

CareSource Doubles Down on Investments in Georgia's Children

\$215,000 Gift to Sustain and Expand Intervention Across the State

ATLANTA, GEORGIA, UNITED STATES , December 12, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Atlanta, GA (December 2022) – [Reach Out and Read](#) today announced a \$215,000 two-year grant from

[CareSource](#) to improve health, equity and education outcomes for young children and their families in Georgia.

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At CareSource, we recognize the importance of literacy at an early age, our partnership with Reach out and Read GA is exemplary of our commitment to ensuring our members understand their health needs.”

Dr. Seema Csukas, Chief Medical Officer of CareSource Georgia

“This partnership has special meaning to us. Alongside both Dr. Terri McFadden, medical director for Reach Out and Read Georgia and National Board member, and Dr. Seema Csukas, chief medical officer of CareSource Georgia, we have made it our life mission to help families thrive and so we all have a shared sense of purpose and passion” said Amy Erickson, Executive Director for Reach Out and Read Georgia.

The partnership between CareSource and Reach Out and Read Georgia launched last year with a goal of expanding

intervention services to reach more Medicaid families and to help sustainability efforts in select existing medical offices. Outreach, enrollment, training and implementation of the Reach Out and Read intervention at Soos Pediatrics in Dublin, Georgia, was one of the highlights of the partnership. In recognition of Reach Out and Read, Georgia's 25th Anniversary CareSource has doubled down on its commitment to support the research-based intervention gaining widespread adoption in pediatric and public health offices across Georgia.

“At CareSource, we recognize the importance of literacy at an early age, and our partnership with Reach out and Read Georgia is exemplary of our commitment to ensuring our members understand their health needs and outcomes,” said Dr. Seema Csukas, Chief Medical Officer of CareSource Georgia. “There is a connection between literacy and an individual's health, and we are excited to partner with this organization to improve the overall health of our members.”

Reach Out and Read Georgia is committed to making relational moments matter – helping

families build their child's strong, healthy brains and relationships. The pandemic has inarguably disproportionately impacted marginalized, low-income and underserved communities. Reach Out and Read Georgia's pediatricians now play an even more vital role in supporting underserved families by leaning in, listening, modeling and helping to skill-build in parents to encourage everyday moments focused on positive interactions together.

At each well-child visit beginning at birth through age 5, the child receives a new book to take home and build their home library. Books are chosen to be developmentally, linguistically and culturally diverse with stories, images and characters that accurately reflect and affirm a diverse range of identities. These books provide children with mirrors of their own lives and experiences, as well as windows into the lives and experiences of other people. For children of color, particularly from Black and Brown communities, books can make a positive impact on their racial identity formation, self-worth and belonging.



Doctor reading to child at well-child visit.

Medical providers will engage with parents about the benefits of reading regularly with their children as part of a healthy routine and will also use the book as a development assessment tool. The partnership will focus on Reach Out and Read Georgia's priority area of books Beginning at Birth and Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity initiative focused on diverse children's books and supporting families.

"We are incredibly grateful to the CareSource Foundation for their generous support," said Dr. Jay Berkelhamer, Reach Out and Read Georgia advisory board member and past president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, "There is no better messenger than a pediatrician to deliver advice about a child's brain development, and the important role parents and caregivers have on this journey."

CareSource's funding will allow Reach Out and Read Georgia to expand to one or more medical practices, provide co-branded educational resources and new children's books to select medical sites, and engage CareSource employees as partners in our shared mission to promote reading and routines as part of a child's healthy development.

"Reach Out and Read Georgia's work aligns with CareSource's 'health care with heart' philosophy. Our logo depicts a stethoscope in the shape of a heart representing our mission and heart for

those we serve. We are thrilled to partner with CareSource – a partnership that we anticipate will remain for years to come,” added Erickson.

Amy Erickson

Reach Out and Read Georgia

+1 770-401-6852

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