



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Suzi Oppenheimer

Senator Suzi Oppenheimer Encourages Parents to Read Aloud to Their Children to Prepare Them for School

SUZI OPPENHEIMER August 25, 2010

| ISSUE: **FAMILIES, EDUCATION, CHILDREN, YOUTH**

| COMMITTEE: **EDUCATION**



As thoughts turn from summer vacations to back-to-school preparations, Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Mamaroneck) reminded parents that reading aloud to their young kids is one of the best ways to prepare them for the challenges of a new school year. Senator Oppenheimer, who chairs the Senate Education Committee, recently participated in an early literacy awareness event at the Open Door Family Medical Center in Ossining.

Reading the popular children's book, "Five Little Monkeys" by Eileen Christelow, the Senator captivated her young audience, who joined in with the refrain "No more monkeys jumping on the bed!" The children and their parents were at the Open Door Family Medical Center for pediatric check-ups.

The Senator's visit was organized by Reach Out and Read of Greater New York, a non-profit organization that promotes school-readiness through reading. Physicians at Open Door and other participating medical facilities in the New York area give free age-appropriate books to children, ages six months to 5 years, during check-ups and advise parents on the importance of reading aloud to their kids for early language development. Every child participating in the Reach Out and Read program will have a home library of ten books by the time he or she enters school.

"Here in New York," observed Senator Oppenheimer, "nearly 35% of children enter kindergarten without the basic language skills they need to be ready to learn. Reach Out and Read makes reading an integral part of a child's early well care check-ups, instilling a lifelong love of reading that will serve these children well in school and in life."