

REACH OUT AND READ MINNESOTA

Annual Report FY-24

7/1/23 - 6/30/24

“I love the look on parents’ and children’s faces when they are given a book at a visit to take home. Often this is the first time they have been gifted a book. I treasure those little moments with my patients’ families.” - Ramlal, RN, at Hennepin County Public Health Clinic, Minneapolis

Reach
Out
& Read®



MINNESOTA

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Planting a seed for a healthier, happier future for Minnesota's kids

When a clinician hands a book over to a young child, there is usually an immediate pay-off: smiles! Parents and children love getting books and clinicians love giving them. While we cannot add up the exact number of smiles shared every year, we do have some data that backs this up. Clinics participating in Reach Out and Read see higher rates of well-child visit attendance and see higher rates of clinic morale and provider satisfaction. The data is clear; books make people happy.

We think these moments of joy are a good reason in and of themselves to be a part of our program. However, we know that the greatest benefits of our work will take many more years to pay off.

When children are supported by loving and attentive caregivers—when they are read to, sung to, spoken to, and told that they are loved—the positive effects last a lifetime. Children who are read to early and often do better in school. Shared reading can also mitigate toxic stress, thereby building resilience and allowing the brain to develop healthily. Evidence shows that positive early experiences can even reduce incidences of depression or poor mental health in adulthood. We could go on, but we'll choose to save the trees (or pixels)!

Our point is this: **loving, nurturing relationships create the foundation on which a lifetime of learning, health, and success is built.** By partnering with clinics all across the state, Reach Out and Read Minnesota can play a vital role in giving families the tools and the coaching they need to help their little ones take their first steps towards happier, healthier lives.

In order to achieve these enduring, wide reaching effects for all Minnesota children, Reach Out and Read Minnesota must be an enduring and wide reaching organization. Our ultimate goal is to make the quality implementation of Reach Out and Read the standard of pediatric care in Minnesota. We want every child, no matter their zip code, what their family looks like, or what language they speak at home, to benefit from the proven effects of our program.

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- [1. Reach Out and Read and developmental screening: using federal dollars through a health services initiative, 2021](#)
 - [2. Evaluating the Effect of Reach Out and Read on Clinic Values, Attitudes, and Knowledge, 2020](#)
 - [3. Preventing Childhood Toxic Stress: Partnering With Families and Communities to Promote Relational Health, 2021](#)
 - [4. Positive Childhood Experiences and Adult Mental and Relational Health in a Statewide Sample, 2019](#)

Over the course of this last year, Reach Out and Read Minnesota has taken some major steps to bring this vision closer to a reality. Last fall, we hired a full-time Program Coordinator, allowing us to provide more hands-on site support than ever before. With a more robust staff, we were able to perform over 170 site quality visits, nearly double the number of visits in the previous fiscal year. In June, we approved a new strategic plan charting a path forward to growing our program with an eye towards equitable reach and high-quality care. We also expanded our Building Connections Beginning at Birth program so that more families receive books and guidance right from the very beginning of their child's life. Throughout the year, we worked to broaden our selection of books so that every child can see themselves and their neighbors reflected in the pages.

By the end of the year, we saw these investments begin to bear fruit. Throughout the course of the year, our clinics distributed 320,234 books, an increase of more than 23,500 over last year. We added nine new clinics to our network, bringing our total to 305 clinics statewide. We also saw improvements in our provider training and book distribution rates. These numbers are major steps forward, but they are just the beginning of what we aim to achieve for Minnesota families.

Our plans for Minnesota are ambitious, and yes, it will take years to see the greatest benefits of our program come to fruition. **But for us, there is no doubt: Minnesota's kids are worth it.**

By planting the seeds now, we can set children up to flourish for decades to come. We're willing to make these investments and do the work. Will you join us?



