



Reach Out and Read Washington State (RORWA) *Connections to* Recommendations to the Governor for Action in 2010

How Reach Out and Read Supports the 5 Recommendations for Action

1: Enhance voluntary early learning opportunities for all children from birth to grade three, and work to close the achievement and preparation gaps.

Reach Out and Read is integrated into regular well-child care visits within the medical home, and thus is uniquely suited to reach all children from birth through age 5. Currently serving over 57,000 children in 23 counties, ROR is serving predominately low-income families and those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds; including tribal, military, and immigrant communities.

#2: Sustain investment in health services for children.

Reach Out and Read supports and enhances the medical home, leveraging state investments in health services to support early learning and educational outcomes.

#3 Invest in and strengthen partnerships with parents, families, schools and communities.

Reach Out and Read is a direct partnership with parents, providing information and support to parents through one-on-one visits with their child's medical provider. ROR is delivered via local doctors offices, and partners with community coalitions to integrate ROR into early learning partnerships, which include non-profit organizations, businesses and schools.

4: Invest in and strengthen support for providers and teachers.

Reach Out and Read Washington State provides training and support to doctors, nurses and other health providers around early learning and early literacy. Parents want early learning information from their child's health care provider more than any other source; and health providers need support to have the information and skills to meet the early learning needs of parents and children in their care.

5: Develop and invest in the early learning system infrastructure to promote, sufficiently fund, and provide accountability to ensure equitable access and quality for all.

Reach Out and Read Washington State provides a statewide infrastructure to help assure access, quality, and sustainability of Reach Out and Read programs across the state. RORWA is also the vehicle through which doctors and the health system become integral parts of the Early Learning system at both the state and community levels. The health care system is the only place where almost all young children and families can be reached directly, and thus is a vital partner to ensure equitable access for all.

(See next page to learn how Reach Out and Read Supports Six of the Prioritized Initiatives)

Reference: *Early Learning: Recommendations to the Governor for Action in 2010*

<http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/elac-gris/docs/GovRecommendations120109.pdf>



Reach Out and Read Washington State (RORWA)
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(continued)

How Reach Out and Read Supports Six of the Prioritized Initiatives

Promote support for early language and literacy development and reading success in school for children birth through 3rd grade that are culturally and linguistically relevant (Rec. #1)

Reach Out and Read is an evidence-based, proven early literacy program. ROR doctors begin providing books and developmentally appropriate language and literacy guidance to parents at age 6 months. The books are chosen to meet the developmental, linguistic and cultural needs of the families each clinic serves, and the ROR catalogue has board books for young children available in 13 languages. ROR brings a program to parents “where they are,” using a trusted messenger.

Promote funding for existing birth through age 3 programs that include a continuum of services; identify service gaps for infants and toddlers; and ensure that, as pre-k services are phased-in that a parallel funding stream for birth through age 3 services is developed in tandem (Rec. #1).

Reach Out and Read begins delivering books to children at age 6 months, using providers who often begin their relationship with parents at birth. Since young children are seen more often 80% of Reach Out and Read visits are with children birth through 3. Because almost all infants and toddlers receive medical care, while most are not in formal child care settings, health providers can connect with families, assess gaps in services, and refer families to community programs. RORWA strives to support physicians so that they can better connect families of infants and toddlers with the continuum of services they need.

Sustain investment in public health care programs for children so that we continue to work towards reaching the Governor’s goal that “All children will have access to health coverage that provides effective care by 2010” (Rec. #2).

Integrating literacy advice into regular checkups via Reach Out and Read enhances both the quality and impact of the medical home. 13 published research studies demonstrate ROR’s effectiveness. National pediatric and public health guidelines support including literacy promotion as a standard of care within children’s preventive health care visits.

Promote parenting education and information (Rec. #3).

Reach Out and Read makes literacy information and parenting education about child development a standard part of pediatric primary care; something that families automatically receive during checkups. Most Washington parents trust their child’s health care provider as a source of early learning information (71%), and 69% of parents want information about how to support their child’s early reading and skills (2008 Department of Early Learning parent survey).

Promote and support culturally and linguistically appropriate parenting education and information (Rec. #3).

Parents develop a unique and trusted relationship with their child’s medical provider. Integrating Reach Out and Read into children’s regular checkups provides supportive education in a setting which is convenient for parents, via providers already working to support their cultural and linguistic needs.

Build on the Joint Resolution of DEL, OSPI and Thrive by Five and build on ELAC to develop a shared/collaborative governance model that works at both the state and community/regional level (Rec. #5).

Reach Out and Read has been intensively involved with DEL, OSPI, Thrive by Five and ELAC in early learning planning work. ROR actively partners with early learning coalitions across the state to engage doctors and ROR programs in local partnership planning and implementation activities. Thus RORWA is uniquely suited to provide expertise relevant to children’s health, medical providers, and the health system, which can help inform proposed state and local governance structures.