

Books Build Better Brains

Exposure to books and reading enhances school readiness.

Encouraging families to share books with their children helps wire neurons in ways which prepare children to be ready to learn. Through our Reach Out and Read programs in primary care clinics and the Inpatient Reading Library in the American Family Children's Hospital, books are a routine, everyday part of excellent pediatric care at UW Health.

This year, we again distributed just under *nine thousand books* through Reach Out and Read programs in four busy UW Health primary care clinics, accompanied by high-quality advice from health care providers. Additionally, over 840 books were circulated in the inpatient setting, providing hospitalized children and families with a beneficial, enjoyable activity during their time at AFCH. Collaborations with other schools and agencies continued onward, and

8646
Reach Out &
Read books

> **845**
inpatient books
circulated

donations of books continued to be handled within the Early Literacy Projects.

Reach Out and Read

The renowned early literacy promotion program is in operation at four UW Health Pediatric clinics, consisting of a three-part model:

1. Health care providers discuss with parents the importance of reading aloud with their young children and offer age-appropriate tips and encouragement.
2. The pediatric primary care provider gives every child between 6 months and 5 years of age a new, developmentally-appropriate book to take home and keep as part of their well-child visit.
3. In the waiting room, when possible, volunteer readers entertain children with books, modeling for parents the techniques and pleasures of reading aloud. In 2013, four UW Health clinics gave out the following number of books:

East Towne Pediatrics	1928	books distributed
20 South Park Pediatrics	3406	
West Towne Pediatrics	2205	
University Station Pediatrics	<u>1107</u>	
Total (Jan 2013–Dec 2013)	8646	

Inpatient Reading Library

The 600+-book Inpatient Reading Library is a self-service, continuously-available library designed for children from infancy through age 18. It is difficult to ascertain directly, but it is likely that AFCH has one of the few (if not only) regularly-accessible children's libraries within a pediatric hospital *in the country*.

Due to the self-service model, it is difficult to accurately track circulation. However, at least 845 books were obviously circulated in 2013, and this is likely a major undercount. For a 61-bed hospital with most of the library clients likely coming from the 24 general care beds, this represents, at a minimum, about 1 book per bed per week, with the pace only accelerating.

Books circulated: 845 (undercount)
(July 2012–June 2013)

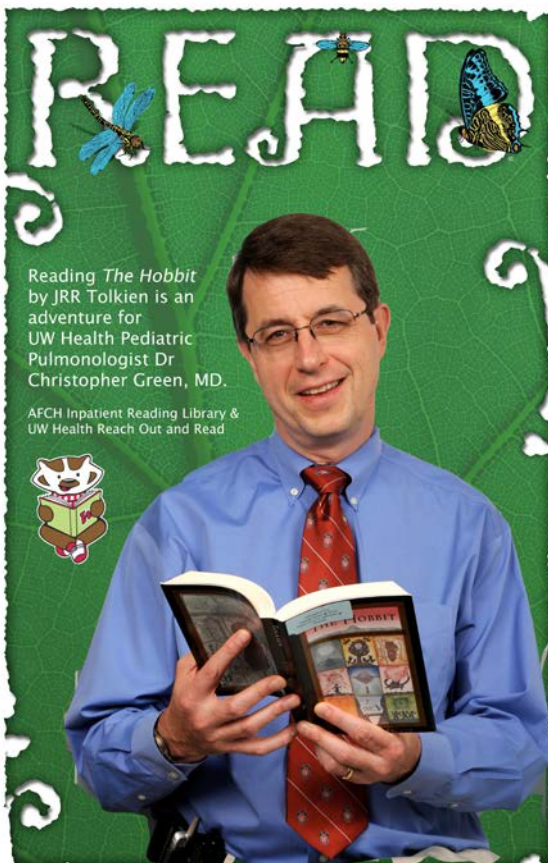
30 of the books were Spanish-language with additional books being added
21% of the books circulated were elementary-school-age
24% board books
18% preschool

Testimonials

An e-mailed note to ELP director Dipesh Navsaria from a pediatric resident after we obtained books specifically for a young patient facing months in strict isolation:

"It is so incredibly awesome that you were able to get ALL those wonderful books for — and his family!!!! I cannot tell you how much EVERYONE, including the family, appreciates it. It has been a long hard road for them, and will only get harder, so those books and stories will really enable — and his family to focus on something other than his illness and get lost in a story and help him have as normal a "childhood" in the hospital as possible...

