Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am pleased to present the Reach Out and Read Annual Report for 2015–16. This has been a year of many exciting developments for Reach Out and Read – a testament to your dedicated support! I would like to express our sincere thanks for your partnership as we continue to expand into new localities and clinics to reach more families with our message about the importance of reading aloud.

We were thrilled at the significant recognition of the value of our program in December 2015, when the Every Student Succeeds Act was passed into law. This law authorizes the Reach Out and Read model in federal education policy for the first time, and was the culmination of years of advocacy on our behalf by our Reach Out and Read champions in the government.

As a commitment to giving our 28,000 providers with tools to help them implement the Reach Out and Read program, our National Staff initiated a revision of our training in 2016. This included the production of 11 new videos covering topics such as screen time for young children, talking and reading to infants, and families for whom English is a second language. They are a wonderful record of what Reach Out and Read looks like in the exam room and can be seen on YouTube – please click here!

One of the highlights for me this year, was our Leadership Conference held in Boston in May. For the first time in four years, we brought together not only clinicians, statewide leaders, program directors and medical directors that represent all 5,800 Reach Out and Read sites across the nation, but also many of our very active National Board of Directors. The conference provided an exciting and informative program, along with opportunities to connect across the network, share best practices, and tell stories about the difference Reach Out and Read makes for the children we serve. I believe that all of the participants took home with them an energy and enthusiasm for bringing reading aloud to as many families as possible across the U.S.

Of course, our focus always remains on the impact of the Reach Out and Read program – how we are giving the young children we serve a foundation for success. We were encouraged at the recent publication of an article in the New York Times entitled “The Good News About Educational Inequality.” A letter from our National Medical Director, Dr. Perri Klass, provides more details on pages 3–4; suffice it to say that the authors credit Reach Out and Read for contributing to a narrowing of the achievement gap. This is an amazing endorsement of the value of our work, and, as partners in our mission, we are delighted to celebrate this news with you.

I would like to express our sincere thanks to all of the staff, our National Board of Directors, our clinicians, our medical directors, and our hard-working local boards and volunteers for all that you do to make this such a wonderful year for Reach Out and Read. I am grateful for the support of our partners in the private sector, and to the families who continue to express their support and dedication to our programs.

Sincerely,

Thomas G. DeWitt, M.D., F.A.A.P.
Chair of the National Board of Directors
Reach Out and Read
Dear Reach Out and Read Supporters,

We were recently excited to read an article in the New York Times Sunday Review section, which cited Reach Out and Read as part of an important—and encouraging—trend that is big news for children and parents in this country, and should help and encourage us all in the work we do. “The Good News About Educational Inequality,” was authored by two professors of education and a professor of social work. In this piece, they discuss the apparent paradox that the performance gap between high-income and low-income children has begun to shrink, even though the economic inequality is worsening. In other words, they explain, “Children entering kindergarten today are more equally prepared than they were in the late 1990s.”

This improvement, they argue, is directly related to the parenting practices which help low-income children:

“What has changed is that low-income children are now getting more of what the political scientist Robert Putnam calls “‘Goodnight Moon’ time” than they did in the 1990s. That’s excellent news.”

They go on to raise the question of how this came about, in the setting of increasing income inequality, and here is what they say: “We suspect that in part this happened because of the widespread diffusion of a single powerful idea: that the first few years of a child’s life are the most consequential for cognitive development.” They point out that the achievement gap grew, in part, because of the ways that high-income parents “invested” in the cognitive development of their young children. The article goes on:

“Why are low-income families now adopting these parenting practices? It may be partly a result of public information campaigns like Reach Out and Read...”

You can read the full article online here. The authors are Sean F. Reardon, Jane Waldfogel, and Daphna Bassok.

As you know, we’ve been doing Reach Out and Read for 27 years now, and we’ve had a widespread network for almost two decades and continue to expand rapidly. Reading this article will give you a sense of how experts in other fields are measuring some of the most important outcomes that we are trying to affect every day in our exam rooms. It’s wonderful to see evidence that the education gap is narrowing, even if the income gap is not—that low-income children are coming to school with better skills and a better chance. And it’s great to see the efforts and dedication of all those parents acknowledged as the key factor that we know it to be—that “Goodnight Moon” time which does so much for children in so many ways.

