

FY22 Community Health Grant

Final Report

Project Title: Reach out and Read @ the Library

Grant Category: Piloting grant

Project Director/Principal Investigator: Mariana Glusman, MD

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Department/Division/Program: Advanced General Pediatrics

<p>Objectives: <i>Copy objectives from grant proposal.</i></p>	<p>Obj 1 - Local Partnerships: Identify 5 ROR-IL/CPL pairs that will meet virtually once a month (with 3 meetings for the group as a whole.) These activities will increase knowledge about what is offered at the clinic/library for all participants and lead to individualized action plans for each of the ROR-IL/CPL pairs that will be put into action by February 2022. A feasibility evaluation will be conducted in May to identify successes and challenges for each of these action plans.</p> <p>Obj 2 - Materials: Develop co-branded materials for families at pilot sites. Emotion cards and CPL scrap books will be given out to at least 100 families. ROR-IL coordinators will obtain informal feedback from their clinic’s clinicians (and families, if possible).</p> <p>Obj 3 - City-wide ROR-IL/CPL activities: We will provide <i>information</i> for possible partnerships to all ROR sites in Chicago. We will create a presentation/webinar for CPL Children’s librarians about ROR and how pediatricians/librarians can partner. We will disseminate CPL information to all ROR-IL sites in Chicago and provide them with information and contact at the CPL site nearest to their clinic. We will send out a brief survey to ROR-IL sites in Chicago about interest in future collaborations with their local library branches.</p>
<p>Progress on Objectives/Key Accomplishments: <i>Please include a cumulative, final summary for the 1-year grant period. If you have supplemental reports or materials, please attach or send separately.</i></p>	<p>Obj 1- Local Partnerships: 6 ROR-IL/CPL pairs have been created in the following neighborhoods: Uptown, Chicago Lawn, Lawndale, Homan Square, Altgeld Gardens, and Near West Side. Each partner has developed an individual action plan, with actionable tasks that have been scheduled from February of 2022 through the summer of 2022.</p> <p>Obj 2- Materials: In lieu of CPL scrap books, Imagine Neighborhood Activity Books have been provided to clinics and library branches. Approximately 200 activity books have been disseminated at time of writing. The Uptown neighborhood partners (Bezazian CPL branch and Lurie Uptown) have collaborated on a poster that highlights the partnership between ROR-IL and CPL, as well as promote the resources and events offered at the library that go beyond book lending, which has also been distributed to each clinic and library pair.</p> <p>Obj 3- City-wide ROR-IL/CPL activities: Some partners are planning Back to School bashes that will reach the community beyond the clinic or library. In the Lawndale</p>

and Homan Square neighborhoods, a Back to School bash is being planned in conjunction with Harmony Community Church. Furthermore, a web page has been created that allows visitors to locate their nearest ROR-IL affiliated clinic. On this same page, there are links to websites that allow families to also find their closest library (one for Chicago Public Library users and one for those outside of Chicagoland.)

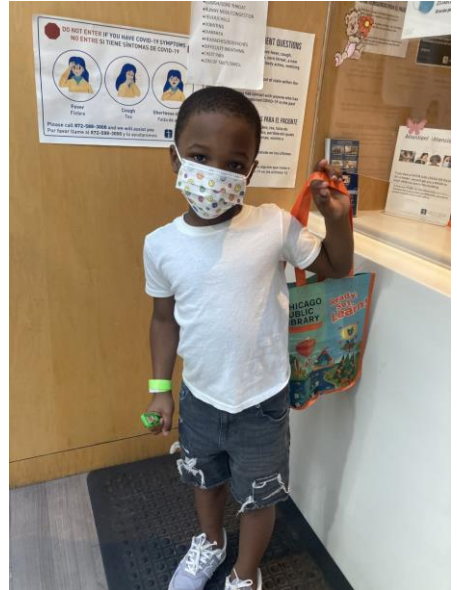
Evaluation Plan Progress:

Please include cumulative qualitative and quantitative metrics for the 1-year grant period and progress towards outcomes of interest.

Each local ROR partnership site was interviewed with the purpose of assessing their experience throughout our pilot program. We designed a qualitative, semi-structured interview guide and administered interview questions to 18 clinicians and librarians investigating their experiences and program effectiveness. We also attended an ROR-IL/CPL event in-person at the Bezazian CPL branch to view the on-site librarian host a story time event for a group of 7 families.



Pictures taken at ROR-IL/CPL storytime event at Bezazian CPL branch





Pictures taken at Lawndale Christian Health Clinic's storytime event in Homan Square

Challenges/Changes:

Please include challenges that impacted your progress or any changes to your objectives or evaluation plans.

The interview process posed difficulties due to persistent restrictions related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This included finding alternative media to interview participants on, and we subsequently used Zoom recordings and notetaking to provide audio recordings and written transcripts.

Over the course of the pandemic, Chicagoland libraries and clinics closed and many patrons were unaware facilities had reopened with early childhood education programming. A recurring theme throughout our interviews indicated issues in coordinating consistent meetings between neighborhood partnerships' librarians and clinicians and associates within Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. This was due to markedly different schedules between the three parties, causing restrictions for further dedication to the program.

