



REACH OUT AND READ

Program Guide

This evidence-based national model makes early literacy an integral part of pediatric primary care. Raising Readers in Story County (RRSC) sponsors a unique countywide program that serves all families who bring their children to well-child checkups from 2 months to 5 years. RRSC provides nearly 10,000 books each year with funding from local sponsors. Doctors at participating clinics give a book to each child and encourage families to talk and read aloud with their children daily in order to nurture their early language and literacy development.



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References

The Need for Reach Out and Read

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)¹ declared literacy promotion is an essential component of pediatric care for all children. The Academy says Reach Out and Read is an effective intervention to engage parents and prepare children to achieve their potential in school and beyond.

The [Child and Family Policy Center](#)² reviewed Iowa's early childhood population trends, children with high needs, and at-risk communities. They concluded that Iowa fares relatively well compared to the nation on most indicators related to young children, but there are still significant numbers of Iowa children at high need. "Changing demographics are placing new challenges on raising the next generation and ensuring young children, in particular, get what they need to start school healthy and prepared for success."

The National Reach Out and Read Model

The model has three components:

1. Children receive books at each check-up from 6 months to 5 years.
2. Doctors encourage families to read aloud daily at home.
3. Waiting rooms are literacy-rich environments.

When a doctor prescribes reading at home, families are likely to follow that advice, especially when they also receive an attractive new book. Healthcare providers know reading builds parent-child relationships as well as an interest in books and early literacy skills that prepare children to enter school ready to learn to read.

[Reach Out and Read research](#)³ has demonstrated a positive impact on the behaviors of both parents and children.

1. Parents served by Reach Out and Read are up to four times more likely to read aloud to their children.
2. During their preschool years, children served by Reach Out and Read score three to six months ahead of their non-Reach Out and Read peers on vocabulary tests. These early language skills help children succeed in school.

Story County Reach Out and Read

The Story County Reach Out and Read program replicates the national model faithfully. In addition, Raising Readers in Story County (RRSC) expands the basic model in an effort to reach all families and to have an even greater impact.

1. Our program serves all children up to age 5 who attend well-child checkups at Reach Out and Read sites.
2. RRSC recruited all Story County primary health providers. RRSC offered to provide books and installed Reading Corners in satellite medical clinics in Story County. In 2009 RRSC received a national award for being the first county to have 100% of providers participating in Reach Out and Read.
3. As a 501(c)3 organization, RRSC serves as the fiscal agent and raises funds for books. Community individuals, organizations and businesses support the program. Lead Sponsors donate funds year after year to purchase books for specific checkup levels. RRSC also applies for grants.
4. In RRSC reaches more disadvantaged families by providing Reach Out and Read training and books to the Mid-Iowa Community Action Women Infants and Children (WIC) program. WIC staff gives a book to every child at each checkup. In 2015 RRSC added the new Primary Health Care Clinic in Ames as a Reach Out and Read site.
5. A local Reach Out and Read team of RRSC members and a pediatrician selects the developmentally appropriate books. The team chooses books, places bulk orders, labels books, and delivers books to sites. RRSC conducts book inventories twice a year and completes bi-annual progress reports.
6. Family surveys revealed many parents didn't start reading with their babies until after their doctor gave the first book at 6 months. So RRSC created a parent handout and poster for babies that doctors now give at 2 months.

Desired Result and Indicators

Our desired end result is "All Story County Children Read to Succeed."

An indicator of the impact of our early literacy programs is the percent of children entering kindergarten demonstrating the basic language and literacy skills associated with reading as measured by school districts. From 2008 to 2013, the Ames district used the PAT assessment tool. The percent of children entering kindergarten with basic literacy skills improved from 65% in 2008 to 80% in 2013.

In 2014 Ames changed to the FAST assessment tool, following Iowa protocol. The new baseline in 2014 was 65.10% of entering kindergarteners demonstrating basic literacy skills. This percent improved to 77.54% in fall of 2016.

