

READ TO ME NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1
Inaugural Issue

Dear Friends of **READ TO ME**,

Here's to you who have been connected to **READ TO ME** from the start, and to you who may have met us by reading the May 2002 O Magazine article. This inaugural newsletter offers a progress report and a hope that we can develop a supportive network.

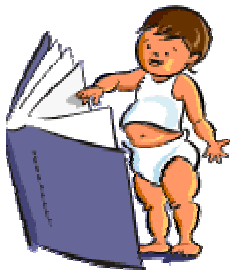
First let me introduce Kristen Lynch, our newly appointed Associate Director. Her background in dance and theater arts, teaching ESL and running a foreign film festival promises inventive new initiatives and steady communication with our growing network of RTMs.

We are delighted to announce that **READ TO ME** Programs are currently running in New York City, Athens, GA and Charlottesville, VA. More are in the planning stages, in NYC, Dutchess County NY, Boston, Chicago, Indianapolis, Atlanta, Pasadena and Toronto. Kristen and I are also developing new ventures with interesting community partners.

The **READ TO ME** Program wants to support new initiatives in a variety of settings (hospitals, prisons, libraries, day care & early education centers, high schools, community agencies.) We want to reaffirm our pledge to get more books into the lives of babies and their families.

This inaugural issue is jam-packed with anecdotes, acknowledgements, and offers. We want to work with you on this important, and fun, mission. Visit our website and please fill out a registration form so that we can continue to update you on news and events. The information you provide will also guide our future.

Here's to babies and books!



Susan Straub
Director, **READ TO ME**

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Starting New RTM Programs

You read the [O magazine](#) article. You visited the website. Now you want to start up a Read to Me program in your hospital, library, school, or daycare center. The question is where and how to begin. That's what we are here to help you with. We can provide you with certain resources, information, and suggestions as to how to get more books into the lives of the babies and families in your community.

Here's what you can do:

- Connect with the local public library. Identify a group of young parents and babies who need an inventive introduction to reading together. This is a large and varied group of people: teen parents, non-English speaking families, abused or battered women, incarcerated parents, GED students, and library groups.
- Discuss and develop a collaboration with staff members: administrators, day care providers, librarians, social workers, teachers. It makes sense to have a special time per week to run the program, either during a scheduled class or during an after-school program.
- Research local author/illustrators in your area who might be willing to participate in your program by coming to the site and presenting their work. They should be paid a nominal honorarium for their visit. In addition, the program should purchase copies of the author/illustrator's books which will then be autographed and given to the young parent and child to become a part of their personal library.
- Locate funds to support the program. Running a RTM program need not be costly. Programs can be developed easily within existing agency budgets. Aside from salaries for staff members, the biggest expense has to do with books: books to use for the program and books to give the young families to keep. Locating grant-awarding organizations is made easier through the Foundation Center. It can help you research likely charitable possibilities from private and government sources. Note: grant-making foundations currently look for sensible partnerships.

www.foundationcenter.org

Here's what we can do:

-Provide a **READ TO ME Starter Kit** which includes:

- RTM VideoGuide Book *
- RTM Book Bag*
- Art and photo supplies for Reading faces and Making Baby a Book
- Resource and Picture Books

* *description below in **What's on Sale***

Starter Kit Fee: \$250.00

includes: shipping and handling

Contact Susan or Kristen at 212.691.6590 ext. 26/27

-On-site training workshops for your agency *

-Offer consultation sessions via e-mail, phone or in-person. *

-Help link interested people in a particular community to both lead and volunteer in a new **Read to Me** program

- Connect or recommend possible funders in local areas

-Suggest a variety of activities for volunteers: fundraising, collecting children's books, and publicity

-Assist in building relationships with local author/illustrators and publishers

**fee scale is available on request*

Three Anecdotes **Exceptional New Read to Me Programs**

One new NYC program ran at the West End Intergenerational Residence, a homeless shelter for women and children under 7. Kathy Kinsner led a RTM in collaboration with Tom Harriman, director of WIR. She generously volunteered her time, as did her two RTM associates Amy Wilson and Bethany Hegedus. The successful program attracted young mothers, several of whom got their first library cards and were thrilled by author-illustrator Pat Cummings' presentation.