Kris Hoplin
Executive Director

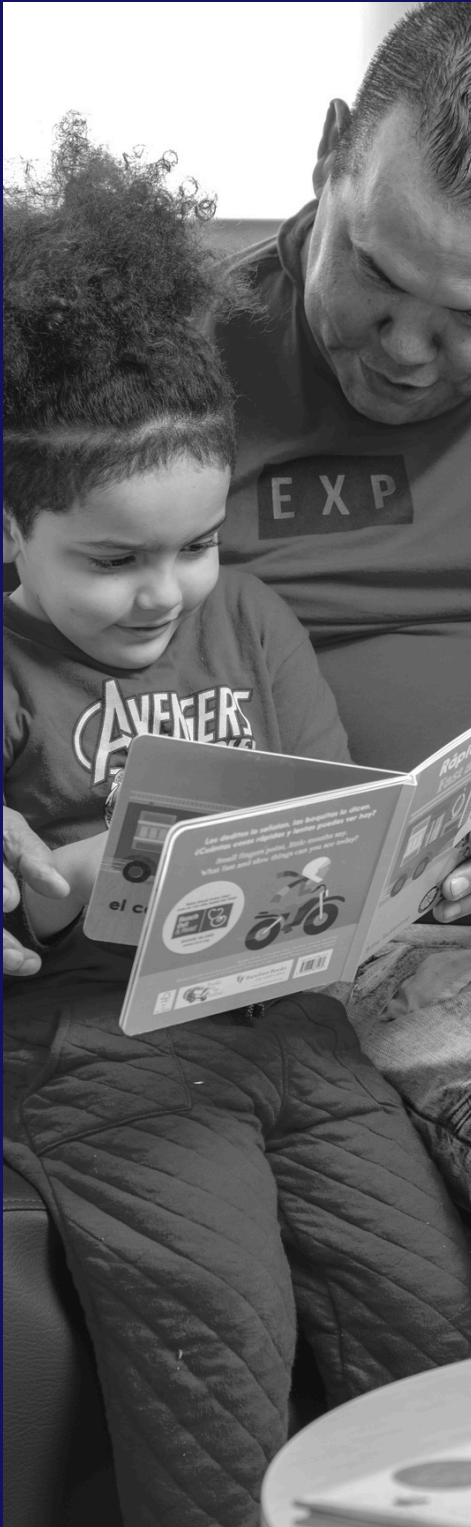


Janice Haines
Program Manager



Liam Mackin
Communications and Development Manager





Our Mission

We seek to strengthen all families with young children in Minnesota through guidance from medical clinicians about nurturing relationships through shared reading.

Our Vision

A Minnesota where every child has the relationships essential to learn and thrive.

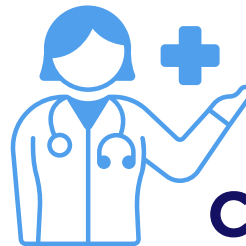
Our Work

At over 300 clinics across the state, medical clinicians trained in our program give books to children and give developmental guidance to parents and caregivers at their children's routine well-child visits. Our program gives young children and their families both the resources and knowledge they need to build a foundation for a healthier and happier future.

Reach Out and Read Minnesota is an independent 501(c)(3) affiliate of the national Reach Out and Read network.

REACH OUT AND READ
- MINNESOTA -
DISTRIBUTED

322,683
BOOKS



ENGAGING

2,583

CLINICIANS

INCLUDING PEDIATRICIANS, FAMILY PHYSICIANS,
NURSE PRACTITIONERS, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS,
AND OTHER PRIMARY HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

WITH AN **85%**
CLINICIAN
TRAINING
RATE



AND A **90% BOOK DISTRIBUTION RATE**

DURING ELIGIBLE WELL-CHILD VISITS

WHILE SERVING FAMILIES WHO SPEAK MORE
THAN **TWO DOZEN LANGUAGES** SUCH AS

SPANISH, SOMALI, HMONG,
ARABIC, OROMO, FRENCH,
CHINESE, AMHARIC, VIETNAMESE,
RUSSIAN, AND OTHERS.

OUR NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Reach Out and Read Minnesota has big things planned for our state's littlest learners and their families. As our program continues to grow across the state, we partnered with the local firm Creation In Common in order to create a comprehensive new strategic plan which will guide our work through the next three years (FY25-FY28).