Children from families with low incomes are most likely to be behind in language and literacy. The proficiency of the subgroup of Ames kindergarteners eligible for Free and Reduced-priced Lunch improved from 52.85% in 2014 to 62.93% in 2016.

Examples of Performance Measures

1. Books: RRSC provides about 10,000 books each year to Story County Reach Out and Read sites. Lead sponsors and generous donors have helped provide sustainable funding for books. Nationally, providers annually distribute 6.5 million books to children along with literacy advice to their parents.
2. Children: Annually in Story County, about 7,000 unduplicated children receive new books at 9 well-child checkups from 2 months to age 5. Nationally, the program reaches over 4 million children.
3. Families: In addition to serving all families who participate in well-child checkups up to age 5, RRSC makes a concerted effort to reach families with low incomes by providing Reach Out and Read training and books to Women Infants and Children (WIC) Clinics and Primary HealthCare. Nationally, Reach Out and Read serves one in five families with low incomes.
4. Providers: Story County has 32 Reach Out and Read providers, and there are over 20,000 nationally. Story County has 9 sites, and there are 5,000 national sites.

Starting a Reach Out and Read Program

The national Reach Out and Read resource center has an online [“Application Process: How to Become a Reach Out and Read Program Site.”](#)⁴

Prospective sites complete these basic steps:

1. Collect routine data
2. Plan to supply books, and
3. Submit an application.

Each site recruits a Medical Consultant and On-site Program Coordinator. All providers must complete training, either in person or online.

RRSC Five Steps for Starting a Reach Out and Read Program

RRSC Step 1: Identify literacy needs

1. Meet with clinic administrators and primary care physicians to explore their interest in Reach Out and Read. Ask how many children attend each well-child visit up to age 5 to estimate how many books will be needed. The Reach Out and Read bi-annual progress report will ask for this demographic data about your target population:

Health Insurance percentages

- Self Pay/Uninsured
- Private Insurance
- Medicaid
- SChip
- Tricare
- Other

Average Annual income percentages

- 100% or below of Federal Poverty Level
- 101-150%
- 141-200%
- 200+%

Ethnicity percentages

- Asian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- White/Caucasian
- More than one race

Primary languages percentages

- English
- Spanish
- Chinese
- Arabic
- Other

2. Some doctors may say well-child visits are too busy to add another task. However, many doctors find it actually makes their job easier. Giving books at the start of checkups establishes positive rapport, and doctors can use the books to help assess children's development and parent-child relationships.
3. Contact other community providers serving children in their first five years whose families live with low incomes and other risk factors. Ask about the populations they serve and if they are interested in implementing a Reach Out and Read-type program. RRSC provides books for the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clinic.

RRSC Step 2: Plan

1. Review the [Reach Out and Read model](#).⁵
2. The [national Reach Out and Read website](#)⁶ lists state coalitions that support local sites.
3. The [Reach Out and Read Iowa website](#)⁷ has information about Iowa's activities.
4. Identify a nonprofit 501c3 organization to be the fiscal agent and to do fundraising. Recruit a Community Coordinator.
5. Form a Reach Out and Read Team. Consider including a children's librarian, a preschool or kindergarten teacher, and a physician.
6. Recruit a physician to serve as the Reach Out and Read Medical Consultant.

