

Sustainability Grants

Federal Grants

We have been receiving a lot of questions concerning the Sustainability Grants that will be made with the Federal appropriation. We are expecting a clarification from the Federal government about some accounting requirements by mid-May. Once this clarification is received applications will be mailed out to all ROR clinic site coordinators. Please check the ROR web site for updates. We will also be posting the application on the web site as soon as it is completed.

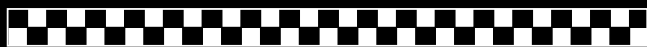
Massachusetts Grants

Funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the Department of Education is enabling ROR to make book grants to Massachusetts sites. Applications for funding were mailed to all Massachusetts ROR sites on April 19, 2000. If you are a ROR site in Massachusetts that has been approved and operating before January 1, 2000 and have not received an application, please contact Ron Bailey (Ron.Bailey@bmc.org) at the National Center. Copies of the application are also available to download from the web site.

Reach Out and Read Web Site

The National Center is increasingly relying on our web site as a way to communicate with our over 600 programs throughout the country. We have been working diligently to get more information up in a timely manner – the Massachusetts Sustainability Grant form discussed above is just one example. We encourage you to check the site regularly and welcome your feedback on its accessibility or any difficulties you experience in using it.

The address is www.reachoutandread.org.



Please Note

Reach Out and Read email addresses will be changing shortly. If you experience difficulty getting email through, please contact the National Center at 617-638-3380.

Research Update

We are getting still another real boost in published research on ROR's work!

We would like to call your attention to an article in the April 2000 edition of *Pediatrics*, Vol. 105, No. 4, pp. 927-933, "Literacy Promotion in Primary Care Pediatrics: Can We Make a Difference?," authored by Pamela High, MD, Linda LaGasse, PhD, Samuel Becker, BA, Ingrid Ahlgren, BA, and Adrian Gardner, BS. The article reports on a study designed to evaluate the effects of a literacy promoting intervention delivered by pediatric providers as part of well-child care on parent attitudes and behaviors and on child language. As indicated in the article, the study "... is important because it links pediatric anticipatory guidance, including giving books to low-income infants and toddlers, with changes in parental attitudes and behaviors and also with improvement in child language outcomes." This research will be extremely valuable to sites that are in the process of preparing grant requests to foundations and corporations.

B O O K N E W S



Patricia Cowan, RN
National Program Officer

Our thanks to all who responded to the book surveys, which were sent out with the winter catalogue. We're listening to you!

We've heard your old and new favorite book titles and some great ideas for organizing the catalogue and improving the ordering process. We will try to implement as many ideas as possible.

Many of you want to know why all books are not available for book credits. The answer is simply that Scholastic Inc. is the only publisher which offers them to us at this time. The National Center uses book credits in our grant awards and challenges. All publishers participating in the ROR Catalogue are welcome to award book credits if they so desire. We are working to add a number of publishers to the list of those who do so and hope to have more information for you in the near future.



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Timing is Everything! **Matthew Veno, Assistant Director**

continued from page 3

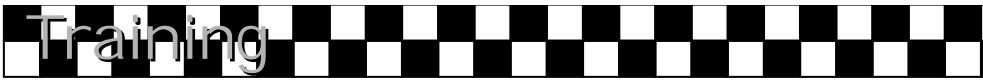
in touch with us. Also, if you're interested in expanding ROR to other service delivery sites in your system, give us a call.

2. We are preparing to mail an application for sustainability funding for new book purchases to all ROR sites. We are going to great pains to make the application as simple as possible so that we can get the support to you quickly. If your site does not receive an application by the beginning of May, email us. We hope that this funding opportunity will allow you to leverage additional private sector support and build lasting local partnerships to sustain your program.

3. We have begun to enhance our capacity to deal with the ever-growing level of interest, ensuring that the National Center continues to serve and support sites, and build upon a budding regional infrastructure.

At the same time, we are conducting targeted outreach to healthcare facilities that provide care to particularly vulnerable populations: pediatric residency programs/teaching hospitals, migrant health centers and Indian Health Service clinics and hospitals. We're also discussing spreading the word to healthcare facilities on US military bases around the world.

