

Fall 2007

A Coalition of 192 ROR Sites and Satellites

Reflections from the Road

What you're thinking: *Where did those lovely books come from?*

What you're feeling: *Wow. This is so unbelievably kind.*

What you're pondering: *The very last gently used book in the waiting room went home with a family just last night. This morning, a donation suddenly arrives! How does this happen? The minute we need something, it seems to magically appear!*

But of course, it's not magic. There's no wand being waved except the wand of good intention. And, like all good magic, the trick with generosity is that it's usually not meant to be seen, even though, off stage, someone has indeed juggled a rabbit or two – not to mention boxes! And whose sleight of hand makes the delivery of thousands of donated books to dozens of ROR programs look easy? Who initiates these book drives?

The magicians are sometimes businesses and sometimes teens; sometimes anonymous families and sometimes your own ROR program's staff who just wish to "help out". In a global sense, they are truly your brothers and sisters. In a more local sense, they are your neighbors.

Spotlight on Staff...

Hello! My name is Nora Murphy and I am the new Massachusetts Programs Assistant. But I am also the new Boston Medical Center ROR Coordinator. Thus, my exposure to all aspects of ROR-in-action is certain to better help me help you, and that's what I'm here for.

It's wonderful to join the team here at Reach Out and Read.



Several months into it, ROR has been a big success at CCP! The word is even out in the community. I had a 9 year-old boy ask me if he would get a book like his baby cousin had at a past well child check. So, I told him, 'Maybe you could read your baby cousin's book aloud to him.' But now, with the donated books, I can give him one in the future!"

- Dr. Rashna Irani, Cape Cod Pediatrics, Forestdale (a new ROR program)

NEW PROGRAMS: Welcome to ROR!

We are pleased to note the addition of the following practices since our last newsletter:

Pediatric Healthcare of Brockton, Brockton
Pleasant Hill Pediatrics, West Bridgewater
Quincy Pediatric Associates, Quincy
Monson Pediatrics and Family Practice, Monson
Pediatric Associates of Malden, PC, Malden
Westfield Pediatrics, Westfield
Riverbend Medical Group, Agawam

And in a very specific sense, they are your program's guardian angels. For this issue, I hope you'll flip through the pages and find a few of them.

Thank you, Reach Out and Read donors and volunteers, and thank you, ROR doctors and nurses, for always expressing your gratitude when the magic, indeed, happens.

*- Gretchen Hunsberger
ROR-MA Programs Director*

As an avid reader, I feel as though I am in splendid company! I hold a degree in Child Life Therapy from Wheelock College in Boston. Child Life is hospital based social and emotional care for children who are chronically or terminally ill and their families. My previous positions include internships on the acute care units of Children's Hospital and Shriners' Hospital for Children with Burns. After college, I worked at Barretstown Gang Camp in County Kildare, Ireland. Barretstown is a camp which caters to children with cancer. Most recently, I worked right here in Boston for an organization called Horizons for Homeless Children.



Although I am passionate about the not-for-profit world, I do enjoy my personal time. I spend my time reading (shocking!), playing soccer, surfing/snowboarding, and delving into various artistic endeavors at which I am, at times, somewhat successful.

I would like to thank everyone for the warm welcome to ROR. I look forward to working with you!

From the ROR-MA Medical Director...

In the May 2007 issue of the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* (2007;161:473-479) researchers indirectly rose the banner a little higher for the importance of reading aloud to children in the first years of life. Drs. Zimmerman, Christakis and Meltzoff examined television and DVD/video viewing in children younger than 2 years of age. Yet by default, they endorsed everything that Reach Out and Read stands for.

The study consisted of a telephone survey of 1,009 parents of children aged 2-24 months in Minnesota and Washington state. Households where English was not spoken or a child had a major disability were excluded. They found that among these families, by 3 months of age about 40% of children regularly watched TV, DVDs or videos, and by 24 months this proportion rose to 90%. The median age at which regular media exposure was introduced was 9 months, and among those who watched by 24 months, those children were watching more than 1.5 hours per day. Parents cited "education", "entertainment" and "babysitting" as major reasons for this early media exposure. It is also notable that parents endorsed TV viewing as "education", yet only 32% endorsed that they "always" watched TV with their child. The majority of children, therefore, are viewing without parent scaffolding at least some of the time. These researchers described in detail how very young children start early and they watch a lot!