7. Recruit an on-site Program Coordinator.

RRSC Step 3: Implement

1. Arrange for training for all participating medical providers and coordinators. Pediatrician Jill Alexander, M.D. is the Story County trainer. The Reach Out and Read Iowa Coalition provides training and support for Iowa sites. A [Core Training Course](#)⁸ is also available online.
2. Select good books that are developmentally appropriate for checkup levels up to age 5. Purchase books from local vendors or from publishers' catalogs.
3. Raise funds for books.
 - RRSC recruits community Lead Sponsors who fund all the books given at a particular checkup age. If the average cost for a book and label is \$3, and your medical providers annually see about 100 children at a checkup age, a Sponsor would donate \$300.
 - Other ideas are soliciting gifts to cover the cost of all the books for one child and writing grants to help fund books.
4. Design and print book labels that give donors credit.
5. Manage the books.
 - Determine where ordered books will be delivered.
 - Arrange for labeling and a safe dry place to store the books.
 - Keep records of the number of books received and their distribution.
 - Keep financial records: invoices and evidence of payments, including copies of credit card receipts and front/back of checks.
6. Communicate with sites.
 - Establish a procedure for sites to request more books when they are running low.
 - Collect information for the bi-annual progress reports. Arrange for parent surveys about early literacy behaviors.

RRSC Step 4: Assess

1. Complete the online bi-annual Progress Reports required by Reach Out and Read.

2. The Medical Director also completes an online survey.
3. Reach Out and Read Site Observation Visits may be done when desired.
4. Gather data each fall on the percent of local children entering kindergarten with basic literacy skills.
5. RRSC also collects annual performance measures (outputs):
 - Number of books distributed
 - Number of children served and percent of total 0-5 population
 - Demographics of families with children ages 0-5
 - Number of sites
 - Number of healthcare providers participating and percent of possible providers
 - Number of volunteers and volunteer hours donated
 - Amount of funds raised; percent of total Reach Out and Read budget
 - Number and percent of parents who report increased reading time with children on the surveys
 - Number and percent of families participating in RRSC and other community literacy programs who say their doctor referred them
6. Establish a procedure and permission form for taking pictures of the Reach Out and Read program.
7. Establish a procedure and survey to collect data, feedback, and quotes from families.
8. The RRSC Team visits each site in the county once or twice a year to maintain the Reading Corners, get feedback from staff, and pick up family surveys.
9. Arrange to get population-level data from school districts about the basic literacy skills of each year's class of incoming kindergarteners.
10. Annually review Reach Out and Read program costs, implementation, participation, unit costs, and results.
11. Report the program's impact to stakeholders and the community.

RRSC Step 5: Revise

1. Consider changing books about every two years so younger siblings get different books
2. When there are changes in primary care providers, recruit and train new ones. Update data on the national Reach Out and Read website.

Origins of Reach Out and Read in Story County

In 2001 Ames Morning Rotary Club launched a pilot project that provided a start-up collection of 500 Baby Faces books for several McFarland Clinic pediatricians to give out at the 6-month checkup. Word of the program spread, and soon other parents started asking their doctors about getting books.

Rotarian leaders, who were also founders of Raising Readers in Story County (RRSC), gathered data about the number of Story County primary care physicians doing well-child checkups and the number of children they served. By 2006 RRSC was providing books for all McFarland Clinic pediatricians to give at checkups from 6-months to 5 years, and Story County became an official Reach Out and Read program. The program continued to grow, and in 2009 we received an award for being the first county in the nation to have all primary care doctors participating.

Ames Morning Rotary Club has continued as a Lead Sponsor, annually providing \$3,000 for the books given at the 6-month checkup. The club published a [Reach Out and Read Tip Sheet](#)⁹ to encourage others to support this program.

Benefits of the Reach Out and Read Program

1. Giving a book at the beginning of a checkup is an ice-breaker and builds positive relationships.
2. Doctors can use the age-appropriate books in evaluating children's development and parent-child interactions.
3. ROR training is available both in person and online for medical providers and staff.
4. Medical providers can earn 1.25 level one CME credits for completing the Reach Out and Read online CME Course.

5. Reach Out and Read is a proven intervention that is supported by American Academy of Pediatrics.
6. Children who live in print rich environments and who are read to during the first years of life are much more likely to read on schedule.
7. Families are given good quality children's books and advice about the importance of reading aloud with young children.
8. Strong language and literacy skills contribute to school success and reduce school dropouts, juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy.

