



## PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER

# Bringing Books to More Children in Need

**Sean Songer, Manager of National Expansion**

Since June 31, 2005, an additional 290,000 children have been introduced to Reach Out and Read. As many of you know, the ROR National Center is in the midst of an aggressive campaign aimed at doubling our annual rate of expansion and increasing the program by 1,200 sites over a two year period. After seven months we are proud to announce that this effort has paid off with the establishment of 315 new ROR programs throughout the United States, DC, Guam, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands!

*We are pleased to report:*

- **New Sites: 315**
- **New Children Served: 291,350**

Clearly this is an exciting indication of progress and growth, but we aren't finished yet. By the end of June, we hope to announce an annual total of well over 600 new sites.

In order to accomplish that goal we will continue to work with partners across the country. This includes many existing sites and Coalitions, as well as many new local and national organizations. A special thank you to our new partners:

### **AmeriChoice**

AmeriChoice, part of the UnitedHealth Group and a public sector healthcare provider, has been a long-time sponsor of Reach Out and Read in Maryland, New York, New Jersey,

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W I N T E R 2 0 0 6

# Welcome to New Coalitions

Reach Out and Read is pleased to announce the establishment of 6 new Coalitions. These organizations will focus on expanding ROR to new sites within their regions and sustaining new and existing programs after this period of aggressive growth has subsided. As we expand, we must, as always, rely on our programs and Coalitions to provide a consistent level of quality. Please join us in welcoming our newest Coalitions and Coalition Leaders!

### **Reach Out and Read Alabama—**

The Alabama Coalition is being housed within the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Polly McClure of Pinson, AL has been hired to act as Coalition Leader. She can be reached at [roralabama@charter.net](mailto:roralabama@charter.net).

### **Reach Out and Read Connecticut—**

The Connecticut Coalition is being housed within the Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Jillian Wood, Executive Director of the CT AAP, will act as Coalition Leader. She can be reached at [jwood@aap.org](mailto:jwood@aap.org).

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## Thank you— American Academy of Pediatrics

We gratefully acknowledge the many chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the affiliated foundations that have partnered with Reach Out and Read to establish several of the coalitions mentioned above and numerous other initiatives across the country. Local AAP Chapters have agreed to act as fiscal sponsors and fundraising partners and in several cases have provided administrative support to ROR staff. The support of the AAP has been invaluable to our program expansion efforts this year and we look forward to continuing this partnership in years to come. In addition to the chapters mentioned above, we'd like to recognize chapters in Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Vermont and Virginia for their support.

# Calling All Advocates....

Please contact us and we will work with you on all of the logistics to make your event a success:  
**legislativeaction@reachoutandread.org**  
or **617-629-8042, ext 224.**

## ROR's Federal Funding in FY06:

**W**e want to thank everyone who participated in Reach Out and Read's FY06 appropriations campaign. In a very difficult environment we were able to consolidate gains in both the House and Senate, thanks to your hard work at home and on Capitol Hill last May. We also were able to maintain solid support for our federal request throughout the entire appropriations process.

We do not yet have definitive word on the amount that ROR will receive for next year. Early indications show that our funding may be cut back significantly from the \$10 million of last year. We will communicate with all of you as soon as we have more news. Your help is needed more than ever in securing funds for FY07.

We have begun ROR's FY07 campaign:

## FY07 Funding Request:

President Bush included ROR in his budget request for FY07 for \$10 million! The ball is now in the court of Congress, which has already begun the appropriations process. As a national program, we need you now to raise your voices in support of this funding. You can help by:

### ■ "Dear Appropriators" Letter

At press time, we were in the middle of our "dear appropriators" letter campaign that is due March 15. Look for updates on this campaign on our website and via e-mail.

