



## Reach Out and Read American Indian/Alaska Native

### Site News & Notes

May 2009

#### From the ROR AI/AN Co-Medical Director . . .

Dear ROR Sites,

As co-medical director of the newly-formed ROR American Indian/Alaskan Native Coalition, I am excited and at times overwhelmed at what we have set out to do.

This new Coalition, a partnership between the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Indian Health Service, and Reach Out and Read, is unique. Our "offices" are spread out over the whole continent and serve children from hundreds of different tribal backgrounds. While most ROR coalitions are regional, helping Sites in their locale with help in book purchases, fund raising, training, expansion, our Coalition is nationwide.



As you will read elsewhere in this newsletter, we are making good progress in meeting several of our challenging goals. We have begun to form a Board of Advisors that will include members from a variety of backgrounds and locations. We need this to guide our program and develop new priorities. We have begun some serious efforts at fundraising. We are making progress in fundraising and met our initial goal of 20 new sites in Oklahoma during 2008. We need to keep at all of these.

We have also identified goals for our coalition that are unique.

1. We want to catalog and evaluate existing children's books that deal with American Indians/Alaskan Natives and identify those that are culturally appropriate. We plan to partner with several organizations to help with this effort.
2. We want to encourage and support the publication of MORE children's books written by or about contemporary Indians and Alaskans. Several publishers have expressed interest in helping with this. Identifying authors, illustrators, and stories is our next challenge.
3. We want to expand the number of Indian/Alaskan books offered through the ROR catalog, and be sure that those offered meet cultural standards.
4. We have begun to create a ROR AI/AN waiting room video. This video will feature natives from many tribes reading aloud a children's book, both in English and in their own language. The video is designed to be entertaining, but also to educate children and their families on the importance of their language, their culture, their stories, in the world today. The pilot film looks great. Keep tuned....

In short, we are a new and excited coalition, with a new and excited board. Your input, suggestions and ideas are not only welcome, but needed.

Sincerely,  
Bill Flood MD, FAAP

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#### ROR AI/AN Fast Facts

- 76 Sites in 21 states
- 40,000 AI/AN Children Served
- Over 53,000 books distributed

#### Who's Who at ROR AI/AN?

Need help with an ROR issue? Have a question? Need guidance? Our ROR AI/AN team is here to support you!

**Maureen Finneran, MSW, Program Manager,**  
[mfinneran@aap.org](mailto:mfinneran@aap.org), 1/800-433-9016 ext. 7106

Administrative issues including start-up, site management, fundraising, advocacy, quality assurance, and technical assistance.

**Bill Flood MD, FAAP, Co-Medical Director,**  
[William.flood@ihs.gov](mailto:William.flood@ihs.gov)  
Provides leadership and guidance to coalition activities.

**Steve Holve MD, FAAP, Co-Medical Director,**  
[Steve.Holve@tchealth.org](mailto:Steve.Holve@tchealth.org)  
Provides leadership and guidance to coalition activities.



## Book Funding Secured

ROR AI/AN worked closely with the ROR National Center to secure a grant for all ROR AI/AN Sites from Reading is Fundamental (RIF). RIF is a national nonprofit literacy organization that provides free books to children ages 0 – 8 years.

The grant will fund 75% of all ROR AI/AN sites' total book budgets for at least 12 months. The remaining 25% of book expenses will be covered by ROR National Center, state-based Coalitions, and ROR AI/AN. The grant will affect the way books are purchased and distributed to I/T/U Sites. A Frequently Asked Questions is being developed to help Sites understand how book distribution will change.

