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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation and Reach Out and Read Indiana Provide Children Resources for Building Healthy Relationships and Social-Emotional Development

INDIANAPOLIS – April 1, 2021 – The Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation and the Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics are coming together to support local children with resources for building healthy relationships and social-emotional development through the Reach Out and Read Indiana Program.

The \$40,000 grant from Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation will allow 3,300 disadvantaged children in Indiana to be served by Reach Out and Read trained providers through their medical home at 6 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in Indiana. The grant will support the following health clinics: (1) Jane Pauley Community Health Center, Marion County (2) Maple City Health Care Center, Elkhart County (3) HealthLinc East Chicago, Lake County (4) Healthlinc Knox, Starke County (5) Healthlinc Michigan City, Laporte County (6) HealthLinc South Bend (IUSB), St Joseph County.

"We are thrilled to partner with Anthem in our mission to promote the healthy development of young Hoosier children through reading aloud with their families every day," said Dr. Katie Swec, Reach Out and Read Indiana Medical Director. "Anthem's commitment to Reach Out and Read Indiana not only supports children in their school readiness journey, but also provides positive read aloud experiences for young children and families to share around high-quality inclusive and culturally-responsive books that are so critical for building healthy relationships and social-emotional development."

Pediatric clinicians are passionate about this program because of the effects on patients and families. The simple act of a trusted pediatric clinician providing a child with a new book at their well child visit and encouraging their parents to read aloud and have fun conversations about the pictures in that book with their child is a proven way to optimize early brain development, protect against the effects of toxic stress and other negative social drivers of health.

"Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation continues to support education programs that provide impactful experiences for strengthening the child-caregiver relationship," said Dr. Kimberly Roop, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Indiana Medicaid Plan President. "The Reach Out and Read program fosters healthy relationships and self-confidence in children, paving a path for healthy behaviors."

With this grant, Reach Out and Read intends to assist in alleviating health disparities, improve language skills and school readiness, address the issue of social justice, and provide a high-yield response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Work is focused on where intervention is most vital and impactful which most

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powerfully intersect at FQHCs across Indiana where Medicaid-predominant, underserved, and minority populations in the highest concentration are reached.

For more information about Reach Out and Read please visit inaap.org/reachoutandread or if you would like to donate funds or volunteer as a reader, please contact mc@inaap.org.

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About Reach Out and Read

Reach Out and Read Indiana reaches over 135,000 families annually in over 370,000 well child check-ups at 141 clinical primary care locations throughout the state. Our clinics serve many children growing up in low-income families. In Indiana, 69% of the children that are in the program receive public insurance or are uninsured. Reach Out and Read is the only national early literacy organization working directly with pediatric care providers to share the lifelong benefits that result from families reading aloud to their children every day. We know that nurturing, language-rich interactions like reading aloud together give young children a foundation for success. By integrating these experiences into pediatric care and providing the tools and encouragement families need to read aloud together, we can transform pediatric care practices and give children of all backgrounds and means a better start to life. The Reach Out and Read program begins in infancy and continues through age five, with a special emphasis on children growing up in low-income communities. Pediatric teams provide new, age- and language-appropriate books and share literacy advice with children and parents at each well-child visit. The program is both cost-effective, and evidence-based: research shows that Reach Out and Read results in more frequent reading at home, more enjoyment by families reading together, and accelerated language development. The effectiveness of our model is recognized by the American Academy of Pediatrics in a policy statement that recommends early literacy promotion as an essential component of pediatric care.

About Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation

Through charitable grant making, the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation LLC, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, promotes Anthem's inherent commitment to improving lives and communities. Through strategic partnerships and programs, the Foundation addresses the social drivers that will help create a healthier generation of Americans in communities that the company serves. The Foundation focuses its funding on critical initiatives that make up its Healthy Generations Program, a multi-generational initiative that targets: maternal health, diabetes prevention, cancer prevention, heart health and healthy, active lifestyles, behavioral health efforts and programs that benefit people with disabilities. The Foundation also coordinates the company's year-round Dollars for Dollars program which provides a 100 percent match of associates' donations, as well as its Volunteer Time Off and Dollars for Doers community service programs. ®ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield names and symbols are registered marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. To learn more about the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, please visit <http://www.anthem.foundation> and its blog at <https://medium.com/anthemfoundation>.