

# Reach Out and Read - Iowa

Making books part of a healthy childhood



## I Want to Support Reach Out and Read - Iowa to Help Children Grow Up with Books and a Love of Reading!

- \$27.50 Provides 10 new books for one child.
- \$55 Provides 20 new books for one child.
- \$100 - \$299 Illustrator's Circle - Provides between 35 to 110 new books for children.
- \$300 - \$499 Publisher's Circle - Provides six months of books to children at one small clinic.
- \$500 - \$999 Author's Circle - Provides one year of books to children at one small clinic.
- \$1,000 - \$2,499 Silver Reader's Circle - Provides six months of books to children at one large clinic.
- Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check payable to **Reach Out and Read - Iowa.**

I will notify my employer of my gift and request a matching gift form.

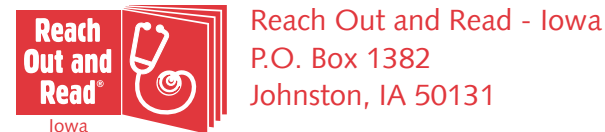
*Your contribution is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.*

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Cut along the line and send with your donation to:

**Reach Out and Read - Iowa**  
**P.O. Box 1382**  
**Johnston, IA 50131**



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

### Our Mission:

The mission of Reach Out and Read is to make literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric primary care, so that children grow up with books and a love of reading.

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### ROR-Iowa Advisory Committee:

- Christie Vilsack, Chair
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- Jamie Christophersen, MD
- Carolyn Jons
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### Health Literacy and Reach Out and Read

Health literacy is defined by the Institute of Medicine as "the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions." As health care becomes more complex, children and their parents must serve alongside health care providers as partners in their own care. But for many patients and their families, limited health literacy is a major barrier to understanding and adhering to health care advice.

More than 90 million US adults read below high school level. Adults with limited literacy have less knowledge of disease management and health-promoting behaviors, report poorer health status, are less likely to use preventive services, and have higher hospitalization rates and emergency service use, with higher healthcare costs. Among children, low parent/caregiver literacy and health literacy have been linked to decreased knowledge of secondhand smoking hazards, breastfeeding behavior, and worse chronic disease outcomes.

By promoting literacy in primary care, Reach Out and Read (ROR) can be used as a way to open discussions with parents about literacy—their own as well as their children's. It can be used for primary prevention of low literacy and low health literacy among children, and also for secondary prevention—to help providers explore parents' reading comfort and respond appropriately by using plain language and other techniques to improve health communication, and through referrals to adult reading programs. Literacy promotion in primary care leads to parents reading aloud more often to young children (that can also enhance their own reading abilities), and is associated with significant improvements in expressive and receptive language scores by the second year of life.

Using the ROR model is an effective and positive way to promote children's emergent literacy and parents' literacy skills, as well as promoting school-readiness and health literacy.



### Dates to Remember:

- November 27 – 30, 2008:** Festival of Trees featuring the ROR-Iowa Neighborhood Tree
- December 2008** ROR-Iowa Annual Appeal
- December 6, 2008:** Barnes & Noble Benefit Bookfairs around Iowa:  
 Davenport – 320 W. Kimberly Rd – North Park Mall  
 Sioux City – 4400 Sergeant Rd, Southern Hills Mall  
 West Des Moines - 4550 University Avenue  
 West Des Moines - 101 Jordan Creek Pkwy, Jordan Creek Mall
- February 12, 2009:** Early Childhood Day on the Hill – State Capital
- March 2, 2009:** Dr. Seuss Day featuring Dr. Seuss' stories, activities and giveaways at ROR-Iowa sites
- March 2009:** ROR-Iowa 1st Annual Green Eggs and Ham Breakfast
- May 27-31:** The Principal Charity Classic: Birdies for Charity Fundraiser

## Reach Out and Read – Iowa and the 2009 Legislative Session

During the upcoming 2009 Iowa legislative session, ROR-Iowa will again seek a state appropriation as a direct investment in research-based early literacy promotion for Iowa's youngest children. Reaching young children while their brains are growing and especially receptive to language acquisition should be a fundamental component of Iowa's overall efforts to promote emergent literacy and school-readiness. An appropriation will also support ROR-Iowa's capacity to effectively serve 50,000 more children, especially those in poverty.

