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.

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**“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
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.

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!

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.

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

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.

96% of families increased knowledge about how to nurture their child's early language skills

2x more likely to read with their children daily

2,000 clinical service hours provided by our social work team

98% of families increased confidence as parents and caretakers

350 babies served through our family center

why i care:

personal stories about and of children

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.

2014

95% of families completed the program this year

$100,000 value of in-kind service hours provided by 1,600 volunteers

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

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.

room to grow continues to support me to be strong and hopeful during extremely hard times.

- jennifer

room to grow parent

98% of families increased confidence as parents and caretakers

350 babies served through our family center

96% of families increased knowledge about how to nurture their child's early language skills
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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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.

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.