The combination of more pediatricians knocking on our door, with the support of the private and public sectors, is bringing us one step closer to ensuring that books and literacy guidance are part of pediatric care everywhere.

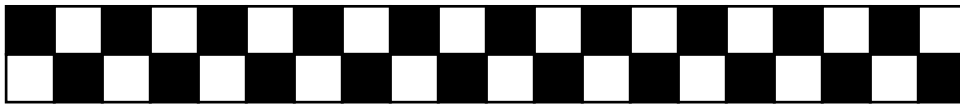


Please check the Reach Out and Read web site at www.reachoutandread.org for future training opportunities.

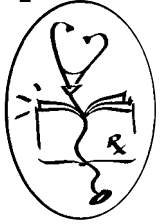
The Reach Out and Read Program is endorsed by the

American Academy of Pediatrics





Reach Out and Read



A Report from the First Reach Out and Read National Conference: Pediatrics and Early Literacy

Perri Klass, MD, Medical Director and President

As someone who has been through her share of medical conferences and CME sessions, as a listener, as a lecturer, and even as the occasional panelist, I never thought I'd say this, but: I had so much fun at the March Reach Out and Read Conference, I was flying for the whole three days. At moments, the conference felt like a family reunion, with proud ROR coordinators and medical directors from around the country telling stories of their programs' growth and development – and sometimes passing around photos. At other times it felt more like the most intense workshop I've ever attended, with smart and dedicated people filling the room, eager to extract every possible piece of guidance or wisdom or experience from their colleagues. There seemed to be, if you will pardon the new aginess of the expression, tremendous good energy in the room, and enormous good will, all compounded and

on its future directions. The Honorable Pat Schroeder told us, among other things, that we have to start asking for more money from the government, and she connected publishing and policy and social change, speaking always with humor and determination. Barry Weiss, MD, brought the issues of patient literacy and medical literacy very much alive, illustrating vividly the gaps between what we think we are communicating and what patients are understanding. And Dame Marie Clay led us through the early development of reading and writing with the patience, understanding, and enthusiasm which come from a distinguished career spent in charting out the paths children take toward language and understanding.

The talks were terrific and the plenary sessions on research, family literacy and early reading difficulties stimulated excellent discussion. But what really made this conference were the people who participated, and who took the workshops, the plenary sessions, and, inevitably, the hallways and lobbies, and made them their own. I personally walked around the conference in a haze of pride, looking at people from ROR programs we had helped to start one and two and three years ago, who were now leaders and champions and bursting with new ideas and directions. State and regional ROR coalitions seemed to be forming on the spot, and then there were all those people from newer programs, eager to learn, but also full of new energy and important ideas.

I have to say, it was a remarkable and an inspiring couple of days. I came away from it feeling that all around the country (and, yes, in Japan!), Reach Out and Read has attracted a remarkable group of practical idealists, truly and happily dedicated to improving the situations in which children grow up. And, yes, we're all about improving their chances to learn and their odds for school success – but we're also all about children's books, which means we all want to see learning linked with fun and pleasure and warmth and lap time. One especially meaningful moment at the beginning of the conference came when Robert Needlman, MD, after ruefully acknowledging himself as now the grand old man of pediatric literacy (and no longer its in-house wunderkind), was able to introduce Jean Nigro and Kathleen MacLean, the two early childhood educators who worked with him back at the very beginning of this great idea. I think that for them and for all of us it was a little overwhelming to look around the conference room and see where this idea has gone – which is to say, where you have all taken it.

Thank you to Pfizer Pediatric Health for the unrestricted educational grant that made this all possible. And thank you, also, to the over 200 people who came and participated – and to everyone else, hoping to see you next time!



Keynote speaker, The Honorable Patricia Schroeder, President and CEO of the Association of American Publishers, joins ROR Medical Director, Perri Klass, MD, at the First Reach Out and Read National Conference which drew over 200 attendees from ROR programs across the nation.

extended by the joy of giving out books and advice to children, all around the country and even beyond (there was one participant who came all the way from a US military base in Japan, and quickly became a conference legend).

