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Ensuring early acquisition of literacy: a study on parental support

Appendices



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Appendix 1 Review of meta-analytic and primary research evidence

1.1 Introduction

In this appendix, we provide additional material which may be of use to researchers, policymakers, programme developers and others seeking more information on family literacy research. Appendix 1 consists of the following sections:

- Section 1.2: Detailed tabular summaries of 10 relevant meta-analyses, including the six discussed in our research review
- Section 1.3: A more extensive discussion of effect sizes and their interpretation
- Section 1.4: A summary of our research review search and selection strategy.

1.2 Meta-analyses: summary tables

The following tables summarise the objectives, approaches and findings from all known relevant meta-analyses of family literacy interventions. details of study characteristics, intervention characteristics, and participant characteristics. Where any of these characteristics were found to influence intervention outcomes, we summarise those effects.

1.2.1 Meta- analysis 1: A descriptive review and meta-analysis of family-based emergent literacy interventions

Bibliographical information	Manz, P. H., C. Hughes, et al. (forthcoming 2011) "A descriptive review and meta-analysis of family-based emergent literacy interventions: To what extent is the research applicable to low-income, ethnic-minority or linguistically-diverse young children?" <i>Early Childhood Research Quarterly</i> .
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	This research review consists of two components: 1. a descriptive review of 31 academically published articles about family literacy interventions targeted at children ages 2-6

	<p>2. a meta-analysis of a subset of 14 of those 31 studies. These 14 studies utilised experimental (12 studies) or quasi-experimental research designs (2 studies).</p> <p>The focus of the review was the impact of family literacy interventions on families who were ethnic minority, low income or not speakers of the official language of the school system. The review therefore sought to compare impacts for families falling into one, two or three of those categories with families not doing so.</p> <p>In addition to investigating the impact of participant characteristics, the review also sought to investigate intervention characteristics, in particular intervention location (home-based, centre-based, or combined) and the extent of training provided to families.</p>
Number of studies included	The meta-analysis consisted of 14 studies. Only information from those studies is included in this table.
Range of years in which primary studies were conducted	1994 – July 2007
Geographical range of primary studies	Unclear, but either primarily or solely North America
Combined number of participants	1394
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	<p>The review specifically sought to determine whether or not family literacy interventions were working as well for "at risk" families as for more advantaged families. Key variables investigated included socio-economic status and ethnicity.</p> <p>Of the 14 studies included in the meta-analyses, nine reported race/ethnicity information for the child participants. Seven studies specified participant socio-economic status.</p>

Participant characteristics: age	Studies included children aged 2-6
Intervention types	Dialogic reading interventions were investigated in 10 of the 14 studies.
Intervention sites	8 studies investigated interventions implemented only at home, while 6 studies investigated interventions implemented both at home and in an early childhood education and care centre.
Other intervention characteristics analysed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extent of training received by parents • timing of training received by parents – i.e. prior to the intervention only (6 studies), or prior to and during the intervention (8 studies)
Selected study characteristics	The meta-analysis included only studies published in academic journals.
Variables measured	A range of variables were measured, including phonological awareness, expressive language, general reading, concepts of print, and receptive language.
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect size	The combined weighted effect size for the 14 studies was 0.33.
95% confidence interval range	Unclear
Impacts of participant characteristics	<p>The authors investigated the impact of a range of participant characteristics on effect sizes. These are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • primarily White Caucasian participants: effect size = 0.64 • primarily ethnic minority participants: 0.16 • primarily middle or high socio-economic status: 0.39 • primarily low-income participants: 0.14

Impacts of intervention characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effect size for dialogic reading interventions only was 0.32, nearly identical to the combined effect size for all types of interventions (0.33). • Neither the extent nor the timing of training yielded significantly different effect sizes. • Intervention site did yield significant differences in effect size. Home-based interventions had a combined effect size of 0.47, while combined home and centre-based interventions had an effect size of 0.13.
Impacts of study characteristics	N/A
Comments	<p>The authors found that ethnic minority and/or low income children did not receive as much quantitatively measured benefit from family literacy interventions as did White and/or middle-to-high income children. According to the authors, there are likely to be two primary reasons for this outcome. One is the relative lack of educational experience and engagement of disadvantaged parents. The other is the lack of interventions which were “culturally valid” for low income and/or ethnic minority families. By cultural validity, the authors mean the extent to which intervention methods are consistent with disadvantaged families' values and normative behaviours, as well as the extent to which interventions benefit these groups.</p> <p>The authors suggest that a “one size fits all” approach to family literacy programme development is unlikely to produce programmes that produce substantial benefits for educationally disadvantaged children.</p>
Key messages for policymakers	The authors of this study argue that family literacy interventions tend to suffer from a lack of cultural validity, in that they tend to be designed for and piloted on more advantaged families, as opposed to the families who are most in need of additional educational

	<p>assistance.</p> <p>Manz et al argue that family literacy programmes need to be specifically designed to understand and meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged families. They further argue that measures of success need to be developed which are both reliable and valid for disadvantaged children. This is likely to require greater use of mixed methods and partnership-based research designs in order to develop interventions which "balance intimate awareness of stakeholders' perceptions, values and routines with scientific rigour" (lines 782-783).</p>
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1.2.2 Meta-analysis 2: How effective are family literacy programmes? Results of a meta-analysis