### ■ Site Visits: starting March 17th

There are several great opportunities this year to get legislators in to visit your Reach Out and Read program. We urge you to invite your legislator(s) to visit your clinic or hospital to learn more about Reach Out and Read. These visits are a great way to cultivate a relationship with your Member of Congress, show him/her firsthand how ROR works, and raise awareness about your program in your community with local press! Here is the recess calendar:

**March 20–24:**

*St. Patrick's Day District Work Period*

**April 10–23:**

*Spring District Work Period*

**May 29–June 2:**

*Memorial Day District Work Period*

**July 3–7:**

*Independence Day District Work Period*

**July 31–September 1:**

*Summer District Work Period*

## Shifting Roles at the National Center

### Martha Gershun, Executive Director

**I**t is a great honor to be expanding my role with Reach Out and Read as the organization's new Executive Director. I have already had the pleasure of working with many of you over the years—beginning as a member of the ROR Board of Directors in 1998, and, more recently, as the Director of National Expansion.

As the ROR program continues to grow, the need for an executive director to oversee the National Center's day to day operations has become clear. The addition of my new position will allow Perri Klass, MD, our president and medical director, to concentrate on the critically important tasks of training, writing and speaking about the program on a national level, as well as continuing to shape our strategic vision for the future.

In my new responsibilities with ROR I will assume leadership of the National Center, as we continue to work with our sites and Coalitions to bring books and a love of reading to children living in poverty. For me, this is the culmination of a 20-year career in multi-site management, including positions in curriculum design, operations and marketing with DeVry University; leadership of an Internet publishing company; and management of a 50-person training department for H&R Block.

While I will continue to live with my husband, Don, and two children, Nathan (14) and Sarah (11), in Kansas City, I will be commuting to Boston to work at the ROR National Center. I hope I will meet each of you as I travel to visit ROR programs around the country and at our National Conference this April. I am eager to hear your ideas and hopes for the program. You can also reach me at **Martha.Gershun@reachoutandread.org**.

It is a pleasure to continue our work together to benefit the children and families touched by Reach Out and Read.

### Barbara Ducharme, Director of National Programs

**A**s you may know, Ron Bailey retired from the Reach Out and Read National Center in January after six years of contributing to the growth and success of ROR programs around the country. When Ron joined ROR in December 1999, there were fewer than 650 active Reach Out and Read sites; today

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# Reach Out and Read in a Rural Practice

**Christa Marie Thornberry, M.D., ROR Regional Trainer, Children's Medical Center, Martinsville, VA**

**P**racticing pediatrics in a rural area comes with its own set of challenges. As a ROR program in a busy pediatric group, with a large Medicaid population, and a significant number of young single mothers, these are some of the ways we have tried to tackle these problems.

In an area with no public transportation and long distances to travel to a clinic, getting to the doctor's office is no small feat. The promise of a free new book for their child seems to be a huge incentive to parents to bring their child in to the clinic in a timely manner for health supervision visits.

Many of our parents have limited education and finances but they recognize that having books and being read to is important for their children. We try to meet this challenge by providing as many books as we can throughout the year in addition to the books given out through Reach Out and Read at their well-child checks. We have a great partnership with the United Way Success-By-6 program and their Born to Read Program which has generated both new and gently used books for our families.

Excessive television viewing is a pervasive problem in any area, rural or urban, that puts children at risk for behavioral and learning problems. Talking about Reach Out and Read during well-child checks gives the opportunity to counsel parents on a regular basis about the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines for television viewing and its harmful effects.

"My child won't sit still for a book" is a common complaint. Shutting off the television and reading is the

## SHIFTING ROLES—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

there are over 2,700! We are very grateful to Ron for helping to build ROR to what it is today, and we know that you join us in wishing Ron the very best in all his future endeavors.

Since Ron's departure, I am honored to have moved into the position of Director of National Programs. Before joining the National Center two years ago, in addition to earning MBA and EdM degrees, my career focused on continuing medical education and health care quality improvement. While at ROR, I have served as liaison to the coalitions and worked on development of the programs' process assessment tools. Throughout that time, I have been continually impressed by the dedication—and love—that the National Center management and staff, coalition representatives, medical consultants and program coordinators bring to putting beautiful new books into the hands of children ages six months to five years. I look forward to working with you to continue expanding and improving ROR program delivery nationwide.