Funding for ROR should be ongoing, sustainable, and diverse—from federal, state, and private sources. In addition to demonstrating a strong commitment by the state to help children and youth achieve their potential, an appropriation will provide support for expansion and quality improvement to broaden and deepen ROR-Iowa's impact statewide through a three-pronged strategy: (1) Reach 50,000 more at-risk children by enrolling physicians at hospitals, health centers, and clinics throughout Iowa. (2) Strengthen the quality and viability of existing ROR-Iowa sites, ensuring our impact on each family is as powerful as it can be, by continuing to provide limited, but critical, grant dollars to purchase books, and training and technical assistance for doctors and nurses; transforming clinic waiting rooms into literacy-rich environments; and disseminating high-quality parent education materials. (3) Form creative new collaborations with other stakeholders in early childhood development, literacy, and community health.

The election to determine the make up of this year's General Assembly is around the corner and although we cannot predict the results, there are ever-present hurdles we must overcome, regardless of whether Democrats or Republicans are in power, including the weakened economy. Our strategy in seeking the appropriation will be through a grassroots strategy. You, as a reader and as an interested party in the future of ROR-Iowa, will play a crucial roll. Our government affairs team will call on you to contact local legislators in your area to voice your support of the program. By creating awareness at the Statehouse and in the legislators' districts, your voice will have a profound effect on the success of fulfilling the request.

### Saluting our Supporters

- Border's Books
- Iowa Community Empowerment Boards
- Principal Charities Classic
- Mid-Iowa Health Foundation
- St. Pius X School – Mission Awareness Day
- Target Community Grants
- United Way of Central Iowa



Raising Readers volunteer Carol Elbert in their literacy-rich waiting room

### ROR-Iowa Featured Volunteer Carol Elbert

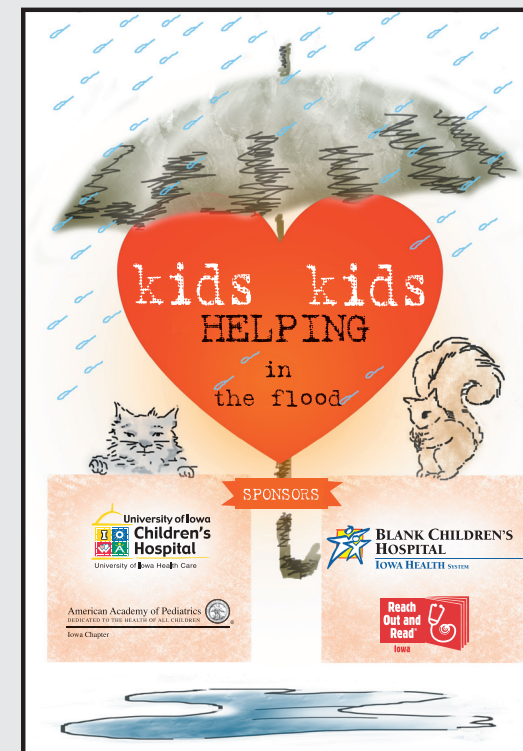
Carol Elbert has just taken over as President of Raising Readers in Story County, the nonprofit organization that co-sponsors the ROR-Iowa site in Story County at McFarland Clinic Pediatrics. She's our "Girl Friday." She's a retired children's librarian and continues as a freelance reviewer of books, writing a monthly column for the Raising Readers website. Carol leads our team that selects books for each of the ROR levels. She helps label them appropriately, store them, and conduct a book inventory twice a year. Carol served on the team that developed ten Reading Corners in public waiting rooms in 2008. She helped author the manual "Raising Readers Reading Corners: Literacy-rich Environments that Entice Adults and Children to Read Together." Next, Carol is helping to write guidelines for coordinating a ROR program, with a special focus on how community volunteers collaborate with healthcare professionals. She's an active volunteer reader herself and helps orient new volunteers. She gives programs to parents and professionals about how to read effectively to young children and how to pick good age-appropriate books