Bibliographical information	van Steensel, R., McElvany, N., Kurvers, J. and Herppich, S. (forthcoming 2011) "How effective are family literacy programmes ? Results of a meta-analysis." <i>Review of Educational Research</i> .
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	To analyse the overall effect of family literacy programmes, and to investigate whether impacts were different for comprehension-and code-related measures. Furthermore, to identify programme, sample and study characteristics that appear to moderate effect sizes.
Number of studies included	26 studies, accounting for 15 different programmes. Six programmes were evaluated in more than one study.
Range of years in which primary studies were conducted	1992-2006
Geographical range of primary studies	Primarily North America
Combined number of participants	3453 families
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	This study investigated the relationship between disadvantage and impacts of family literacy programmes. Samples were characterised as "at risk" if they consisted of at least a majority of children from low socio-economic status families, or of children diagnosed as being at risk of reading delays on the basis of standardised tests.
Participant characteristics: age	Studies included children in preschool, kindergarten and primary school. This study did investigate the relationship between child age and impacts of family literacy programmes
Intervention types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogic reading: 5 studies • Paired reading: 3 studies • Even Start: 3 studies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIPPY: 2 studies • Project PRIMER: 2 studies • Project EASE: 2 studies • 9 other programmes, each associated with one study
Intervention sites	Home; home and school
Other intervention characteristics analysed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared reading • Literacy exercises • The authors also investigated the effects of comprehension-focused programmes as compared to code-focused programmes.
Selected study characteristics	<p>The authors investigated the impact of randomisation on study results.</p> <p>The meta-analysis included only studies published in academic journals.</p>
Variables measured	Primarily pre- and post-test reading
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect size	0.25 – however, in randomised studies the effect size did not differ statistically from zero
95% confidence interval range	Unclear
Impacts of participant characteristics	Programmes aimed at children in primary school had a larger combined effect size than those aimed at children in pre-primary.
Impacts of intervention characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes featuring shared reading plus other literacy related activities showed a larger mean effect size than programmes featuring only shared reading or literacy exercises. • In the case of comprehension-focused programmes, effect sizes were roughly the same for comprehension-related measures and code-related measures (0.28, 0.26).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the case of code-focused interventions, effect sizes were much higher for comprehension-related measures (0.43) than for code-related measures (0.10).
Impacts of study characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In randomised studies, the combined mean effect size did not deviate significantly from zero. • When looking at the potential effects of publication bias, the authors calculated that they would need to find 62 unpublished studies reporting no positive results to reduce the weighted mean effect size of their meta-analysis to non-significance.
Comments	<p>The authors of this meta-analysis investigated the comparative effects of intervention characteristics, participant characteristics and study characteristics, and found that the only significant predictor of effect size was whether or not a study sample was randomised. Studies without randomisation had a much higher effect size than those with randomisation. Studies which fell into the latter category -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - i.e. those which meet the gold standard for social science research - - did not appear to produce positive effects on child literacy outcomes.
Key messages for policymakers	<p>In contrast to the other meta-analyses included in this chapter, the results of this review suggest that positive expectations for family literacy outcomes may be overly optimistic, at least in terms of improving child literacy. In particular, studies using randomised method of participant assignment showed no positive impacts of family literacy programmes compared to control.</p> <p>However, there are suggestions in this meta-analysis that interventions which combine shared reading with other types of literacy exercises may be more effective than those which focus on only shared reading or literacy exercises alone.</p> <p>Furthermore, the authors emphasised that for disadvantaged children, even small gains in literacy may represent significant and important steps in improving educational trajectories and long-term outcomes.</p>

1.2.3 Meta-analysis 3: Added value of dialogic parent-child book readings: A meta-analysis

Bibliographical information	Mol, S. E., A. G. Bus, et al. (2008). "Added value of dialogic parent-child book readings: A meta-analysis." <i>Early Education and Development</i> 19(1): 7-26.
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	To examine the added value of dialogic parent-child book reading in comparison to more typical, less interactive forms of parent-child reading. One objective was to investigate whether disadvantaged children benefited more or less from dialogic reading interventions than non-disadvantaged children.
Number of studies included	16
Range of years in which primary studies were conducted	1994-2006
Geographical range of primary studies	US (10), Asia (4), Australia (2)
Combined number of participants	626 parent-child dyads (313 intervention, 313 control)
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	Seven studies accounting for 208 parent-child dyads focused on children considered to be at risk for literacy problems.
Participant characteristics: age	Children were aged 2-5
Intervention types included	Dialogic parent-child book reading

Intervention sites	Home
Study characteristics	N/A
Variables measured	Vocabulary (expressive and receptive)
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect	0.59
95% confidence interval range	0.44 to 0.75
Impacts of participant characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantage: The combined effect size for the seven studies of children at risk was low: 0.13, with a 95% confidence interval of -0.08 to 0.35. Dialogic reading had a much smaller impact when children came from disadvantaged families. Age: the positive impact of dialogic parent-child reading was concentrated on families where the children were aged 2 to 3. Dialogic reading had a much smaller impact when children were in the older age bracket for this study (4 to 5 years old).
Impacts of intervention characteristics	N/A
Impacts of study characteristics	N/A
Comments	<p>The authors suggest that while exposure to stories promotes language development, it is also important for parents to encourage their children's active involvement in the process by asking open ended questions designed to elicit expressive talk about stories.</p> <p>The authors suggest that the quality of shared book reading is just as important for literacy development as frequency.</p> <p>Improving verbal interaction between parent and child during shared</p>

	reading sessions increases the positive effects of book reading.
Key messages for policymakers	<p>In this meta-analysis, dialogic reading proved effective for 2-3-year-olds, but less effective with children over the age of three. However, as the authors observe, this replicates other findings and therefore did not come as a surprise.</p> <p>More worrying was the finding that dialogic reading programmes proved effective overall, but markedly less so with disadvantaged children. The authors advance two possible theories for this finding. One, it may be the case that parents with poor literacy skills are less able to use dialogic reading effectively. Two, very young children at risk may not benefit from dialogic reading because making inferences and performing other tasks essential to this type of intervention may be beyond their present abilities.</p> <p>This then raises the possibility that although dialogic reading does not generally appear to have a positive impact on 4-5-year-olds, specially tailored programmes may theoretically offer positive benefits for at risk children in this age group.</p>

1.2.4 Meta-analysis 4: The effect of family literacy interventions on children's acquisition of reading: from kindergarten to grade 3. A meta-analytic review

