



Reach Out and Read, Inc. (the parent organization of Reach Out and Read MN) launched the Bookend City Initiative in 2008 to encourage Reach Out and Read regional leaders, local officials, and pediatric medical providers to work together to promote early literacy for every child in their community. The Initiative helped promote the goal of making literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric primary care to give all young children a foundation for success and to encourage their families to read aloud together. Originally it was reserved for cities with a population of 50,000 or more and focused on pediatric practices.

In 2014, Reach Out and Read Minnesota revamped this milestone award to acknowledge the important part that smaller cities play in promoting literacy. We created three award tiers: Bookend City (cities with a population of 50,000+), Bookend Community (cities with a population of 10,000-50,000), and Bookend County (counties of any size). And most importantly, we included pediatric and family medicine practices as well as public health clinics that provide primary care to young children.

**How does a city or county achieve Reach Out and Read Bookend status?** The Bookend milestone is reached when 100% of all medical facilities in a city or county that provide primary care to children from the ages of 6 months through 5 implement the Reach Out and Read program with a high degree of fidelity. Eight metrics are used to assess quality and all the clinics must rate in the highest tier of every metric at the same time in order for the city or county to achieve the milestone. The goal does not have to be achieved at the same instant, but all clinics must be high performers in the same time period for the award to be granted.

**What special recognition does a Bookend receive?** After a city or county has been declared a Minnesota Bookend, Reach Out and Read MN presents an engraved crystal book to the Mayor or the Chair of the County Board and a certificate to each participating clinic and community partner involved in reaching the milestone.

Northfield is the second Minnesota Bookend Community award winner (Fairmont was the first in 2015) and citizen involvement in this process has piqued interest in working to make Rice County the state's very first Bookend County. As of this writing (September 2017) there are no Bookend Cities in the state though Minneapolis is working towards that goal.

**Why is the Bookend Initiative important?** Reach Out and Read believes the best way to achieve our goal of making literacy promotion a standard part of pediatric care is through developing partnerships with the public and private sectors and the medical community. We recognize that our success is due in large part to the support and leadership we receive from local institutions, businesses, foundations, and of course, doctors, nurses, and other medical providers. The Bookend Award emphasizes the importance of those partnerships and honors all those who have worked together in their local community to ensure that every family understands the importance of early literacy and reading aloud to children.

**What is Reach Out and Read?** Reach Out and Read is a national, evidence-based literacy program used by medical providers that have unparalleled access to families with young children. During the well-child exams of children age five and younger these providers teach parents the value of reading aloud as a strategy for helping young children meet early literacy milestones. Children receive a developmentally- and language-appropriate book and their parents become engaged, almost from birth, in their child's healthy development. Research shows that our model impacts both parental behavior and attitudes toward reading aloud, as well as the language scores of young children who participate.

Reach Out and Read Minnesota is an organization that provides guidance, training, technical support, and oversight to primary care clinics statewide that use, or want to learn to use, Reach Out and Read.