**Christa Marie Thornberry, M.D.**

best way to help to improve their attention span. Reading to the child while they are a captive audience in their car seat, highchair or in the bathtub are great opportunities to develop good habits.

The reality of practicing in a rural area that has one of the highest unemployment rates in the state of Virginia is that our children are greatly at risk. Read Out and Read provides us with a unique opportunity to make a big impact on how children and parents view reading and its importance in their lives.

## Introducing Dorothy Weintraub

### New ROR Account Manager at Scholastic

**W**e are pleased to announce that Dorothy Weintraub has joined the Scholastic Literacy Initiatives group as the new Senior National Account Manager working with ROR. Dorothy's primary role will be to oversee the day-to-day management of ROR business in close cooperation with the National Center.

As a reminder, here are numbers that will prove helpful to you in working with the ROR Book Catalog:

- To check on your Scholastic Prepaid Account, or for billing inquiries, please contact Scholastic Credits at **1-800-225-1761**
- For customized book lists, special order fulfillment or bulk purchasing, please contact the ROR Account Manager at **1-800-387-1437 ext. 226**
- To place or track your orders, please continue to contact Scholastic Customer Service at **1-800-724-2222**

# Developmental Tools Workshop

## Why We Like This Book

**Jackie Miller, MLS, National Programs Coordinator**

### **The Itsy Bitsy Spider as told and illustrated by Iza Trapani**

- This new version of an old favorite offers readers of all ages a chance to enjoy the rhyme on several different levels
- Familiar objects in the illustrations give children a chance to name items while parents of preschoolers can ask questions like “What will happen next?” as the spider continues its adventures.



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](mailto:training@reachoutandread.org)

## *The Itsy-Bitsy Spider as told and illustrated by Iza Trapani*

**Robert Needman, MD, ROR Co-founder**

**P**rinted on sturdy stock, Iza Trapani's wonderful *Itsy-Bitsy Spider* book can gratify a baby's need to open and close, open and close. The brightly-colored pictures invite infants to gaze and pat, toddlers to search out all the different creatures, and preschoolers to describe and discuss. The rhyming words and strong rhythms can captivate a verbally sensitive child of any age. And the implicit plot can appeal to a young child who always feels small, who goes through the day falling down over and over, and who can take vicarious pleasure in the spider's final triumph.

I've been struck by how difficult rhyming is for many young school-age children. A couple of weeks

ago, I spent 15 minutes teaching a six year old boy how to make rhymes. We started with “hot—pot—snot” (a little humor never hurts). We practiced changing first letters, seeing what different words came out, then putting the words together into silly poems, with my patient supplying the last words of each line: “I had a little pot. The pot got very ... hot. The pot was filled with ...” By the end, he was pretty good at it. More importantly, I think his mom had gotten the hang of how to have fun with teaching. If he had had *The Itsy Bitsy Spider* a couple of years ago, I bet he would have been a strong rhymer already.

Books that are flexible, like *The Itsy Bitsy Spider*, lend themselves to looking ahead. When I hand the book to a young infant, I wonder out loud if he'll like listening to the rhymes, or if he'll prefer to open-and-close or bang the book, or chew it, or pat it.

I suggest that the baby's interests are likely to change over time. I promise to ask, at the next visit, about new ways the parent and child have found to enjoy the book together. A book like this keeps us looking to the future, which is what ROR is all about.

(You can find this book, published by Charlesbridge, on page 37 of the 2005/2006 ROR Catalog.)



**Robert Needman, MD**

and Pennsylvania. Recently AmeriChoice has played a significant role in our expansion efforts, providing funding and site-recruitment support in at-risk areas throughout the state of New Jersey.

### Association of Clinicians for the Underserved

The Association of Clinicians for the Underserved, a national organization devoted to supporting healthcare clinicians serving the most needy, has been a welcome partner in expanding nationwide.