Bibliographical information	Sénéchal, M., & Young, L. (2008). The effect of family literacy interventions on children's acquisition of reading from kindergarten to grade 3: A meta-analytic review. <i>Review of Educational Research</i> , 78, 880–907.
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	Analyse the impact of interventions in which researchers tested whether or not parent involvement enhanced children's literacy
Number of studies included	14
Range of years in which primary studies were conducted	1970-2001. The authors divided the studies into two groups: six studies published between 1970 and 1989, which were classified as "older studies", and eight studies published between 1990 and 2001, which were classified as "recent".
Geographical range of primary studies	8 studies were carried out in the US. The other 6 were conducted in either England, Australia or New Zealand.
Combined number of participants	1174 families
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	Four studies were conducted with children experiencing reading problems or who were classified as at risk for reading problems. Five studies focused on low income families. Families in three studies ranged from middle to high income. The remaining studies did not provide sufficient information about socio-economic status.
Participant characteristics: age	Children were aged 5-9. Four studies were of children in kindergarten (aged 5-6), five studies included only children in primary grades 1 to 3 (aged 6-9), and five studies included children from kindergarten up to grade 3.
Intervention types	The review included studies of three types of parental involvement

included	<p>interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents read to child (2 studies) • Parents listened to children read (5 studies) • Parents taught literacy skills to children (7 studies)
Intervention sites	N/A
Other intervention characteristics analysed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of intervention: three interventions lasted 1.5 months or less. Seven lasted between 2.5-5 months. Three lasted 10 months or longer. One study was excluded as an outlier. • Providing parents with supportive feedback: In eight studies, parents were given feedback during the intervention. In six, they were not given such feedback. Limited information was available about the quality of feedback.
Selected study characteristics	In eight studies, participants were randomly assigned to intervention and control groups. This was not the case in the remaining six studies.
Variables measured	A variety of reading measures
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect size	0.68
95% confidence interval range	0.56 - 0.81
Impacts of participant characteristics	<p>Disadvantage: compared to children with normal literacy levels, intervention impacts were no lower for children experiencing reading problems or considered to be at risk of such problems. Socio-economic status did not have an impact on effect sizes.</p> <p>Age: the impact of interventions was similar for younger and older children.</p>
Impacts of intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention type: interventions in which parents taught reading skills to their children produced a very large effect size: 1.15. This

characteristics	<p>was somewhat more than double the effect size for interventions in which parents were trained to listen to their children read: 0.51. Parents reading to children produced the smallest effect size: 0.18.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of intervention: did not affect intervention outcomes. • Feedback: the provision of feedback was not associated with improved child outcomes.
Impacts of study characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant assignment: studies that did not randomly assign participants to intervention and control groups did not have larger effect sizes than those which did. • Sample size: studies with smaller samples did not differ in effect sizes from those with larger samples. • Timing of post-test: this did not impact effect sizes. • Type of post-test: the three studies with researcher-designed tests produced larger effect sizes than the 11 using standardised tests.
Comments	<p>This meta-analysis provides positive evidence for intervention impacts on disadvantaged children, and provides a potential starting point for additional investigations into the impact of intervention method on child literacy outcomes.</p> <p>Sénéchal and Young's meta-analysis is criticised by van Steensel et al (forthcoming) for its inclusion of a large number of older studies, but Sénéchal and Young found no difference in effect sizes for older or more recent programmes. As van Steensel et al (forthcoming 2011) have observed, the earlier studies in Sénéchal and Young's review, i.e. those carried out between 1970 and 1989, reported a larger average effect size than did studies carried out between 1990 and 2001. However, Sénéchal and Young's note that the apparently lesser impact of the more recent interventions is due not to their more recent date but to the presence of two Shared Reading programmes, both of which had minimal effect sizes. Once the two studies of this intervention type are removed, earlier studies show no greater</p>

	impacts than do later ones.
Key messages for policymakers	<p>The results from this meta-analysis suggest that family literacy programmes can have a moderate to large impact on child literacy outcomes, and that these impacts are just as strong for socially disadvantaged children.</p> <p>Furthermore, this analysis suggests that policymakers and programme developers should pay particular attention to the types of programmes they offer. Interventions encouraging parents to read to their children showed a small effect size -- although it should be noted that only two such interventions were included in this meta-analysis. It should also be noted that such interventions are relatively inexpensive to implement and may provide a wide range of other positive benefits not assessed in this meta-analysis, such as improved parent-child bonding and improved parent and child attitudes to reading.</p> <p>Programmes in which parents were trained to listen to their children read showed much greater benefits: at 0.51 such interventions showed greater average gains than the majority of school-based programmes. However, by far the largest positive effects came from programmes in which parents were trained to teach specific reading skills to their children. The effect size for these programmes was an extremely impressive 1.15.</p>

1.2.5 Meta-analysis 5: Approaches to parental involvement for improving the academic performance of elementary school-age children

Bibliographical information	Nye, C., H. Turner, et al. (2006). "Approaches to parent involvement for improving the academic performance of elementary school age children." Accessed at http://campbellcollaboration.org/doc-pdf/Nye_PI_Review.pdf 14(11): 06.
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	To summarise and synthesise the outcomes of randomised controlled trials (RCTs) investigating the effects of parental involvement intervention programmes on the academic performance of primary school-age children. The review included studies looking at the effects of parental involvement not just on reading achievement, but also on maths and science. However, within that rubric, the authors did isolate and analyse the impacts of parental involvement programmes on reading alone.
Number of studies included	18, of which 12 reported the impact of parental intervention programmes on reading achievement. Eight of the studies were of collaborative reading interventions.
Range of years in which primary studies were conducted	1964-2000. Seven studies were conducted between 1964 and 1982, and 11 were conducted between 1993 and 2000.
Geographical range of primary studies	15 studies were conducted in the US. Two were conducted in the UK and one in Canada.
Combined number of participants	The 12 studies which included reading outcomes had a total of 448 families for whom reading outcomes were measured.
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	In studies reporting the socio-economic status of the families, 18% were from lower SES groups and 73% were from mixed SES groups. 9% were from middle SES groups.

