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**Congressman Joseph Crowley Inspires Reading
at Elmhurst Hospital Pediatrics**
*Congressman Reads Aloud to Children in Support of
Reach Out and Read Literacy Program*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – (Elmhurst, NY) August 26, 2009 -- Doctors at Elmhurst Hospital Pediatrics are sending families home from check-ups with free books and a very important prescription – “read aloud to your children.” **Congressman Joseph Crowley, who represents some of the families served by the hospital in the 7th New York Congressional District, paid a visit to Elmhurst Hospital Pediatrics** to follow doctors’ orders by reading to families and children who participate in its Reach Out and Read (ROR) early literacy program. He also used the opportunity to tour the facility and see firsthand how ROR helps instill a love of reading in local area children.

"Literacy is one of the greatest gifts we can give to our children," said Congressman Crowley. "The work that Reach Out and Read of Greater New York does here at Elmhurst Hospital is clearly making a difference in the lives of children in Queens. It was an honor to join Reach Out and Read of Greater New York today and share in the joy of reading."

ROR works with medical providers across the greater New York area in advising parents about the importance of reading aloud to their children and provides 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, 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. Additionally, volunteers read stories with children in clinic waiting rooms, thereby modeling for parents reading aloud techniques.

"Many of our families have come to this country to provide a better education for their children. What better way to encourage that goal than by championing early literacy from a young age," stated Amy Woolever, MD. ROR GNY Medical Consultant, Elmhurst Hospital Pediatrics. "It's great to see our patients clutching their new books in the waiting room."

About Reach Out and Read of Greater New York

Elmhurst Hospital Pediatrics is one of seven program sites in the 7th New York Congressional District that participate in ROR, providing books to more than 23,000 children annually. Across the region, 176 ROR

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program sites serve over 277,000 infants, toddlers and preschoolers each year and distribute over 454,000 books. For more Information about ROR of Greater New York visit our website at www.reachoutandreadnyc.org.

About Reach Out and Read

Reach Out and Read is a national, nonprofit program that is working to make literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric primary care. ROR trains medical providers to advise parents about the importance of reading aloud and to give books to children at check-ups from 6 months to 5 years, with a special emphasis on children growing up in poverty. Endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, ROR has one of the strongest records of research support of any primary care intervention. Peer-reviewed studies indicate that parents who get books and literacy counseling from their doctors and nurses are more likely to read to their young children, read to them more often, and provide more books in the home. Low-income children exposed to the program have shown improvements in language development, a critical component of school readiness.

Since 1989, more than 52,000 pediatricians, nurses, residents and health professionals have been trained in the ROR model of early-literacy promotion. This year, ROR will provide over 6 million books to more than 3.8 million children, at more than 4,500 hospitals and health centers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands. For more information about Reach Out and Read visit www.reachoutandread.org.

About Elmhurst Hospital Pediatrics

Elmhurst Hospital Center (EHC) is the major tertiary care provider in the borough of Queens. The hospital is comprised of 545 beds and is a Level I Trauma Center, an Emergency Heart Care Station and a 911 Receiving Hospital. It is the premiere health care organization for key areas such as Surgery, Cardiology, Women's Health, Pediatrics, Rehabilitation Medicine, Renal and Mental Health Services.

Elmhurst Hospital Center serves an area of approximately one million people. This community is recognized as the most ethnically diverse in the world. Last year, EHC received 693,600 ambulatory care visits as well as receiving 130,042 Emergency Room visits making it one of the busiest ERs in New York City. Over 4,200 babies were delivered at Elmhurst last year alone-the most in this region. Ensuring accessible health care is our priority.

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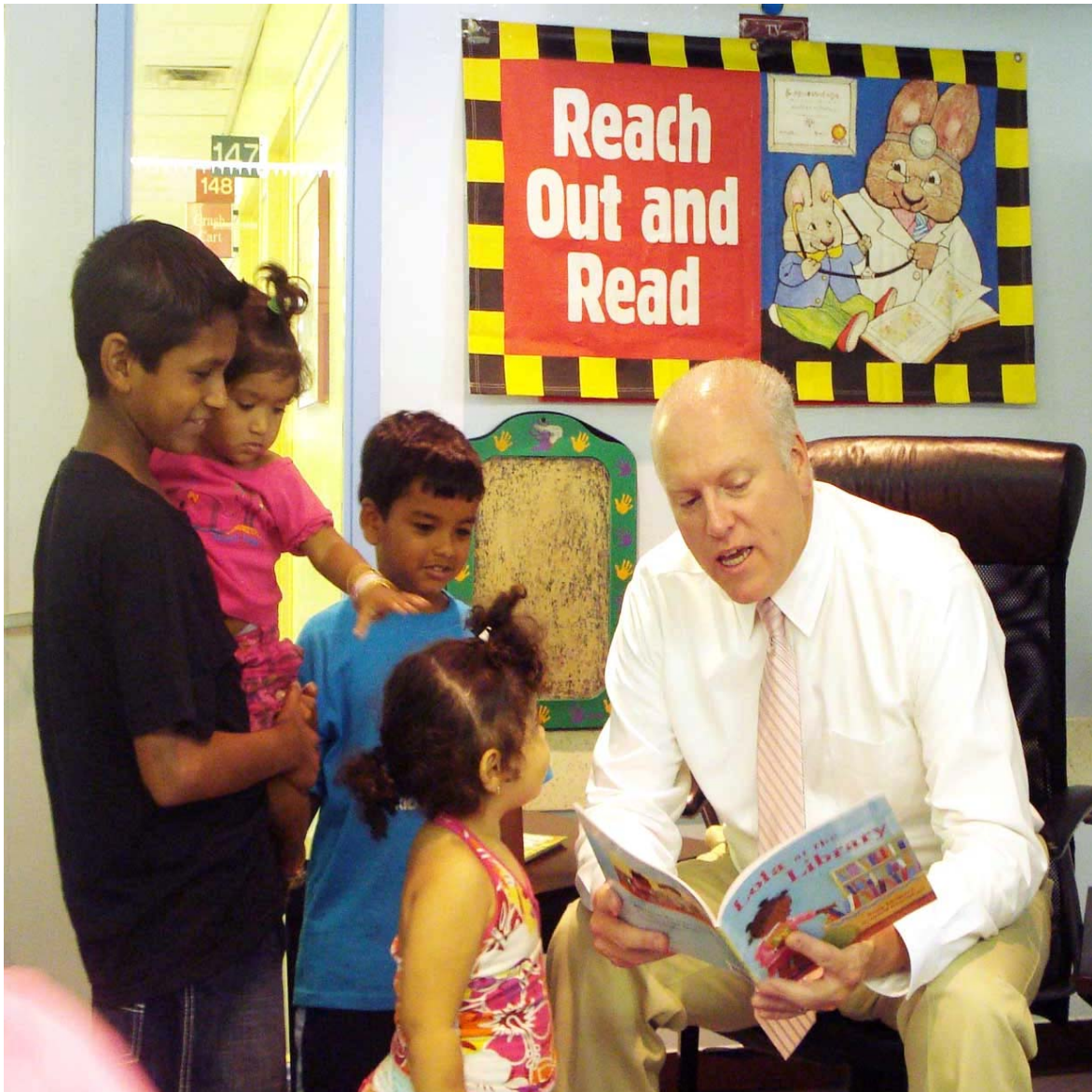
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On Wednesday, August 26, 2009, children had fun as Congressman Joseph Crowley read at Elmhurst Hospital Pediatrics.

Photo courtesy of: Reach Out and Read of Greater New York

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