Dad and brother live 3 hours away and they have a lot of trouble visiting due to dad's work schedule. Mom has really had a hard time with this hospitalization so far. [...] However, I can assure you, the books (and the thoughtfulness) brought a needed smile to mom's face. And of course — was smiling and playing with the books and showing every one of them to his mom."



Early Literacy Publicity and Awareness:

Over the past several months, early literacy has received significant press. The New York Times released an article related to the AAP recommendations and early literacy guidelines featuring Dr. Dipesh Navsaria. Dr. Navsaria commented on how reading aloud to children from birth can reduce academic disparities later in life. He states "If we can get that first 1,000 days of life right, we're really going to save a lot of trouble later on and have to do far less remediation."

Read the full article:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/24/us/pediatrics-group-to-recommend-reading-aloud-to-children-from-birth.html>

The Madison-based Capital Times featured an article titled "Pediatrician urges early childhood reading to address achievement gap." In this, they quote Dr. Navsaria's comment "The brain is wiring at much faster rates, neurons are wiring at much faster rates in the first three years of life than they are later on," Navsaria said. "It's the fastest at that young age. The foundation for learning, for being able to take in from the environment around you, to think about it, to explore it — all of that is really happening in the first 1,000

days of life

Read more: http://host.madison.com/news/local/writers/jessie-opoien/pediatrician-urges-early-childhood-reading-to-address-achievement-gap/article_43136a75-3923-5ed8-aa0a-44857374aa50.html#ixzz3AluKsHCT

Madison Magazine featured a similar article stating that reading is a crucial component of pediatric care. They quote Dr. Navsaria's comment "In a well child visit where there is no other identified concern or complaint, I would rather walk in without my stethoscope than without a book."

Read more: http://host.madison.com/ct/news/local/writers/jessie-opoien/pediatrician-urges-early-childhood-reading-to-address-achievement-gap/article_43136a75-3923-5ed8-aa0a-44857374aa50.html

Literacy-Rich Environments

The AFCH Specialty Clinics and the primary care clinics offer volunteer readers, when possible, who spend time reading aloud to children. This is not only a form of entertainment, but allows readers to model techniques for parents as well as demonstrate how enjoyable reading together can be.

We are currently working on a model of creating fixed enhancements to waiting rooms which will allow for the clear and convincing promotion of literacy without relying completely on volunteers — we hope to pilot this here and elsewhere in Wisconsin before sharing it nationally.

Additionally, Sheila Muehlenbruch, with the assistance of Robert Gordon of the Pediatric IT staff, completed a video-recorded "bedtime story" project, featuring AFCH physicians, residents, staff and administrators reading stories out loud. These are available on DVD for inpatients to enjoy, allowing children and families to enjoy the experience of being read to by familiar individuals. This innovative program is part of the literacy-rich environment and helps encourage families to do the same themselves.

Donations

All donations of books to AFCH now come to the Early Literacy Projects for expert screening and distribution, ensuring that the books being given to children or placed out for reading are of the highest quality. Donations reached high levels as many members of the community begin to view UW Health as a place of choice to donate both new and gently-used books. It is even common for children to request new, quality books to be brought to their birthday parties so they can in turn donate them to AFCH.

Collaboration

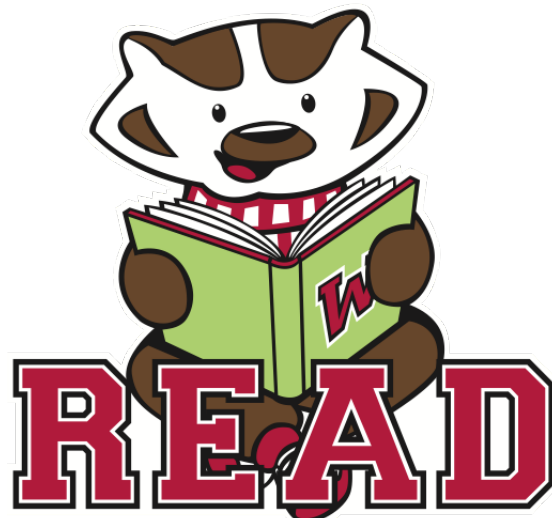
Our vibrant collaborations continue onward. This past year, we continued a collaboration with the Madison Public Library through the excellent services of Ruth Sias, Youth Services Librarian. She has played an important role in the recruitment and training of reading volunteers, and provides a direct link in promoting library services to families, whether they are linked to local libraries or to public libraries in their home communities.