Participant characteristics: age	As indicated by the title of this review, participating children were in primary school. Looking more closely, 47% of programmes involved a mix of primary school ages, 21% looked only at children in grade two, 11% focused on children in grade one, 11% looked at children in kindergarten, and the remaining studies did not report an age/grade breakdown.
Intervention types	Eight studies were of interventions which the authors termed "collaborative reading: parents and children reading together as a structured activity" (p. 13). It was unclear from the review what types of collaborative reading interventions were assessed. The intervention types for the remaining four reading programmes were also unclear.
Intervention sites	Unclear
Other intervention characteristics analysed	The duration of interventions ranged from 4 to 104 weeks with a mean of 23.2 weeks and a median of 10.5 weeks. As the difference between the median and mean suggests, the intervention lasting 104 weeks was an outlier.
Selected study characteristics	This review was limited to studies which included at least two groups and which used random assignment -- i.e. randomised controlled trial designs.
Variables measured	Primarily reading achievement, but this is not clear for all reading studies.
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect size	Literacy outcomes only: 0.42 All academic outcomes: 0.43
95% confidence interval range	Literacy outcomes only: 0.18 to 0.66 All academic outcomes: 0.30 to 0.56
Impacts of participant	This study did not analyse the impact of participant characteristics.

characteristics	
Impacts of intervention characteristics	Duration of intervention was not related to effect size
Impacts of study characteristics	Looking at all academic outcomes, studies in the grey literature yielded an effect size of 0.36, while those published in journals boasted an effect size of 0.63. This is consistent with research showing that studies with greater impact or more likely to be published than studies showing less impact.
Comments	<p>Despite the growing emphasis among meta-analytic researchers on investigating the impacts of participant and intervention characteristics on programme outcomes, this systematic review did not look at the impacts of participant characteristics, potentially reducing the value of this review for understanding the impacts of family literacy interventions on disadvantaged families.</p> <p>However, this review is unique in that it included only randomised controlled trials (RCTs), suggesting a particularly high methodological standard. The fact that Nye et al found evidence of gains which were slightly above average (in comparison to other educational interventions) in programmes assessed by RCTs presents an interesting point of contrast to the conclusions of van Steensel et al (forthcoming 2011), who found no evidence of positive gains in RCTs studies included in their meta-analysis.</p>
Key messages for policymakers	Results from this review, which included only randomised controlled trials, indicate that parental support interventions targeting child reading outcomes appear to have a slightly above average (in comparison to other educational interventions) effect on those outcomes. The fact that only randomised controlled trials were included in this review suggested that the findings are particularly robust – a positive message for researchers and policymakers seeking to determine the benefits of family literacy programmes.

1.2.6 Meta-analysis 6: Parent tutoring: a meta-analysis

Bibliographical information	Erion, J. (2006). "Parent Tutoring: A Meta-Analysis." <i>Education and Treatment of Children</i> 29(1): 28.
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	<p>To provide a synthesis of research on programmes in which parents provided academic instruction to their own children. While this review did not limit itself to interventions targeting improved reading, this was the objective of most programmes studied. Other interventions included those focused on spelling, written expression and maths. 20 group design studies provided 32 experimental comparisons. Of these comparisons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 5 did not include some measure of literacy. All four of these measured mathematical skills • 27 included some measure of literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14 measured reading comprehension alone ○ 2 measured word recognition alone ○ 4 measured reading fluency alone • 7 measured some combination of the above outcomes. All studies measuring more than one outcome included at least one literacy outcome. <p>While not every study included in this review included literacy measures, the fact that 27 of 32 experimental comparisons included at least one literacy outcome suggests that the findings of this review are relevant to our aims.</p> <p>In addition to measuring the general effectiveness of parent tutoring programmes, this review tested the impact of a variety of intervention characteristics and study characteristics.</p> <p>The author of this review does not provide a definition of what he means by "parent tutoring", noting only that his focus is on interventions based around parental involvement in "learning activities at home" (p. 80).</p>
Number of studies included	<p>37 studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 group design studies featured 32 experimental comparisons

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 single-subject design studies featured 25 comparisons. <p>Separate analyses were conducted for group design and single-subject design studies. Only the results for group design studies are included in this table.</p>
Range of years in which primary studies were conducted	1971-February 2004
Geographical range of primary studies	Unclear
Combined number of participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All group design comparisons: 1408 (781 experimental, 627 control), although this includes double counting of participants involved in more than one experiment. We estimate that approximately 1015 unique participants were involved in the 20 group design studies. (The exact number was not given in the report.) Of these, an estimated 875 participated in studies which measured literacy outcomes.
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	N/A
Participant characteristics: age	Studies included pupils ranging from kindergarten to grade 6 (ages 5-12)
Intervention types	N/A
Intervention sites	N/A
Other intervention characteristics analysed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Length of treatment Modelling of treatment Supervised practice Length of training Availability of consultation Availability of written instructions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring
Selected study characteristics analysed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication type: 13 of the included studies were published in academic journals; the remaining 24 consisted of dissertations, Masters theses or other papers • Norm-referenced versus criterion-referenced assessment of outcome
Variables measured	<p>While this review did not limit itself to interventions targeting improved reading, this was the objective of most programmes studied. 20 group design studies provided 32 experimental comparisons. Of these comparisons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 5 did not include some measure of literacy. All four of these measured mathematical skills • 27 included some measure of literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14 measured reading comprehension alone ○ 2 measured word recognition alone ○ 4 measured reading fluency alone • 7 measured some combination of the above outcomes. All studies measuring more than one outcome included at least one literacy outcome.
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect size	<p>In this table, we include only results for group design studies. For these studies, a mean weighted effect size of 0.55 was found. The following bullets provide disaggregated effect sizes for all literacy-only outcome measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading comprehension (14 comparisons): 0.57 • Reading fluency (3 studies): -0.08 • Word recognition (2 studies): 0.43

95% confidence interval range	<p>The following bullets provide disaggregated 95% confidence intervals for all literacy-only measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading comprehension: 0.32 to 0.81 • Reading fluency: -0.73 to 0.56 • Word recognition: -0.45 to 1.31
Impacts of participant characteristics	N/A
Impacts of intervention characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer training sessions for parents appeared to improve outcomes somewhat • No other intervention characteristics investigated appeared to moderate outcomes
Impacts of study characteristics	None of the study characteristics investigated appeared to moderate outcomes
Comments	<p>Despite investigating a range of intervention characteristics, the authors found very little evidence of differential impact of these various characteristics. However, as noted elsewhere in this paper, the reporting of intervention characteristics in primary studies tends to be inconsistent at best. Furthermore, reviews of this size may struggle to find a sufficient number of programmes differing in the right combination of intervention characteristics to draw conclusions from.</p>
Key messages for policymakers	<p>The results of this review suggest that parent tutoring interventions are an effective means of improving children's literacy skills. The author's analysis included 14 studies looking at the impact of family literacy interventions on child reading comprehension, and found an effect size of 0.57, which, in educational terms, is relatively large.</p>