Earlier Christakis endeavors (*Pediatrics* 2006;118:2025-2031) looked at 12 controlled trials focusing on the effects of TV content rather than viewing time. For young children, while content viewing may expose children to material before they

begin formal school instruction, "entertainment programming" may displace time more appropriately spent in developmental activities (such as free play and social interaction). The studies reviewed were few in number and warrant further investigation, but they found some intriguing trends among infants and preschoolers. Specifically, while educational TV programs are successful in broadening children's knowledge, there is some evidence that viewing cartoons has a negative effect on their attentional abilities.



Both these studies challenge societal beliefs that TV is good for kids – and that if a little TV is good, then a lot of TV viewing even earlier must be better. What TV viewing can never do is replace the relational component of BEING with a child – something reading aloud excels at! In the 21st century, where parents are bombarded with media to help "create the perfect child in 12 easy DVDs," it is the challenge to pediatric clinicians to help support families in making realistic choices based on science and child development.

To further aid the challenge we all face in figuring out how to support families well, ROR-Massachusetts will be sponsoring a half-day CME course (4.5 credits) in Marlboro on October 20th, 2007, titled **Supporting Families in a Multicultural World**. For more details or to register, please visit the conference website at <http://www.bu.edu/cme/seminars/RORMA07/accreditation.html>

We hope you will join us!

– Marilyn Augustyn, MD
ROR-MA Medical Director



Above: (L to R) Elizabeth Boyle, MD, Nancy Miller, MD, and Susan McQuiston, PhD, at the Baystate grand rounds in July.

Grand Rounds at Bayside

Nancy Miller, MD, ROR-MA Physician Champion and pediatrician at Baystate Children's Hospital, along with developmental psychologist Susan McQuiston, PhD, and Elizabeth Boyle, MD, (ROR trainer and medical director at Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center), presented "Reach Out and Read and Early Language Development" at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield this past July for a Pediatric Grand Rounds there.

The 100 attendees included community and attending physicians as well as pediatric and medical/pediatric residents. A real crowd pleaser was the videotape created just for the Grand Rounds of Baystate residents sharing books and literacy guidance with patients – an engaging way to illustrate ROR in action!

Thank you, Nancy, for spearheading this presentation to the Baystate community.

Legislative Site Visits

Every August, during the summer congressional recess, ROR encourages members of Congress to visit individual ROR programs in their districts. In this way, they more personally experience ROR-in-action and can directly speak with medical providers about the positive impact on their constituents of hearing the ROR message and of being exposed to books and language early and often. Since January, 10 state legislators and members of Congress have visited ROR programs in various corners of the Commonwealth. They read to children, spoke with administrators, and continued their own education about the importance of early literacy intervention. Thank you, legislators, for supporting our work on behalf of the children of the Commonwealth! Pictured here are photos of some recent visits.



Above: Rep. Sarah Peake meets some children during her visit at Outer Cape Health Services in Wellfleet.



Above: Congressman John Tierney reading aloud at Cape Ann Pediatrics, Gloucester. **Far left:** Sharon Lindgren, UMass Memorial Literacy Coordinator, Angela Beeler, MD, State Sen. Richard T. Moore, David Keller, MD, and Donna Craig, ROR Coordinator at South County Pediatrics in Webster. **Left:** State Sen. Diane Wilkerson engages a little one at Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates-Copley in September.

¡Cuando leemos juntos, crecemos juntos! ...

... When we read together, we grow together!

This is true for all families, and helping families prepare their youngest children for kindergarten is frequently touted as a primary objective of Reach Out and Read. No less important, however, is the tenet that a children's book can also be a powerful tool in developing intangible bonds between parent and child. Speakers of Spanish will recognize this essential concept as *cariño*. Roughly translated as affection or fondness, *cariño* has become a fundamental element in ROR-National's newest initiative, *Leyendo Juntos* (Reading Together), designed to offer ROR medical professionals linguistically appropriate training and materials.

In this way, ROR hopes to effectively



Katie Sullivan to the rescue

In addition to reading to children while they wait for appointments, Boston Medical Center volunteer reader, Katie Sullivan, pitched in to ensure the supply of ROR books on ACC-5 would not dwindle this summer before the arrival of Nora Murphy, BMC's new ROR coordinator. Katie, originally from Buffalo, NY, has her MA in literacy from B.U. and is now a second grade teacher at Baker Elementary School in Brookline. Thanks for filling the physicians' book cart, Katie!

encourage Spanish-speaking mothers, fathers, and extended family members to read to their children and to learn from and build upon best practices that medical providers with various levels of fluency in Spanish have used when discussing the importance of literacy to Spanish-speaking families. Working with the Boston-based Latin American Health Institute, we are currently gathering information from Latino families throughout Massachusetts to learn how our ROR providers can best communicate the ROR message.