Ruth was also the 2011 recipient of the Frances de Usabel Outreach Services Award from the Wisconsin Library Association for her work with our program.

We continue to enjoy the excellent services of students from the University of Wisconsin School of Library and Information Studies. They provide critical services to the functioning of the Inpatient Reading Library, including book management, collection development, and other tasks. By volunteering for our project, they not only provide us with an important service, but gain critical practical knowledge for their education.

Growth

Reach Out and Read Wisconsin, the state-level coordinating body for Reach Out and Read, has now



entered its third year. In the mere three years it has existed, Wisconsin has moved from about 55 Reach Out and Read Sites to 101! Our purpose and mission is becoming well-known throughout the education, literacy, and pediatric communities in Wisconsin.

Reach Out and Read Wisconsin is generously co-sponsored by AFCH and Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. With ELP director Dipesh Navsaria as the Medical Director, Reach Out and Read Wisconsin brings the benefits of early literacy promotion throughout the state.

The Coming Year

We look forward to releasing the literacy-rich waiting room model which has represented a significant amount of work by many individuals.

The generous grant support of the Ira and Ineva Reilly Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Endowment has supported us from the inception until last year, when the grant funds were depleted. The Inpatient Reading Library is currently funded by the American Girl Fund for Children, for which we are grateful. We are very happy to learn that Reach Out and Read was recently incorporated fully into the UW Health budget, thanks to the enthusiastic support of Lori Hauschild, UW Health Vice President, Primary Care. With her support, and the support of the clinics, we are now able to fund every primary care clinic in the entire UW Health System.

For 2014-15, we will continue to fund the Inpatient Reading Library as in the past. This is possible due to small donations, and local grants from Rotary Clubs and similar organizations. Additionally, Dr Navsaria charges significant speaking fees, all of which are turned over directly to the Pediatric Early Literacy Projects.

We are also grateful for the support of University Book Store, the Target Community Foundation, and the Friends of UW Hospital and Clinics. The funding and technical assistance of Reach Out and Read Wisconsin has also been beneficial. Additionally, we appreciate the numerous small donations made by community members, families and others who are surprised and delighted by our programs.



Additionally, we have operated on remarkable levels of volunteer support with minimal staff costs. We pay for a small part of one staff member's time — the rest are extraordinary, dedicated volunteers or in-kind donations of time and skill. We would like to be able to improve the services we provide — audio books or electronic books, the ability to process more donations efficiently and effectively, and other extensions and programs. We can only do so on a limited basis without being able to pay for more staff time.

We are working with the UW Foundation and are always searching for new grants or funding. We would appreciate any help with fund-raising, operational support, or other ideas.

Early Literacy Programs Staff

Dipesh Navsaria, MPH, MSLIS, MD

Director

Ruth Sias, MLS

Youth Services Librarian, Volunteer Recruiter/Trainer

Sheila Muehlenbruch

Program Coordinator

Nan Peterson, RN, MS

Director, AFCH Child Health Advocacy

Wendy Hellwig

Student Coordinator Emeritus, School of Library and Information Studies


Emily Minerath

Volunteer, School of Library and Information Studies

Prescription for Reading

Name: _____

Date: _____ Age: _____



Rx *Read Books*

- Every night at bedtime
- For _____ minutes every day
- As needed

Refills: as requested at local public library

Signature: _____

Dipesh Navsaria, MPH, MSLIS, MD
Pediatrician & Occasional Children’s Librarian

Families: Please visit reading.pediatrics.wisc.edu for more information on the joy of sharing books together and how it can make a huge difference in your child’s life.

reading.pediatrics.wisc.edu
[ror@pediatrics.wisc.edu](mailto:rur@pediatrics.wisc.edu)