



## **New York City Council Member Peter Vallone, Jr. Ends the School Year With a Visit to Families at Mount Sinai Queens**

### *Vallone Reads Aloud to Children in Support of Reach Out and Read Literacy Program*

**(Astoria, NY) June 2, 2009** -- Doctors at Mount Sinai Family Health Associates in Queens are sending families home from check-ups with free books and a very important prescription – “read aloud to your children.” New York City Councilmember Peter Vallone, Jr. (22<sup>nd</sup> NY City Council District) visited Mount Sinai Hospital of Queens to follow doctors’ orders by reading to families and children who participate in the Reach Out and Read program. As part of his visit, Councilmember Vallone, Jr. had the chance to see first hand how Reach Out and Read (ROR) brings reading to children.

New York City Councilmember Peter Vallone, Jr. stated that “one of the greatest joys of being a father came from reading to my daughters. I am very pleased with Reach Out and Read’s efforts to promote literacy and allow parents to participate in their child’s development.”

Mount Sinai Queens participates in ROR, a program in which medical providers advise parents about the importance of reading aloud and give free books to children 6 months to 5 years of age at pediatric check-ups. 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 heard at every well-child visit about the importance of books and reading with their children. In addition, volunteers read stories with children in clinic waiting rooms, thereby modeling for parents reading aloud techniques.

“Reading aloud to your child provides a solid foundation for his or her development,” said Diane Liu, MD, Reach Out and Read Medical Consultant. “Reach Out and Read at Family Health Associates has positively impacted our patients and their families in a number of ways. From building emotional bridges between parents and their children, to improving reading level in school-age children, its effect reaches beyond the academic success noted by researchers.”

#### About Reach Out and Read of Greater New York

Mount Sinai Hospital of Queens is the only ROR program site in the 22nd City Council District that participates in ROR, providing books to more than 600 children annually. Across the region, 173 ROR program sites serve over 259,200 infants, toddlers and preschoolers each year and distribute close to 439,000 books. For more information about ROR of Greater New York visit our website at [www.reachoutandreadnyc.org](http://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 4,535 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](http://www.reachoutandread.org).

#### About Mount Sinai Queens

Mount Sinai Queens celebrates 10 years as Mount Sinai and 100 years of caring in Western Queens in 2009. This 235-bed community hospital offers a full spectrum of sophisticated inpatient and outpatient services with a team of nearly 400 physicians representing 36 medical and surgical specialties and subspecialties. Its mission is to provide every patient the best possible experience and outcome in a safe, supportive, environment while serving all with compassion, competence and respect. This mission is achieved through premiere programs tailored to the specific healthcare needs of the community and offer a depth and breadth of excellence including comprehensive services in cardiology, breast health, minimally invasive surgery, orthopedic surgery, vascular care and is Queens only Joint Commission Designated Stroke. Between the physicians and staff, more than 50 languages are spoken, just one of the many important ways that the Mount Sinai Queens cares for its culturally diverse population.



**New York City Council Member Peter Vallone, Jr. reading with children in the Reach Out and Read program at Mount Sinai Hospital of Queens in Astoria.**

**(Photo courtesy of the Office of NY City Councilmember Peter Vallone, Jr.)**

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