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REACH OUT AND READ NATIONAL RECEIVES RECORD \$6M DONATION FROM VALHALLA FOUNDATION

The grant will help the nonprofit further its evidence-based early childhood development program, which uses shared reading to support early literacy and healthy relationships

BOSTON (April 9, 2024) — [Reach Out and Read](#), a national nonprofit leading the charge in promoting early literacy and healthy early relationships through pediatric care, today announced the second-largest grant in the organization's 35-year history. Valhalla Foundation granted Reach Out and Read National \$6 million to further the organization's mission and to grow its program across the country. The nonprofit partners with 36,000 clinicians nationwide to strengthen relationships for families with young children through books and guidance about shared reading. In FY23, Reach Out and Read served more than 4.4 million children and distributed 7.1 million free books.

"Through leveraging pediatric well-child visits, Reach Out and Read strives to be a population-level intervention," said Reach Out and Read CEO Marty Martinez. "Our work stems from the core value that all children require equitable access to the opportunities vital for a strong start in life. This generous grant from Valhalla Foundation will help us provide that important support to even more families with children 5 and under nationwide."

Reach Out and Read National plans to use the \$6 million donation over three years to advance several goals, including ensuring that the program is accessible for all children with a focus on diverse, multicultural, and bilingual families and developing new research on how the Reach Out and Read model impacts early relational health.

Reach Out and Read works hand-in-hand with clinics in each state to ensure that young children and their families have the resources to cultivate early literacy, learning, and strong familial bonds. In its last fiscal year, Reach Out and Read had 8.8 million face-to-face interactions with children and families at well-child visits, donated half a million more books than the previous year, and served an additional 171,000 children. In addition, [a peer-reviewed study published in Academic Pediatrics](#) confirmed the program's effectiveness in increasing the frequency of parental reading.

"Reach Out and Read's simple but powerful pediatric intervention has a meaningful impact on children's early literacy and development. We're excited to support them in reaching millions of children in communities across the U.S.," said Sara Allan, Valhalla Foundation President.

Valhalla's goal in early childhood is to dramatically improve kindergarten readiness in the U.S., so that all children — particularly low-income children and children of color — get off to a strong start in learning and life. The foundation funds proven solutions, research, field-building efforts, and policy organizations that aim to help all children enter kindergarten ready to learn.

“Embedding early literacy promotion in well-child visits, considered a best practice by the American Academy of Pediatrics, is a powerful way to foster learning and healthy early relationships,” said Dr. Trude Haecker, Reach Out and Read Board Chair and Medical Director of Global Patient Services at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. “The funding from the Valhalla Foundation comes at a critical time, as we work to establish Reach Out and Read as a vital, core component of pediatric care for every child.”

The Valhalla grant comes on the heels of an historic \$8 million investment from philanthropist [MacKenzie Scott](#).

To read more about Reach Out and Read’s mission and research-based model, visit [ReachOutandRead.org](#).

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About Reach Out and Read: As a 501(c)3 nonprofit, Reach Out and Read provides children with a solid foundation for achievement by integrating books into pediatric care and encouraging family reading time. Endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics as the sole evidence-based national pediatric program centered on emotional bonding, Reach Out and Read annually serves more than 4.4 million children in every state across the U.S., delivering services through 6,200 clinics and leveraging the expertise of 36,000 clinicians. Discover more at [reachoutandread.org](#).

About Valhalla Foundation: Valhalla Foundation is dedicated to driving meaningful and measurable outcomes in six key areas: Early Childhood Development, K-12 Education, Data Science, Medical Research & Talent, Environmental Innovation, and Collaborative Philanthropy. Valhalla focuses on improving educational and health outcomes, particularly for low-income children and children of color, and emphasizes collaboration with other funders to maximize impact. For more information, please visit [www.valhalla.org](#).