— Brian Gallagher,
Director of National Expansion

ROR-MA is honored to be the testing ground for this important new initiative from ROR-National, which anticipates a roll out in 2008.

ROR Physician Profile

Brian Orr, MD

Right away, Dr. Brian Orr enters our conversation chuckling: “You should’ve seen this!” His last patient, a tiny two year old, even before Dr. Orr entered the exam room, had gathered about 30 books and was flipping through them, chattering away. “We have piles of donated books ... and, one by one, she’d gone back and forth, carting them into the exam room. So I said to the mom, ‘She must love books.’ And the mom, with a look somewhere between a grin and a grimace, laughingly exclaimed, ‘This is all we do!’

“Her daughter just loves books. It was a perfect ROR teachable moment. I could tell her, ‘Keep on doing what you’re doing! This will make her develop and develop well. Turn off the TV,’” and then he proceeded to give her other supportive feedback, because this is what he always hopes to see: a talkative, engaged child. “Kids who are involved with books develop their speech earlier, and in general, seem to mature earlier, developmentally speaking.” And his little patient didn’t fuss as she waited - one of

those little unexpected boons of practicing ROR.

But Dr. Orr didn’t learn about ROR in the Navy, where he did his residency at Bethesda Naval Hospital, nor while stationed in Sardinia in Italy as a Navy physician, nor even at the former Harvard Pilgrim in Medford after his discharge. He kept hearing about ROR on WBUR as he drove to work, mentally noting, “I should be doing this.” And now Dr. Orr and the providers at Cape Ann Pediatricians, are practicing ROR in Gloucester, a seaside fishing community rich with cultural diversity and old world charm, but with modern problems, too, one of which is a need for consistent literacy guidance.

ROR is also a natural extension of what Dr. Orr already does and does well...advocate for children. He’s written a book, *A Pediatrician’s Journal: Caring for Children in a Broken Medical System*, has co-authored two others on one- and two-year-olds, and has a series of parenting DVDs soon coming out. One of his greatest contributions might be his work in Central America, though, which is not nearly as visible. Dr. Orr travels yearly to Honduras to work at an orphanage there, where he’s proud to note, “They raise the children – they are not up for adoption – and they raise them well. Every child leaves there literate and with a skill. In fact, two are headed to medical school next year, one is in law school, and two are becoming nurses.” Every time he goes to Honduras, he and the other volunteers bring books for the library.

“And because I now speak Spanish well, I can better communicate with the Spanish speaking families I see every day in my practice; I can get by in Portuguese. In Gloucester we have many, many immigrant families and they come to our practice.” And thus it is that the lessons from his travels to Central America come into daily play.

“You recognize that there are a lot of human beings born in unfortunate circumstances. And given the right opportunity, and the right help, they can succeed. That’s what the work at the orphanage shows me, and that is what ROR shows. I want my families to take advantage of their opportunities. So, I try to help them see those opportunities so that they can succeed. That’s every pediatrician’s goal.” And that goal is being met daily at Cape Ann Pediatricians, thanks to Dr. Orr, Dr. Carbone, Dr. Stockman and nurse practitioners Emily Roulet and Paula Grant, as well as by the hundreds of other ROR-MA medical providers across the Commonwealth. Thank you all!

Dr. Orr, his wife, Bernadette, and their three children live in Beverly, MA.



SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS

Book drives:

Atrium School, Watertown
Benjamin Cowan
Delta Kappa Gamma, Alpha Lambda Chapter
Susan Fields
Hilltown Cooperative Charter School
Louis Katz
Jacob Webber
Eric Weiss

Borders/Waldenbooks pick-ups:

Lucesita Scammon, High St. Health Center
Linda Lajoie, Holyoke Pediatrics
Joely Edwards, MD, Outer Cape Health Services
Sharon Lindgren, UMass Memorial Literacy Coordinator
Dr. Carolyn Roy-Bornstein, Merrimack Valley Child and Adolescent Health
Erin Twombly, Pentucket Medical Associates/
Bradford Elementary School
Kathi Mello, Pediatric Associates of Fall River
Debbie Nudd, Pleasant St. Pediatrics
Dr. Ricardo Lewitus, Marlboro Pediatrics

WBUR Radio Spot

Dr. Deb Buccino, Macony Pediatrics
Dr. Brian Orr, Cape Ann Pediatricians

What's new?

(Don't even) Ask ... and You Shall Receive!

Thank you to **Borders Books** in Massachusetts! In August, every Borders, Borders Express and Waldenbooks store across the Commonwealth held a month-long, in-store promotion to join customer philanthropy with the all-American book drive for benefit of ROR programs here in Massachusetts.

