



Reach Out and Read: The Evidence

Research shows that when pediatricians promote early literacy according to the Reach Out and Read (ROR) model, there is a significant effect on parental behavior, beliefs, and attitudes towards reading aloud, as well as improvements in the language scores of at-risk young children who participate. These effects have been found in ethnically diverse low-income families, in all areas of the country, regardless of parental literacy.

The body of published research supporting the efficacy of the ROR model is more extensive than for any other psychosocial intervention in general pediatrics.

The following studies have been published in peer-reviewed medical journals:

STUDY	MAIN FINDINGS
Needman et al., 1991	Parents who had received a book as part of ROR were more likely to report reading books with their children , or to say that reading was a favorite activity . The benefits of ROR were larger for families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children.
High et al., 1998	Parents whose children (< 3 years) had received books and educational materials during well-child visits, were more likely than parents in a control group to report that they shared books with their children , and to cite sharing books as a favorite activity or a child's favorite activity .
Golova et al., 1999	Hispanic parents whose children had received bilingual books, educational materials and literacy-promoting anticipatory guidance were more likely to report reading books with their child at least three days/week (66% vs. 24%) and report that reading books was one of their three favorite things to do with their child (43% vs. 13%) than parents in a control group. Parents participating in the ROR-model intervention also tended to have more books in the home (for children and adults).
High et al., 2000	Families participating in the ROR model were more likely to read to their children (4.3 vs. 3.8 days/week), and their toddlers' receptive and expressive vocabulary scores were higher, even when adjusting for parental education, foreign-born and language proficiency.
Sanders et al., 2000	Hispanic parents participating in ROR were more likely to report reading to their children compared to non-ROR parents. When parents read more frequently to their children, they were also more likely to read frequently themselves.
Jones et al., 2000	Parents participating in ROR were more likely to rate their child's pediatrician as helpful than those not participating in ROR. Pediatricians in the ROR group were more likely to rate parents as receptive than those in the non-ROR group. Mothers in the ROR group were two times more likely to report enjoyment in reading together with their child than those in the non-ROR group.
Mendelsohn et al., 2001	High-risk urban families participating in ROR read more frequently to their children . Children exposed to ROR had higher receptive language scores (mean: 94.5 vs. 84.8) and expressive language scores (mean: 84.3 vs. 81.6). Increased exposure to ROR led to larger increases in language scores (receptive and expressive).
Sharif et al., 2002	Children participating in ROR had higher receptive vocabulary scores (mean: 81.5 vs. 74.3). They also had higher scores on the Home Literacy Orientation (measured reading to child and number of books in the home) than children not participating in ROR.
Silverstein et al., 2002	English and non-English speaking families who participated in the ROR model increased their weekly bedtime reading , and more parents reported reading as their own or their child's favorite activity. For non-English speaking families the number of children's books in the home also increased as a result of the ROR model.
Theriot et al., 2003	Among children age 33 to 39 months attending a well-child clinic in Louisville, KY, expressive and receptive language scores were significantly associated with both the number of ROR-enhanced well-child visits they had attended, and with the number of books purchased for them by their parents. This finding supports a "dose effect" for the ROR intervention: the more ROR, the higher the score.

Weitzman et al., 2004	In a study using direct observation of children's homes, parents were more likely to read aloud to their children and enjoy reading together when their families had more encounters with the ROR program.
Needlman et al., 2005	In a multicenter study, families exposed to ROR were more likely to report reading aloud at bedtime , to read aloud three or more days per week, mention reading aloud as a favorite parenting activity, and own 10 or more children's books.
Byington et al., 2008	This qualitative study examined the thank-you notes sent to staff at a ROR clinic by Hispanic families. Families expressed thanks for the books received, as well as the literacy advice given by doctors and nurses. Many families believed that the books and advice promoted the habit of reading and demonstrated respect the staff held for the families and their children.
King et al., 2009	Successful implementation of the ROR program was related to the culture of the clinic. Staff at clinics that struggled to implement ROR found their jobs burdensome and reported lacks in communication. Staff at successful ROR Sites worked as a team and expressed strong commitments to their communities.

References:

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