to read aloud. Carol and others within Raising Readers are in the process of working with five other healthcare clinics to assist them with establishing satellite ROR-Iowa sites. We have already created Reading Corners in their waiting rooms. Carol says, "I love being involved in this work. It's the perfect volunteer job for me. I am convinced that helping parents understand the why and how of early language development has great potential for helping children and families, now and in the future." Carol is amazing!

### ROR-Iowa and IA-AAP support the Kids Helping Kids in the Flood Project

The floods of June 2008 displaced more than 2000 children in Iowa alone and impacted many more, damaging or destroying their homes, schools, childcare settings, friends' homes, playgrounds, and sometimes entire neighborhoods.

To help these children and their families, Reach Out and Read-Iowa and the Iowa Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics are partnering with health care organizations and children to provide books for children affected by the floods, ensuring they have books, or re-establish having books, in their homes or learning environments, by supporting Kids Helping Kids in the Flood. Kids Helping Kids represents children who want to help other children who have been impacted by this summer's floods. They hope to make it possible for children all over Iowa or from around the country to be part of this project. To launch the Kids Helping Kids effort, Iowa's two children's hospitals—the University of Iowa Children's Hospital in Iowa City, and Blank Children's Hospital in



Des Moines—have come together to provide initial funding and support.

Kids Helping Kids' first project was the purchase of *The Flood that Came to Grandma's House* by Iowa author Linda Stallone. It will be given to Iowa children in flood-affected areas and has been used extensively around the country for children impacted

by floods and hurricanes, including Hurricane Katrina. It helps children understand how floods occur, what happens during and after a flood, how families and communities are affected, and how they work to rebuild their homes and lives.

When families have experienced a natural disaster, danger, or displacement from their homes, children look to their parents and other adults to help them feel loved and protected. Reading aloud to children helps provide them with a sense of security, a predictable routine, parental support, and nurturing care that can help both children and families during this difficult time.

**For more information:**  
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### ROR in the News:

We are pleased by ROR-Iowa's coverage by radio, TV, and print media in the past several months.

**The Culture Buzz (99.1FM):** September 2008 - a great partner, The Culture Buzz, a Des Moines - area radio station, conducts regular interviews with ROR-Iowa as special events occur.

**KCCI TV-8 (Central Iowa CBS affiliate):** October 2008 - Mollie Cooney taped a health segment featuring Reach Out and Read – Iowa that aired October 20, 2008.

**Iowa City Press Citizen,** October 12, 2008 and **Cedar Rapids Gazette,** October 14, 2008: published articles featuring ROR-Iowa and Kids Helping Kids in the Flood.

**WHO-Radio and Clear Channel Communications:** October 2008 – Sue Danielson, Assistant News Director, did an interview about ROR-Iowa and Kids Helping Kids in the Flood. Part of the interview ran on WHO-AM; the entire interview aired Sunday, October 26, on 100.3 "The Bus", 106.3 Capital, and 107.5 KISS FM.

### Welcome New ROR Clinical Sites:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| - Alegant Health – Logan Clinic, Logan, IA<br>Join Date: 4/1/08     | - Community Health Centers of Southeastern Iowa, Inc, Burlington, IA<br>Join Date: 6/1/08 | - Maxwell Medical Clinic<br>Join Date: 9/1/08 |
| - Ronda Dennis-Smithart, MD, PC, Oskaloosa, IA<br>Join Date: 4/1/08 | - West Side Clinic, Cedar Rapids<br>Join Date: 8/1/08                                     | - Slater Medical Clinic<br>Join Date: 9/1/08  |
|   | - Nevada Medical Clinic<br>Join Date: 9/1/08  | - Zearing Medical Clinic<br>Join Date: 9/1/08 |