

2015

ANNUAL REPORT



REACH OUT AND READ-ALABAMA



where great stories begin™



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WHEN PEDIATRICIANS ENGAGE PARENTS AND GIVE BOOKS TO FAMILIES, CHILDREN EMBARK ON A JOURNEY TOWARD SUCCESS IN SCHOOL.

This past year has proven to be a successful year of partnerships in the expansion of our state's Reach Out and Read program. [Help Me Grow](#), a community-based case management for families through the state's 2-1-1 system, assists providers in implementing the basics of Reach Out and Read as well as helping parents understand the importance of reading aloud daily to improve brain development and success of their child in school. [Project LAUNCH](#), a collaboration of the Alabama Partnership for Children and the Alabama Department of Mental Health to provide early childhood services needed by families in Tuscaloosa County, included Reach Out and Read-Alabama as one of more than 15 partners. This linkage will help expand the program and serve more than 12,000 children and their families there.

Through the generous donations of the [Mike and Gillian Goodrich Foundation](#) and the [Daniel Foundation](#), providers in some of the state's most economically challenged counties will be prescribing books and helping families understand the link between brain development and the importance of reading books together on a daily basis.

All of these partnerships are important as we work together to lay the groundwork for our children to become successful in school and life. Building these foundations starts with the

provider's engagement with parents as they make that first visit with their child to their pediatrician. Prescribing a book during that visit gives us the opportunity to connect with parents and create a partnership in the lifelong journey of learning for their child. What's even better is that new studies are documenting the effectiveness of the unexpectedly complex interactions that occur when you put a small child on your lap and open a picture book.

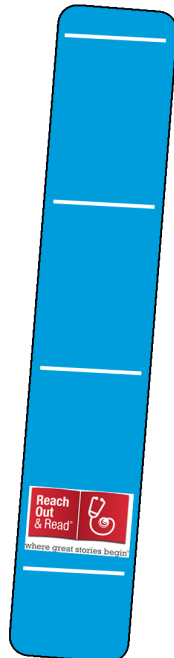
We are excited about creating other partnerships throughout our state that will allow us to prescribe books to ALL of Alabama's children and lay that groundwork for success in school and life.

*Cathy Wood, MD, FAAP
Alabama Chapter-AAP President*



The best opportunity to influence a child's future is in the first five years, a critical window of rapid brain development that does not occur at any other time.

Disadvantaged children, who hear fewer words during early childhood, start school developmentally behind their peers and will likely never catch up.



2015 BY THE NUMBERS

76,388 new books distributed to children at well-child checkups

117,928 Children served in 30 counties in Alabama

300 Doctors and nurses prescribing books and building better brains

The evidence continues to mount

On the heels of the 2014 American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement regarding the essential nature of Literacy Promotion for Primary Care Pediatric Practice come two studies that shed light on how reading to a child improves brain function and literacy success.



Using Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to study brain activity of three- to five-year-olds while they listened to stories, researchers found differences in brain activation based on how much the child had been read to at home. The more a child was read to at home, the greater the activation of the visual section of their brain.



A report in *Psychological Science*, which studied the language content of children's books, found diverse words from the books that would not be used in typical child-directed speech. The thought is that in hearing more words, children create more images with those words, which translates to success in reading.

Building on the unique relationship between families and children's doctors, Reach Out and Read engages parents as their child's first teacher starting in infancy. Last year, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a statement that pediatric primary care should include [literacy promotion, starting at birth](#). During regular, one-on-one visits with the doctor, families grow to understand the powerful and important role they play in supporting their child's development. Parents gain the confidence and skills that enable them to support early language and literacy at home, and they help their children be ready for kindergarten. And they leave each visit with a brand new book to enjoy together at home.

Reach Out and Read-Alabama, working with the Alabama Chapter-American Academy of Pediatrics, has ensured that literacy promotion is an essential part of pediatric primary care for the past 10 years.

Early literacy and healthy eating goal of First Step partnership



Starting in April, **United Way of Baldwin County** partnered with Reach Out and Read-Alabama to help pediatricians prescribe books to over 6,000 children annually in four Baldwin County practices and clinics. The First Step program puts age-appropriate books in the hands of children and their parents at every well-child visit from ages 6 months to 5 years and a pre-school-sized portion plate and activity book that promotes healthy eating at their 18-month visit. Together, these efforts will ensure these children get a healthy start in school.