We passed around books and handouts, we nibbled pastries in the hallway and networked like crazy, and we listened to a remarkable array of speakers. Barry Zuckerman, MD, Founding Director of ROR, welcomed everyone on the first night and reflected on the growth of Reach Out and Read and



Working with Bilingual Families

A Report from the ROR
National Conference

Amanda Rodriguez, MD
Boston Medical Center

A sincere thank you to all who participated in the bilingual early literacy workshop at the First National Reach Out and Read Conference in Boston on March 4, 2000. Dr. Natalie Golova, Dr. Sharon Dabrow, and Rebecca Kazal joined me on the workshop panel. We had an enthusiastic, energized group of participants with a wide range of experience and ideas on how to best make the ROR programs work for our bilingual families.

There are an estimated five million preschoolers in the United States whose dominant language is not English. Many of those children are cared for by clinicians who participate in ROR. Given this, the Reach Out and Read National Center, as well as many individuals, have expressed an interest in improving our programmatic capacity to provide information regarding early bilingual language development, literacy, and bilingual books. Much to our delight, representatives from both Scholastic and DK publishing companies expressed interest as well.

Concrete recommendations that emerged from the workshop included: 1) Encourage ongoing communication of interested parties via email, mail, and website. 2) Collect and distribute literature relevant to early language development and literacy in bilingual children. Collate this information and include in training manual. 3) Identify attractive and culturally respectful bilingual and foreign language books. Share these. 4) Advocate for availability of high quality bilingual and foreign language books. 5) Promote family bilingual literacy. 6) Inform and respect parental choice. 7) Translate current ROR posters and bookmarks into multiple languages. 8) Celebrate bilingualism!

If you have ideas, comments, book titles to share, book title requests for the publishers, or want to be included in our interest group, please email Amanda.Rodriguez@bmc.org, or write to me at the ROR National Center.

Research

A Report from the ROR
National Conference

Alan Mendelsohn, MD
New York University School of Medicine

Pediatricians and other health care providers who participate in ROR have a firsthand opportunity to see its impact on families. Reading becomes an important part of the lives of families in which reading had not previously been a consideration. The children in these families seem to be speaking better, and seem to be mastering the pre-literacy concepts that will prepare them for school and beyond.

There is now good evidence that what has been witnessed at an individual level is making a difference for disadvantaged families generally. This evidence comes from a study that was performed at New York University School of Medicine – Bellevue Hospital Center and at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. In this study, two groups of preschool children from disadvantaged families were compared. The families were poor, urban and members of minority ethnic groups. Many of the parents had limited education and many had significant problems of their own with reading. However, the two groups differed in one important respect. One group had attended a pediatric clinic with a long-standing ROR program. The other group had attended a clinic in which ROR had not previously been present. The children in these two groups were compared with respect to receptive language (what they could understand) and expressive language (what they could say), using the One Word Picture Vocabulary Test.

We found that children attending the clinic with ROR had better receptive and expressive language development. For receptive language, the difference was 6 months; for expressive language, the difference was 3 months. Both

of these differences were highly statistically significant. Furthermore, each contact with ROR was found to be associated with an incremental improvement in language development, demonstrating that ROR has a cumulative impact during the preschool years.

In summary, as a result of ROR, disadvantaged children who otherwise would have been at high risk for language delay, manifested nearly normal language development. ROR is making an important difference for disadvantaged families.

This research was presented at the annual meeting of the Ambulatory Pediatric Association in May 1999.



Thank you to all our Plenary Session presenters:

Research: Early Literacy and Pediatric Interventions

Natalia Golova, MD
Pamela High, MD
Alan Mendelsohn, MD
Robert Needlman, MD

Family Literacy: Linking ROR with Adult Learning Opportunities

Theresa Holtrop, MD
Barbara Qualls
Marsha Rhodes, MD
Benita Somerfield

Early Reading Problems

Kathy Shelton Clem, Ed.D.
Jean Ciborowski Fahey, Ph.D.
Steven Parker, MD

And a special thank you to everyone who made the Workshop Sessions so successful.

Training

A Report from the ROR National Conference

Ron Bailey, MEd., National Programs Administrator

Two of the workshops at the National Conference focused on training new providers. A highlight for 22 new providers (and an equal number of curious old pros) was a provider workshop offered by Perri Klass, MD, and co-founder of ROR, Robert Needlman, MD. In the other workshop, I enjoyed joining with Dr. Klass, Dr. Peter Noronha and a group of ROR site leaders interested in the content of training presentations. Both of these groups gave us a unique opportunity to talk with ROR folks from a wide range of clinical settings and geographic locations. Lists of key "training points" were generated from recording both sessions.

