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**Reach Out and Read of Greater New York
Celebrates First Annual Early Literacy Awareness Week
August 9-15, 2009**

***ROR GNY Celebrates 10 Years of Service with Series of FREE Family Events
and Mayoral Proclamation***


**Appearances by Clifford the Big Red Dog • Book Drives Sponsored by
The Wiggles, Barnes & Noble, Borders and the WNBA New York Liberty**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (New York) July 30, 2009 – Reach Out and Read of Greater New York celebrates the power of reading aloud to children with its first annual **Early Literacy Awareness Week, August 9-15, 2009**. The week has been officially decreed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg as a time to learn about the importance of introducing books to children 6-months to five years as part as an important part of their early development.

Since 1999, Reach Out and Read of Greater New York (ROR GNY) has partnered with medical providers serving lower income communities in advising parents about the importance and benefits of reading aloud to their children. **58% of New York area children ages 0-5 living in poverty are not read to aloud daily, significantly decreasing their opportunities for developing important language and cognitive skills, as well as building motivation, curiosity and memory.**

ROR GNY programs provide free books at each check-up for children ages 6 months to 5 years. The books are new, carefully chosen, and developmentally appropriate -- starting with board books for babies and moving on to more complex picture books for preschoolers. Through ROR GNY, each child starts kindergarten with a home library of up to 10 books and a parent who has learned through every well-child visit about the importance of books and reading with their children.

ROR GNY Early Literacy Awareness Week will feature **FREE family events** in all five boroughs. Highlights include:

- **Clifford the Big Red Dog** at Early Literacy Week events in **all five boroughs** 
- **FREE** readings by acclaimed children's authors **Melanie Hope Greenberg** and **Geoffrey Hayes**
- **FREE reading fairs** with games, arts and crafts, face painting, raffles and more
- Special readings by New York State Assembly Members **Richard Gottfried**, **Jose Rivera** and **Linda Rosenthal** and New York City Councilmember **Rosie Mendez** at ROR program sites
- Opportunities for parents to **speak with leading child development experts** about the benefits of reading to children and tips to use at home

A full schedule of events is attached and can be downloaded at www.reachoutandreadnyc.org.

As part of this extensive awareness raising campaign, New York area families are also encouraged to support Reach Out and Read of Greater New York programs their local communities.

- Parents can download special vouchers at www.reachoutandreadnyc.org and present them at select **Barnes & Noble** and **Borders** stores to have a portion of sales go to area ROR programs reaching low income families.
- Families can upload a memory of reading with children on the **Little, Brown Books for Young Readers** (LBYR) website in celebration of the Julie Andrews' Collection of Poems, Songs, and Lullabies. For every story shared through photo, video or written message, LBYR will donate a book to Reach Out and Read.
- **New York Liberty** fans can support early literacy by purchasing special tickets to the **Thursday, August 14**, game against the Chicago Sky at Madison Square Garden. When families use code RORGNY, **the Liberty will donate \$5 of every \$15 or \$30 ticket purchased** to ROR area programs. In addition, families can **drop off a new children's book** at the ROR GNY table at the game and receive a **FREE meal voucher**.
- As part of the New York area stop on their **Wiggles Go Bananas Live! Tour Friday, August 21 and Saturday, August 22**, The Wiggles encourage every family attending the shows to bring a new children's book to be donated to ROR GNY area programs.

About Reach Out and Read of Greater New York

Reach Out and Read of Greater New York (ROR GNY) is a regional coalition of the national Reach Out and Read (ROR). Since 1999, ROR GNY programs have been reaching New Yorkers with the message to read aloud to their children partnering with pediatricians and other health care providers to provide books to children 6-months to 5-years old during check-ups, and give advice to parents about the importance of reading aloud to their kids. ROR programs distribute books and advice throughout the five boroughs of New York City, Long Island, and seven counties north of the city: Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Orange, Dutchess, Ulster, and Sullivan. Across the Greater New York region, 175 ROR Program Sites serve over 277,000 infants, toddlers and preschoolers each year and distribute close to 455,000 books. For more information about ROR of Greater New York visit: www.reachoutandreadnyc.org.

