



Children's Community Clinic
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Dear Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education,

On behalf of Children's Community Clinic, I would like to urge you to support the Reach Out and Read Oregon funding of \$75,000 under the Department of Education budget and promote the significant impact the program has made in the lives of the children and families we serve in our clinic.

Reach Out and Read Oregon has a unique opportunity and unparalleled access to connect with the 97% of children in the state who visit a primary care provider for routine health care, and to engage children and families when it matters most, during the span of rapid brain growth and development between birth and age five. Most children, the path to school success is directly correlated with positive early experiences with books, years before they pass through the doors to begin school. When paired with attention from a caring adult, shared reading promotes the development of lifelong positive associations with books and reading, building a strong foundation for success in school and beyond.

At Children's Community Clinic, our medical providers give books to children at ten or more well-child visits from infancy until they begin elementary school. More importantly, the free book and "prescription to read" the families receive from our medical providers encourages parents and caregivers to read aloud and engage with their young children every day. The evidence-based program stimulates brain development and supports language and literacy skills within our young patients, many of whom do not have access to books. The books we give out are often the only ones they have.

By investing in the growth and sustainability of Reach Out and Read Oregon, you are investing in the lifelong health and wellbeing of not only the children for whom we provide care for but also of children across the state.

Thank you for this opportunity to share the impact of Reach Out and Read Oregon has on our patients, their caregivers, and families.

Kind Regards,

Mardica Hicks
Chief Executive Officer