



# Reach Out and Read American Indian/Alaska Native

## The Reach Out and Read (ROR) Model

- In the exam room, doctors and nurses trained in the developmental strategies of early literacy encourage parents to read aloud to their young children and offer age-appropriate tips.
- The pediatric primary care provider gives every child between the ages of 6 months and 5 years a new, developmentally- and culturally-appropriate book to take home at each well-child care visit.
- In the waiting room, displays, information, and gently used books create a literacy-rich environment. Where possible, volunteer readers entertain the children, modeling for the parents the fun of reading aloud.

## The need to promote and encourage early literacy among American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children is clear

- 80% of AI/AN children on reservations live in families with income below 200% of the federal poverty line
- AI/AN children, as a group, have the poorest test scores, the lowest high school graduation rates, and the worst college entry and graduation rates of any minority group in the United States.
- Early language development is recognized as essential for later school achievement of young children. More than a decade of peer-reviewed, published research shows ROR to be a highly effective strategy for school success.
- Indian Health Service/Tribal/Urban (I/T/U) clinics care for 75% of AI/AN children, and provide an established infrastructure to reach this population. Currently only 70 of the approximately 300 I/T/U clinics have implemented ROR in their health care setting.
- There are limited AI/AN-themed children's books available, and those that exist are quite expensive.

## ROR impact within the Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal Clinics

- 70 IHS and tribal clinic sites currently participate in ROR programs.
- More than 40,000 AI/AN children benefit from ROR annually.
- More than 53,000 new, developmentally-appropriate books are distributed to AI/AN children annually.

## The ROR American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Coalition: A Partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics

A Coalition specifically focused on AI/AN children has been developed in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics. This coalition will serve four primary functions:

- Providing site-based training, technical assistance, and quality improvement visits to I/T/U Sites
- Securing funding for each Site's annual book budget. Most I/T/U clinics are under funded and lack the discretionary funds to purchase ROR books.
- Expanding the ROR program to additional I/T/U programs across the country
- Procuring books with Native American themes and making books in Native American languages available

1 2000 Census, [www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org)

2 National Center for Education Statistics, US Department of Education. National Indian Education Study: Part I: The Performance of American Indian and Alaska Native Fourth- and Eighth-Grade Students on NAEP 2005 Reading and Mathematics Assessments. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006463> Accessed on 11/1/06.

3 Greene, JP and Winters, MA. Public School Graduation Rates in the United States. Center for Civic Innovation at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. [http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr\\_31.htm](http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_31.htm) Accessed on 11/1/06.

4 Jackson, AP, Smith, SA, and Hill, CL. (2003). Academic persistence among Native American college students. *Journal of College Student Development*. [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3752/is\\_200307/ai\\_n9300410](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3752/is_200307/ai_n9300410) Accessed on 11/1/06.

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