Another remarkable program in Athens, GA ran in memory of a young family killed in the 9/11 Pentagon attack. Ruth, Sara and George Koch found that RTM could help them channel some part of their profound grief into something positive by introducing books into the lives of families unaccustomed to reading to babies. They tackled the additional challenges of bilingualism with humor and insight. We are honored to be a part of their lives.

Finally, Judith Bauerle can be proud of a creative demonstration RTM inside a maximum security prison in Charlottesville, VA. Stipulating that the series be offered only to women prisoners scheduled for release in three months, Judith got the moms to discuss the richness of books as a means for reconnecting with their children forced into unnatural separations from their mothers.

We hope to get all of these RTM leaders to add more detailed anecdotes and assessments in future newsletters or on the website bulletin board.

New Collaborations

RTM is engaged in several collaborations focused on parent-education. Including settings in hospitals and day care centers, the most elaborate is sponsored by the Altman Foundation called The Art in Reading. RTM's partners are the Center for Intergenerational Reading and the Studio in a School, both of whom are devoted to introducing the richness of story and art to teachers and parents of pre-schoolers.

What's on Sale @ RTM

We now have **READ TO ME VideoGuide Books** and **READ TO ME Book Bags** available.

READ TO ME

A Guidebook and Videocassette

By Susan Straub

\$25.95 VHS videocassette and guidebook. (Ames/T&W)

This documentary chronicles a ground-breaking series of reading workshops for teen mothers sponsored by T&W's Read to Me program. Intended for those who work with new families, daycare providers, early childhood specialists, and children's librarians, the 30-minute video and 28-page guidebook provide readers with the necessary foundations to start their own Read to Me programs. Includes practical suggestions on inspiring successful reading, making books for children, and finding guest authors and illustrators.

READ TO ME Book Bags

\$15.95

- Measuring 18" X 13.5", these canvas carryall bags are capacious and sturdy, with a gusset bottom, reinforced straps and a side pocket. The RTM embroidered logo features a golden baby. Each bag is for sale now for \$15.95. Click here for a photo of the bag.

www.readtomeprogram.org/news.html#bookbags

Normal S&H via UPS Ground is an extra \$6. There is no tax. Send your address with a check or money order for \$21.95 made out to TEACHERS & WRITERS, READ TO ME, 5 Union Square West, 7th Floor, NY, NY 10003. You may phone in your order if you wish to pay by credit card. The toll-free number is 1-877-787-READ (7323). As the bag is not yet in the T&W Catalogue, please ask for Kristen or Susan at extension 26/27. We'll be sure it gets to you.

Staying Connected

We are committed to giving you regular updates as well as being here to support new Read to Me programs. Please visit our website at:

www.readtomeprogram.org

We also encourage you to fill out the registration form on the site so that we can add you to our mailing list. You can fill out the registration by clicking directly on the address below:

<http://www.readtomeprogram.org/reg.html>

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VOLUNTEERS

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Bethany Hegedus
Stephanie Hinton
Kathy Kinsner
Lauren Kopko
Stephanie Roling
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Rachel Payne
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NEW LEADERS

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Judith Bauerle, Charlottesville, VA
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Diane Whitaker Brown, NYC

Kameelah Evans, Fayetteville, NC
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Kathy Kinsner, NYC
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Amy Axler	Dannette Queen
Joan Davis	Althea Gibson Treadwell
Beverly McLay	Tracy Truitt, DC

O Magazine

Liz Brody
Judith Newman

Libraries

Baltimore County Library
Brooklyn Public Library, Children's Services
Cooperative Children's Book Center Library, WI
New York Public Library, Children's Services
NYPL Early Childhood Resource and Information Center
Queens Public Library, Children's Services