One of the goals of these workshops discussions was to distill a group of consistent "talking points" for smaller ROR provider workshop sessions beyond our established grand rounds training format. This has become especially important as we see that a third generation of pediatricians are emerging as training leaders in rural networks and urban coalitions of ROR programs.

A thread in comments from regional ROR trainers was that local data about early literacy in the city or state of the training is a crucial talking point, to bring home the fact that pediatric clinicians need to take up the banner of early literacy locally. Several participants mentioned citing the local high school dropout rate, or failure in reading scores by grade three, which is information available early to most trainers.

Perri Klass wrote a couple of pages of "...Idiosyncratic Notes on Training Providers" for the conference syllabus. She notes that when structuring talking points for her provider workshops "...after an introduction and general comments about ROR, it is most helpful to {offer information about pediatric literacy in the exam room} by age: let's talk about six-month-olds – what kinds of books do they like? What can they do with books? What are we already saying to these parents about language, and how can books help? Okay now, how

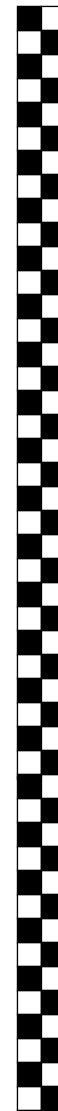
about the twelve-to-twenty-four-month-olds...and so on." There was general agreement among conference workshop participants that reviewing age appropriate books and specific advice for parents for at least three age groups was necessary.

There was also consensus that some of the emerging research base underlying ROR work should be presented in all workshops, probably in a brief narrative format, as a key talking point. Dr. Alan Mendelsohn presented soon-to-be-published research that will become very helpful in discussing ROR interventions directly, and the work of Robert Needlman, MD, Pamela High, MD, and Natalia Golova, MD can all be summarized from the discussion sections of their articles. (See Alan Mendelsohn's summary of his current work in this issue and Pam High's terrific new paper in the April 2000 *Pediatrics*.)

Robert Needlman noted during his workshop that, as a summary talking point for his ROR training, he has begun to use a slide showing the initials SAFER, to make sure he has covered important points for physicians to remember for exam-room practice:

- S** show the book to the child and parent
- A** ask the parent about reading activities and assess the response
- F** give some feedback about the importance of sharing a book
- E** encourage parents by noting the benefits of becoming a reader
- R** refer parent to resources and record the information on the chart

We will distill these suggestions until we can produce a PowerPoint presentation of twenty overheads or slides which give a ROR trainer a clear set of "talking points" that work for the precious one-hour training window which is emerging as the most familiar format for providers training fellow providers.



Reach Out and Read is supported by:

- ❖ American Booksellers Association/Rebecca Wells
- ❖ Annie E. Casey Foundation
- ❖ Association of American Publishers
- ❖ The Paul and Edith Babson Foundation
- ❖ Joan and Steve Belkin
- ❖ The Boston Foundation
- ❖ The Charles Hotel
- ❖ Cordelia Corporation
- ❖ CVS/pharmacy
- ❖ The Dreyfus Corporation
- ❖ Enron Corporation
- ❖ Friends of Reach Out and Read
- ❖ The Gillette Company
- ❖ The Harris Foundation
- ❖ Hasbro Children's Foundation
- ❖ Henry Bear's Park
- ❖ Hirsh Family Foundation
- ❖ Mabel A. Horne Trust
- ❖ It Takes A Village/Hillary Rodham Clinton
- ❖ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- ❖ John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
- ❖ Mellon New England
- ❖ Pfizer Pediatric Health Team
- ❖ Pritzker Cousins Foundation
- ❖ The Mabel Louise Riley Foundation
- ❖ Reader's Digest Foundation
- ❖ Rhode Island Foundation
- ❖ The Salmon Foundation
- ❖ The Sawyer Foundation
- ❖ The Taylor Foundation
- ❖ Warner-Lambert
- ❖ The Weezie Foundation

Timing Is Everything! **Matthew Veno, Assistant Director**

At health centers and hospitals across the country, the demand for ROR continues unabated – in fact, it is accelerating. In our January 2000 grant round, we added 62 new sites, our third strongest quarter ever. At the same time, we have come back to earth from our celebration of \$2 million in support from the US Department of Education, which will go a long way in helping us keep up with this demand.