When the authors of this essay cite us as one of the key interventions in getting out the message to parents, it’s a recognition of the time and effort that you have put in to build and support this network, and to help pediatric primary care providers deliver the message, the anticipatory guidance, the modeling, and the books to so many parents all around the United States, to help them do what they all want to do—give their children the best possible start.

As the authors say of Reach Out and Read and Too Small to Fail, “these campaigns represent an effort to ensure that our knowledge about the unique importance of early childhood helps everyone. Like a new medical innovation that is first adopted by the wealthy but then becomes commonplace, the emphasis on public and private investments in young children has helped turn a benefit for the rich into an equalizing force in society.”

We want to celebrate this news with you, our partners, and our supporters—above all, to celebrate what parents are doing for their children, and the ways that the children’s skills are improving—though, as the article points out, there is still a long way to go, and educating parents needs to be part of larger initiatives to reduce inequalities and disparities. We are proud to be acknowledged as part of this good news, and eager to work with you and your networks—and through them with families and clinicians—to go on making things better.

Warmly,

Perri Klass, M.D.
National Medical Director
Reach Out and Read
In 2016, Reach Out and Read continued our commitment to evaluation of our impact through independent research.

**A NEW RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE**

In May, 2016, Reach Out and Read medical advisors established a research collaborative of clinicians, researchers and Reach Out and Read coordinators with the aim of taking our research to the next level.

This collaborative, named the *Collaborative for Early Literacy and Brain Development in Primary Care* (otherwise known as LitNet), will develop and coordinate research projects, with a particular emphasis on large-scale network-based research that will further demonstrate the impact of our program on families and children.

*We hope to initiate our first such research project in the spring of 2017.*

**YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARDS**

For the last six years, Reach Out and Read has partially funded young investigators researching aspects of early literacy through the Young Investigator Award program. Results of work supported by this program include:

- Through brain imaging studies, John Hutton, M.D., demonstrated that when families read aloud and engage with their young children, there is increased development of regions of the brain associated with learning to read and higher thinking processes.

- Using LENA, a device that digitally records and analyses the number of words heard by young children, Adriana Weisleder, Ph.D., showed that Reach Out and Read stimulates an overall increase in the number of words and conversational turns between families and young children.

- Anna Miller-Fitzwater, M.D., M.P.H., assessed the new training for residents on how to implement Reach Out and Read for children ages 0 – 6 months. Residents found the training applicable and practical and that families were receptive to the concept.

**BRIDGING THE WORD GAP CHALLENGE**

Reach Out and Read was excited to be selected from more than 75 submissions as one of 10 Phase One winners of The Word Gap Challenge. The aim of the challenge is to “support innovative solutions that can help promote early-language development among children from low-income families in the U.S.”

We were awarded $10,000 to pilot an amplification of the Reach Out and Read model using video and mobile app technology:

- The message from doctors and nurse practitioners encouraging families to read aloud to their young children was reinforced by use of video shown during the pediatric checkup and accessible at home via a mobile app.

- Reminders sent via the mobile app increased the dose of the Reach Out and Read message.

In our small sample of subjects (26), the results were stunning:

- 100% Video motivated parents to do the activity
- 95% Parents found the reminders helpful
- 100% Parents very likely to continue this activity
We recently received this warming message from one of our Kentucky Program Coordinators:

“One of our Save the Children colleagues overheard a Mom and Dad talking at one of our joint events. She told us “The Dad said to the Mom ‘I didn’t know it was that important to read to my child.’ The Mom said ‘Now you know, you can read to them too. I don’t have to be the only one reading to them.’ So we know that at least one person really paid attention and hopefully will start reading to their children. I loved it when I heard that.”

**EXPANDING OUR “REACH”**

Between 2005 and 2015, we **expanded our reach** to more clinical sites at more locations across the USA.  

![](2005.png) 2005  

![](2015.png) 2015

We work with the American Academy of Pediatrics to establish the Reach Out and Read model as **standard pediatric practice** – following their landmark policy statement in 2014 promoting literacy as “an essential component of pediatric primary care.”

We provide books in 21 different languages – including Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish. Many of our materials are also produced in other languages.

