



New Thoughts on Literacy Rich Pediatric Waiting Rooms

Ron Bailey, National Programs Director

What is this thing we call “early literacy intervention” as it is perceived by children and parents in the waiting room of their pediatric clinic? Is it a poster on the wall? A pleasant volunteer who reads on Wednesday mornings? A gently used donated chapter book to read with your sister?

It is all of these things—and can be much more. Remembering the goals we share with other educators is the key: Early literacy skills involve the development of capacities which will help the child learn to talk and to read and to write. Early literacy support also involves a goal cherished in Reach Out and Read programs: developing with the child a desire to talk and read and write and fostering the understanding that books are sources of pleasure and information.

So along with the volunteers reading whenever possible in our waiting rooms, and with gently used books available for the taking, there are other opportunities to enhance waiting room literacy support.

Consider the pediatric waiting room: curious infants, rambunctious preschoolers, school-age siblings, young parents, sick children. Our challenge is to give them all a little something “literacy-rich” in the minutes they are there.

We can break this down at a few developmental ages and easily look for opportunities for “literacy mini-interventions” before the family even gets to the provider and the exam room.

How do you get parents and infants and toddlers talking—using new language—together in the waiting room? One line of thinking is to provide some cues: a tape of lullabies and nursery songs

2005 Conference Highlights

Nearly 300 ROR doctors, nurses, coordinators, and supporters joined us at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Washington, D.C. to participate in a lively and productive three day conference. We lead off with a highly successful Capitol Hill Day (see page 2 for more details). Then we attended workshops and plenary sessions, enjoyed delicious food provided by our corporate partners **Alpha-Bits**, **Scholastic**, and **Target**, and as at past conferences we talked and talked about our programs, our waiting rooms, our books, and our patients.

Patton Tabors, EdD, from the Harvard University School of Education, provided useful information about an often highly charged topic—talking about literacy with parents from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Authors **Todd Parr** and **Mem Fox** each delivered inspiring and entertaining plenary sessions, and



Todd Parr

graciously joined us for extended book signings. A new workshop this year focused on Literacy Rich Waiting Rooms. That session was so well attended that we are including the remarks by **Ron Bailey**, ROR National Programs Director and workshop leader, in this edition of the newsletter.



Mem Fox

Reach Out and Read Goes to Washington!

Matt Veno, Director of External Affairs

Kelly Taranto, Advocacy and Development Manager

On May 12th, there was plenty of excitement, plenty of enthusiasm, and plenty of “buzz” as Reach Out and Read held our first Capitol Hill Day in Washington, D.C., as part of our national conference. The day began with an inspirational training lead by Stephanie Vance from AdVanced Consulting, after which 105 doctors, nurses, coordinators and other friends of ROR fanned out across the Capitol to meet with their representatives in the U.S. House and Senate, introduce them to ROR, and ask for

their support. Before day’s end, 186 such meetings had taken place.

Those with meetings on the Senate side of the Hill had a specific request to make, and the outcome was very positive. The Senate “dear appropriators” letter

closed for signature the following day with 49 signers (20 more signers than we had before Hill Day!). ROR also received

a mention in the Senate Congressional Record as a result of a meeting with ROR advocates. We are already planning some form of annual presence in the nation’s Capitol; stay tuned.

If you weren’t able to attend Capitol Hill Day, we urge you to do your part during the month of August and host your U.S. Representative or Senator for a visit to your ROR program. Most Members of Congress are back in their districts during the August recess. Organizing a site visit is fairly simple and just requires a few steps. The first step is to contact the ROR National Center’s Government Affairs office:

legislativeaction@reachoutandread.org or
617-629-8042, ext 224

We can help you get started in inviting your Member of Congress to your program. If you schedule a site visit with your U.S. Representative or Senator, contact us immediately! Not only can we help you plan a very successful event, we also may be able to get you 1,000 new books donated to your program by Scholastic in honor of your Representative or Senator. Visit our Legislative Action Center for more information:

<http://capwiz.com/ror>

Introducing our Department of Institutional Advancement

In order to assure a more coordinated national fundraising effort, a new Department of Institutional Advancement has

been created, incorporating the former departments of Development and Government Affairs. Led by **Anne-Marie Fitzgerald**, the re-organized department will encompass all activities related to public and private fundraising, as well as advocacy. **Matt Veno** will continue to work with ROR on a consultant basis while **Kelly Taranto** will continue her activities related to grassroots advocacy as she becomes increasingly involved in both donor and legislative events.

We are delighted to welcome three new department members.

Julia Van joins the department as Director of Development. A previous Director of Foundation Relations at the City Year National Headquarters in Boston, Julia also served as a Community Partners Program Officer for the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation where Reach Out and Read was part of her portfolio.

Katherine (Kit) Blundo is our new Manager of Individual Giving. Kit comes to ROR from Cary Memorial Library in Lexington, MA where she raised money for library renovations. She also has experience in the independent school sector where she worked on a campaign to add a middle school program to an existing elementary school.

