



MEDIA ALERT

Elijah Johnson (Young Simba in “The Lion King”) to Celebrate “National Drop Everything and Read Day” and Support Reach Out and Read by Reading to Children in Philadelphia

WHEN: 10:30-11:00 AM
Monday, April 12, 2010
“National Drop Everything and Read Day”

WHAT: **Elijah “Lil ElijahJ” Johnson**, the 11-year-old actor and triple threat entertainer who plays Young Simba in the Broadway musical “The Lion King,” will read to young children in the waiting room at St. Chris Care at Northeast Pediatrics in Philadelphia in support of the school readiness initiative Reach Out and Read. The Lion King is in Philadelphia for one month only, playing at the Academy of Music until Saturday, April 24.

St. Chris Care at Northeast Pediatrics, which is affiliated with St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children, participates in **Reach Out and Read**, a research-proven program that **prepares America’s youngest children to succeed in school** by partnering with doctors to **prescribe books and encourage families to read together**. Through Reach Out and Read, each child starts kindergarten with a home library of up to 10 new, carefully-chosen books and a parent who has heard at every regular pediatric checkup about the importance of books and reading. Bilingual books are available in 13 languages.

Reach Out and Read was founded in 1989, and today serves more than 3.8 million children and families at 4,500 Program Sites nationwide. In Greater Philadelphia, Reach Out and Read serves children at 43 locations, reaching more than 36,000 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers each year.

For more information about Reach Out and Read and its impact in Philadelphia, visit www.reachoutandread.org or <http://www.reachoutandreadphilly.org/>.

WHO: Elijah “Lil ElijahJ” Johnson, Young Simba in The Lion King
Kirsten Rogers, Coordinator, Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia
Dr. Alanna Kramer, Pediatrician and Reach Out and Read Medical Consultant

WHERE: St. Chris Care at Northeast Pediatrics
Waiting Room
9501 Roosevelt Boulevard, Suite 410, Philadelphia

VISUALS: Elijah Johnson reading books to children gathered around him.
Children’s books and literacy posters.

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