We adapt our model for children with disabilities – updating our training to incorporate best practice and to include disabilities, such as autism, that are now more widely recognized and understood.

We create public-private partnerships – currently 15 states invest in the work of Reach Out and Read.

We implement our program in infancy – providing training and support materials that encourage Reach Out and Read Providers to start the program in the child’s first few months, when parent-child bonding has a significant impact on brain development.

We partner with other organizations – in 2016, we continued our joint initiative with Save the Children, funded by the federal Innovative Approaches to Literacy Program. This partnership has taken us into rural communities in the U.S., including the Navajo Nation, and focuses on building child-centered communities. We also partner with libraries, supporting our mutual interest in promoting early literacy.

We continue to make our program as accessible to as many families as possible:

- **Attending Routine Pediatric Checkups Every Year**
  - 91% of children under the age of 6 attend routine pediatric checkups every year.
We reach more children every year:

Your support is helping us to continue to grow at a rate of 5% every year.

That’s an additional 180,000 children every year and our aim is to keep going until we reach Every Child, Everywhere!

We gratefully acknowledge the following corporations, foundations and individuals who generously contributed to Reach Out and Read between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016

$1 Million plus
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Early Education and Care* Scholastic State of South Carolina

$500,000 - $999,999
William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust* U.S. Department of Education*

$100,000 – $499,999
Anonymous* Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation* BAE Systems The Boeing Company James M. Cox Foundation* Richard M. Fairbanks* Foundation

$25,000 - $99,999
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The impact of your gift in 2016:

4,500,000 CHILDREN SERVED. 5,800 PROGRAM SITES. 28,000 MEDICAL PROVIDERS. 6,500,000 BOOKS DISTRIBUTED. OPERATED IN 50 STATES AND D.C.

With the partnership of the Heising-Simons Foundation, this year Reach Out and Read piloted our Early Math Initiative in California and Minnesota, engaging nearly 5,000 parents to talk with their children about shapes, numbers, patterns, and other foundational concepts.

Over a three-year period, a generous grant from the William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust supported the expansion of Reach Out and Read’s model to 28,533 children growing up in low-income communities in Florida, Kentucky, New York, and North Carolina.

REVENUE & SUPPORT

- Revenue & Support: Total: $11,982,587
- Contributions: $4,554,853 33%
- Revenue & Support: Total: $10,816,779
- General & Administrative: $615,667 6%
- In-Kind: $3,044,060 25%
- Program: $9,235,020 85%
- Government: $4,007,877 33%
- Other: $375,797 3%
- Fundraising: $966,092 9%

EXPENSES

- Expenses: Total: $10,816,779
- Contributions: $4,554,853 33%
- Revenue & Support: Total: $11,982,587
- General & Administrative: $615,667 6%
- In-Kind: $3,044,060 25%
- Program: $9,235,020 85%
- Government: $4,007,877 33%
- Other: $375,797 3%
- Fundraising: $966,092 9%

IN-KIND

- In-Kind: $3,044,060 25%
- General & Administrative: $615,667 6%
- Program: $9,235,020 85%
- Government: $4,007,877 33%
- Other: $375,797 3%
- Fundraising: $966,092 9%

For greater detail, see our annual report at reachoutandread.org.
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Dr. Jay and Jacqueline Berkheimer
Bertsch Family Charitable Foundation, Inc.
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The Buffalo Rotary Foundation
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Richard and Nancy Cohen
The Community Foundation of the Dan River Region
The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina
Suzanne Crandall
Cultural Care Kids First Foundation
Paul Dabisch
Robert and Lenore Damrau

The Grossman Family Foundation has been instrumental in the growth and sustainability of Reach Out and Read in the Connecticut region since 2011.

Larry and Marcia Creb
Greenville County First Steps
Mary Guyette
Hartford Steam Boiler
Dr. Brooke Hata
Dr. Maxine Hayes
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Jennifer Taylor
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Donna and Bruce Templin
Joel Trugman
Heidi Tucholski

Longstanding support from the Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation has been critical in making Springfield, Massachusetts a Bookend City, where 100% of eligible pediatric practices participate in Reach Out and Read.

Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund
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United Way of Clallam County
Michael Venturini
Thomas and Marcy Vogel
Waccamaw Community Foundation
Abby Lutz Walsh
Winthrop Family Fund of the Coastal Community Authority

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Lamberto Andreotti
Bain Capital Children’s Charity
The Beaufort Fund of the Coastal Community Foundation
Bertsch Family Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Robert W. Booth Fund
Brandle Foundation
G. Richard Brown
Central Carolina Community Foundation

Funding from Carnegie Corporation of New York was instrumental in enabling Reach Out and Read to hold our 2016 National Leadership Conference, which convened our Board, staff and medical providers from across the country to discuss best practices in early literacy promotion.

Winnick Family Foundation
Woodworth Family Foundation
$1,000 – $4,999
Alamance Community College Savings Bank Fund
Alamance County Farm Bureau
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American Junior Golf Foundation
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Karen and Dr. David Asayama
The Atlanta Braves Foundation
Barnes & Noble Booksellers
Adrienne Barnett
Catherine Snow and Michael Baum
Barbara Oski Beane

The Stringer Foundation’s many years of general operating support have allowed Reach Out and Read to direct our resources toward communities and families with the deepest and most urgent early literacy needs.

Community Foundation of Henderson County
Community Foundation of South Puget Sound
Maria Dandrea
William and Ami Danoff
Joan Egie
Epic Systems
The Gerber Foundation
The Glass Foundation
Curtis and Dina Gray
Larry and Beth Greenberg
Mimi and Peter Haas Fund
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1211
Reach Out and Read is deeply grateful to BAE Systems for their long-standing support of Reach Out and Read. From donating more than 500,000 books last year to the significant discounts we receive on our programs to supporting our leadership conference, Scholastic consistently demonstrates its commitment to our work.

We are grateful to Scholastic Corporation for their long-standing support of Reach Out and Read.

PwC Matching Gifts
Stefany and Dr. William Raich
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Sallie Permar and Frank and Sandra Norman
Northwest Pediatric Center, Inc.
Michael Norworth
Panera Bread, Howley Bread Group
Sallie Permar and Matt Ferraguto
Primrose School of Greenville

Siu Wan and Jemima Huang Tso
Reach Out and Read Friends,

Every child, everywhere. That’s our vision, and I hope this report has shown you how much we value your partnership, how widely the effects of your contributions are felt, and how your support helps us reach more children throughout the year. Whether you gave directly to your Regional Office, or the National Center, please be assured that we strive to make every dollar count.

After a successful year, we are already well into an ambitious schedule for 2016–17!

While our technology infrastructure has served us well over the years, it no longer meets the needs of our network, or allows for expansion at scale. So, we are revolutionizing our data management platform to enhance connectivity with our partners, and improve data collection and reporting functionality. As you can imagine, this is a mammoth undertaking, requiring both a concerted effort to raise funds, as well as collaboration throughout the network to ensure that the new platform will benefit all our stakeholders.

This effort will impact all areas of our work — network communication, organizational efficiency, research and evaluation, and our capacity to build partnerships, both nationally and locally. Most importantly, it will enable us to deliver our program to more families, to motivate more parents to cuddle their children and share a picture book together, to give more young children a foundation for success.

Here at Reach Out and Read, we have always sought to evaluate the impact of our program, building a large body of published research that supports the efficacy of our model. We now aim to take our evidence base to the next level with an exciting new venture — we have established a research collaborative, LitNet, described on page 5, aimed at developing a cohesive and expansive research strategy. Starting in 2017, we plan to conduct a network-wide research project to further establish Reach Out and Read as a leader in early childhood development.

These are just two of a number of initiatives planned for the coming year. But, as you know, the dedication of our 28,000 clinicians, the commitment of our network leaders, and the generosity of our volunteers are the driving force of our organization. Thanks to their work and your support, Reach Out and Read continues to grow to reach more families and children, taking us ever closer towards our vision of giving the power of reading aloud to every child, everywhere.

With appreciation,

Brian Gallagher M.P.A.
Chief Executive Officer
Reach Out and Read
It’s so wonderful to see the transformation from a parent who says, “I can’t do this!” to one who can enjoy the bonds created through shared time together and who knows that they are giving their child a chance for success at school.”

Claudia Aristy, Reach Out and Read Program Director at Bellevue and Member of the Reach Out and Read National Board.