1.2.7 Meta-analysis 7: Evidence-based parent involvement interventions with school aged children

Bibliographical information	Fishel, M. and L. Ramirez (2005). "Evidence-Based Parent Involvement Interventions with School-Aged Children." <i>School Psychology Quarterly</i> 20(4): 371-402.
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	<p>To evaluate parent involvement interventions with school-aged children, using evaluation criteria as proposed by the American Psychological Association Task Force on Evidence-Based Interventions in School Psychology.</p> <p>This review covered a range of academic outcomes.</p>
Number of studies included	<p>24, of which 14 utilised between-subject group design, 8 used single participant design, and 2 utilised mixed designs.</p> <p>Of the 14 group design studies, 12 measured child literacy outcomes.</p>
Range of years in which primary studies were conducted	1980-2002
Geographical range of primary studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US: 20 • Canada: 3 • Puerto Rico: 1
Combined number of participants	There were 925 total participants in the 12 group design studies which measured literacy outcomes.
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	14 of the 24 studies involved interventions for children with ongoing school problems
Participant characteristics: age	Of the 12 group design studies which measured literacy outcomes, 11 focused on primary school aged children. One focused on children in kindergarten.

Intervention types	<p>The 12 group design studies which measured literacy outcomes looked at the following intervention types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent training and involvement: 8 studies • Parent involvement: 1 • Peer and parent involvement: 1 • Paraprofessional and parent involvement: 2
Intervention sites	N/A
Other intervention characteristics analysed	N/A
Selected study characteristics analysed	According to the review authors, the methodological characteristics of group design studies varied greatly.
Variables measured	12 of 14 group design studies targeted child literacy. Of these, 3 also attempted to improve children's maths skills.
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect size	This review did not report a combined weighted mean effect size. However, the authors conclude that there is promising evidence that “parent home tutoring” leads to child literacy improvements (p. 396).
95% confidence interval range	N/A
Impacts of participant characteristics	The authors argue that the methodological weaknesses in the literature prevent conclusive analysis of the impacts of participant characteristics.
Impacts of intervention	The authors argue that the methodological weaknesses in the literature prevent conclusive analysis of the impacts of intervention

characteristics	characteristics.
Impacts of study characteristics	N/A
Comments	<p>Fishel and Ramirez's review placed a strong emphasis on programmes targeting disadvantaged children: 14 of their 24 included studies involved interventions for children with ongoing school problems. However, it is unclear how many of the 12 literacy programmes were included in this number.</p>
Key messages for policymakers	<p>The authors of this review found good evidence for the effectiveness of family literacy interventions in the home, particularly those focused on a single academic problem, such as reading.</p> <p>However, the authors argue that despite this promising evidence, the methodological weaknesses that characterise primary research on family literacy mean that it was impossible to draw conclusions about programme effectiveness. This is a conclusion that was also drawn by a number of earlier meta-analyses in this field, including Mattingly et al (2002).</p> <p>More recent meta-analyses have also highlighted the limited availability of methodologically robust quantitative family literacy research, but have been able to access enough high-quality studies to draw some conclusions about programme outcomes. This suggests that the quality of primary research in this field is improving. However, there is still insufficient research for meta-analysts to draw robust conclusions about the impact of intervention and participant characteristics.</p>

Broader reviews

In the following section, we summarise three additional reviews of parental involvement programmes. While none of these reviews focused specifically on child literacy programmes, such initiatives were among the interventions included in these reviews, and all three reviews offer potentially useful messages for policymakers and programme leaders seeking to improve child literacy through parental support interventions.

1.2.8 The relevance of delivery mode and other programme characteristics for the effectiveness of early childhood intervention

Bibliographical information	Blok, H., R. G. Fukkink, et al. (2005). "The relevance of delivery mode and other programme characteristics for the effectiveness of early childhood intervention." <i>International Journal of Behavioral Development</i> 29(1): 35-47.
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	To answer questions regarding the delivery and design of early intervention programmes for disadvantaged children. This meta-analysis this included measures of cognitive and socio-emotional effects. In our summary, we include only cognitive outcomes. Unfortunately for our current purposes, cognitive outcomes for each study, including literacy outcomes, were aggregated in the review to produce one effect size for each experiment. Therefore, we are not able to infer literacy outcomes from this review, even though many of the included studies did measure literacy.
Number of studies included	19 studies yielding 34 different comparisons. (For example, a study of the Turkish Early Enrichment Project effectively included three experimental comparisons: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• education daycare with mother training versus education daycare without mother training• custodial daycare with mother training versus custodial daycare without mother training• home care with mother training versus Homecare without mother training)
Range of years in which primary studies were	1985-2001

conducted	
Geographical range of primary studies	Of the 34 experimental comparisons, 26 were conducted in the US, 3 in the Netherlands, 3 in Turkey and 2 in Bermuda.
Combined number of participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding all 34 experimental comparisons together, we found a total of 8406 children. However, the actual number of children involved in the 19 studies was lower, as many children took part in more than one experiment. While the review did not provide enough information to compute the exact number of children involved, we estimate it to be approximately 6570. • Average sample size was 77, excluding one very large sample of 3200 children.
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the authors of the meta-analysis, "all selected studies appeared to focus on disadvantaged children" (p.37) • 76% of families were classified as low socio-economic status • 97% of families were classified as low income • 81% of children were part of an minority ethnic group
Participant characteristics: age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth to 64 months (at the start of the intervention) • Average age at the start of intervention was 37 months • 29 of 34 comparisons were of programmes which ended prior to kindergarten
Intervention types	Coaching of parenting skills: 29 of 34 experiments
Intervention sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-based: 13 • Centre-based: 11 • Combined: 10
Other intervention characteristics analysed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery mode • Timing • Duration: 4-96 months (average = 22 months) • Intensity: 1-25 hours per week (averaged 8.5 hours per week) • Retention of any gains
Selected study characteristics	N/A
Variables measured	This meta-analysis included measures of cognitive and socio-

