risk for adverse outcomes. We do this by partnering with pediatric medical providers who encourage parents to read aloud

regularly with their children and provide the knowledge and tools families need to nurture early learning and provide the best start for their children.

Based on our extensive research base, we expect the following outcomes for the 500 children and their parents who will receive our early literacy intervention with your grant:

- Parents increase their knowledge and practice of reading aloud, and participating children have high-quality, age-appropriate books at home. Understanding that reading aloud every day is important for their children, parents are more likely to read regularly.
- Empower parents and caregivers with strategies for strengthening their children's basic language abilities. Children will gain foundational literacy skills needed for school success. During the preschool years, children served by Reach Out and Read score three to six months ahead of their non-Reach Out and Read peers on vocabulary tests; and
- Ensure our clinics in Massachusetts will deliver the Reach Out and Read program with high fidelity to our model, maximizing results for families.



Floating Hospital's Center for Children with Special Needs (Boston, Massachusetts)

We know from our evidence base that Reach Out and Read delivers results for families when it is implemented in accordance with our model. We are committed to regular program evaluation so that we can target areas for improvement to enhance program quality. We have developed these standard tools to assess the quality of program delivery at individual sites:

1. Semi-annual Progress Reports, submitted by providers, capture the number of books distributed, children served, demographics of the patient population, number of providers participating in the program, and other quality assurance data.
2. A Program Quality Assessment, completed by our Program Coordinators, evaluates the quality of the program.
3. Program Quality Site Classification Assessments completed for program sites, evaluate the four major elements of our program; medical providers, literacy-rich environment, books, and program management.
4. Our Medical Provider Survey is an annual self-assessment tool through which providers describe their interaction with our model.

Our Connecticut and Massachusetts team works closely with our clinics to collect accurate data and use it to improve program outcomes. These tools, together with provider training data, give our staff a complete picture of program implementation and quality.



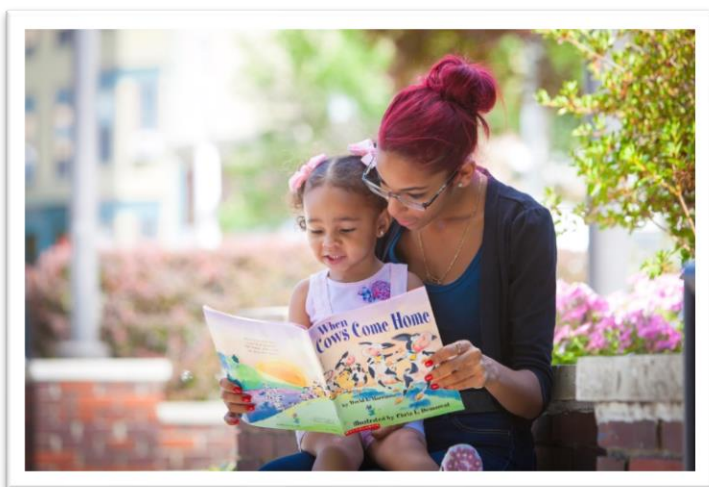
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Evidence of Success

With more than a dozen published studies confirming Reach Out and Read's positive impact, we know that our core model effectively engages parents to change behaviors around reading (see <http://reachoutandread.org/our-impact/reach-out-and-read-the-evidence/>). For example, Silverstein et al. (2002) found that both English- and non-English speaking families who participated in Reach Out and Read increased their weekly bedtime reading, and more parents reported reading as their own or their child's favorite activity (see also High et al. 2000, Weitzman et al. 2004, and Needlman et al. 2005). As a result, children gain vocabulary and other critical pre-reading skills needed for academic achievement. In fact, during the preschool years, children served by Reach Out and Read score three to six months ahead of their non-Reach Out and Read peers on vocabulary tests.

Recent research has underscored the importance of our program, not only to build children's pre-reading skills, but also for healthy early brain development. First, a study recently published in Pediatrics used imaging to study brain activity in 3- to 5- year-old children as they listened to stories. The images showed differences in activation of an area of the brain associated with learning to read, corresponding to how much the children had been read to at home. Another study compared word types in a variety of picture books that might be read aloud to young children with those in samples of child-directed speech. The results suggest that reading aloud to young children improves their language skills by exposing them to a greater variety of vocabulary than when parents talk to them.