A Perfect Partnership: Help Me Grow, Project LAUNCH and Reach Out and Read-Alabama

Focused on the greater Tuscaloosa area, **Project LAUNCH** is the collaboration

with the Alabama Partnership for Children and the Alabama Department of Mental Health that implements the principles of **Help Me Grow**, a system that connects at-risk children with the services they need. One of the keys to this project is expanding Reach Out and Read to area practices and clinics served by the project. Two practices, Crimson Pediatrics and Bama Pediatrics, now are able to prescribe books and serve over 1,000 children and their families.

Alabama Public Television and Birmingham Public Library partnership produces super heroes

Our sixth-annual summer campaign that promotes families reading together came to a close with 15 program sites sharing the book, **I AM SUPERKID**, which was chosen to be used in conjunction with the Rx for Summer Reading campaign at local libraries. Thanks to **Alabama Public Television's** project funded by the Corporation of Public Broadcasting, American Graduate, the **Birmingham Public Library** teamed up with Reach Out and Read-Alabama once again to provide practices and clinics across the state with prescription pads and posters to promote summer reading.



Using the book as inspiration, campaign organizers encouraged families to read together and become reading super heroes. Copies of the book were distributed by pediatric healthcare providers statewide, who also talked to parents about reading together daily as well as becoming involved in the summer reading program at their local library.

Leveraging partnerships with local foundations expands services in Black Belt

In the state's Black Belt, poverty rates soar to 30 percent and higher. Families living in poverty often lack the money to buy new books, as well as access to libraries. And, by age 3, children from lower-income families have heard roughly 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers.

Through the generosity of the **Mike & Gillian Goodrich Foundation** and the **Daniel Foundation**, pediatric healthcare providers working in practices and clinics in the Black Belt will have the opportunity to prescribe brand new books to over 5,000 children annually and encourage parents to share these books together each day. Through targeted online training, providers learn how to use the book to screen for developmental delays as well as instruct parents on the link between reading and healthy brain development. Developing these relationships with parents in the child's early years will help lay the foundation for the child's success in school and life.



The **Caring Foundation (TCF)** of **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama** donated 1,800 books this summer for the Western Health Center's Reach Out and Read program. Founded in 1990 by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama, TCF supports initiatives to improve the health, wellness and education of all Alabamians.

This year, Reach Out and Read developed partnerships with different sectors of the community to expand our reach and have a collective impact on the lives of young children.

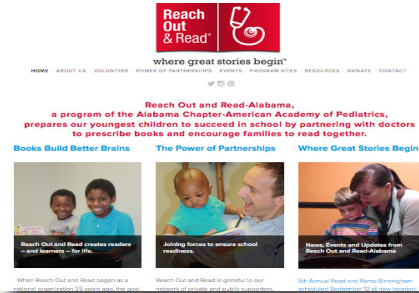
A YEAR OF STORIES

February



Our program accepted book donations from the **Public Relations Council of Alabama - Montgomery Chapter**, which were delivered by Statewide Coordinator Polly McClure to the AFMS - Maxwell 42nd Medical Group, a program site since 2011.

June



Our redesigned **website** provides quick and easy access to essential information and features, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the program's mission and vision.

July

Morgan Green, Miss Alabama Outstanding Teen 2014, worked with Verquita Scott Conley, MD, FAAP, Reach Out and Read-Alabama Medical Coordinator, to **transform the waiting room** at Alabama Multi-Specialty Clinic, PC, into a space that encourages reading and book-sharing. The makeover was unveiled during the practice's summer campaign event.



August

For the fourth year, Reach Out and Read-Alabama received a donation from the **Nick's Kids Foundation**, allowing pediatricians to prescribe 400 brand-new books to the children of Tuscaloosa County.