The pandemic also aggravated existing staffing shortages, which were reflected in interviews with some participants only having been in their position with the Reach Out & Read pilot for less than 1 year at the time of interviewing. Within the CPL branch partnerships, there are librarians who recently joined and are experiencing difficulties to adapt to the existing program

	<p>One of the librarian participants had been participating in Reach Out & Read for only 2 months and felt that learning about the program as a new recruit is challenging since he wasn't a part of the planning from the beginning.</p> <p>Participating families in served communities noted their socioeconomic statuses dictated the effectiveness of the program outside of clinic and library doors. Despite the free services offered within the program, financial stressors are exacerbated with the recommendations to provide additional reading material to children: "Financially, books can seem like a luxury and the library turns books into not being a luxury but a necessity. With low income families, they tend to view books as a luxury and this results in reading at an older age rather than a younger age" (Clinician from Homan Square location). Of note, Spanish-speaking children participants had less access to books in their target language than English-speaking children.</p> <p>According to both clinicians and librarians, there was a record of few immigrant children meeting late reading milestones to support further learning. However, there was no distinct difference in reading comprehension between Spanish- and English-speaking children.</p>
<p>Sustainability & Next Steps: <i>Please include plans for sustainability, future needs and next steps for the project or program.</i></p>	<p>Participants from all 6 site locations hope their immediate supervisors and program coordinators address persistent staffing issues and high turnover rates. Both clinicians and librarians thought that more staffing with Reach Out & Read in the upcoming years would allow for ease of program expansion and satisfaction rates. Participants hope to expand the program to pediatric patients with increased lengths of stay, as well as add an expanded parental education component, to create a strong relational bond between parents, their children and the early childhood development professionals.</p> <p>One librarian suggested health-based coloring sheets, including themes such as 'asthma, allergies, communicable diseases, etc.,' that are oriented towards child audiences. Implementing surveys across all neighborhoods with existing Reach Out & Read infrastructure would help assess the program's effectiveness amongst parents and participating families. Every Reach Out & Read participant wants newer patrons and families to participate and would like to provide them with early literacy tips and library cards. Results of this push may be seen in the fall and hopefully results in children becoming more interested in reading so Reach Out & Read can continue. Many participants want to work with other local organizations and take the learnings from this pilot and roll it out widely to different organizations in the future.</p>

Outcomes/Impact:

As you complete this 1-year of funding, what are the key outcomes your project supported? How has your project 'moved the needle' on child and adolescent health or contributed to advancing health equity for youth and their families in Chicago?

Quotes

(Reflections on Reach Out and Read's participants' experience with families who participated in the pilot program.)

Both clinician and librarian participants had a positive experience with the program and hope that the program will expand to more neighborhoods in the Chicagoland area and statewide. Participants would like to see more of a focus on parents, so the program can educate adults on developmentally appropriate practices to increase their child's literacy.

Noticeable impacts within our program have involved children beginning to learn how they can make noticeable improvements to a critical skill while recognizing themselves as growing individuals. With our program's intervention, children who may become sick and/or are scared to go to the doctor have their fears alleviated by knowing the clinic has enrichment activities such as kids storytimes, musical instruments and reading materials. In addition, some clinics and libraries teamed up to create a coupon program where parents participate in a storytime and get a coupon to exchange for an education item at a partnering CPL branch. Families also receive nutrition and knowledge of childcare resources upon arrival to a partner location that would have otherwise not been available. For example, within the North Lawndale clinic is the Green Tomato Cafe, which provides pregnant and low-income women stable income and opportunities for leadership experience. Participants from all 6 locations believe that Reach Out & Read does well at supplying multilingual resources in languages including Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

All interviewed participants hope that in the future, Reach Out & Read connects more families with their public libraries. The community plays a critical role in showcasing the importance of literacy and early learning. Residents from neighborhoods not involved in this pilot project have expressed interest in using the resources developed by this project. The Reach Out & Read and Chicago Public Library are teaming up to expand the program by creating and distributing universal resources that can be used by any library/clinic pair, thus aiding the goal of giving children exposure to literacy materials and making a connection with others in key developmental stages prior to and during primary schooling.

REACH OUT AND READ PARTICIPANT QUOTES

"I [Librarian] had a little boy whom I wasn't sure went to clinic. I told him about the program and that he can bring his foster mother with him, and once he completed everything he could come back and get toys. This made him want to go to the doctor." (Librarian #4) [Homan Square Neighborhood]

“If you go to the doctor next time, and come back, you may just get something. It’s a good feeling to have.” - (Librarian #6) [Chicago Lawn Neighborhood]

She had one family who was there to get a kids' book and she said hey and the kids were in high school. The brother needed community service hours. She was able to have them connect with younger children in the library. They had children read at least 20 mins a day and give them a price. The family was able to help get kids to read. One parent wanted her to read 3 books at the clinic and she was excited . She wanted to take a picture but didn’t have a consent form.

“There’s no monopoly to love” - (Mariana Glusman) [Medical Director ROR]

There's no one particular way parents can love their children, parents can’t choose whether or not to love their children or a certain way they can love them, they don’t have control over that.

“I had a patient that now brings her children to the clinic. For Olivia’s (patient’s child) 4th birthday I (Mariana) gave her (Olivia) a ROR book and the mother still has the name of the book ‘When I was an astronaut’ from when she was in ROR. Her child (Olivia) had the book memorized. - (Mariana Glusman) [Medical Director ROR]

“It gave me goosebumps to think that something that I did 15 years ago, more than 20 years ago is still making an impact.” - (Mariana Glusman) [Medical Director ROR]

She feels as if the book is making an impact on the 2nd generation because the parent is showing her child the book. She helped encourage the parents to see how important books can be. The parent incorporated this into her parenting

“Just the number of books in a person's household and environment is important for their health, school preparedness, job preparedness, and long term outcomes. It’s important to increase the number of books available for kids to decrease barriers” - (Clinician #2) [Uptown Neighborhood]

“One of the things parents in the North Lawndale area did in the library was read some of the most circulated books she had seen. Compared to another community with the same demographics but with poverty reading less circulated books.” - (Librarian #4) [Homan Square Neighborhood]

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Connection to Community Health Implementation Strategy:

Please complete the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FY22CHGReport> to detail how your project aligns with Lurie Children's Community Health Implementation Strategy.

Did you complete the survey? Yes No