



**WISCONSIN**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bethany Rhodes | National Strategies Public Relations

Phone: 813-865-3093 | Email: brhodes@nspublicrelations.com

## **NEARLY \$45,000 OF RECORD-SETTING MACKENZIE SCOTT GIFT TO FUND REACH OUT AND READ WISCONSIN DIVERSE BOOK INITIATIVE**

*10 Reach Out and Read Affiliates, including Wisconsin, will be funded from this project*

WISCONSIN (Jan. 30, 2024) – [Reach Out and Read](#), a national nonprofit dedicated to promoting early childhood literacy and healthy early relationships, is using a record-setting donation by philanthropist MacKenzie Scott to support 10 projects at Reach Out and Read Affiliates, including \$44,995 to help families in Wisconsin. A total of \$400,000 will be invested in communities across the country. These projects strengthen Reach Out and Read’s shared goals, partnership efforts, and vision of growing the program nationwide. In FY23, Reach Out and Read served more than 4.4 million families with young children, working to strengthen parent-child relationships through shared reading.

Reach Out and Read Wisconsin will use the \$44,995 to establish a Mirrors & Windows project, which will deepen the dialogue with clinic staff about the importance of diverse books that both reflect children’s lives and offer windows into the experiences of other people. Funding will provide bundles of 10 to 15 high-quality, diverse books for clinics and education from staff.

“We chose our Mirrors & Windows project because we believe books with representation matter,” said DeDe Williams, Reach Out and Read Wisconsin Executive Director. “It gives children the opportunity to see themselves in the books they read. It can also introduce children and families to a wide range of people and culture, which helps them embrace differences and grow empathy.”

The new projects across Reach Out and Read’s national network will help build staff, relationships, and resources to enable the Affiliates to further foster early childhood development and literacy in their regions. This funding is the first major allocation from [the \\$8 million donation to Reach Out and Read by Scott](#) in 2023. Her commitment to addressing societal challenges aligns seamlessly with Reach Out and Read’s vision of building a strong foundation for children’s future success.

“This investment in our Wisconsin Affiliate is also an investment into the lives of the children and families there. Building healthy early relationships through shared reading and early

literacy is a powerful catalyst for positive change,” said Reach Out and Read CEO Marty Martinez. “We are grateful for MacKenzie Scott’s transformative gift, which is already helping us to create those moments that matter with their children.”

The remaining nine, growth-minded projects are:

- **Arizona:** Expand support to Reach Out and Read clinics; \$40,000
- **Bay Area:** Hire staff to secure sustained fiscal support; \$40,000
- **Carolinas/Mid-Atlantic:** Increase community partnerships; \$40,000
- **Florida:** Launch Clinician Learning Collaborative; \$40,000
- **Greater New York:** Purchase diverse books; \$40,000
- **Indiana:** Hire staff to secure sustained fiscal support; \$40,000
- **Michigan:** Fund books for statewide expansion; \$38,500
- **Northeast:** Hire staff to secure fiscal support for expansion into Maine; \$40,000
- **Northwest:** Expand public awareness throughout medical community; \$37,500

These Affiliates span diverse communities, transform pediatric care, and provide important resources to families. Reach Out and Read is excited to be able to further the work being done to positively impact the lives of children nationwide. This use of the Scott gift to invest in Affiliates and communities is an ongoing strategy that will continue to grow.

In FY23, Reach Out and Read served more than 4.4 million children and provided 7.1 million free books across 8.8 million well-child visits. More than two-thirds of the children served are from low-income families. Recent research in a [peer-reviewed study published in Academic Pediatrics](#) confirms the program’s effectiveness in increasing the frequency of parental reading. To learn more about Reach Out and Read and the programs offered, go to [ReachOutAndRead.org](https://ReachOutAndRead.org).

###

**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](https://reachoutandread.org).