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REACH OUT AND READ ANNOUNCES PLAN TO SERVE 10 MILLION CHILDREN BY 2030

*The nonprofit's new strategic plan outlines a goal to reach half of U.S. kids under 5,
focused on under-resourced areas*

BOSTON (July 30, 2024) – [Reach Out and Read](#), a national nonprofit that fosters parent relationships through shared reading, announced today a new growth plan, focused on more than doubling its reach, to serve 10 million children by 2030. Its new strategic plan, a roadmap for this dramatic expansion, demonstrates the 35-year-old nonprofit's continued commitment to providing resources and nurturing relationships that enable every child to learn and thrive.

“Our strategic plan lays the foundation for a better future for millions of under-resourced young children,” said Marty Martinez, CEO of Reach Out and Read. “To combat inequities, build stronger communities, and best serve children of all backgrounds, Reach Out and Read must become an essential component of pediatric care across the country.”

Reach Out and Read served 4.4 million children in FY23, providing books and guidance about the importance of shared reading at well-child visits in clinics nationwide. To reach half of U.S. children under 5 by 2030 with a focus on under-resourced communities, Reach Out and Read's strategic plan must build a sustainable, equitable path to growth.

Parent and pediatric nurse Nikki Becker knows firsthand the benefits of Reach Out and Read, in her professional life and at home. She shares books with young patients at their well-child visits and experiences the exam room from the other side, with guidance about reading aloud and a new book to take home, as a parent when her own children attend checkups. She uses “I Love You to the Moon and Back,” a book from a Reach Out and Read visit, to make meaningful connections with her 3.5-year-old daughter, Brielle.

“The whole family has the entire book memorized because we've read it so many times,” said Bekker, an RN at Gunderson Pediatrics Clinic in La Crosse, Wis. “She likes to say the words and kind of sing the story. It's a calming mechanism — we're rocking, getting ready for bed, and we still do the same interactions: the squeeze and the tickle and touching noses. And she gets all excited for all those little things, even having read it so many times.”

[Reach Out and Read](#) wants to profoundly increase its impact on not only families like the Becker's, but also to directly target those who are unlikely to already have books at home.

To kick off this process, the organization updated its vision to “a world where every child has the relationships essential to learn and thrive” and its mission to “strengthen all families with young children through guidance from medical clinicians about nurturing relationships through shared reading.” It also adopted new values, including inclusive collaboration, transformational change, and social justice.

“Children and families of all backgrounds should not only be able to access our program, but they should also see themselves reflected in it,” said Johnnetta Anderson, Reach Out and Read Chief of Staff. “We work to provide books that reflect the families we serve, but that’s only one part of our DEI commitment. Reach Out and Read is dedicated to ensuring our leadership, board members, National and Affiliate staff, and clinicians represent the communities in which we work.”

Reach Out and Read developed seven strategic goals to guide its seismic growth across the next three years.

- **Growth With Quality:** Reach 50 percent of all children 5 and under by 2030 with a focus on under-resourced communities.
- **Funding:** Achieve long-term, sustainable, and diverse funding to support the model and the organization for growth.
- **DEI:** Ensure the model is accessible and effective for all children and families and that diversity, equity, and inclusion are centered throughout the organization.
- **Infrastructure:** Evaluate and strengthen infrastructure to swiftly address challenges and build for growth and stability.
- **Brand Visibility:** Increase awareness of Reach Out and Read’s identity, value, proposition, and impact among policymakers, funders, health systems, through leaders, and the public.
- **Population-Level Delivery:** Establish Reach Out and Read as a critical, core component of pediatric well-child care for every child.
- **Centering Community:** Connect Reach Out and Read model and organization with other family-serving programs, organizations, and systems to advance stronger holistic support and outcomes.

“In today’s challenging political and social environment, the Reach Out and Read model offers a unifying opportunity to ensure all children get a strong start in life,” said Callee Boulware, Regional Director of Reach Out and Read. “We want to send a message to policymakers, partners, and early childhood advocates to join us in making Reach Out and Read a new standard in pediatric care.”

More than 36,000 Reach Out and Read clinicians use pediatric well-child visits, from birth through age 5, to provide parents guidance about how reading aloud together sets their children up for success, by fostering healthy early relationships, childhood development, and

literacy. Clinicians also give families free, age-appropriate, culturally relevant books. (The nonprofit provided 7.1 million books to young children in FY24.)

[Peer-reviewed](#) evidence shows that the Reach Out and Read model strengthens positive connections between parents and their young children while enhancing early language and literacy. Studies also suggest that Reach Out and Read increases attendance at well-child visits, improving health outcomes for children.

“We aim to create a world where every family uses shared reading to build the bonds needed for their children’s health and future,” Martinez said. “We invite you to join us on this revolutionary journey, working together to change the lives of children, families, and communities.”

To learn more about Reach Out and Read and its strategic plan, go to reachoutandread.org/strategicplan.

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About Reach Out and Read: As a 501(c)3 nonprofit, Reach Out and Read leverages the near-universal reach of the pediatric well-child visit to support caregivers in fostering healthy relationships with their young children through shared reading. The only national pediatric literacy model endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Reach Out and Read serves children in every state across the U.S., through 6,200 clinics and the expertise of 36,000 clinicians. Discover more at reachoutandread.org.