

2. Adult Education/Family Literacy

a. *Family Literacy Research Summary (including Even Start)*: The National Center on Family Literacy reports the following. "Integrated family literacy programming is more effective than traditional approaches to adult education, early childhood education, or stand-alone parent programs for our most vulnerable adults and children. From the beginning of the Kenan program in 1989, NCFL has utilized standardized and teacher-made tests, case studies, anecdotal records, parent surveys and interviews, and staff observations to evaluate all aspects of the program. The early findings indicated that both adults and their children made important gains as a result of attending family literacy programs:

>Parents who made a commitment to attend regularly made significant improvements in academic performance, in their relationships with their children and with other adults, and in their view of themselves. Even though the average reading and math scores were between the 6th and 7th grade level, 30% of adult students either received GED certification during the program year, passed parts of the exam, or had scheduled the exam at the end of the program year.

>By the end of the program year, more than 90% of formerly "at-risk" children were judged by their teacher as ready for entry into kindergarten with no expected academic or social difficulties. These children demonstrated significant growth in behavior, use of language, and development of pre-academic skills.

Breaking the Cycle of Illiteracy: The Kenan Family Literacy Model Program (NCFL, 1989).

The Kenan model was expanded nationally in 1991 with the Toyota Families for Learning Program (TFLP). The findings produced from 15 cities (sample size: n = 500) demonstrated the need to approach these problems from the comprehensive family perspective of the Kenan model:

>Adults participating in family literacy programs showed greater gains in literacy than adults in adult-focused programs.

>Participants in family literacy programs were less likely to drop out of the program than were participants in adult focused programs.

>Children participating in family literacy programs demonstrated greater gains than children in child-focused programs.

>More educationally supportive home environments were reported by parents in family literacy programs than when they entered the program. *The Power of Family Literacy* (NCFL, 1996).

Parental involvement is perhaps the most important indicator of the success of family literacy programs. Ideally, adults and children both improve in literacy ability, and lifestyle changes should be occurring in parent/child interactions so that learning gains can be maintained and extended independently by families. Mikulecky and Lloyd, in a study of NCFL programs in Atlanta, Rochester, Fort Wayne, Nashville, and Richmond (n = 133) demonstrated through comparisons made at time of entry and time of exit that:

- 1) Parents provided a wider range of reading and writing materials at home for their children:
Parents took their children to the library twice as often, about every 3 weeks. Parents bought or borrowed books for their children 40% more often, every one to two weeks.
- 2) Parents engaged in a wider range of reading and writing activities with their children at home, drawing and writing with their children and using educational materials and games:
Parents read or looked at books with their children 40% more often, almost every day. Children asked parents to read to them 20% more often, almost every day. Children's book and magazine reading increased by nearly 40%, to more than once a day.
- 3) Parent-child talk about manners and hygiene involved more explaining and less direct instruction.
- 4) Parents and children played together with toys or games about 30% more often.
- 5) Parents displayed children's drawings and writings at home 20% more often, every 4 to 5 days.
- 6) Children saw their parents engage in a wider range of reading and writing activities at home.

Appendix E: Home Involvement in Schooling

7) Parents became increasingly aware that children can learn through play and do not need to be taught or controlled by adults.

>Parents thought that children learned to read and write well in school because their parents spent quality time with them rather than because of the child's ability or effort.

Parents believed taking children to the library or educational programs would help children learn to read and write better. Mikulecky and Lloyd. (1995). *Evaluating Parent/Child Interactions in Family Literacy Programs*.

The NCFL Parent Survey shows practically and statistically significant gains ($p < .003$, $n = 1100$) in the frequency that parents: (a) talk to their school-age children's teacher, (b) talk to their children about their day, (c) read or look at books with children, (d) are seen reading or writing by their children, (e) take their children to the library, (f) volunteer at school help children with homework, and (g) attend school activities (analysis of NCFL primary database, 1997)

In NCFL's first follow-up study, 53 adults & 98 children were evaluated after leaving the Kenan program:

>One year after leaving the program, 66% of adults were either enrolled or had definite plans for enrolling in some form of higher or continuing education program or were employed.

>35% were employed, while fewer than 10% were employed at the time they enrolled in the program.

>After two years, none of the children had been held back in school.

>Over three-fourths of these children were rated by their current kindergarten or grade-school teacher as average or above average on academic performance, motivation to learn, support from parents, relations with other students, attendance, classroom behavior, self confidence, and probable success

in school. *Follow-up Study of Impact of the Kenan Trust Model for Family Literacy* (NCFL, 1991).

