



## MEDIA ALERT

### **Governor Beebe, AR First Lady, and Congressman Snyder to Read to Young Children at Little Rock Pediatric Clinic in Support of Reach Out and Read**

#### **Medical Intervention Using Children's Books Improves Youngsters' Language Development and School Readiness**

**WHEN:**           **10 a.m.**  
**Thursday, November 13**

**VISUALS:**

- ▣ Governor Mike Beebe, First Lady Ginger Beebe, and Congressman Vic Snyder reading books to children who are gathered around them in brightly colored waiting room.
- ▣ Doctor in pediatric exam room giving a book to a child and advising the parent about the importance of reading to their child.
- ▣ Colorful display of age-appropriate and bilingual children's books.
- ▣ Reach Out and Read posters and program information.

**WHAT:**           Doctors and medical staff at Little Rock Pediatric Clinic are sending their youngest patients home with free books and this advice for their parents – "Read to your child every day." **Governor Mike Beebe, First Lady Ginger Beebe** and **Congressman Vic Snyder** (AR-02) will visit the clinic to support that message and the importance of school readiness by reading to a group of children. They also will help launch Reach Out and Read Arkansas public service announcements that will begin airing on TV this month.

Little Rock Pediatric Clinic participates in **Reach Out and Read**, a national children's literacy program that focuses on the children at greatest risk – children aged 6 months to 5 years living at or near the poverty level. Doctors participate in Reach Out and Read by distributing carefully selected, new, developmentally and culturally appropriate books, which include bilingual books available in 12 languages. Children who participate in Reach Out and Read from birth to age 5 start kindergarten with a home library of up to 10 books and a parent who has heard at every well-child visit about the importance of books and reading.

**Research shows that the program really works!** Studies show that parents who get books and literacy guidance from their doctors and nurses are more likely to read to their young children, provide more books in the home and share books with them more often. Low-income children

exposed to Reach Out and Read show significant improvements in language development--the single strongest predictor of school readiness.

Reach Out and Read Arkansas currently serves over 28,000 infants, toddlers and preschoolers at 18 locations across the state, providing them with more than 48,000 new books to this year. Reach Out and Read Arkansas became an official coalition of Reach Out and Read National in March of this year. Prior to that, the non-profit was known as Arkansas Well Child Reads.

Endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Reach Out and Read was the sole American recipient of the 2007 UNESCO International Literacy Prize and the only American program featured at the White House Conference on Global Literacy.

**WHERE:** Little Rock Pediatric Clinic  
500 South University, Suite 400  
Little Rock, AR 72205

**WHO:**

- Governor Mike Beebe
- First Lady Ginger Beebe
- Congressman Vic Snyder (AR-02)
- Dr. Chad Rodgers, Reach Out and Read AR Medical Consultant and co-founder
- Dr. Peggy Sissel-Phelan, Reach Out and Read AR Board President and co-founder.
- Kathy Vining DeLone, Executive Director, Reach Out and Read AR

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Helpful information for all parents on choosing children's books and age-appropriate literacy development is available at [www.reachoutandread.org](http://www.reachoutandread.org). Please feel free to link to the web site or to use the information as a sidebar for a printed article (with credit to Reach Out and Read).

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