Sarah Holmes, who joins us from the Kerry-Edwards campaign, is the new Development Assistant. She replaces **Beth Krueger**, who is shifting her responsibilities full-time to the Communications Department.

**Staff
Notes**



Stephanie Vance, Advocacy Guru, trains ROR providers and coordinators to “Go Forth and Advocate” during ROR’s Capitol Hill Day.

Focus on a Trainer:

Jackie Miller talks with **Kyu Rhee, MD, MPP**

Kyu Rhee, MD, MPP has been involved with ROR since his residency in Los Angeles. Dr. Rhee is now the ROR medical coordinator for the Unity Health Care sites in Washington D.C. and is also president of the Association of Clinicians for the Underserved.

What do you enjoy most about being a ROR trainer?

Meeting so many different types of people all over this country who are so excited about pediatric literacy and the ROR model!

What difference has giving books to the kids made—for you, the parents, the children?

Giving a book to a child when you first enter the exam room changes the dynamics of the entire clinic and the well-child care visit. Kids look forward to the books. They want to read in front of you. Parents demonstrate pride in the fact that their children are reading to them and sometimes even teaching them.

With the problems with health literacy that are so prevalent in underserved communities, Reach Out and Read is helping to prevent the next generation from having similar problems.

What new training materials would you like to have?

I always have a part at the end of my trainings where the audience gets to participate in a pretend well-child care visit with a ROR book. Usually, I get a doctor to act like a 2 year old, another staff member to act as the parent, and a clinician to engage the pretend 2 year old and the parent. This is a very fun part of the training where people get to participate. I'd like to see more materials for role-playing as it works so well as a teaching tool.

Have you seen ROR make a difference for residents learning to do well-child visits?

Yes. I have residents who are now practicing clinicians who have started new ROR programs and say that they can't see doing pediatrics without it!

What is the one thing you'd like to tell new sites about setting up trainings?

Involve everyone in the team. ROR is a transdisciplinary team effort. The whole staff has something to contribute whether it is donating some used books to promote literacy in the waiting rooms, helping to get and thank the volunteers, making sure that ROR fits within the flow of the clinic, or fundraising for your local ROR program.



Kyu Rhee, MD, MPP

2005 National ROR Provider Survey Completed!

Barbara Ducharme, National Programs Projects Manager

Thanks to each primary care provider who recently completed the online Provider Survey! Nearly 800 unique ROR programs were represented in this most recent survey, and here are highlights of your responses:

- **54%** of all on-site ROR Medical Directors convene re-trainings for their ROR participating providers at least once per year,
- **73%** of participating providers give literacy guidance and books in at least 80% of their health supervision visits for ROR-age children,
- **61%** of providers report that they always or usually are able to use the book as a developmental assessment tool in the health supervision visit,
- **54%** of this sample of ROR providers give the book to the child at the very beginning of the health supervision visit,
- **77%** of participating providers report that books are easily accessible for health supervision visits, and
- **68%** say that the books they have available are always age-appropriate for their ROR-age patients

We look forward to using this information to plan provider training and coordinator orientation strategies for ROR. And thank you for all you do to make Reach Out and Read a quality clinic program!

Developmental Tools Workshop

Why We Like This Book

Jackie Miller, MLS, National Programs Coordinator

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed

- The fast-paced rhyme makes for enjoyable reading for both children and adults.
- The antics of the monkeys are always humorous-even after frequent readings.
- Lively illustrations offer a fresh view on a classic rhyme.
- It's just plain fun to read aloud!



ROR providers have a unique opportunity to make a real difference in the life of a child by giving a book and discussing literacy with the parent. We encourage you to share these suggestions with

your colleagues. If you have a favorite book and tips about how you talk about it with families, please send your suggestions to training@reachoutandread.org

Using the Book *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed* as a Developmental Tool in a Residency Program



Babar Hasan, MD

Abigail Klemsz, Attending Physician, Riley Children's Hospital

Abigail Klemsz, MD, a ROR National Trainer and attending physician at The Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis, IN, enjoys using the fun-filled rhyming book, *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed* when children come to her clinic for their health supervision visits.

Playful illustrations of misbehaving young monkeys, their exasperated mother, and the kindly doctor complement the predictable rhyme while providing the medical provider with a chance to assess how speech development is progressing. In a residency program, the opportunity to begin an exam with a brand

new book to offer each child is priceless: it's a way to develop a fast friendship with youngsters as the resident and child share the child's latest book.

Dr. Babar Hasan, a third year pediatric resident at Riley Hospital for Children, comments on using *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*, "I like the book because it depicts a pediatrician being a part of the family. Having a doctor in the story reinforces the connection between the doctor and the patient and that the role of the doctor is to help you. It helps me get connected to my little ones. Between a pediatrician and the child, speaking in rhyme not only gives you insight into language development, it's fun to do!"