Our new plan highlights four key outcomes which lie at the heart of what we hope to achieve:

- Grow our program's reach with an eye towards areas where we believe our program will have its greatest impact, prioritizing growth for historically underserved populations in the state. In order to maximize this impact we aim to serve every family with culturally responsive literature and care.
- Maximize our program's impact through meaningful investments in program quality and actively collaborating with other stakeholders in Minnesota's early childhood ecosystem.
- Build a robust and diverse base of funding in order to ensure stability for our clinic partners and catalyze growth.
- Create a more streamlined, structured, and efficient organization in order to better respond to the needs of our clinics and the families we serve.

If you would like to learn more about these objectives and our strategies both big and small which will help them become a reality, check out our strategic plan summary [here](#).

“Being presented with new books makes the children feel special. They look forward to a sometimes fearful visit to the doctor. Reading together helps their attention spans, increases their vocab, feeds their imagination and boosts their reading ability.” -
Staff at CentraCare Sauk Center



CELEBRATING OUR CHAMPIONS

This year our National Center released their inaugural Reach Out and Read Honor Roll to celebrate policymakers and corporate partners who have played a vital role in making our program possible for millions of children across the county. Here in Minnesota, we were fortunate to have two honorees. They include:

- **Representative Dave Pinto** (46B), a longtime champion of early childhood and family issues and advocate for our program at the capitol who played an instrumental role in each of our state funding campaigns since 2019
- **HealthPartners**, one of our state's major healthcare systems, who, in addition to fully funding our program at their 51 primary care clinics in Minnesota, leads the Little Moments Count coalition for early learning.

This year we were also thrilled to celebrate two more outstanding champions at our Spring Benefit in May. **Susan Goodemote, NP**, of Sanford Health Mountain Lake and Windom took home our Gerald Gilchrist Medical Champion Award for her hard work bringing the Reach Out and Read program to her two southern Minnesota clinics, as well as securing local funding to supply books for the new programs. **Senator Steve Cdwodzinski** was awarded our Diane Loeffler Legislative Champion Award for his enthusiastic advocacy for our program in the Minnesota Senate, including lead authoring our senate bill, which led to a major investment in our program from the state in 2023. You watch Susan Goodemote and Sen. Cwodzinski accept the awards in the recording of our 2024 breakfast [here](#).



Kris Hoplin presents National Honor Roll award to Dr. Andrea Singh and Dr. Christian Nagal of HealthPartners



**Susan Goodemote, NP
Winner of 2024 Gilchrist Award**

EXPANDING OUR CATALOG

35 FOR 35 AND MIRRORS & WINDOWS

Reach Out and Read Minnesota is constantly seeking out the best books for our clinics: books that families can relate to and see themselves in, books that teach children about the many different people they share the world with, books that families can get excited about reading. After all, we think families are more likely to read together when they like the books they have at home!

This year we were thrilled to participate in the 35 for 35 initiative, a collaboration between Reach Out and Read and Scholastic to celebrate 35 years of the Reach Out and Read program nationally. Through this initiative, in which 35 brand new, diverse titles, representing the many different types of families, communities, and cultures we serve, were made available to our program at a deeply reduced cost. Reach Out and Read Minnesota ordered 21,875 of these brand new books for our clinics statewide, which were received enthusiastically by clinics and families. Each of these titles is now available for our clinics via the Scholastic Reach Out and Read store.

We have also continued to make strides forward with our local Mirrors & Windows diverse book initiative. Recent grants from The Ciresi Walburn Foundation, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, and CenterPoint Energy have allowed us to purchase new collections of books which represent the many diverse communities we serve in Minnesota. These grants have allowed us to work with local publishers, such as Black Bears and Blueberries, a Cloquet based Native owned publisher which publishes books centered on Native American languages and cultures.



TAKING OUR MESSAGE TO THE AIR

OUR PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

We want every parent and caregiver in Minnesota to know: reading, singing, and talking to young children helps build their brains and prepares them for a happier, healthier future. Thanks to an investment from our National Center, we are now embarking on a new campaign to amplify this message in key communities all across the state.

We are taking a multi-channel approach, including digital billboards, original content for local publications ([check out our articles in the Sahan Journal](#)), community radio, digital advertising, social media advertising, and more in order to reach parents and caregivers in every corner of the state. Our hope is that through accessible and practical messaging, we can empower families to take simple steps to aid their children's development in the critical first years of life. We also want to let families know that they can receive brand-new books and developmental coaching through our program at more than 300 clinic sites statewide!



