

## What's New at Read to Grow Summer 2010



### Comcast Grant Provides Books

The children were all smiles when representatives from Comcast and Read to Grow came together to hand out books to Fair Haven School students. The occasion celebrated a \$12,000 Comcast Foundation grant to support Read to Grow's Books for Kids program in New Haven and the distribution of 10,000 books to area children.

"Many of our students don't have access to books at home," said Kim Johnsny, school principal. Each of the 632 students received a new, age-appropriate book to take home. They also got books for summer reading, an important intervention that, according to a recent study, helps prevent a "summer slide" that contributes to the achievement gap between low-income and middle-income children.



### Anna Quindlen Packs the House



It was "standing room only" at Long Wharf Theater for Read to Grow's special evening with best-selling author Anna Quindlen in April. The event was held in the intimate Stage II, where the author read from her latest book, *Every Last One*, shared her thoughts on motherhood with RTG board chair, Roxanne Coady, and took questions from the audience.

### Growing Local Support

With need and demand for our services increasing, Read to Grow is reaching out to expand local donor and volunteer involvement in communities where our programs have a strong presence. Groups are forming in Fairfield and Hartford areas, and it's a perfect time to join the effort.

Two "informational coffees" were held in Westport to establish a Fairfield County advisory group. Thanks to Belinda Bralver and Laurie Witkin for hosting and generating support.

In West Hartford, former editor Jenny Minton Quigley hosted a gathering of about 100 friends under a tent for an evening of literature and learning. Authors Heather Clay and Dolan Perkins Valdez presented their new books, and Roxanne Coady spoke about low literacy in Connecticut and ways to support RTG. "If you can't read by fourth grade, it's over," she told the crowd. "This is something we can fix."

To find out how you can make a difference, call Read to Grow at 203-488-6800.



Read to Grow board chair Roxanne Coady in Westport with host Belinda Bralver on right, and guest Nora Armstrong, center. Belinda has become one of RTG's Books for Babies hospital volunteers in Bridgeport and a member of our development committee.

### Fairfield Takes on Literacy



Jamie Palazzo and Brooke Mackno got permission from Fairfield's school superintendent and principals to send notices to all families of elementary school children asking for book donations. They set up collection boxes at each school, then retrieved and counted all the books before packing them up for us.

Fairfield took on children's literacy this year, donating more books to Read to Grow than any single town in the state through its support of four books drives run by local folks.

The team of Jamie Palazzo and Brooke Mackno, students at Fairfield Ludlowe High School, collected over 2,000 books; Sam Mahler's bar mitzvah community service project produced more than 1,700 books; the boys of Fairfield Prep's Book Club gathered over 1,000 books; and the Kiwanis Club of Fairfield collected 4,000 books in its fourth annual book drive for RTG.

Thanks to the generosity of Fairfield residents and to so many others in towns across the state, RTG's programs remain strong at a time when we're needed the most.



Fairfield Prep's Book Club ran its second annual book drive for RTG in the spring.



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