Possible Challenges

1. Funding for books is needed each year for a sustainable program.
2. A system to order books, label and store books, and distribute books is needed.
3. Doctors may think they are too busy to include Reach Out and Read in their checkups and to do the required training.
4. Children in the most disadvantaged families may not attend all the well-child check-ups and thus miss some benefits of Reach Out and Read.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do you pay for Reach Out and Read books?

RRSC is a 501c3 non-profit organization and does the fundraising for our books. We calculate the cost to sponsor all the books for each checkup level. In Story County we provide over 1,000 books per level. We estimate \$3 as the average cost of a high quality new book purchased in bulk and with free shipping. Then we multiple the number of children at each level times \$3.

We established a Lead Sponsorship program and invited community groups, individuals and businesses to participate. It has been very successful. A Lead Sponsor pledges to fund all the books for a specific level. RRSC recognizes Lead Sponsors publicly, and we send a thank-you letter each June, along with an invoice for the next year.

This is a sample letter:

Dear (Name of Lead Sponsor for 3-year-old checkups),

Thank you for being Lead Sponsors of Reach Out and Read in Story County! This past year your generous \$3,000 contribution purchased 1,091 books for doctors to give to children at their 3-year-old well-child checkup. Your label was placed on every book.

It is our policy to change titles every few years. This year our 3-year-old selection changed from **Over In the Meadow** by Louise Voce to the equally delightful book **Hug** by Jez Alborough. Children enjoy telling the story of this warm, comforting book. *"Bobo, a baby chimpanzee needs a hug. But his friends don't seem to understand. "Hug," he implores, time and again. Time and again his puzzled pals—from the smallest chameleon to the tallest giraffe—shrug and cuddle with their jungle mothers. As the lonely chimp's plea escalates, his friends grow concerned. Eventually he finds his mum and reaps the reward."*

The Reach Out and Read program improves home literacy environments by providing good books and engaging parents. This, in turn, helps improve the development of children, especially those growing up in poverty. According to research by the national center, "Children served by Reach Out and Read enter kindergarten with larger vocabularies, stronger language skills, and a six-month developmental edge."

In Story County we distribute almost 10,000 Reach Out and Read books a year. Our doctors and nurses follow the model by reminding families of the importance of reading at home and giving developmentally appropriate books to children from 6 months to age 5. One of the factors that makes Story County stand out is that all primary care physicians participate. Another unique feature of our program, thanks to materials provided by United Way of Story County, is that our medical providers have started sharing the literacy message at 2 months instead of 6 months. We

believe 4 more months of increased talking and reading with babies can make a powerful difference.

According to Ames school district data, we are continuing to make progress toward our goal of all children coming to kindergarten ready to read and succeed. In fall of 2013, 80% of Ames children entered kindergarten scoring proficient on early literacy skills compared to 75% in 2012 and 65% in 2008.

A second fundraising option is to invite a donor to fund books for one child. A gift of \$30 could cover all the books for a child at checkups in the first 5 years.

Writing grants is a third option. This is an example of language that could be used in a grant application to support Reach Out and Read.

What is the need you are addressing?

Approximately ____% of local children enter kindergarten lacking basic literacy skills essential for learning to read. *(Ask your school district about their test data.)* The foundation for language and literacy development is laid in a child's earliest years. Many parents don't know that reading and talking with their children is one of the best ways to build their brains and prepare them for success in school. Once a child has been identified as needing remedial reading, the cost to society increases and the likelihood of their becoming a good reader decreases.

What is your proposal?