In follow-up studies of 200 representative families in four states (KY, NC, HI, and NY) one to six years after attending family literacy programs, NCFL has documented these enduring effects:

>51% of the adult students have received a high school equivalency certificate;

>43% are employed, compared to 14% before enrolling;

>13% have enrolled in higher education or training programs and another 11% are continuing in Adult Education programs working toward GED certification;

>Dependence on public assistance has been reduced by 50%

>The present primary teachers rate almost 80% of former family literacy children at or above the class average on such factors as attendance, classroom behavior, relations with other children, motivation to learn, family support for education, and probability of success in school.

A follow-up study ($n = 23$) of former family literacy children in Rochester, NY showed that while only 11% scored above the 20th and none scored above the 50th percentile rank on the PPVT as 3 and 4-year-olds in the family literacy program, 87% scored above the 20th percentile rank and 39% scored above the 50th percentile rank on a standardized reading test (CAT) as first and second graders. (Analysis of NCFL follow-up database, 1996).

NCFL documented the results of high quality, federally-funded Even Start programs to show what can be expected of programs when implemented according to the Even Start mandate. Data was collected from 30 sites across the country in 1997. Adults made significant changes in their lives:

>54% seeking educational credentials received the GED or its equivalent.

>45% of those on public assistance reduced the amount received or ceased to receive aid altogether.

>40% were enrolled in some higher education or training program.

>50% of those not currently enrolled in an education or training program are employed.

The percentage of children in the Even Start program rated "average or above" by their current classroom teacher (grades K-5): (a) 67% on overall academic performance, (b) 78% on motivation to learn, (c) 83% on support from parents, (d) 89% on relations with other students, (e) 91% on attendance, (f) 84% on classroom behavior, (g) 73% on self-confidence, (h) 75% on probable success in school, (i) 80% on all factors by their teachers, and (j) 90% showed satisfactory grades in reading, language and mathematics (*Even Start: An Effective Literacy Program Helps Families Grow Toward Independence*, NCFL, 1997).

For more information, see:

National Center for Family Literacy website: www.familit.org/research/research.html

Appendix E: Home Involvement in Schooling

- a. *Family Intergenerational-Interaction Literacy Model (FILM)*: This is designed for all family members to improve basic literacy, employment, and parenting skills in order to increase the educational level of disadvantaged preschool children and their families. It provides literacy services and parenting/ life skills education to parents and early childhood education to children. Post-test outcome data indicate that (1) the program compared favorably with other adult education programs in promoting academic achievement and GED acquisition, (2) participating preschoolers scored higher on school readiness indicators than a comparison group, (3) preschool graduates were ranked by teachers as higher in academic performance and social skills than their peers, and (4) teacher reported greater parent involvement in their children's education.

For program information, contact:

Dean Hiser, Orange County Department of Education, 200 Kalmus Drive, P.O. Box 9050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628-9050; Phone: (714) 966-4145; Fax: (714) 966-4124; www.ed.gov/pubs/EPTW/eptw11/eptw11a.html

- c. *Mother-Child Home Program (MCHP) of the Verbal Interaction Project, Inc.*: This is a non-didactic, home-based program that aims to prevent educational disadvantage in two- to four-year old children of parents with low income and limited education, and to foster parents' literacy and self-esteem, by enhancing parent-child verbal interaction. Guided by the theory that cognitive and social-emotional growth results from the playful exchange between parent and child, "Toy Demonstrators" model for the parent a curriculum of verbal and other positive interaction with their children. Specific outcomes reported include (1) children at risk for educational disadvantage at age two were no longer so after two years of the program, and (2) program graduates met national achievement test norms in elementary school and graduated from high school at a normal rate.

For program information, contact:

Dr. Phyllis Levenstein, Director, National Center for Mother-Child Home Program, 3268 Island Road, Wantagh, NY 11793. (516) 785-7077. (Affiliated with the State University of New York at Stony Brook.)

- d. *Parents as Teachers*: This is an early parenting program that provides comprehensive services to families from the third trimester of pregnancy until the children are three years of age. It aims at helping parents give their children a solid foundation for school success and at forming a closer working relationship between home and school. Services include regularly scheduled personal visits in the home, parent group meetings, periodic screening and monitoring of educational and sensory development, and access to a parent resource center. Reported outcomes are: (1) Children of parents in the program score significantly higher at age three on the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children and the Zimmerman Preschool Language Scale than the comparison and nationally normed groups; (b) Children of parents in the program score significantly higher at the end of grade one on standardized tests of reading and mathematics than the comparison and nationally normed groups; (c) Parents in the program for three years demonstrate significantly more knowledge and child-rearing practices, are more likely to regard their school district as responsive to a child's needs, and are more likely to have children's hearing professionally tested than the comparison parents; and, (d) Parents who were in the program were found to be significantly more involved in their children's school experience at the end of grade one than were comparison group parents.

For more information, contact:

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