CREATING A LITERACY-RICH WAITING ROOM ON A BUDGET

Literacy-rich waiting rooms are a great way to enhance Reach Out and Read program sites and encourage families to read together. Here are a few tips for creating your own literacy-rich waiting area on a budget.

**Literacy-Rich Waiting Area Ideas Under $50**

- Parent Resource Guide Materials
  - Reach Out and Read Developmental Milestones sheet or bookmarks
  - Reach Out and Read Reading Tips sheet
  - Local library information, hours, addresses, and story times
  - Flyers from other education, early intervention, or adult literacy programs
  - AAP pamphlets on developmental screening
- Gently-used books for patients and siblings to bring home
- Reach Out and Read posters and banners
- Questions displayed around the waiting room that further children’s thinking about stories they already love
- Multicolored milk crates from dollar store for used book storage/seating
- Black and white copies of pages from books the children may use as coloring sheets, and volunteers can use to ask questions that expand on the text
- Child-centered magazines, such as Discovery Kids, Highlights, My Big Backyard, Cricket, and Wondertime

**Under $100**
(Includes everything above, plus the following)

- Bean bag chair
- Bulletin boards with literacy themes
- Felt board with laminated characters
- Puppets for volunteer readers
- Laminated color copies of classic stories for use with dry erase markers
- Reach Out and Read shirts for staff to wear

**Under $350**
(Includes everything above, plus the following)

- Area rug
- Bookshelf for children’s books
- Rolling literacy cart
- Grab and write dry erase kits
- Story Boards with felt characters (or laminated with Velcro as JACHO requirements allow)

**Under $750**
(Includes everything above, plus the following)

- Large area rug
- Child size table and chairs
- Book case

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**Resources and Websites**

Be sure to check out myROR.org for templates, resources, and materials for your Reach Out and Read program.

**Posters**

- You can also purchase used classic children’s books at thrift stores, remove the pages with eye-catching illustrations, frame, and hang in your waiting area.
  - www.getcaughtreading.org
  - www.alastore.ala.org
  - www.demco.com

**Furniture and Rugs**

- School Outfitters offers a special Reach Out and Read Catalog and 3% discount to our participating program sites. Contact your Regional Leader or email jeff.boley@schooloutfitters.com for a PDF of the catalog and more info.
- Stores like Target, Ikea, Wal-Mart, etc, also sell child-sized furniture.
  - www.kaplanco.com
  - www.demco.com
  - www.ecmdstore.com

**Resources, Activities, and Materials**

- Ask your local library for additional ideas and suggestions.
  - www.readingrockets.org
  - www.cpcbooks.org
  - www.pbskids.org
  - www.childcrafteducation.com
  - www.rif.org/literacy-central