Codman Square Health Center (Dorchester, Massachusetts)

In a recent column for The New York Times, our National Medical Director Dr. Perri Klass explains, “Reading picture books with young children may mean that they hear more words, while at the same time, their brains practice creating the images associated with those words — and with the more complex sentences and rhymes that make up even simple stories.” By engaging parents to read regularly with their infants and toddlers, Reach Out and Read establishes a framework for lifelong learning.

Beyond data and evaluation, Reach Out and Read is positively impacting children on an individual level. For example, one of our medical providers in Essex County, Massachusetts shared: “One of my patients

recently told me that the books her 2-year-old receives at his well child checks are the only books he owns. She is so grateful to have these so that she can read to her child at home and make this a part of his bedtime routine. If it were not for this program many of my patients would not have any exposure to books at all before starting kindergarten.”

Sustainability

We are committed to the long-term delivery of our program for high-need children and their parents. To ensure program sustainability, we seek funding from a variety of sources: foundations and corporations, individuals, and the government. Throughout the year, we continually submit requests for funding to support our Massachusetts programs. Our Connecticut and Massachusetts office works closely with local partners including The Irene E. and



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George A. Davis Foundation, The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, The Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts-Acushnet Foundation Fund, and Cape and Islands United Way, while also continuously seeking new funding. We recognize that growing our unrestricted revenue is critical to our ability to support our program in Massachusetts and nationwide, and so we are aggressively working to increase our fundraising from individual and major donors as well.

Demographics and Local Impact

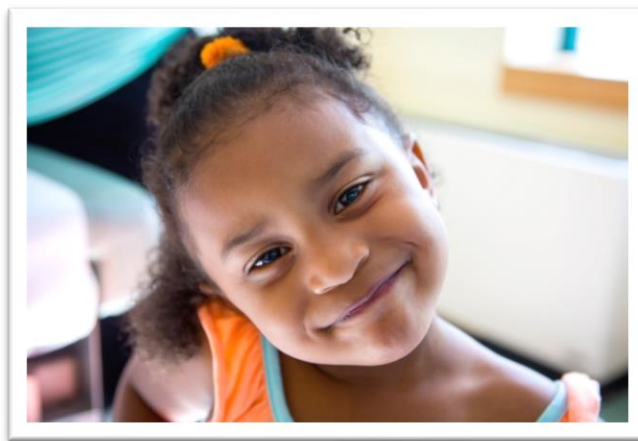
Our Massachusetts network includes 293 clinics and more than 1,550 medical providers who volunteer to deliver our program to more than 209,000 children and families annually. In the most recent year, we distributed nearly 328,000 new books statewide. The families we serve reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth. Among those for which information is available, 85% of families have incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level; 61% of children are uninsured or rely on public insurance. Thirty percent of children speak a primary language other than English at home.

In December, a local medical provider shared: “One parent confided to me that she does not read to her child because she could not read herself. She was from Guatemala and left school early to work. She wanted her daughter to be a good reader and felt that she could not support her in this. She was excited to learn that she could read the books with her daughter by discussing the images and the story that the images told, as well as having a conversation about the images and pointing and describing.”

Reach Out and Read is deeply committed to intentionally engaging a diverse, high-performing staff and board of directors that closely represent the communities we serve and reflect all segments of society. While the demographics of our constituents are not yet reflected in the composition of our staff, (12% racial and ethnic minorities), and board, we are striving to increase our diversity and have made recent progress in this respect; for example, the five members elected to our board in December 2017 include four women and one African-American.

Conclusion

We are grateful the students of the Framingham State University Nonprofit Course for your consideration of our proposal and hope to have the opportunity to host you on a site visit this April. Our partnership would empower pediatricians and families to work together to grow literacy in Massachusetts, one book, and one child at a time. Thank you.



Codman Square Health Center (Dorchester, Massachusetts)