We will collaborate with local healthcare providers to launch the Reach Out and Read program. The ultimate goal of this pediatric literacy intervention for infants and toddlers is to foster a love of books and help lay the foundation for reading success in school. Doctors have a special opportunity to encourage families to read aloud because parents trust their advice and they have regular and repeated contacts with children and their parents. Research indicates that parents exposed to Reach Out and Read are over 4 times more likely to read with their children and low-income families are up to 8 times more likely. Our goal is to increase the

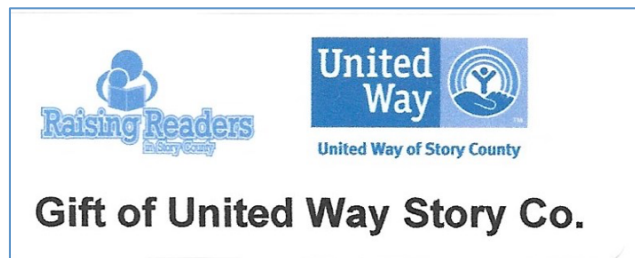
percentage of children entering kindergarten with proficient literacy skills based on the valid and reliable assessment administered by the school district.

How will the funds be spent?

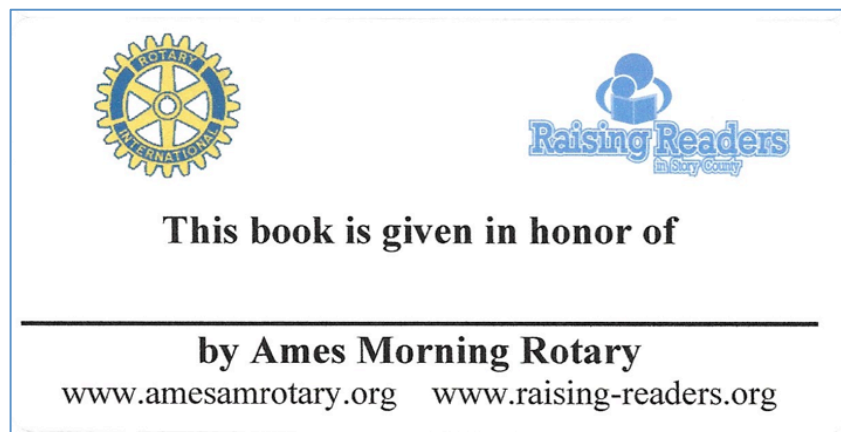
We request \$_____ to purchase (#) _____ good quality, developmentally appropriate books for doctors to give in the year ahead to children at their _____ (age level) well-child checkup. Every time these (#) _____ families read the books, they will see the label with your name and be reminded that you care about their children. The funds from this grant will be 1/8 of the total annual Reach Out and Read budget of \$_____.

How do you credit the donors?

RRSC puts a label on each book to recognize the funder of the book. We typically use 1-inch x 2 ⁵/₈-inch labels (30 to a page). This is an example:



Sometimes, when donors want to personally sign the books, we use 2-inch x 4-inch mailing labels (10 to a page). This is an example:



Where do you buy Reach Out and Read books?

Local businesses that sell books may have titles you want, and they may offer discounts for a cause like Reach Out and Read.

Scholastic, Inc., has a [Scholastic Literacy Partner](#)¹⁰ program that has a catalog of board books and paperbacks available with deep discounts, free shipping, and bonus books. You may qualify if you are a 501c3 nonprofit, a state agency, a community organization, or a corporation. For more information, visit the website or call 800-724-2222.

[All About Books](#)¹¹ is an authorized Reach Out and Read vendor that offers book discounts, free shipping and bonus books. Visit the website or call 866-732-3667 to see if you are an eligible non-profit literacy program or organization.

[First Book Marketplace](#)¹² is an online bookstore offering high-quality children's books at prices 50 to 90 percent below retail. It is available only to programs where at least 70 percent of the children served are from low-income or military families or Title 1 eligible schools.

What are examples of good books for different age levels?

The Reach Out and Read website features "[Choosing Books for Children](#)."¹³ The page pictures books recommended by experts and tips for reading to children at twelve different age ranges.

These are some of the books RRSC has selected over the years for the specific check-up levels.

