



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
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Peak Vista Community Health Centers Adopts National Reach Out and Read Program

Colorado Springs, CO, August 12, 2008--Getting books from the doctor has recently become a routine part of well child visits at Peak Vista Community Health Centers' Pediatric Health Center as doctors and nurses adopt the Reach Out and Read program. Peak Vista joins more than 3,797 programs nationally that are working to make books part of a healthy childhood.

Reach Out and Read (ROR) is a simple, yet highly effective concept. The program targets children growing up in low income households and without books and features three key elements:

- Volunteers read with children in pediatric center waiting areas
- Pediatricians educate parents about the importance of reading with their children every day, and
- Every child from the age of six months to five years receives a new book to take home and keep when they come in for a well-child check-up.

“Giving a book to a young child, along with age-appropriate advice about sharing books for the parents, may be the only concrete activity a pediatrician can routinely do to promote child development,” commented Barry S. Zuckerman, M.D., ROR co-founder and Chief of Pediatrics at Boston University School of Medicine.

Medical research supports that theory, showing that literacy promoting interventions by the pediatrician have a significant effect on parental behaviors, beliefs and attitudes toward reading aloud.

“For more than a decade, studies have indicated that parents who receive 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,” said Dr. Kathleen Foote of Peak Vista Community Health Centers’ Pediatric Health Center, “In addition, several studies have also shown improvements in the language scores of young children participating in Reach Out and Read.”

“Peak Vista Community Health Centers’ passion is helping our patients to improve their lives. Toward that end, I see Peak Vista’s implementation of proven programs like Reach Out and Read as playing a significant role, along with the other proven programs we offer to our patients, including First Visitor, Prenatal Plus, and Centering Pregnancy,” said Dr. Michael Welch, VP of Medical at Peak Vista Community Health Centers.

For more information or to donate funds or volunteer with Reach Out and Read at Peak Vista Community Health Centers, contact Jennifer at 329-7191.

About Reach Out and Read

Reach Out and Read is a national, non-profit program that is working to make literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric primary care, so that children grow up with books and a love of reading. ROR trains doctors and nurses about the importance of reading aloud and to give books to children at pediatric check-ups from six months to five years of age, with a special focus on children growing up in poverty. This year Reach Out and Read will provide more than 5.4 million books to more than 3.3 million children, at over 3,797 programs throughout the country.

About Peak Vista Community Health Centers

Peak Vista Community Health Centers is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide exceptional healthcare for people facing access barriers. Celebrating 37 years of service to El Paso and Teller counties, Peak Vista serves more than 53,000 patients with medical, dental and behavioral health care through 12 centers at 9 sites. Most patients are from working families. Peak Vista is accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc. To learn more about Peak Vista, visit www.peakvista.org.

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