

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DepEd-McDo Reading Program – 'go big time'

To cultivate the habit of reading among public schoolchildren, the Department of Education (DepEd) and Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) will mark the expansion of the Bright Minds Read (BMR) Program with a symbolic turnover of BMR kits today at the DepEd Central Office.

This year's expanded BMR Program will provide supplemental books not only in public elementary schools in Metro Manila but also to public elementary schools nationwide.

The program is set to cost P370M over five years and benefit 37,000 public elementary schools nationwide.

"Good reading skills facilitate the learning process in many subject matters," DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus said. "McDonald's BMR supplementing our Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP) promises further improvement in the achievement levels of elementary pupils, and consequently of high school students."

"Now that we are coming up with ways to provide more resources and opportunities for reading, the challenge for us is to spur the reading habit among children," he added.

The BMR Program is a reading program that provides instructional materials to teachers and worksheets to pupils with the purpose of making each grade one pupil an independent reader by the third grade.

A BMR Kit contains 28 big books in Filipino and four big books in English. It also includes a BMR bag, a set of manuals for teachers, a set of worksheets for students, one ABC chart, and a BMR banner.

This joint program also provides training workshop for grade 1 teachers and school heads of recipient schools.

Lapus reiterated his call "for the private sector to support the Department of Education as we double our efforts to improve the situation in our public schools,"

BMR is coursed through DepEd's Adopt-a-School Program (ASP). Led by Director Mari Paul Soriano, Special Assistant for Private Sector Concerns, ASP seeks to encourage private sector groups to work with DepEd in boosting government resources in education. Per Republic Act 8525, businesses receive tax incentive of up to 150 per cent.

In 2007, the private sector support to DepEd's ASP to improve students' reading skills reached P P39.6M. **END**