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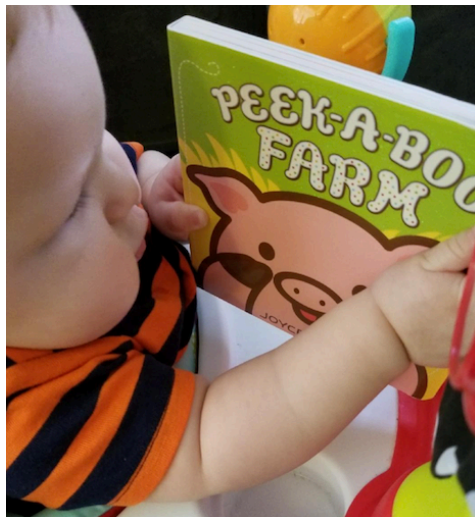
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Willamette Valley Community Health and Marion-Polk Early Learning Hub Partner on *Immunization and Early Learning Book Project*

– *Project aims to increase awareness of immunization milestones while encouraging early literacy* –



Salem, Ore. (May 16, 2018): [Willamette Valley Community Health](#), a coordinated care organization that seeks to improve the quality of health care and health outcomes for Willamette Valley residents covered by the Oregon Health Plan, has partnered with the Marion & Polk Early Learning Hub as a part of the ***Immunization and Early Learning Book Project***.

With the goal of improving childhood immunization rates and promoting early learning, the *Immunization and Early Learning Book Project* mails children's books to every Willamette Valley Community Health-enrolled child, ages 0-2 years old at regular intervals aligning with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) immunization schedule. Also included in the mailing is a CDC "Ages and Stages" handout for parents, to educate and encourage them to make timely pediatric appointments for their child's well-child check-ups and immunizations.

"At Willamette Valley Community Health, we are dedicated to collaborating with our community partners to best support the health and wellbeing of the residents of the Willamette Valley," said Rob Johnson, Chief Executive Officer of Willamette Valley Community Health. "Our goal with this project is to improve health outcomes and literacy rates, to contribute to the health and success of our future generation."

In addition to providing routine health care, regular well-child visits help keep children immunized and healthy, while preventing and detecting illnesses and issues before symptoms arise.

"Every child can learn and succeed—the key is to start early. Research shows that shared book reading and availability of books in the home during a child's first formative years are the strongest predictors of early literacy skills," said Lisa Harnisch, Executive Director of the Marion & Polk Early Learning Hub. "Through our partnership with Willamette Valley Community Health, we're able to reach our youngest residents to help ensure that they have the best start in life."

To date, 3,000 books have been distributed, with 20,000 more books to be dispersed to Willamette Valley Community Health members throughout 2018. For more information about the *Immunization Book Project*, please visit [insert URL].

About Willamette Valley Community Health

Willamette Valley Community Health is a coordinated care organization (CCO) dedicated to serving Willamette Valley residents covered by the Oregon Health Plan/Medicaid. Willamette Valley Community Health strives to provide a system that focuses on prevention and wellness that is integrated, patient-centered, cost-efficient and equitable. Willamette Valley Community Health coordinates a network of over 600 health care providers, including physical health, dental health, behavioral health and addiction specialists, to improve quality and access to care for our more than 97,000 members.

About Marion & Polk Early Learning Hub

Marion & Polk Early Learning Hub (MPELH) works in and on behalf of the Marion and Polk region to ensure children are more ready for kindergarten when they arrive. MPELH works to convene, collaborate and catalyze action in our hub region to better align services and resources for children and families.

About Coordinated Care Organizations

A Coordinated Care Organization is a network of all types of health care providers (physical health care, addictions and mental health care and dental care providers) who work together in their local communities to serve people who receive health care coverage under the Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid). CCOs focus on prevention and helping people manage chronic conditions, like diabetes. This helps reduce unnecessary emergency room visits and gives people support to be healthy.

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