



TEXAS

## Introduction

- Shared book reading has numerous benefits in early childhood including improved early language and literacy skills, and enhanced parent-child relationships.
- Children with Down syndrome often have difficulties in speech and language skills, and can have mild to severe intellectual disability, both of which place them at higher risk for challenges with early literacy skills.
- Reach Out and Read is a national clinic-based literacy program that promotes shared reading with children ages 0-5.
- There are limited descriptions of its use among children with neurodevelopmental disabilities such as Down syndrome.

## Objective

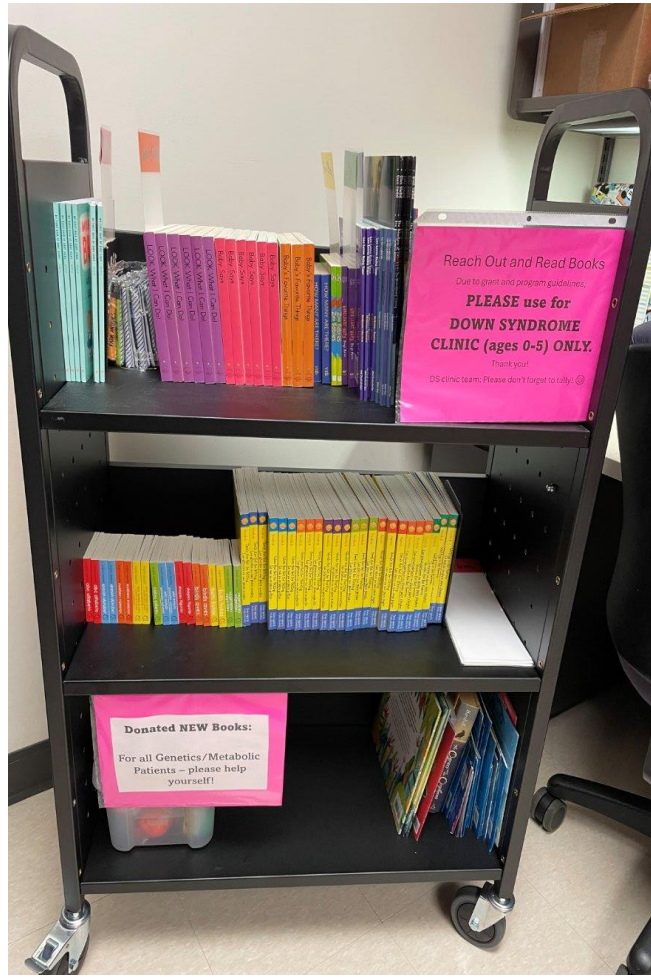
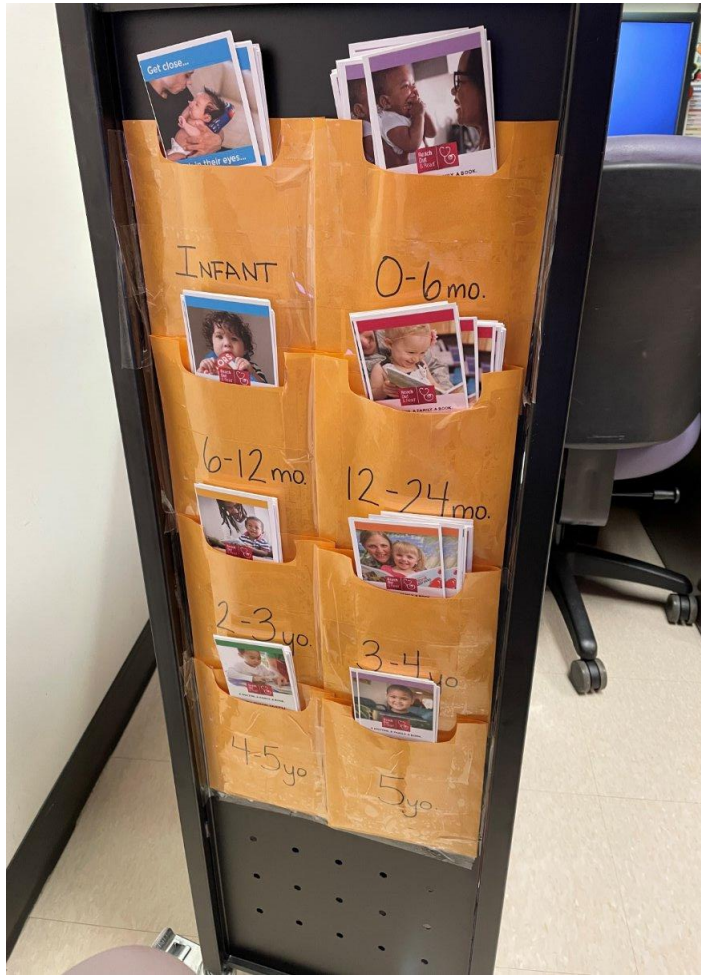