We are making headway in the three areas of priority:

1. We anticipate another hefty grant round for the second quarter. Ron Bailey is busy arranging trainings. If you know of any clinic or hospital interested in getting started, put them

continued on page 6



Development Update

Nancy Berman,
Development Officer

CVS/pharmacy Grants Announced

CVS/pharmacy announced that 22 Reach Out and Read sites in nine states will receive a combination of cash and book grants this spring. The CVS/pharmacy Prescribes Reading Initiative is just one of the ways that CVS/pharmacy is working to promote literacy in the 24 states where they operate. ROR was selected by CVS because of the program's unique link between literacy and good health, two areas of particular interest to CVS/pharmacy.

"Reach Out and Read is a perfect match for us," said Jennifer Veilleux, Community Relations Director at CVS, "because the program includes the pediatrician, the primary health contact for parents, and it advances the belief that literacy, when combined with proper healthcare, are two of the most influential factors in preparing children for success in school, which is important to us at CVS."

Local sites were selected by CVS/pharmacy associates. Finalists received a site visit and evaluation by CVS store managers, pharmacists, recruiters and district sales managers, who met with parents, pediatricians, volunteers and site coordinators.

Susan DelMonico, Community Relations Director at CVS said, "Utilizing local CVS associates was the most powerful and effective way for us to evaluate the local ROR programs. They were asked to score the sites on level of participation, past successes and future plans. It enabled our associates to meet with those promoting literacy in the same communities where their stores are located."

This first round of grants represents only one facet of the CVS/ROR relationship. Through an in-store program in 1999, CVS and Golden Books were able to donate 6,000 books that will be distributed this spring. A CVS/Warner-Lambert collaboration will generate more books later this year.

Progress Report Highlights

Matthew Veno, Assistant Program Director
Ron Bailey, MEd., National Programs Administrator

The progress reports highlighted the successes and challenges of the ROR model:

- More than 90% of respondents rated both book ordering and provider participation as either good or very good
- 71% of respondents rate the volunteer component as either fair or poor
- Training for providers was quite strong
- Success with fundraising produced a near perfect bell curve

Thank you again to all the sites who returned reports promptly. Many of you were rewarded generously, in the form of book credits, for having done so. This data is absolutely critical for us to have. We use it to promote the effectiveness of the program nationally, provide feedback to sites on how they fare compared to others (I know many of you will look at the data on the volunteers and say, "Wow, I'm not alone!"), and highlight areas that we, as a national program, need to address.

Knight Foundation Grant Awarded to National Center

ROR recently received a \$647,000 grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to expand its collaborative programs in the Charlotte, NC area. The grant program, which also includes community literacy efforts in Philadelphia and Palm Beach County, Fla., will provide ROR training for local pediatricians.

The program was introduced in Charlotte in 1998, and will now expand to reach all local pediatric practitioners. Working with local and national literacy and education organizations, Knight Foundation has encouraged collaboration among Charlotte nonprofit agencies to develop strategies for addressing literacy, identified by local residents as a community priority.

The grant will also support new collaborative work between ROR and the National Center for Family Literacy to develop new training materials that will focus on strategies for effective cross-referral and education of literacy and medical personnel. The materials will be developed and field-tested in two Knight communities for national dissemination. The project will also include consultation of Libraries for the Future and Development Communications Associates.

Established in 1950, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation makes national grants in journalism, education and arts and culture. Its fourth program, community initiatives, is concentrated in 26 communities where the Knight brothers published newspapers, but the Foundation is wholly separate from and independent of those newspapers.



\$1.3 in Local ROR Funds Raised in 6 Months

With more than 60% of sites reporting on program activity during the last 6 months of 1999, ROR sites nationwide paint a picture of a vibrant, innovative and successful network of programs across the country:

- \$1.3 million in local funding raised for book purchases
- 6,465 pediatric clinicians trained in literacy guidance
- 108,650 free books awarded to sites through the Scholastic Local Challenge