## Advisory Board Established

ROR AI/AN established an Advisory Board to provide oversight and guidance to ROR AI/AN activities. The Board is led by Medical Directors, Dr Bill Flood and Dr Steve Holve. The new Board Members are:

**Bronwen Anders MD, FAAP** San Diego, CA  
**George Brenneman MD, FAAP** Catonsville, MD  
**Joseph Bruchac** Greenfield Center, NY  
**Brady Englestead MD, FAAP** Pawhuska, OK  
**Barbara Johnson** Washington D.C.  
**Kathy LaCapa** Taylor, AZ  
**Debbie Reese** Urbana, IL  
**Pat VanMaanen** Phoenix, AZ

Board members bring a wealth of experience with ROR in I/T/U settings, with American Indian Children's literature, and with early childhood education.

## ROR Celebrates 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In March 1989, Boston City Hospital pediatricians Barry Zuckerman and Robert Needlman began handing out books to their youngest patients, offering advice to parents about the importance of reading aloud, and deploying volunteer readers in the pediatric clinic waiting room. That was the birth of Reach Out and Read, which currently serves 25 percent of the nation's at-risk infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

More than 20 million books have been distributed to children in the 20 years since ROR Started. A National Center has been established in Boston and over 4,000 Sites across the country now serve more than 3.5 million children 6 months to 5 years. There are 76 Indian Health Service/Tribal/Urban (I/T/U) Sites serving approximately 40,000 AI/AN children.

Dr. Perri Klass, National Medical Director of Reach Out and Read, who helped expand the program from a single Site to thousands of Programs nationwide, said, "This program has grown so rapidly because of the powerful connection between primary care providers and the families they care for. Reach Out and Read helps parents transform children's home environments and bedtime routines, and improve their educational odds—all through books and reading aloud." More than 50,000 pediatricians, family physicians, and nurse practitioners have been trained in the ROR model.

## Useful Websites

[www.myror.org](http://www.myror.org)

Myror is your one stop website for all your program-related needs. Check it out for the latest announcements from ROR National, ROR documents, Scholastic Book Account, and much more.

[www.aap.org/ror](http://www.aap.org/ror)

This is the official website of ROR AI/AN. Check it out for newly updated information about the Coalition and how to make a donation.

[www.aap.org/literacy](http://www.aap.org/literacy)

A new web-based toolkit on literacy from the American Academy of Pediatrics. It covers selecting quality books, health literacy, and more.

[www.Oyate.org](http://www.Oyate.org)

Oyate is a Native organization whose work involves evaluation of books with Indian themes. They also sell books.

<http://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>

A blog about American Indians in Children's Literature from Debbie Reese, a ROR AI/AN board member. The website includes a list of recommended books and resources.

One of Reach Out and Read's greatest strengths, especially during challenging economic times like these, continues to be its cost-effectiveness. The cost of the full, five-year ROR program is just \$40 per child.

Endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Reach Out and Read is the model of a successful public-private partnership, drawing funding support from the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Defense, 14 state governments, and individuals, corporations, and foundations nationwide.

After 20 years, Reach Out and Read's goal remains the same: that every child grow up with books and a love of reading. Thank you for all you do to support that noble mission.



### **Call for Newsletter Content:**

**We want material from YOU for the next newsletter.**

**Please e-mail Maureen Finneran ([mfinneran@aap.org](mailto:mfinneran@aap.org)) any items of interest by July 15, 2009.**

Possible submissions may include:

- Creative program administration ideas/tips
- Examples of community partnerships
- Opinion pieces
- Other newsworthy announcements, photos or quotes that may be of interest to ROR AI/AN Sites.

**When submitting a piece for consideration please:**

- 1) keep your submissions to 350 words or less;
- 2) include a "for more information please contact NAME at EMAIL" (may also include phone number or website, if appropriate);
- 3) feel free to include pictures and/or logos;
- 4) spell and grammar check your articles before submitting

### **We Want to Hear From You!**

**Do you have a touching ROR-related story?**

**Ideas on how the Coalition can support your work?**

**Photographs of ROR at your clinic?**

**A favorite book that every ROR Site should know about?**

**Contact Maureen Finneran, [mfinneran@aap.org](mailto:mfinneran@aap.org) or 1/800-433-9016 ext. 7106.**