**Reach Out and Read
Early Literacy Awareness Week
August 9-15**

Read to a Child in Your Life Today!

This August, activities throughout the NY metropolitan area celebrate the joy of reading aloud in honor of Reach Out and Read of Greater New York Early Literacy Awareness Week. **For more information, visit our website: www.reachoutandreadnyc.org, or call 212-803-3334.**

All Month

- Select Borders bookstores throughout Queens, Long Island and Westchester will conduct book drives
- Little, Brown Books for Young Readers (LBYR) web site launch for Julie Andrews Collection of Poems, Songs, and Lullabies. For every story shared through photo, video or written message, LBYR will donate a book to Reach Out and Read. (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers has also pledged a donation of 10,000 books and hopes to schedule a children's book author for a special reading at a ROR GNY Program Site.)

Readings and Book Fairs

Sunday, August 9 – Saturday, August 15

ROR GNY Book Fair

Barnes & Noble Tribeca
97 Warren Street
212-587-5389

and

Barnes & Noble, 86th & Lexington (August 12 only)
150 East 86th Street
212-369-2180

Present the ROR GNY voucher available at www.reachoutandreadnyc.org to donate a percentage of your sale

Monday – Thursday, August 10-13, 10am-12pm – FREE Event!



Look for Clifford on Thursday

Adventures in Reading! Volunteers read to kids in Rufus Park, Queens
Jamaica Neighborhood Center
161-06 89th Avenue, 3rd floor
718-739-2060

Monday, August 10, 12-1:30pm – FREE Event!

Melanie Hope Greenberg, acclaimed children's book author/illustrator reads from her book collection
Brooklyn Hospital Center, Pediatric Clinic
121 Dekalb Avenue
718-250-6672

Tuesday, August 11, 11am – FREE Event!



Children's Story Time
Bronx Library Center
310 E Kingsbridge Rd
(718) 579-4244

Wednesday, August 12, 11:30am - 2:30pm – FREE Event!

“Early Literacy Awareness Day” including children's story time, raffles, prizes, adult & family literacy resources, and a book fair.

Morris Heights Health Center
85 West Burnside Avenue, Bronx
718-716-4400



Wednesday, August 12, 3pm – FREE Event!

Leora Mogilner, MD, Mt. Sinai pediatrician and ROR specialist and **Meryl Weinberg**, Executive Director of Metropolitan Hospital Center read from their favorite children’s books.

Barnes & Noble, 86th & Lexington
150 East 86th Street
212-369-2180

Thursday, August 13, 4 pm – FREE Event!

Geoffrey Hayes reads from his new book “Benny and Penny in the Big No-No!”

Barnes & Noble Tribeca
97 Warren Street
212-587-5389

Saturday, August 15, 11:30am-2:30pm – FREE Event!

“Early Literacy Awareness Day” with a reading circle, arts & crafts, a clown and face painting. Children will paint the walls to decorate the clinic with their original artwork.

Community Health Center of Richmond
235 Port Richmond Avenue, Staten Island
718-876-1732



Saturday, August 15, 2 pm – FREE Event!

Children’s Story Time.
Barnes & Noble Tribeca
97 Warren Street
212-587-5389

Legislator Visits to Pediatric Clinics

August 10, 10:30am

NYC Councilmember Rosie Mendez visits the Beth Israel ROR program, and reads to children in the pediatric waiting room.

Beth Israel Medical Center

August 10: 1:30pm

Assemblyman Jose Rivera will tour Morris Heights Health Center in the Bronx on Monday

Morris Heights Health Center

August 11: 2:00 pm

Assemblyman Richard Gottfried and **Assemblywoman Linda Rosenthal** will visit the Ryan/Chelsea-Clinton Community Health Center

Ryan/Chelsea-Clinton Community Health Center