2 months

- RRSC created and produced a Fun with Baby poster and a companion parent brochure to encourage talking, reading, singing, and bonding with your baby

6 months

- Baby Faces series

9 months

- Wild Animals Touch & Feel
- Bright Baby: Animals, On the Farm, At the Zoo

12 months

- Baby Gym: Calm & Soothe, Bounce & Jiggle, Touch & Tickle, Wiggle & Move
- Alphabet, Colors, Shapes
- Ducklings, 5 Busy Ducklings
- Babies On the Move
- Farm Animals

18 months

- Head, Shoulders, Knees, Toes
- Just Like Me: Eating Well, Looking Good, On the Go

2 years

- Whose (ears, feet, teeth, tail) are these? Lift flaps
- Moo, Baa, La La La
- Wheels on the Bus
- Five Little Ducks
- Things that Go
- Lunch
- Blue Hat, Green Hat

3 years

- Old McDonald
- Have You Seen the Crocodile?
- The Train Ride
- 5 Little Monkeys Jumping
- Hug
- Over in the Meadow

4 years


- Give a Mouse a Cookie
- Up, Down, and Around
- Mouse Mess

5 years


- Sam Storybooks: Kiss Goodnight, You Can Do It, Don't You Feel Well?
- Wolf
- Good Night Gorilla

How do young children develop early literacy?

This [Milestones of Early Literacy Development](#)¹⁴ handout is available in English and Spanish from Reach Out and Read.



MILESTONES OF EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT



NEWBORN TO 6 MONTHS

TALK, SING, READ, PLAY Right from birth, babies are listening, looking, and learning. So find, and enjoy, those everyday moments when you can talk, sing, read, and play together with your baby.

	6 TO 12 MONTHS	12 TO 24 MONTHS	2 TO 3 YEARS	3 TO 4 YEARS	4 TO 5 YEARS
MOTOR DEVELOPMENT <i>What your child is doing</i>	holds head steady sits in lap without support grasps book, puts in mouth drops, throws book	holds and walks with book no longer puts book in mouth right away turns board book pages	learns to turn paper pages, 2 to 3 pages at a time starts to scribble	turns pages one at a time, and from left to right sits still for longer stories scribbles and draws	starts to copy letters and numbers sits still for even longer stories
COMMUNICATION AND COGNITION <i>What your child is saying and learning</i>	smiles, babbles, coos likes and wants your voice likes pictures of baby faces begins to say "ma", "ba", "da" responds to own name pats picture to show interest	says single words, then 2- to 4-word phrases gives book to adult to read points at pictures turns book right-side up names pictures, follows simple stories	adds 2-4 new words per day names familiar objects likes the same book again and again completes sentences and rhymes in familiar stories	recites whole phrases from books moves toward letter recognition begins to detect rhyme pretends to read to dolls and stuffed animals	can listen longer recognizes numbers, letters can retell familiar stories can make rhymes learning letter names and sounds
ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE <i>What parents can do</i> <i>Ask questions and wait for your child to answer</i> <i>Read and speak in your first language</i>	talk back and forth with your baby; make eye contact cuddle, talk, sing, read, play point at and name things: nose, ball, baby, dog... follow baby's cues for "more" or "stop" play games such as "peek-a-boo" or "pat-a-cake"	smile and answer when your child speaks or points let your child help turn the pages; keep naming things use books in family routines: naptime, playtime, bedtime; on the potty; in the car, bus use books to calm or distract your child while waiting	ask "Where's the dog?" or "What is that?" be willing to read the same book again and again as you read, talk about the pictures keep using books in daily routines	ask "What happens next?" in familiar stories point out letters, numbers point out words and pictures that begin with the same sound together, make up stories about the pictures	relate the story to your child's own experiences let your child see you read ask your child to tell the story encourage writing, drawing point out the letters in your child's name
WHAT TO READ	board and cloth books; books with baby faces; nursery rhymes	board books; rhyming books; picture books; books that name things	rhyming books; picture books that tell stories; search and find books	picture books that tell longer stories; counting and alphabet books	fairy tales and legends; books with longer stories, fewer pictures

LET YOUR CHILD CHOOSE WHICH BOOK TO READ. FIND STORIES ABOUT THINGS YOUR CHILD LIKES.

www.reachoutandread.org reachoutandread

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What are the duties of local leaders?