### Children's Futures

Children's Futures, an organization committed to ensuring that every child in Trenton, NJ enters pre-school healthy and ready to learn, has provided funding, technical assistance and quality assurance to new and existing sites. They have taken long strides towards ensuring school-readiness by making sure that 100% of the children in Trenton have access to a ROR program.

### First 5 California

Reach Out and Read has successfully partnered with First 5 to expand throughout several counties in California. First 5 focuses on providing developmental services to children 0 to 5 on a county-by-county basis.

### Public Education Foundation

The Public Education Foundation is a private foundation in Clark County, Nevada devoted to improving school readiness. Reach Out and Read has partnered with them to expand ROR throughout Las Vegas and the surrounding communities.

## WELCOME TO NEW COALITIONS—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

**Reach Out and Read Gateway**—The Gateway Coalition will service the St. Louis metropolitan region in both Illinois and Missouri. It is being housed within Saint Louis University. A Coalition Leader will soon be hired to oversee the Coalition. The current contact is the Coalition's founder and Physician Champion, Dr. Monica Ultmann of Cardinal Glennon Hospital. She can be reached at [ultmanm2@slu.edu](mailto:ultmanm2@slu.edu).

**Reach Out and Read Iowa**—ROR Iowa became effective February 15, 2006 with fifteen active sites. Mary Ann Abrams, MD will serve as the Coalition Director, and the Iowa Chapter of the AAP will be the Coalition's fiscal sponsor. She can be reached at [abramsm@mchsi.com](mailto:abramsm@mchsi.com). Matt McGarvey, who was instrumental in establishing the coalition and raising \$40,000 for startup expenses and books, will continue to participate as a key member of the ROR Iowa Coalition's Advisory Board.

**Reach Out and Read Minnesota**—The Minnesota Coalition, with 29 active ROR sites, was up and running as of January 1, 2006. Lynne Burke, a longtime ROR Coordinator and Children's Literacy Liaison for Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis, is the ROR MN Coalition Director. She can be reached at [ror@lburke.com](mailto:ror@lburke.com). The Coalition is in the process of engaging the Minnesota Academy of Pediatrics Foundation as its fiscal sponsor; Sloan D'Autremont, MD will serve as Chair of the Coalition's Advisory Board.

**Reach Out and Read Ohio**—The Ohio Coalition is being housed within the Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. A Coalition Leader will soon be hired to oversee the Coalition. The current contact is Melissa Wervey Arnold, the Executive Director of the OH AAP. She can be reached at [ohaap@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ohaap@sbcglobal.net).

## Retraining at Your Site

# New Training Course on its Way!

If you are looking for a way to re-energize your staff about Reach Out and Read, we have just what the doctor ordered. A new training module—in DVD format—will be arriving at your clinic early this spring. With beautiful footage of babies, parents, and doctors, the module is divided into short segments that focus on the major topics that are essential to the ROR model.

We suggest that you use this course at a noon conference, or any other in-service opportunity that works for your practice. Be on the look-out for an email that will let you know when to expect it. (If your clinic needs a copy in VHS format, please email [Sabreena.punwani@reachoutandread.org](mailto:Sabreena.punwani@reachoutandread.org))





National Center

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## Thank you Qwest.

We are pleased to announce a new grant from Qwest Communications that will benefit ROR programs in Arizona, Colorado, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, South Dakota, Utah, Virginia and Washington, DC.

### Progress Reports Update

**T**he Programs Department would like to thank all the ROR coordinators who have submitted the January 2006 Progress Report. This year, as an incentive to all sites that reported by February 10th, we awarded an early round of sustainability funding, and 600 sites received their award by the end of February. Also, 98% of reports were submitted online, up from 94% percent last year.

# Register **NOW**

## ROR National Conference

April 28–29th, 2006

The Argent Hotel,  
San Francisco, CA

Complete information is available at the ROR website:

[www.reachoutandread.org](http://www.reachoutandread.org)