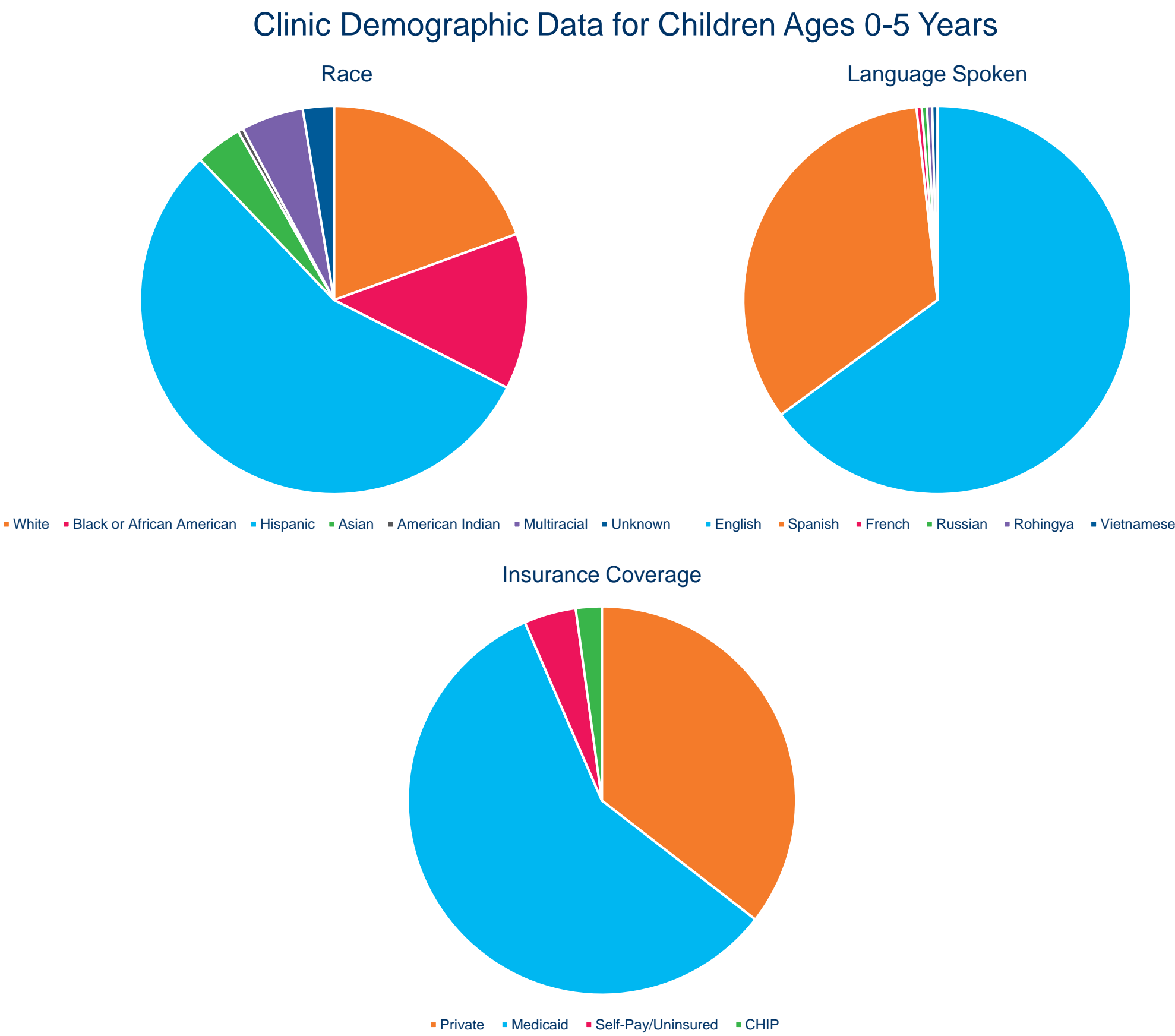
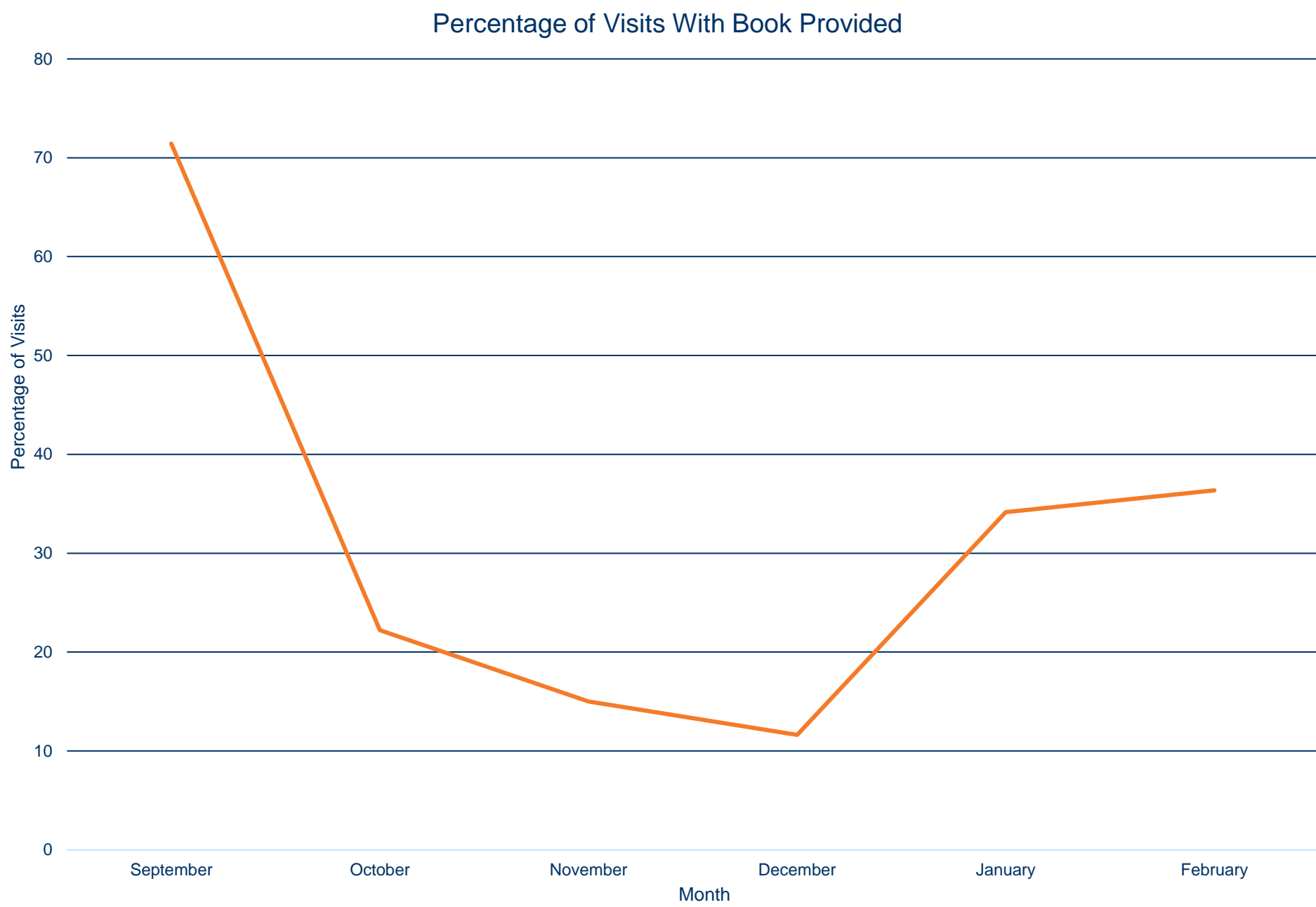
- Implement Reach Out and Read in a Pediatric Down syndrome clinic
- Improve anticipatory guidance provided about the importance of shared book reading with children with Down syndrome

## Methods

- We contacted the Texas Reach Out and Read affiliate to initiate implementation in this unique setting
- As part of the approval process, clinic demographic data including patient age, insurance type, ethnicity and primary language was collected
- An extra-mural funding source for book purchases was identified
- Once approved as a Reach Out and Read site, clinicians completed Reach Out and Read training, and a system for tracking books provided was created
- Data was collected from September 2024 through February 2025

## Results

- 231 clinic visits for children ages 0-5
- 95 books were provided (41%)



## Conclusions and Next Steps

- It is feasible to implement Reach Out and Read in a pediatric Down syndrome clinic
- Challenges included:
  - Communication with clinic staff
  - Consistency between clinicians in giving out books
  - Consistency in giving books throughout the year
  - Accurate tracking of books
  - Difficulties with book ordering and delivery
- Next steps include:
  - Reminding clinicians to give out a book at every visit with a child age 5 years or younger
  - Developing a new system to accurately track books

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