

HOW TO: ORDER QUALITY BOOKS

Books matter. WHAT'S INSIDE MATTERS MORE.

Books have the power to:

- + Increase brain development
- + Increase vocabulary
- + Improve kindergarten readiness

Books have the magic to:

- + Create stronger bonds and secure attachment
- + Mitigate toxic stress
- + Provide early relational health benefits

But what's inside these books matters even more.

Reach Out and Read Colorado is dedicated to providing books with high-quality and inclusive stories to our partner clinics and the families they serve. Here's why:

MIRRORS

Books, like mirrors, help reflect what we observe and know about the world we live in. It's powerful to read or listen to a story about someone like you, that you can relate to.


WINDOWS

Books also allow us to view and understand lives that are different from our own, like a window into other cultures and experiences.

When children see themselves represented in books, they feel valued and included, signifying their lives and experiences are important. And when children have the chance to see a world different from their own in a book, they decrease their susceptibility to harmful stereotypes and learn about the world outside of their own.



ORDERING HIGH-QUALITY TITLES FOR YOUR CLINIC

Reach Out and Read Colorado provides all sites with a [recommended book list](#) that includes high-quality titles and some long time favorites. Please join us in supporting these efforts so children have both mirrors and windows within the pages they read. Look for this symbol  on our recommended books list to find inclusive books to include in your next order.

Below are some general tips when thinking about these titles.

WHAT IS A QUALITY, INCLUSIVE BOOK?

WHAT IT IS:

- ✓ A quality story that includes diverse settings, cultures, or lifestyles as part, but not all, of the story
- ✓ Includes characters of color, LGBTQ+, neurodiverse characters, or characters with disabilities in everyday settings
- ✓ Written or illustrated by a person of color or LGBTQ+ person
- ✓ Features a character of color in the plot and illustrations

WHAT IT ISN'T:

- ✗ A book, typically nonfiction, about a diverse setting, culture, or character (*food, fashion, folklore, festivals, famous people*)
- ✗ A book about having a disability or a book about gender identity
- ✗ Biography about an author or illustrator of color
- ✗ A book about a specific race or ethnicity



Jabari Jumps is one example of a high-quality book.

It is picture book about a boy who finds the courage to overcome his fear of jumping off a diving board at the local city pool. The story is about Jabari's journey and not his identity as a young black boy.

"As a mother of biracial children, I did not realize the importance of representation in books until my toddler pointed to a similar-looking child in *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* and said "that's me!" It was the first time he saw himself in a book we read, and we had read hundreds of books before that moment. Since then, I have been much more conscious to incorporate diversity in my family's library and with the books I give my patients through Reach Out and Read Colorado. These books provide confidence to the child they mirror and a window into their friend's lives."

Dr. Kristie Malik

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL SPECIAL CARE CLINIC
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