BUILDING CONNECTIONS BEGINNING AT BIRTH

EXPANDING OUR PROGRAM TO EARLY INFANCY

The science makes it clear: it is never too early to start reading to babies. While babies may have shorter attention spans, research tells us that they benefit immensely from the language rich environment—and the snuggles—that sharing a book provides. The relationships that develop between child and caregiver during the crucial first months of life shape the trajectory of everything that follows: child development, family resilience, and perseverance through adversity.

For this reason, Reach Out and Read Minnesota is seeking to gradually roll-out our Building Connections Beginning at Birth program, in which our program is implemented starting at the four well-child visits between birth and 5 months. At these visits, clinicians give brand new books and guidance tailored to infants and their parents and caregivers, empowering them to bond and learn together right from the start. In FY24, Reach Out and Read Minnesota brought this program to six new clinics in the state, each serving a high priority population. So far, the program has been received enthusiastically from both clinicians and families; we look forward to sharing our initial results with the rest of our clinic network!

You may have seen the Reach Out and Read program highlighted in local and national media over the past year. In case you missed it, we've gathered a few of the highlights below:

Minneapolis Officially Recognized as a UNICEF Child Friendly City

Reach Out and Read was cited as a key factor in Minneapolis's recent designation as a UNICEF Child Friendly City. As a part of this effort, Reach Out and Read Minnesota partnered with Hennepin Healthcare to distribute books highlighting children's rights at the 5 year well-child visit.

FORBES

Why Volunteers Are Reading to Babies at HCMC

Mpls.St.Paul Magazine highlights the dedication of a team of volunteers reading to infants as a part of our Reach Out and Read in the NICU initiative. Volunteers, including University of Minnesota medical students, read to infants when parents and caretakers cannot be present, helping soothe the infants and provide important developmental stimulation.

MPLS. ST. PAUL MAGAZINE

How Reach Out and Read Is Improving Early Literacy and Job Satisfaction

Mike Mercer, MD, board member and physician at Allina Health United Family Physicians, and Liam Mackin, Communications and Development Manager at Reach Out and Read Minnesota, speak with the Minnesota Family Physician about how our program benefits young children and their families as well as the clinicians providing them care.

MINNESOTA FAMILY PHYSICIAN

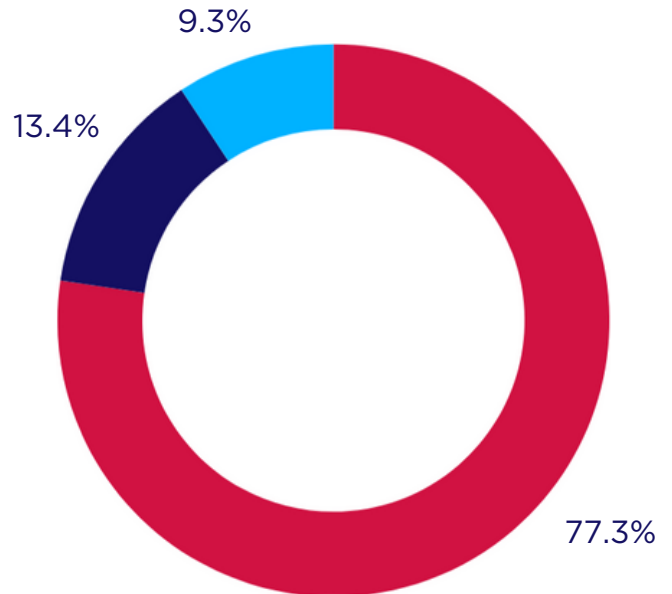
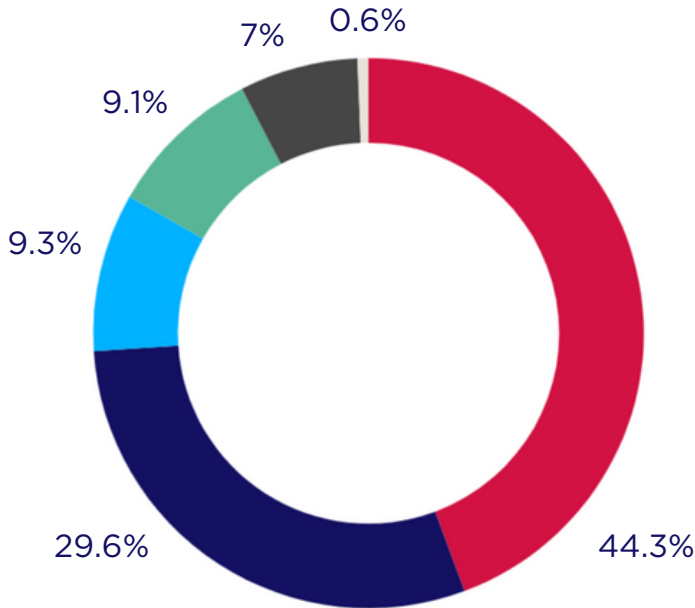
Sanford NP Reaches Out With Free Books at Child Visits,

