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READ AND ROMP EVENT RAISES \$35,000 FOR RORGP

PHILADELPHIA, PA — **Read and Romp**, Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia's annual storybook-themed benefit event, raised \$35,000 to help support its mission to make books part of a healthy childhood. Sponsors of the event included Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc., Comcast, Elliott-Lewis Corporation, Endo Pharmaceuticals, McCloskey Financial Group, Independence Blue Cross, Scholastic Inc., The Simkiss Companies, and St. Christopher's Hospital for Children.

"Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia's supporters and sponsors understand the importance of fostering early literacy skills in young children," said Dr. Kristen Kucharczuk, ROR GP's Associate Medical Director and event co-chair. "Their generosity helps ROR GP put books into the hands of over 35,000 needy area children growing up without them."

Issuing an official proclamation, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter declared the day "Read and Romp 2008 Day" and urged Philadelphians to support ROR GP's mission.

Over 248 children and adults turned out the event, held at The Baldwin School in Bryn Mawr on Sunday, October 12. Notable "celebrity readers" included NBC 10 co-anchor **Dawn Timmeney**, sports director/anchor **Vai Sihakema**, Philadelphia's Health Commissioner and Deputy Mayor of Health and Opportunity, **Donald F. Schwarz**, and author **Judy Schachner** (author of the *Skippyjon Jones* series.)

Read and Romp 2008 featured activity booths, games, and arts and crafts based on classic and new family favorites such as *Olivia Saves the Circus* and *Horton Hears a Who*. The event was capped off with a concert from Philly-favorite "The Cat's Pajamas."

Proven to improve school readiness, Reach Out and Read focuses on those children at greatest risk for literacy struggles – children ages 6 months to 5 years living at or near poverty—during the critical years before they enter kindergarten.

Research shows that Reach Out and Read works. Studies reveal that parents who get books and literacy counseling from their health care provider are more likely to read to their young children, read to them often, and provide more books in the home. Low-income children who participate in Reach Out and Read score significantly higher on vocabulary tests and show improved language development.



(MORE)

Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia is affiliated with Reach Out and Read, Inc., the national, nonprofit pediatric literacy organization that has earned the highest 4-Star rating from Charity Navigator.

About Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia

Targeting children most at risk —children ages 6 months to 5 years living in poverty —Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia doctors and nurses give books to their youngest low-income patients and advise parents about the importance of reading aloud. By building on the unique relationship between parents and medical providers, ROR GP helps families and communities promote early literacy skills so their children enter school prepared for success in reading. For more information, visit <http://www.rorgp.org>.