



COLORADO

FOREWORD

News for our supporters who propel us forward.

FALL 2020

Dear Reach Out and Read Colorado community,

As fall settles into our beautiful state, I appreciate the opportunity to share how the challenges of COVID-19 have affected Reach Out and Read Colorado. Since the beginning of the pandemic, our team has worked hard to adapt to clinics' changing needs and priorities, to ensure that we maintain a high level of service and support in a rapidly changing environment. Just as clinics reinvented themselves in order to safely continue to see patients, so did our team flex and shift, to support providers, site coordinators, partners, and each other.

Currently clinics report 80% or higher volume, returning to a more normal number of well-child visits. We deeply value our partnership with every one of our providers, our 2,160 medical champions statewide. Because of their unwavering commitment, we know that thousands of under-resourced children are still receiving early literacy guidance at a time when so many other community- or school-based resources remain shut down. Across the state we have heard from grateful families who value the guidance providers share and take comfort in the sense of normalcy that a daily practice of spending time together with books delivers. We are proud to be able to provide a simple yet tremendously effective way to lower stress levels and build resilience, while nurturing a love of reading in these critical early years of brain development.

Despite many challenges, silver linings abound!

First and foremost, our stakeholders continue to show up and show up strong. Funders have expressed support and flexibility. Volunteers created workarounds to help safely. Board members are doing more than ever to help tackle our toughest challenges. Staff culture is thriving, despite a still largely virtual work environment. And we're growing our support base through stewardship and outreach, thanks to donors who continually demonstrate their commitment to the Reach Out and Read program.

During these challenging times, we re-imagined our workdays, with a steady focus on program fidelity and support. We used our time wisely, tackling projects that support evaluation metrics, operational efficiencies, and in particular, scenario planning, in order to be best prepared for what is to come in an uncertain year. We've embarked on numerous new partnerships as well, with organizations serving similar vulnerable populations, in order to put gently used books into the hands of families living in our highest-need communities.

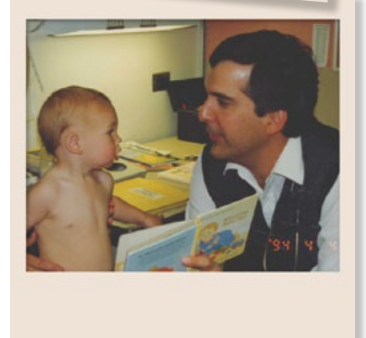
Most exciting, however, is the news that we're adding a much-anticipated program enhancement called Back To Birth, which you will learn all about on the following pages. After a successful pilot program in 2018, we couldn't be more excited to add Reach Out and Read to three additional well-child visits – now beginning at birth!

Lastly, please accept my most heartfelt thanks for your continued generosity, which has helped us remain strong through this very challenging time. Your support directly impacts thousands of children in need. We know this pandemic will not last forever, and we are so grateful to be able to continue to execute our mission and support the families we serve, despite these temporary hurdles.

PS - Please save the date on April 29, 2021, when we'll bring back the gala, in the beautiful outdoor tent space at the Denver Botanic Gardens. I hope to see you there, safely, in person, and ready to celebrate!

With gratitude,

Anne Tengler
Executive Director, Reach Out and Read Colorado



Celebrating Our Founder, Dr. Steve Vogler, AND A LIFETIME OF BOOKS

On October 8th, we celebrated the retirement our founder and Medical Director Dr. Steve Vogler, after more than two decades of Reach Out and Read Colorado support. We were overwhelmed by our community's support for Steve Vogler and early literacy!

Nearly 100 longtime supporters came together on Zoom to honor Steve, sharing wonderful memories and impact stories from the past 28 years—from traveling across the state with Megan Wilson to reading books in waiting rooms with Ann Logan and prescribing books alongside Magdalena Aguayo! A special thanks to Governor Jared Polis for his surprise appearance to discuss the importance of early education and share his deep appreciation for Steve's dedication to our mission here in Colorado.