Abigail Klemsz, MD: I like to use *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed* when I teach the residents about ROR. When I say "...five little monkeys jumped on the bed...", the residents all know the correct rhyme is "...HEAD!" The book helps them understand how children can learn to fill in the blank in their favorite stories. And it helps to illustrate how important predictable rhyming stories are in the development of phonological awareness and pre-reading skills.

And of course we celebrated. In particular we congratulate **Mary Ash** who received the 2005 Richard Robinson Award. Mary, a certified Child Life Director, has worked with the ROR program at the Harriett Lane Pediatric Primary Care Clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore since its inception in 1997.

Mary has been a passionate supporter of ROR and her efforts have resulted in a strong and thriving clinic program. Early on she introduced an innovative volunteer reader program which encouraged hospital employees to read in the waiting room. We were delighted that Mary, her colleagues and family were able to join us in this celebration.

Finally, at the end of each conference, the inevitable question is raised—"Where will we be next year?" Last year, we began an experiment, partnering with the

Pediatric Academic Societies' at their Annual Meeting in San Francisco. We were very pleased with the outcome and decided to give it another try this year in D.C. Again, we felt that the affiliation was advantageous, helping to increase the ROR visibility within the pediatric academic medical community.

Therefore, we are pleased to announce that next year, we will continue our affiliation with PAS, and hold our conference in San Francisco, April 28–29th, 2006. We are already beginning to put an exciting program in place—so please mark your calendars and plan to join us in San Francisco!



Mary Ash, recipient of the 2005 Richard Robinson Award.

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playing softly, posters suggesting quiet games like "Patty-Cake" or "This Little Piggy." Funny pictures and books with funny short stories can provoke new conversations. Posters which reflect the cultures and countries from which your families come—or the places they now live—may trigger conversations.

How do you start parents and preschoolers reading together pleasurably in the waiting room? Consider safe inexpensive handmade materials which prompt easy reading. Little table posters in plexi-glass frames might show text and pictures of "Itsy Bitsy Spider" which so many parents and children know—and can "read." A table poster of "Peter Piper Picked a Peck..." might prompt some language fun.



You can support early writing skills at several age levels in a waiting room without a lot of hassle. At Boston Medical Center the volunteers often wheel around a little "art cart" to the table. With just a few prompts in subject matter, children will draw and write with crayons—parents or volunteers can supervise.

High quality videos of adults reading good books aloud may help you adapt the dreaded waiting room TV for literacy interaction. Susan Straub's new video, "Reading with Babies" is an excellent video and DVD of about 50 little scenes of parents sharing books with infants and toddlers—fun for everyone in the waiting room to watch. Some clinics have made their own videos of clinic doctors reading, acting out and singing familiar ROR books, and some ROR clinic systems have made videos of firefighters, policemen and seniors reading familiar picture books aloud while in their work settings. The best of these actually show the reader reading with the book in plain view. Some have been put on loops to repeat—until the receptionist has had enough!!

Finally, how can we offer parents, some of who have limited reading skills themselves, easy non-embarrassing ways to show their interest in literacy? Look for predictable books and materials with easy text. Eric Carle's books, especially *Brown Bear*, are classics of repetitive rhythms which most any adult reader can read aloud with ease and flair—even in a public setting like the waiting room. With a plastic library cover, a copy of *Brown Bear* or of *Jump Frog Jump* could bring many moments of reading pleasure to waiting families.



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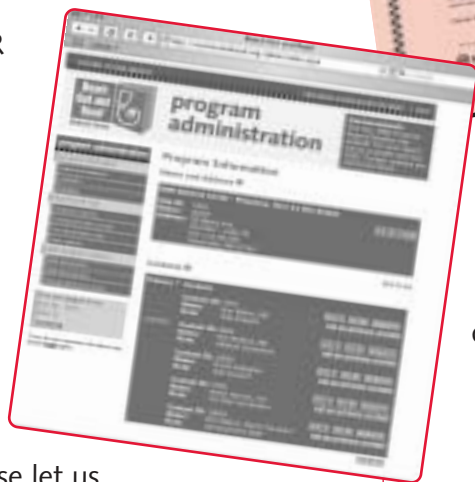
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Programs Announcements

Make the ROR Website Work for You!

We are excited to announce some important enhancements to the Program Administration section of our website: www.reachoutandread.org. Now in addition to completing your Progress Reports on-line, you will be able to access a variety of helpful ROR documents—from the Parent Survey to fundraising templates. You can also purchase ROR merchandise and materials (items that are unavailable in the ROR catalog).

The process is simple. Log-on from the Program Administration box on the ROR homepage. On the left you will see the menu indicating both the documents and merchandise sections. You can search by Category and Keyword. If there are additional items that you think would be helpful to have posted, please let us know. And please continue to check back, as new items will be posted as available.



2005 ROR Programs Manual

The new edition of the Reach Out and Read Program Manual is now available.

All ROR programs will receive a copy via UPS by the end of July.

The Manual is also available as a PDF on the ROR website. You will find it in the Programs section—or log-on to Programs Administration where it is available in the new documents section.