	emotional effects. In our summary, we include only cognitive outcomes. Unfortunately for our current purposes, cognitive outcomes for each study, including literacy outcomes, were aggregated in the review to produce one effect size for each experiment. Therefore, we are not able to infer literacy outcomes from this review, even though many of the included studies did measure literacy.
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect size	For all cognitive outcomes combined: 0.32.
95% confidence interval range	Unclear
Impacts of participant characteristics	Participant characteristics showing no impact were: child age at programme onset, continuation of programme after kindergarten
Impacts of intervention characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery mode: home-based programmes were approximately 0.5 standard deviations less effective than both centre-based programmes and combined home-and centre-based programmes • Parenting skills: inclusion of parenting skills support had a positive impact equivalent to 0.7 standard deviations • Intervention characteristics showing no impact were: how recent the programme was, intensity, total programme dose, provision of social or economic support to parents
Impacts of study characteristics	N/A
Comments	The authors were able to estimate the fading of benefits over time after interventions ended. This effect was estimated at 0.03 standard deviations per year, indicating a very slow fading of positive effects.
Key messages for	Because this review combined effect sizes for a range of cognitive outcomes, it would be inappropriate to draw conclusions about

policymakers	<p>literacy development. However, the findings in this review do support other research which has found that centre-based or combined centre-and home-based interventions are more effective than interventions which take place only in the home.</p> <p>Interventions which included training in parenting skills were much more effective (0.7 standard deviations) in improving cognitive outcomes than interventions lacking such training. This provides some evidence in support of programmes such as MOCEP which offer both cognitive and parenting skills training. However, the studies included in this review did not provide information that would have enabled the reviewers to draw conclusions about how and why parenting coaching improved outcomes.</p>
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1.2.9 A meta-analysis of the relation of parental involvement urban elementary school student academic achievement

Bibliographical information	Jeynes, W. H. (2005). "A meta-analysis of the relation of parental involvement to urban elementary school student academic achievement." <i>Urban Education</i> 40(3): 237.
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	<p>This review synthesised studies of the relationships between parental involvement and the academic achievement of urban primary school children. The review looked both at correlational studies and at studies of parent involvement programmes.</p> <p>However, while approximately 40% of the included studies looked at the impact of programmes, the review itself does not look specifically at literacy outcomes, having instead a broader focus on academic achievement in general. Therefore, no conclusions can be drawn about the impact of parental support programmes on child literacy development. That being said, because the review focuses on urban pupils (albeit in the United States), who are more likely to be from minority ethnic groups, more likely to be socio-economically disadvantaged, and more likely to struggle academically, it may</p>

	contain useful messages for our project.
Number of studies included	41, eighteen of which analysed the effects of interventions.
Range of years in which primary studies were conducted	Studies of programmes were conducted in the years 1969-2000.
Geographical range of primary studies	USA
Combined number of participants	Average sample size for all 41 studies was 559
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	As indicated in the title of this review, all participants were urban. In the American context, this suggests that a high percentage of participants were likely to be socio-economically disadvantaged and/or from minority ethnic groups. However, the review does not provide numerical breakdowns for these variables within studies of parental support programmes.
Participant characteristics: age	Primary school
Intervention types	The review does not provide information on types of parental support programmes included.
Intervention sites	Information not given
Other intervention characteristics analysed	N/A
Selected study characteristics analysed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeynes noted that later studies were more likely to utilise randomisation. This may suggest that researchers in the field are taking on board the lessons of White et al (1992) and Mattingly et al (2002) with regard to the need to produce more methodologically robust research in order to properly assess the value of parent involvement programmes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the 41 studies included in this review, all but one had a positive effect size.
Variables measured	General academic achievement. No specific information provided about literacy.
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect size	<p>Combined weighted effect size for studies of the impact of parental involvement programmes on pupils' academic achievement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.31 (studies without sophisticated controls) 0.19 (studies with sophisticated controls)
95% confidence interval range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studies without sophisticated controls: 0.06 to 0.56 Studies with sophisticated controls: 0.03 to 0.35
Impacts of participant characteristics	Analysis of programme impacts suggested that positive impacts were found for all types of participant groups.
Impacts of intervention characteristics	N/A
Impacts of study characteristics	<p>Looking at a combination of correlational and intervention studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No statistically significant relationship between study quality and effect size No apparent relationship between randomisation and effect size No apparent impact of year of study on the effect size Studies with the small samples produced the most extreme effect sizes, consistent with what we would expect to find in a funnel plot
Comments	The author suggest that the fact that most of these programmes proved to have a positive impact on urban children's academic achievement suggests that parental involvement interventions can be a means of reducing the achievement gap between these students

	and those suffering fewer socio-economically disadvantages and currently performing better academically.
Key messages for policymakers	Unfortunately, this review does not provide specific evidence about the impacts of parental support programmes on child literacy. However, it does provide much-needed evidence on the question of whether or not parental involvement programmes focused specifically on urban pupils produce positive impacts, suggesting that they do and that such programmes can "be a means of reducing the achievement gap" (p. 261).

