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ELLIOT PHYSICIANS ARE MAKING LITERACY THEIR PRIORITY FOR THE YOUNGEST OF PATIENTS

Manchester, NH— Elliot Pediatrics and Primary Care Riverside in Hooksett (EPPC Riverside) and Elliot Pediatrics and Primary Care in Raymond (EPPC Raymond) are taking their role as healthcare providers to a new level and adding literacy to the priority list for their youngest patients! Both offices are actively participating with the national Reach Out and Read® Program (ROR). Through the financial support of the National Reach Out and Read® program, as well as Target Stores and the local Walmart Distribution Center in Raymond, EPPC Riverside and EPPC Raymond were able to launch their participation in this program.

Reach Out and Read® is encouraging medical providers to incorporate literacy education with every well child visit for all children from six months to 5 years of age. Providers are not only taught to give parents tips about reading with young children, but every child is provided with their very own age appropriate book during the visit with their doctor.

“We saw this program as a valuable and unique way to bring the topic of literacy to the forefront with our patients and their parents during a doctor’s visit,” said Gus Emmick, MD. Emmick explains, “Reach Out and Read uses the primary care visit as a springboard for improvement of childhood literacy. It’s a joy for us to incorporate into our well-child visits and the families are very receptive and appreciative of our efforts.”

Reach Out and Read® has been shown to provide significant improvement in both expressive and receptive language skills. The importance of this cannot be underestimated as currently up to 35% of American children arrive in Kindergarten without basic language skills including recognizing letters, and reading from left to right. Furthermore, children who get behind in school often remain behind; 88% of first graders who were below grade level reading remained below grade level at fourth grade.

The Reach Out and Read® program utilizes 13 research studies that indicate significant developmental gains. The average 2 year-old has been shown to have an approximately 6 month developmental gain. Thus, this program has the ability to make very impressive changes with an average lifetime cost of \$40 per child.

Though this program is exciting and offers a potentially significant developmental edge to children, it has required significant resources in both in planning and finances. Dr. Gus Emmick and Jane Macaione have helped site direction at Hooksett, while Dr. Nancy Husarik and Melissa Long have worked to coordinate this program in Raymond. "We hope to distribute 1,600 books per year to children in the Hooksett and Raymond areas," said Emmick.

EPPC Riverside began Reach Out and Read® participation in September of 2010 and Raymond followed shortly after in October of 2010.

References:

Theriot JA Franco SM et al, The impact of early literacy guidance on language skills of 3-year-olds. Clinical Pediatrics 2003; 42:165-172

Mendelsohn AL, et al., The impact of a clinic-based literacy intervention on language development in inner-city preschool children. Pediatrics 2001; 107(1): 130-134.

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