At over 25 locations, cashiers asked patrons to purchase a new book for ROR and – wow! – did our neighborly Bay Staters respond! Over 10,000 new books were collected! But it didn't end there; Borders also donated 5% of those ROR sales to Reach Out and Read, culminating in a check for \$4,920.61, making this summertime initiative more successful than we could ever have hoped for. Thank you, Borders, for your commitment to ROR – and special thanks to Borders District Marketing Managers, Melissa Fulkerson and Heather Morse, for their smooth coordination of this effort.

To help these donated books get into the little hands that need them, many ROR program coordinators and doctors drove to fetch them – thank you! – as did ROR family members Joe Blundo (Sr. and Jr.) and Mike Clarke, who did a lot of schlepping and driving, lifting and delivering! And many Borders employees, such as Ginnilee Berger, at Cambridgeside Galleria, daily challenged their customers to support the book drive as generously as possible. "I love books and love to read, so helping young kids learn to read is something I am passionate about doing." An enormous and appreciative thanks to all of you for sharing that passion.

A "Taxing" Solution ...

How many times a year do you think about your taxes? April 15th, yes. A few days beforehand? Ok, maybe a couple of more than that for the organized among us! But, for the remainder of the year – out of sight, out of mind. Now, ask yourself, how many times do you drive past an **H&R Block** office and notice it?



Gretchen Hunsberger (right) receives "big check" for \$4920.61 from Melissa Fulkerson, Borders District Marketing Manager.



Ginnilee Berger, Sales Assistant at the Cambridgeside Galleria Borders bookstore.

Maybe those same few days...

But those offices are there year round, and in an intriguing partnership with Reach Out and Read-Massachusetts, they are becoming an important link in the books-to-children chain that ROR-MA works every day to forge.

For instance, the logistics of getting 10,000 books from generous Borders staff and customers (thanks again, Borders!) to individual ROR programs is more complicated than it might seem; not all of the participating Borders stores are close to an ROR

site ... and where to store some of those donations while sites are readying themselves to receive them? Thanks to H&R Block District Manager Sandra Mattia's idea to use seasonally under-utilized H.R. Block offices as book depots, the Borders book drive proved the perfect opportunity to try out the suggestion in ROR's Southeastern Mass. region.

In August and September, all the books from the Borders store in North Attleboro were trucked to the H&R Block office in Fall River. Before the first week was over, Kathi Mello (Pediatric Associates of Fall River) picked up as many boxes as she could transport and Debbie Nudd (Pleasant St. Pediatrics) wasn't far behind! Kudos to both for being so proactive on behalf of their practices' patients!

When Boston evening rush hour threatened to interfere with smooth deliveries before several clinic's closing times, H&R Block's Boston District Manager, Matt Gabel, came to the rescue and arranged for employee Angie Furiga to meet the Reach Out and Read driver at a closed Neponset H&R Block office to unlock it. When the delivery proved to be more than a single truckload, Angie cheerfully waited for the driver to make a second trip. Now the books are easily accessible and ready for pickup there by our South Boston area sites. *(If your program needs books, we still have some stored there, so please phone Alison at 781-686-9522.)*

So the next time you drive past an H&R Block, don't just think tax forms and number crunchers. Instead, picture boxes and boxes of brand new books stored inside, waiting to be given to a child, to be read aloud in a waiting room, or to be taken home and read – again and again. Thank you H&R Block employees! Kudos to Sandra Mattia for your brilliant brainstorming on our behalf!

– Alison Corning-Clarke
S.E. Regional Coordinator



Massachusetts

Reach Out and Read

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PLEASE PLACE
POSTAGE
HERE

Thank You to FOX25 and Nissan!

For the second year running, FOX25's summertime ZipTrips have translated into lots and lots of used books for ROR waiting rooms.

This year, Nissan joined the effort by helping to deliver the thousands of collected used books from these community-based book drives directly to our ROR clinics and practices...an often



overlooked aspect of dealing with book donations. Thank you to the generous folks in participating Massachusetts cities and towns

for your generosity and, of course, special thanks to Maggie Hennessey-Nees at Fox25 for her outstanding coordination efforts and weekly reminders!

ROR-MA Half-Day CME Conference

It's not too late to register for the ROR-MA half-day conference! The 4.5 credit CME course, *Supporting Families in a Multi-cultural World: The Role of the Pediatric Clinician*, is scheduled for Saturday, October 20, 2007, in Marlboro, at the Best Western Hotel and Trade Center. We hope all NPs, Family Physicians, Pediatricians, and ROR Coordinators will attend!

**Register at www.bu.edu/cme, or phone
Claire Grimble at 617-638-4604.**