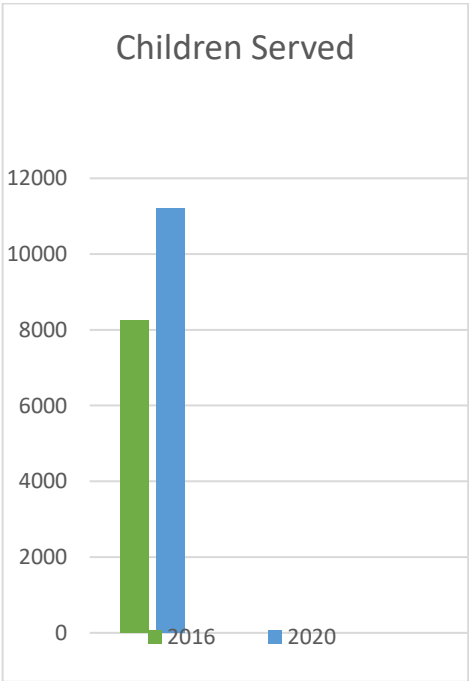


Dear Durham County Commissioners,

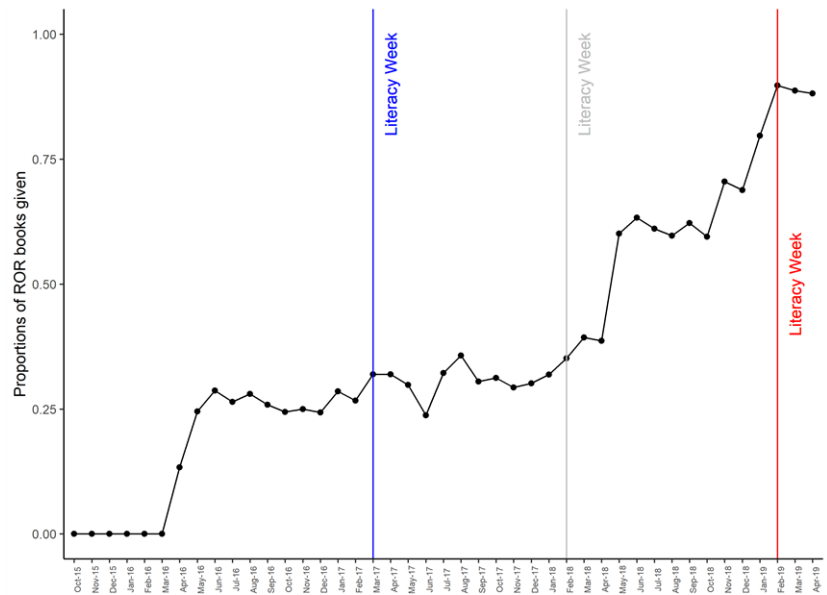
It is with great pleasure that we submit the memo below for your review, reflecting on the importance of our partnership together to support children and families in Durham County. We are grateful for your continued investment, and proud to show the continued integration of the Reach Out and Read intervention into overall clinical work for families. The last few months have been challenging for everyone, and the road ahead is one that will likely include limited integration with preschool and other education system components at best. It is more critical than ever to continue to support of families through the medical home, and we are grateful for your role in helping to make this a reality.

Reach Out and Read in Durham County

The investment from the County has been transformational in the growth of Reach Out and Read in Durham, but also in the quality implementation of the intervention, and on provider engagement and passion for the work. Because the County’s investment has allowed for consistent and quality book selections for families, providers are engaged with the intervention, excited to share the guidance and book with families, and overall transformed in their fidelity to the evidence-based model. The graphs below show the rate of growth in Durham County since the beginning of our partnership, both in terms of clinical locations and children served. In addition, the image on the right demonstrates the way that the Reach Out and Read intervention is an integrated component of whole-child/whole-family health in the clinic.



In addition, the graph here demonstrates the increase in compliance with Reach Out and Read at Duke sites over the life of our relationships with Durham County. Fidelity to the model is another significant indicator of quality, and of the positive impacts of our partnership over the last 3-years. As our partnership developed, providers experienced greater support, and therefore greater engagement with and excitement around their high-quality implementation of Reach Out and Read to support families in the clinic. Consistency of resources has driven quality in the clinics.



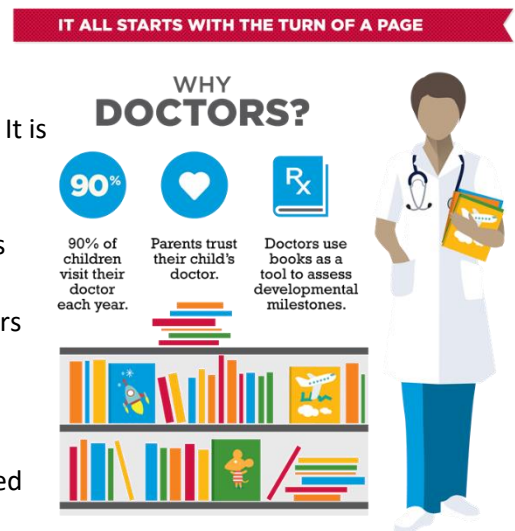
In-kind Investment of our Providers

Though not calculated for traditional financial accounting, Reach Out and Read can estimate the amazing in-kind investment of our healthcare providers in the clinic with families each and every day. It is estimated that providers spend 3-5 minutes talking with families about the routines and habits that support shared reading and language during a well-visit, and at the lowest reimbursement rates allowed by Medicaid, the thousands of providers across North Carolina are providing an in-kind investment in the millions of dollars to our state each year.

Experiences Through COVID-19

As you would expect, the Reach Out and Read programs experienced significant disruptions over the last 3-4 months. Families experienced discomfort coming into the clinics. Compliance with well visits, as is the trend across the country, has plummeted. Reach Out and Read is committed to helping families feel secure in the clinic environment and support healthy routines that will build resilience for children and families in this time of stress.

Though we are in the midst of a public health situation, Reach Out and Read, and pediatric primary care, remains one of the only systems in the early years that CAN still reach children and families, supporting their health and development, resilience, and compliance with best medical and developmental practices. In addition, reading aloud with children eases family stress and fosters feelings of safety and security, building resilience and enabling families and children to cope with social and emotional challenges.



The documented benefits that Reach Out and Read delivers aligns with the goals of the North Carolina Early Childhood Action Plan (alignment attached) and NCDHHS' interests in assuring a robust medical home that not only attends to the medical needs of children and families, but also addresses health-related social needs.

Though check-ups may look a little different right now, Reach Out and Read, and the trusted voice of the provider, is as important as ever. **Moving forward and looking ahead, Reach Out and Read will continue to be an absolutely critical touch point of support for children, families, and the providers who care for them.** As such, the Reach Out and Read community continues to focus on innovation, flexibility, and responsiveness to the needs of our providers, clinic network, and families. Areas for this innovation in the coming year include:

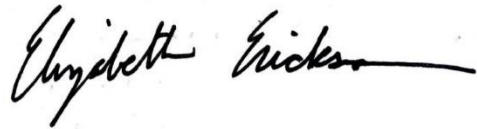
- Provider training, including ROR integration into telehealth, stress and adversity training, and resilience support
- ROR as a tool to support families in routines and normalcy from the voice of the provider
- ROR and its impact on well-visit compliance
- ROR as an ongoing tool to support language rich interactions in children's daily lives to support developing brains and healthy relationships

Thank you again for your partnership, and we look forward to continuing this important work ***together.***

Thank you,



Callee Boulware
Regional Director
Reach Out and Read



Elizabeth Erickson, MD
ROR Medical Consultant
Duke Primary Care