1.2.10 Evaluating evaluations: the case of parent involvement programmes

Bibliographical information	Mattingly, D. J., R. Prislin, et al. (2002). "Evaluating evaluations: The case of parent involvement programmes." <i>Review of Educational Research</i> 72(4): 549.
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Objectives of this review	<p>In this study, the authors analysed 41 evaluations of intervention programmes targeting parents of kindergarten, primary and secondary school children. The focus of this study was less on synthesising quantitative data to estimate a mean effect size for parental support programmes, than on assessing the quality of evaluations of such programmes. Because of this, the review provides only limited information directly relevant to our aim of assessing the impact of parental support programmes. However, we include it in our summary because of its value in assessing the overall quality of research in this field. Without improvements in the quality of this research, reliable conclusions about our primary focus -- the efficacy of parental support programmes -- are difficult to impossible to draw.</p> <p>We also include this study because it is frequently cited in the later reviews, common with more than one paper citing it as not providing support for the hypothesis that parental support programmes improve outcomes. However, this is an overstatement of what Mattingly et al actually found. In their paper, these authors effectively concede that this hypothesis cannot yet be investigated, because of the paucity of robust evidence. Drawing conclusions about efficacy from the studies included in the review, at least in the domain of academic achievement, would mean depending on data from only four of those studies, which they do not seek to do. Rather, they observed that their analysis corroborates the findings from a decade before of White, Taylor and Moss (1992) regarding the lack of conclusive evidence for or against the effectiveness of parental support programmes.</p>
Number of studies included	41

Range of years in which primary studies were conducted	Unclear
Geographical range of primary studies	USA
Combined number of participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the authors of this review, inconsistent reporting in the selected studies meant that it was impossible to say exactly how many children, parents and families were involved. • In the 34 studies reporting participant numbers, the number of participating families ranged from 1 to 11,000, with a median of 114. One-fifth of programmes reported 30 or fewer participating families. 23.5% had 31-100, 38% had between 101 in 500, and 17.6% had more than 500.
Participant characteristics: disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 49% of articles reported in the ethnicity of programme participants • Only 14% reported parental education levels • Among studies providing information, the majority of participants were low income and non-white. • Mattingly and co-authors were highly critical of the absence of relevant data regarding pupil disadvantage, arguing that this lack of data "undermines efforts to provide evidence of a programme success" (p. 564).
Participant characteristics: age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies included pupils in kindergarten up to grade 12 (i.e. through secondary school).
Intervention types	N/A
Intervention sites	N/A
Other intervention characteristics analysed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 78.6% of the interventions included in this review included components to help parents support their child's learning at home. 61% had some focus on parenting skills. • Of the 34 evaluations containing data on how long programmes had been running, 85% had been going for less than a year when the evaluation was carried out, and 59% had been in existence for six months or less. • 39 of 41 evaluations indicated who originated the programmes.

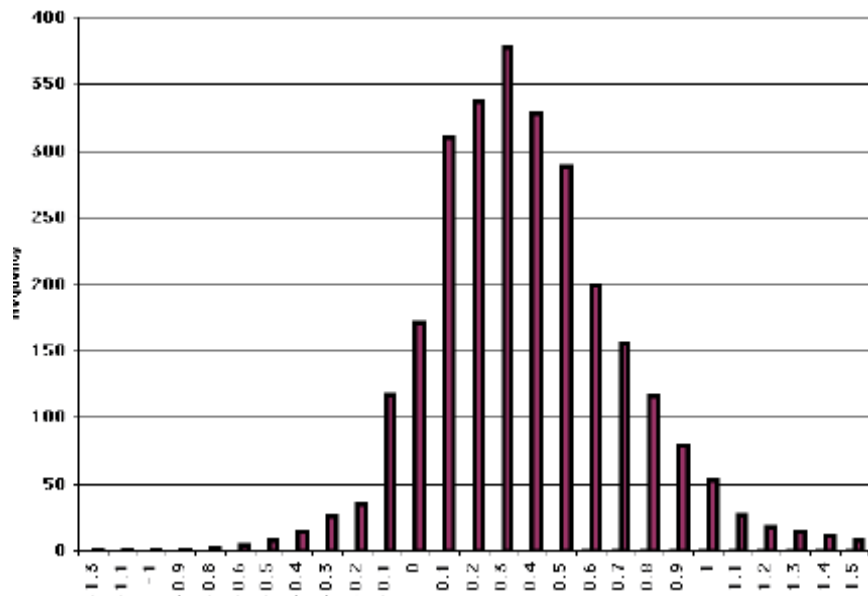
	<p>49% were originated by school districts and 39% by university researchers. 15% were initiated by local schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers participated in the development of 10 of the 34 programmes for which relevant data were available, with parents participating in the development of 5.
Selected study characteristics	<p>As highlighted above, this review was specifically focused on study (i.e. evaluation) characteristics, and sought to provide an analysis on the methodological quality of these characteristics. Looking only at included studies which assist academic achievement (20 studies), 15 showed positive impacts of parental support programmes. However, only five of these studies used a control group, and only four used a design consisting of matched controls, a pre-test and a post test. Of these four, two found improvements in people outcomes, and two did not. That is to say, of the only four studies considered sufficiently rigorous to draw conclusions from, two supported the hypothesis that parental support interventions improve child academic outcomes, and two did not.</p>
Variables measured	<p>This was a broad review of academic outcomes and behaviours. The authors provide no specific information on child literacy outcomes, with this measure presumably being agglomerated into their category "student academic achievement" (p. 565). 28 of the 41 included studies assessed some measure of this broad outcome.</p>
IMPACTS	
Combined weighted effect size	<p>This was a general review of academic outcomes and behaviours. The authors provide no specific information on child literacy outcomes, with this measure presumably being agglomerated into their category "student academic achievement" (p. 565). 28 of the 41 included studies assessed some measure of this broad outcome. Of those 28, 19 (67.9%) showed improvement.</p>
95% confidence interval range	N/A
Impacts of participant	N/A

characteristics	
Impacts of intervention characteristics	N/A
Impacts of study characteristics	Looking only at included studies which assist academic achievement (20 studies), 15 showed positive impacts of parental support programmes. However, only five of these studies used a control group, and only four used a design consisting of matched controls, a pre-test and a post test. Of these four, two found improvements in people outcomes, and two did not. That is to say, of the only four studies considered sufficiently rigorous to draw conclusions from, too supported the hypothesis that parental support interventions improve child academic outcomes, and two did not.
Comments	The authors say that they found little empirical evidence that parent involvement programmes improve student achievement or alter the behaviour of parents, teachers or students. However, they also did not find much empirical evidence suggesting that such programmes do not produce these benefits. Rather, the vast majority of studies available, argue the authors, suffered from serious methodological issues, meaning that reliable conclusions cannot be drawn from them.
Key messages for policymakers	<p>The conclusions of the study are sometimes cited as suggesting that parental involvement programmes do not provide quantifiable benefits, but such a statement is not an accurate representation of the study's findings. The authors do observe that they found little empirical evidence that parent involvement programmes improve student achievement or alter the behaviour of parents, teachers or students. However, they also did not find much empirical evidence suggesting that such programmes do not produce these benefits. Rather, the vast majority of studies available at the time (2002), say the authors, suffer from serious methodological issues, meaning that reliable conclusions could not be drawn from them.</p> <p>The key message to take from this frequently cited review is that the quality of primary studies in the field of parental intervention</p>

