



Reach Out and Read

With the launch of the Reading Action Program, Lions Clubs International President Wayne Madden is challenging Lions to address inequalities related to literacy, which forms the foundation for education and social development. A new partnership with Reach Out and Read will strengthen our efforts in promoting literacy, particularly among underserved children. Reach Out and Read is a nonprofit organization that promotes early literacy and school readiness in pediatric exam rooms across the United States. Beginning at the six-month checkup and continuing through age 5, participating Reach Out and Read pediatricians and medical providers provide new books to children and advice to parents about the importance of reading aloud.

Reach Out and Read is uniquely positioned to improve early literacy and school readiness for children through its innovative partnership with healthcare providers. In the exam room, pediatricians advise parents about the importance of reading aloud and give developmentally-appropriate books to children to take home and keep. Research shows that children who live in print-rich environments and who are read to during the first years of life are more likely to develop stronger reading abilities and enter school prepared to succeed. The real effects of the program are felt outside the exam room, when parents make reading aloud part of their daily routine.

Reach Out and Read programs prove to make a difference in helping parents prepare their children to succeed in school. Fifteen independent studies demonstrate that families served by Reach Out and Read programs read together more often, and their children enter kindergarten with larger vocabularies, stronger language skills, and a six-month developmental edge. Reach Out and Read's 28,000 volunteer medical providers annually serve more than 4 million children and their families at 5,000 health centers in all 50 states. By partnering with their local Reach Out and Read clinics, Lions can promote the transformative power of reading and prepare America's children for success in school and in life.

There are many ways for Lions to partner with Reach Out and Read – as a district, as a club, or as individuals:

- **Adopt a Reach Out and Read clinic** and help raise funds for books, training, and other resources
- **Become a volunteer reader** and model effective reading tips for families in clinic waiting rooms
- **Organize a book drive** to benefit your local clinic
- **Create a literacy-rich waiting room** with books and resources to foster a love of reading
- **Learn about Reach Out and Read's special initiatives** – Military, Leyendo Juntos Spanish-speaking initiative, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Developmental Disabilities
- **Raise awareness** and invite a local Reach Out and Read pediatrician to speak at one of your events or meetings

To "Find a Clinic" or learn more, visit: www.reachoutandread.org.
Lions interested in discussing potential project options should contact Caroline Diczok, Development Associate, at caroline.diczok@reachoutandread.org or (617) 455-0644.