More than 2.3 million books have been shared with Colorado families since Dr. Steve Vogler began prescribing literacy interventions for vulnerable Colorado children at Denver Health's Westside Clinic in 1992. To honor this inspirational legacy, continuing to build a love of reading, Reach Out and Read Colorado will be adding a new program enhancement beginning this fall— we're going Back To Birth!

"One of the very first conversations Steve and I ever had was about offering books at birth. There is no better way to honor his commitment, dedication, and love for this program!"

SARA WATSON, DENVER HEALTH

REACH OUT AND READ COLORADO is going Back To Birth!

The new program enhancement, Back To Birth, will allow us to begin serving our communities' most vulnerable children from day one.

Back To Birth will add books and guidance at the 1-week, 2-month, and 4-month well-child visit, effectively doubling the impact of Reach Out and Read in the first year of life.



Why ARE WE GOING BACK TO BIRTH?

The Reach Out and Read model has historically started at the 6-month well-child visit, yet recent early-childhood research from the American Academy of Pediatrics has powerfully demonstrated that our work and its impact should start at birth. The first six months of a child's life is a time when foundational relationships develop between a parent and child at an unparalleled rate—through mutual attention, engagement, enjoyment, and more.

Back To Birth helps parents recognize the crucial role of engaging with their children when they are babies. Incorporating the three additional well-child visits into our core model will significantly increase the dose of our intervention at a time when families are most receptive to setting up new routines and when foundational patterns of engagement are established. Additionally, including literacy promotion among the vital information that we give both parents right away (breast feeding, safety, symptoms of illness), elevates the importance of our message.

How WILL WE IMPLEMENT THIS PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT THROUGHOUT THE STATE?

We have carefully chosen developmentally-appropriate, diverse, and inclusive books for these first three visits to be used as tools by parents to engage and connect with their babies.

The program will be first introduced to more than 8,500 infants in Denver Health clinics starting in January 2021, in honor of our founder, Dr. Steve Vogler. We will strategically expand this enhancement statewide over the next two years, ultimately investing an additional \$500,000 a year in our youngest children.

We already have over 15,000 children on our Back To Birth wait list and our partner clinics can't wait to start sharing books sooner!

"We would love to introduce babies to the program earlier! They are always so excited to get their books!"

MEDICAL ASSISTANT, UC HEALTH MCC PEDIATRICS



To learn more about Steve's tremendous impact, his legacy, and our new Back To Birth initiative, visit reachoutandreadco.org/celebration.

We are pleased to welcome the following new additions to our Board of Directors:



Ryan Chase
Managing Director, Private Banking, Fortis Private Bank



Dee Daniels, RN, CPNP
Program Director, Sie Center for Down Syndrome, Children's Hospital Colorado



Jessica Sanchez
Vice President, Quality & Operations, Colorado Community Health Network



Kim White, MD
Pediatrician & Clinic Director, Every Child Pediatrics



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Get Involved

WANT TO HELP SORT BOOKS?

We have thousands of gently used books that need to be sorted to stock book shelves in clinic waiting rooms. If interested, please email Lili (intern@reachoutandreadco.org) to set up a socially distanced book sorting session.

BOARD OPPORTUNITIES

We are seeking a new **Medical Director** who will help set strategy for continued program expansion and impact. Qualified candidates are invited to apply.

Join our **Provider Advisory Board!** We're committed to a diverse and inclusive advisory board, actively recruiting providers with a family or pediatric focus statewide, from a variety of clinics and private practices.

We are growing our **Associate Board**, a networking Board that helps raise awareness, build connections, and host small events. Join us!

Learn more about these opportunities and apply here: reachoutandreadco.org/hiring

Join Us on Colorado Gives Day!

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8TH

Supporting local nonprofits like Reach Out and Read Colorado during this pandemic helps our communities stay healthy and thrive. Together, we can keep Colorado strong!

Mark your calendars, or schedule your gift beginning November 1st.
coloradogives.org/rorco