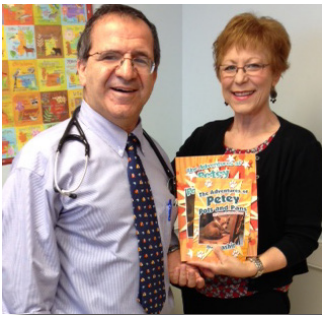


March

The **Primrose School at Liberty Park** celebrated Read Across America Day by donating over 500 books to Reach Out and Read. Ted McInerney, WIAT News 42 Meteorologist, read to students at the school during their event.



Lofti Bashir, MD, FAAP, embraced the program at Selma Pediatrics in 2008. Dr. Bashir wrote and published his own books addressing themes that provide encouragement and hope to the children and families in his practice. —April



May

Physicians and exhibitors from across the state attending the Alabama Chapter's Spring Meeting at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort participated in our second annual **Grand Pediatric Pentathlon**, raising more than **\$12,000** for Reach Out and

Read-Alabama. For each event completed, participants were entered into drawings for prizes, including a Regions Bank green cruiser bicycle, a kayak, a dinner cruise, a FitBit and many others. A special thank-you goes to our main event sponsor, **Southeast United Dairy Industry Association**,

as well as our other sponsors, including MyCare Alabama, the Medical Association of the State of Alabama Medical Foundation, Sandestin Foundation for Kids, Another Broken Egg of America, Inc., the Business Council of Alabama and Jackson Thornton.



September

The fifth annual **Read and Romp-Birmingham** engaged children and their families with learning-based activities themed around favorite children's books. Children left the event with goodies that they either created or earned by completing each station along with a stamped passport and a bag of brand-new books. By associating fun-filled activities with reading, parents learned ways to engage with their child on the life-long journey of learning at an early age, which will help increase their children's success in school.



September

2015 DONORS

Reach Out and Read-Alabama gratefully acknowledges the following corporations, foundations, and individuals who generously contributed to our statewide efforts between November 1, 2014 and November 30, 2015.

On behalf of the children and families who discovered the transformative power of reading, we thank you for being committed partners in our mission to make literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric care so that children start school prepared to achieve their potential.

CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS & BUSINESSES

Alabama Public Television
Angell Foundation
Another Broken Egg
Bayou Area Health Development Board, Inc.
Birmingham Public Library
Business Council of Alabama
Care Network of East Alabama, Inc.
The Caring Foundation of Blue Cross
and Blue Shield of Alabama
Children's of Alabama
Cleburne Medical Clinic
Daniel Foundation
Dothan Pediatric Clinic
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Fairhope Pediatrics
Fresh Air Family
Greater Brewton Foundation
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The Medical Foundation of Alabama
Mike & Gillian Goodrich Foundation
Mobile Pediatric Clinic
My Care Alabama
Nick's Kids Fund
Patagonia
Pediatric Adolescent Medicine
ProAssurance Indemnity Company
Ruby Tuesday

Sandestin Foundation for Kids
Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort
Sib and Addie Paul Foundation
Southeast United Dairy Industry
Association, Inc.
Target
United Fund of Brewton and East Brewton
United Way of Baldwin County's
First Steps Program
WalMart
Willingham Foundation
Wiregrass Foundation



Southeast United Dairy Industry Association sponsored the Grand Pediatric Pentathlon at Sandestin.

Corporate Community Partnership Program

Community partnerships are essential in helping to provide resources to prepare every child for success in their educational pathway and life. With levels ranging from \$250 to \$25,000, there is a partnership level that will fit any sized business. At each level, books personalized with the company's information will be given to select program sites in the community. [ProAssurance Group](#) was the first to join our partnership program, providing 500 brand-new books to selected program sites throughout the state.

Providing new books for Reach Out and Read-Alabama gives us the opportunity to go beyond the work that we do with healthcare providers and make an impact on the communities in which they practice.

~ Jeff Lisenby, General Counsel and Senior Vice President

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

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Executive Director
Alabama Chapter-American Academy of Pediatrics

When families read aloud to their young children, they can give them a better start to life.

With unparalleled access to families with young children, Reach Out and Read providers give books to children at more than 10 visits from infancy until they start school.

More importantly, they encourage families to read aloud and engage with their infants, toddlers and preschoolers every day.

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Our story continues into 2016 as we celebrate 10 years of ensuring literacy promotion as an essential part of pediatric primary care.