



# Year in Review 2014

Building a strong foundation for babies in poverty  
Room to Grow NEW YORK



## A Growing Movement

Across the nation, in the pursuit of breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty, the most effective solutions focus on the beginning stages of life: early childhood. This year, we have seen more incontrovertible research about long-term outcomes, more policy decisions that support early development, and more poignant opinion pieces by thought leaders on this topic than ever before; underlining over and over again that the key to success is starting at zero.

Poverty is expensive — both socially and economically — and early interventions, like Room to Grow, continue to yield significant returns on investment. This year, we are excited that so many powerful voices continue to join ours in this movement as we celebrate our 2014 milestones and look ahead to more exciting work to come.

### Investing in the Future

For every \$1 invested in early education today, we can save over \$8 in the future by increasing graduation rates, earnings, and reducing violent crime.



Investment in early education

Long-term savings

Council of Economic Advisors, 2014

**“Early education is one of the best investments we can make — not just in a child’s future, but in our country.”**  
– President Obama

White House Summit on Early Education  
December 2014

**“If there’s one overarching lesson... about how to break the cycles of poverty... it’s the power of parenting — and of intervening early.”**  
– Nicholas Kristof

“The Way to Beat Poverty”  
New York Times, September 2014

### Our Social Work Team

**Eunice Cruz**, our seasoned bilingual Social Worker, provides coaching and support to Spanish-speaking families from across the five boroughs. In her role, Eunice especially appreciates the opportunity to guide Room to Grow families through the exciting first years of their children's lives and watch them flourish!



provided by our social work team



about how to nurture their child's early language skills



### Promoting Early Literacy

More than 3,000 books were donated to our Summer Reading and Back to School book drives in support of our work to promote early literacy and a shared love of reading at home.



as parents and caretakers



through our Family Center

### Family Spotlight

Jennifer joined Room to Grow in 2012 during her high-risk pregnancy. Her son Nate was diagnosed prenatally with a severe congenital heart disorder. Fueled by the resources, information, and support that Room to Grow offered her, Jennifer has worked tirelessly to help her son reach his milestones.

Today, Nate is thriving and Jennifer is enrolled at DeVry University. Her goal is a career in the hospitality industry. Jennifer also works to support other pediatric heart patients and their families.

**“Room to Grow continues to support me to be strong and hopeful during extremely hard times.”**

**- Jennifer**

Room to Grow Parent



with their children daily



donated to Room to Grow

### Corporate Community

**“The Duane Reade Charitable Foundation’s mission is to support the health and well-being of New Yorkers, and I cannot think of a better organization to partner with than Room to Grow. Room to Grow’s focus on providing support during the earliest years of a child’s life, the most crucial for laying the foundation for healthy development, is such an important and invaluable service to provide in our community.”**

**- Aileen Busick**

Duane Reade Charitable Foundation President



### Uma Thurman

Inspired by a neighbor, the actress and mother of three helps poverty-stricken kids

Founding Board Member Uma Thurman shared how she began her close relationship with Room to Grow in the June 30th issue of People Magazine, helping to raise awareness about the importance of early childhood development.

### Fall Power Breakfast

Event host **Brooke Shields** and special guest, author **Gretchen Rubin**, lead a thought-provoking discussion about finding personal happiness at home, at work, and in life. The event raised significant financial support for Room to Grow.

October 2014



the program this year



provided by 1,600 volunteers

### Dedicated Volunteers

Diana Gardere began her involvement with Room to Grow as a volunteer from Bank of America Merrill Lynch. She has deepened her commitment by serving on event committees and organizing collection drives at her daughter's school.



## Clinton Global Initiative

Room to Grow leadership participated in the CGI Annual Meeting panel discussion, "Starting from Zero: The Unrivaled Importance of Early Childhood," moderated by New York Times columnist, Nicholas Kristof.

September 2014



**G A L A**  
**2 0 1 5**

### Save the Date!

Tribeca Three Sixty  
May 20, 2015  
6:30pm

**Important  
Work  
Ahead**

We are energized by widespread efforts taking place across our city and country to serve children early through universal pre-kindergarten and extended day care opportunities. However, the path to success begins even earlier: before birth. We have important work ahead.

### Vision for the Future



In addition to ongoing capacity building efforts — laying the groundwork for scale — our ambitious projects on the horizon include a renewed commitment to our Family Center through capital improvements and a deeper investment in programmatic infrastructure to help articulate our impact and measure results. We look forward to welcoming new families to Room to Grow in 2015 and to seeing hundreds of babies grow and thrive with us.



Room to Grow provides babies born into poverty with a healthy and secure start in life. Families receive individualized coaching and support, high-quality material items, and referrals to vital community resources over a three year period.

#### WITH GRATITUDE

We thank our supporters, volunteers, and Room to Grow families for being a part of another successful year.

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