



Thank you! YOU play an important role in the success of Reach Out and Read Colorado's *New Parent Empowerment Initiative (NPEI)*, Reach Out and Read Colorado's New Parent Empowerment Initiative (NPEI), a first-of-its kind, groundbreaking materials distribution and awareness campaign!

For the first time ever, Reach Out and Read Colorado is extending its reach to mother's prenatally. This project is centered on the premise that parents may have more capacity to receive early literacy messages during pregnancy (versus the baby's first six months). Expectant mothers will receive the NPEI education (an interactive storybook, *cover shown below*) during a prenatal exam. The NPEI resource is a picture-forward reference material (currently available in English and Spanish), designed for a new mother to look at and read aloud. It has thoughtful content on brain development, early literacy, prenatal timelines, stress management, and trauma-informed care.

This new initiative will be used to scale prenatal early literacy interventions across Colorado and will help inform and promote national dialogue. Empowering and engaging expectant mothers is a unique way for prenatal providers to positively impact Colorado families and future generations!

## How to Use the NPEI Resource in an Exam

The best time to distribute the NPEI resource (*A Story About Reading*) to an expectant mother is at the beginning of the prenatal exam so you can model reading the book aloud, provide anticipatory guidance and create an open dialogue.



Tip: Ask the expectant mother, "Who else will read to your baby?"



The specific appointment or timeframe for distributing the Storybook should be agreed upon, and consistent, at your site.

Distributors are encouraged to choose any preferred page from the storybook. Use the content and tips featured on these pages as talking points and a guide for engaging with the patient. Providers should remind expectant mothers to interact with the storybook again and again, fill out the pages and complete the activities.



Tip: Sign the book with a special note!

## Who is a NPEI Distributor?

An NPEI distributor is a someone who shares the NPEI Storybook + anticipatory guidance with an expectant mother. A distributor can be a family medicine provider, nurse, home visitor, case manager, care navigator, advocate, and others.



Tip: Fill in the provider, clinic and due date information on the resources page.



### When Sharing the Storybook with Your Patient -

- Be authentic.
- Consider individualized delivery, use different messages for different people.
- Use basic language that is relatable and easy to process, sample messages can be found below or in the NPEI Storybook.
- It can increase patient autonomy by creating a tangible way she can contribute to their baby's development.
- It can enhance the patient/provider relationship and builds trust.
- It can provide the patient with an opportunity to establish a sense of control over their lives. For example - begin by letting participants know that they may choose to participate or not participate.

### Prenatal Development + Reading Aloud: A Quick Reference

- **First Trimester**  
At 7 weeks pregnant, your baby's biggest growth is happening. New brain cells are generated at the rate of 100 per minute.
- **Second Trimester**  
At 13 weeks, voice and vision are developed. At 16 weeks, ears form giving your baby an ability to hear your voice when talking out loud or singing in the shower.
- **Third Trimester**  
Your baby is listening to all kinds of sounds, and can recognize your voice at birth. At 26 weeks, they respond to noises and you may notice more movement of the baby when reading or singing.

### Reading to "your" baby CAN:

- a) Build vocabulary and memory
- b) Help with imagination
- c) Improve communication skills
- d) Deepen learning
- e) Create a bond between the mother and child
- f) Put them on a reading road to success
- g) Reduce maternal stress and create a calm environment

### Online Survey Opportunity | Evaluation

On the last page (inside the back cover), readers are invited to participate in an online survey to share thoughts and opinions. If they complete the online survey, the expectant mother will be emailed a \$10 gift card from King Soopers or Walmart, her choice. After six-months she will be sent a second survey opportunity (via email) and, if completed, she will earn another \$10 gift card sent via email.

**It may feel early to start talking about reading aloud and sharing books, but the more parents engage with their children (even before birth) through talking, singing and playing, the more prepared they are when they get to school!** Research suggests that third-trimester babies not only pick up on language patterns, but after birth, they can [recognize words they first heard in the womb](#).