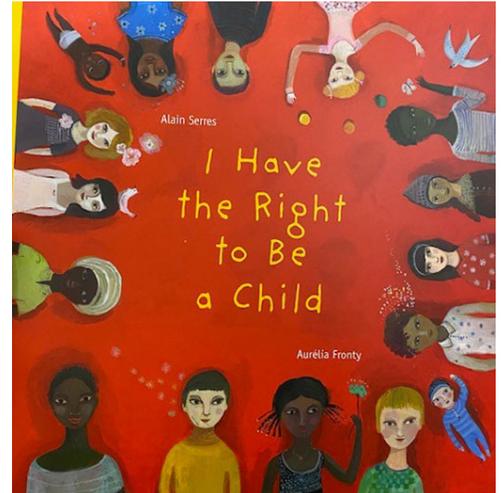


# WHY I GIVE

**Dr. Chuck Oberg,  
Pediatrician**



For Chuck Oberg, MD, a pediatrics physician at Hennepin Healthcare, children’s rights are both a local and global issue.

Formerly the chief of pediatrics for Hennepin Healthcare, Dr. Oberg helped Minneapolis become one of the first pilot Child-Friendly Cities in the United States in August 2020, a UNICEF initiative. He has written and published several pieces about children’s rights, such as the treatment of children at the U.S.-Mexican border, and has taught at the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Oberg’s most recent contribution, a \$3,000 donation to our Children’s Literacy Program, is one of many throughout his over 40 years with Hennepin Healthcare. Through the national Reach Out and Read program, the Hennepin pediatrics team offers children and their families’ books while at medical appointments.

“The program has an overwhelmingly positive impact on families, especially for those that might not have easy access to children’s literature,” said Diana Cutts, MD, Chief of Pediatrics and longtime colleague of Dr. Oberg.

Dr. Oberg’s donation will help buy 500 copies of the book *I Have a Right to Be a Child*, written by Alain Serres and illustrated by Aurélia Fronty. Originally written in French, the book has been translated into English and is geared toward children ages 4-7.

Dr. Oberg said he believed in the book and the literacy program so much that he didn’t want to wait until the funds were raised – he donated himself to jumpstart distributing the new book.

“The book has beautiful illustrations and text that talk to children about what their rights are as a part of the human community,” Dr. Oberg said.

He said *I Have a Right to Be a Child* is especially important now, with the COVID-19 pandemic and the racial justice reckoning.

“We thought it was really important that as a department, we make sure our children know that Hennepin Healthcare is a safe place to be. We support them and care for them,” Dr. Oberg said.

Giving out the book coincides with the opening of the Redleaf Center for Family Healing, which focuses on helping new parents on their mental health journey.

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Dr. Cutts said she sees the literacy program and Redleaf standing side by side, working together.

“The Redleaf Center is also grounded in concepts of social justice, that every child deserves their best parent, and every parent deserves the kind of support so they can be that best parent,” Dr. Cutts said.

Dr. Oberg agreed, and added that both the literacy program and Redleaf focus on equitable care, especially in the first few days, weeks, and months of life.

“There are differences in children’s health status for underserved minority and communities of color,” Dr. Oberg said. “Hopefully over time, we’ll see a decrease in those health disparities.”

**Written by Hennepin Healthcare Foundation, April 2021**

**Donations can be made to the Children’s Literacy program by [donating online](#) and writing Children’s Literacy in the designation line.**