



Reach Out and Read (ROR) in the Military

Our Military Families Deserve Nothing but the Best

With the many sacrifices they make for our country, members of our Armed Services and their families deserve quality health care and proven school readiness strategies for their children. The National Defense Appropriations Act of 2007 provided funding for implementation of a pilot project on pediatric early literacy at 20 military health care facilities in the U.S. and overseas, laying the foundation to one day reach all military families with young children.

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-appropriate children's book to take home and keep.
- 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 pleasures – and techniques – of reading aloud.

The Impact in the Military

- 32 military bases currently offer ROR programs.
- More than 90,000 children of military families participate in ROR annually.
- More than 180,000 new, developmentally-appropriate books are distributed to children on military bases annually.

The Impact Nationwide as of March 2009

- There are more than 4,535 ROR programs based on the ROR model at clinics, hospitals, and health centers in 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- ROR serves more than 3.8 million children annually.
- More than 6 million new, developmentally-appropriate books are given to families annually.
- To date, more than 52,000 physicians, nurses, residents, and health professionals have been trained in the ROR model of early literacy promotion.

The Challenge: Help Military Families Cope in Difficult Times

- Early language skills are essential for the healthy development of young children, and ROR is the gold standard for promoting these skills through a healthcare setting. More than a decade of peer-reviewed, published research shows ROR to be a highly-effective school readiness strategy.
- ROR presents a unique opportunity to support and strengthen military families with young children. ROR helps parents understand developmental stages, build routines which reassure children, and develop skills and knowledge that are essential for families being tested by separation and deployment.
- The military health care system provides full and systematic primary care for the children of military families. ROR has the potential to reach all these children, without building additional infrastructure, through a system parents already know.
- Reading aloud to children is a proven technique to help them cope with stress and anxiety, whether it is because of natural disaster, separation from a parent, or another difficult situation. **Because of the unique pressures on military families, they deserve to have Reach Out and Read as a standard part of the pediatric care provided to their young children.**

For more information, contact the **Reach Out and Read National Center** by phone at (617) 455-0600, email at info@reachoutandread.org, or by writing to us at 56 Roland Street, Suite 100D, Boston, MA 02129. Visit our web site: www.reachoutandread.org