The winner of our Gerald Gilchrist Medical Champion Award, Susan Goodemote, NP, is celebrated by Sanford Health for her outstanding advocacy for our program and her young patients.

SANFORD HEALTH NEWS

REVENUE: \$564,048

EXPENSES: \$584,239



- General Grants: \$167,200
- Individual and Corporate Contributions: \$52,524
- Government Grants: \$250,000
- Events: \$51,483
- In-kind donations: \$39,205
- Investments and other: \$3,637

- Program
- Fundraising
- Admin

“Many children feel nervous when they come to the doctor’s office, and it’s heartwarming to see how a simple book can help ease those fears. It’s not just about reading—it’s a powerful tool that allows providers to connect with their young patients, making them feel more comfortable and cared for. Seeing that connection form, knowing it’s creating a positive experience for both the child and the provider, is special!”

- Staff at CentraCare Pediatrics, St. Cloud

Foundations, Corporations, and Other Organizations who stepped up to support Reach Out and Read Minnesota in FY24

Note: this list does not include individual donors or anonymous donors

\$250,000

Minnesota State Department of Education

\$20,000-\$40,000

CenterPoint Energy Foundation

Ciresi Walburn Foundation

Otto Bremer Trust

Reach Out and Read Inc.

\$10,000-\$19,999

Art and Martha Kaemmer Fund of HRK Foundation

Hugh J Andersen Foundation

Julia Kaemmer Fund of HRK Foundation

Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

\$5,000-\$9,999

All About Books

Children's Minnesota

HealthPartners

Indian Health Services

(distributed through Reach Out and Read Inc)

Primrose Schools of the Twin Cities

Z Foundation

\$2,500-\$4,999

Allina Health

Best & Flanagan

M Health Fairview

Mayo Clinic

\$1,000-\$2,499

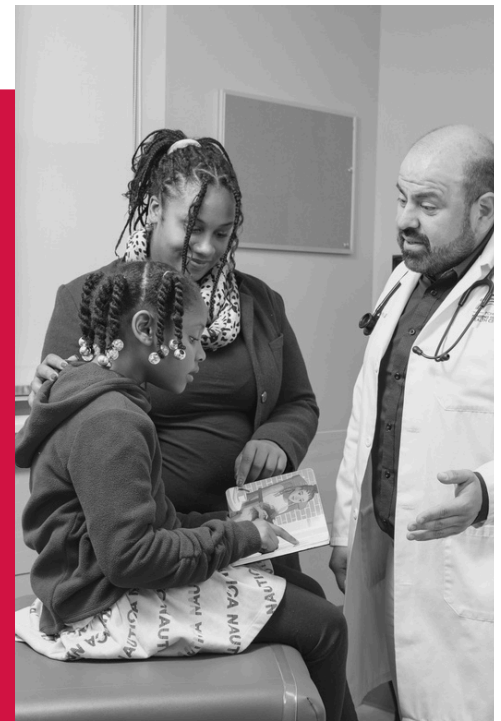
Blaze Credit Union

Books4School

Carlson Family Foundation

Delta Dental of Minnesota

Hennepin Healthcare



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Senior Director, Collective for Community Health, Children's Minnesota



“One of my favorite Reach Out and Read moments was when a young child skipped out of the clinic announcing to the world that they got a new book!” - Staff at Children's Minnesota Partners in Pediatrics Minnetonka Clinic

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