RRSC Community Coordinator(s)

- Take the Core Training Course.
- Manage the books (select, order, label, store, distribute books).
- Fundraise for books and appreciate donors.
- Create and maintain Reading Corners.
- Help with bi-annual progress reports.
- Assess the program with a Parent Survey and/or a Site Observation visit.
- Track the literacy proficiency of entering kindergartners.

Medical Consultant

- Take the Core Training Course and train other providers.
- Help select books.
- Advocate for Reach Out and Read publicly.
- Fill out the Medical Consultant survey online.

Clinic Site Coordinator(s)

- Take the Core Training Course.
- Monitor the inventory of books.
- Help with bi-annual progress reports.
- Arrange for a Parent Survey and/or a Site Observation visit.
- Arrange for photos of Reach Out and Read participants.

How do you get feedback from families?

Once a year, typically during the months of June and July, Story County clinics ask families to fill out a one-page survey before and after the 2-month to 5-year well-child checkups. RRSC compiles the data to help evaluate the impact of Reach Out and Read and to find ways to continually improve.

For instance, early survey responses in Story County indicated most parents weren't starting to read to their babies until after receiving the first book at 6 months. To address this concern, RRSC designed a special poster for infants to look at and a literacy handout for parents. Doctors now give at these materials at the 2-month checkup.

The national Reach Out and Read model specifies that the doctor should give the book to the child and use it in developmental screening. If parents report on the survey that they received the book from a nurse, this can be brought to the Medical Director's attention.

If a number of families report that they prefer to read in a language other than English, it can influence whether you have materials translated and order books in other languages or bilingual books.

This is the form that RRSC developed with guidance from an Iowa State faculty member who was our board president.

WELL-CHILD CHECK-UP SURVEY – McFarland Clinic PEDIATRICS

Date _____

Circle today's check-up: 2-4-weeks 2-months 4-months 6-months 9-months 12-months 18-months 2-years 3-years 4-years 5 years

BEFORE you see your doctor, please answer these questions:

1. Does your child like to read or look at books?
☐ Not interested ☐ Favorite activity
☐ Sometimes ☐ Don't know
2. How often do you read aloud books with your child?
☐ Not yet ☐ Most days
☐ Not often ☐ At least once a day
☐ Several times a week
3. If you do read with your child, about how many minutes do you spend reading together during one day?
☐ 1-9 minutes ☐ 20-29 minutes
☐ 10-19 minutes ☐ 30 or more minutes
4. How many children's books do you have at home?
☐ None ☐ 11-15
☐ 1-5 ☐ 15 or more
☐ 6-10
5. What language(s) do you read in?
☐ English ☐ Spanish ☐ Other ☐ English & Other
What language do you prefer? _____
6. At what hospital was your most recent baby born?

7. Have you heard about **Raising Readers in Story County**?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know
Ask the receptionist for a Raising Readers registration card.

AFTER you see your doctor, please answer these questions:

8. Did your child receive the Raising Readers gift book?
☐ No ☐ Yes
9. Did the doctor or nurse give your child the book?
☐ Doctor ☐ Nurse
10. How important does your doctor think it is to read daily with your child in his or her first five years?
☐ Not important ☐ Very important
☐ Important ☐ Don't know
11. How often do you now plan to read books with your child?
☐ Not often
☐ Several times a week
☐ Most days
☐ At least once a day
12. Other comments:

THANK YOU! Please return this survey to the reception desk.



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