



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Eric Adams

## NYS Senator Eric Adams Reads to Youngsters at SUNY Downstate, Filling "Prescription" to a Successful Education: Read to Children!

ERIC ADAMS September 3, 2009

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**

### MEDIA ADVISORY

NYS SENATOR ERIC ADAMS HELPS PREPARE FAMILIES FOR THE START OF THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR BY READING TO CHILDREN AT SUNY DOWNSTATE MEDICAL CENTER

NYS Senator Eric Adams read aloud to children on September 1st at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in support of the "Reach Out and Read" (ROR) national literacy program. Doctors at SUNY Downstate participate, sending families home from check-ups with free books and an unusual "prescription": read aloud to your children! Senator Adams used the opportunity to tour SUNY Downstate and observe firsthand how ROR helps instills a love of reading in district children. The Senator proceeded to "follow doctors' orders" by reading to families and children who participate in the Reach Out and Read (ROR) early literacy program. [A link to a photo: <http://www.nysenate.gov/photos/2009/sep/02/senator-adams-reads-kids-suny-downstate-support-reading-programs-such-reach-out-a> ]

Senator Adams states: "Nothing can be more gratifying than teaching youngsters skills they will use for the rest of their lives, and doing so in an entertaining and enjoyable way. I am

proud to have worked with Reach Out and Read, a wonderful organization that makes literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric care. By training medical providers to advise parents about the importance of reading aloud to their children, and by giving free books to children at check-ups, ROR demonstrates to youngsters that reading is the key to success and broadening oneself as a person. I commend the staff and organizers, and I salute the kids who are now a little more prepared to face the world as educated people.”

#### 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](http://www.reachoutandread.org)

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.

About Reach Out and Read of Greater New York

SUNY Downstate Medical Center is one of six program sites in the 20th New York Senatorial District that participate in ROR, providing books to more than 22,000 children annually. Across the region, 176 ROR program sites serve over 277,000 infants, toddlers and preschoolers each year and distribute over 454,000 books.

"I have participated in Reach Out and Read now for eleven years, three with SUNY Downstate Medical Center. I cannot imagine practicing Pediatrics without it," stated Galia Austin-Leon, MD, ROR Medical Consultant. "My colleagues and I feel it is an integral part of the well-child visit and anticipatory guidance we give. Moreover, ROR has done wonders for the physician-patient relationship. No longer do we have timid and frightened children visiting our offices. Instead, the children are oftentimes very excited about their visits and asking for their books immediately upon entry into the examining room. It has been rewarding for me to provide books to my patients for all of these years and a privilege to participate in ROR."

###