	<p>programmes needs to be greatly improved. To some degree, this appears to have happened over the last decade, as indicated by the somewhat greater success of recent reviews in finding high-quality primary studies. However, the overall state of research in this important area is still far too meagre and poor, meaning that policymakers and programme developers have only limited evidence to help them in their decision-making.</p>
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1.3 Effect sizes and their interpretation

Figure 1 Distribution of educational intervention effect sizes
(from Hattie, 1999, p. 5)



The following table, taken from Coe (2002, p. 4) provides an overview of various ways to interpret and understand a range of effect sizes.

Table 1 Effect size impacts from Coe (2002, p. 4)

Effect Size	Percentage of control group who would be below average person in experimental group	Rank of person in a control group of 25 who would be equivalent to the average person in experimental group	Probability that you could guess which group a person was in from knowledge of their 'score'.	Equivalent correlation, r (=Difference in percentage 'successful' in each of the two groups, BESD)	Probability that person from experimental group will be higher than person from control, if both chosen at random (=CLES)
0.0	50%	13 th	0.50	0.00	0.50
0.1	54%	12 th	0.52	0.05	0.53
0.2	58%	11 th	0.54	0.10	0.56
0.3	62%	10 th	0.56	0.15	0.58
0.4	66%	9 th	0.58	0.20	0.61
0.5	69%	8 th	0.60	0.24	0.64
0.6	73%	7 th	0.62	0.29	0.66
0.7	76%	6 th	0.64	0.33	0.69
0.8	79%	6 th	0.66	0.37	0.71
0.9	82%	5 th	0.67	0.41	0.74
1.0	84%	4 th	0.69	0.45	0.76
1.2	88%	3 rd	0.73	0.51	0.80
1.4	92%	2 nd	0.76	0.57	0.84
1.6	95%	1 st	0.79	0.62	0.87
1.8	96%	1 st	0.82	0.67	0.90
2.0	98%	1 st (or 1 st out of 44)	0.84	0.71	0.92
2.5	99%	1 st (or 1 st out of 160)	0.89	0.78	0.96
3.0	99.9%	1 st (or 1 st out of 740)	0.93	0.83	0.98

In the following table, which draws both on Hattie's comparisons of educational interventions (1999, 2009) and a summary of effect sizes provided by Coe (2002), we list effect sizes for a range of educational variables and interventions.

Table 2 Selected educational intervention effect sizes

(adapted from Hattie 1999, Hattie 2009, Coe 2002)

Instructional quality	1.00
Instructional quantity	0.84
Corrective feedback	0.73
Home factors	0.67
Repeated reading programmes	0.67
Vocabulary programs	0.67
Teacher professional development	0.62
Students' disposition to learn	0.61
Phonics instruction	0.60
Goal setting	0.56
Peer tutoring	0.55
Comprehension programmes	0.50
Parent involvement	0.51
Teacher in-service education	0.49
Participation in preschool programmes	0.45
Computer-assisted instruction (ICT)	0.37
Bilingual programmes	0.37
Frequent testing/effects of testing	0.34
Reducing class sizes from 23 to 15	0.30
Individualised instruction	0.23
Teaching and/or coaching test taking	0.22
Team teaching	0.19
Audiovisual aids	0.16
Within-class grouping	0.16
Homework (primary school)	0.15
Sentence combining programmes	0.15
Ability grouping	0.12
Whole language programmes	0.06
Retention (i.e. children repeating a school year)	-0.16

1.4 Search and selection strategy

All searches covered the years 1985 to the present. The guiding principle of the search strategy consisted of seeking research which looked at the impact of interventions targeting one population (parents) on a particular outcome (improved literacy) of a second population (children). Therefore our starting point was to search databases for the following combination of keywords or thesaurus items: Intervention terms + Outcome terms + Population 1 terms + Population 2 terms.

However, testing of our results led us to conclude that variation from this pattern would be required in most databases to maximise results for the smaller databases. In many cases, this was appeared to be related to database keyword coding which classified articles as being either about parents or children, but not both. For example, for intervention-related keywords (all keywords can be seen in the table below), plus outcome-related keywords, plus parent-related keywords, plus child-related keywords, yielded only 244 results. More importantly, when we tested this "strict" search against other strategies, it became clear that the strict search was overly strict, and did not provide access to many relevant articles. This was true in ERIC as well, and may indicate that database coders are being overly restrictive when classifying research articles in which there are two key populations: parents and children. This problem was remedied in both databases by expanding our search so that it followed an "intervention + outcome + (parents or children)" pattern. While this strategy had the weakness of yielding a larger number of irrelevant articles, it proved -- through testing -- to be the best means of locating the full range of potentially useful research.

One other question was germane when searching ERIC: should the research team opt for a keyword-led strategy, as chosen by a number of recent meta-analyses, a thesaurus-driven strategy, or a combination of the two? This is a test to compare a thesaurus-driven ERIC search versus a keyword only search in Eric. In order to compare the number of search results returned and the sensitivity of the two approaches, the research team conducted a test. For the sake of efficiency during this test, we focused our search on the years 2006-2008.

Thesaurus plus selected keywords

A search for all possible years using this search strategy returned 3605 results. (The full search string for this test is available upon request.) Looking only at the search results for the years 2006-2008, the research team analysed the first 100 results against our inclusion criteria. For this stage of the inclusion process, the analysis was based on title and abstract only.

Keyword only search

The full search string for the keyword-only search is as follows:

KW=(Programme or Intervention or Training) and KW=(home or Family or parent) and KW=(Literacy or Reading or Writing*

This is the search strategy utilised by van Steensel et al in their forthcoming paper "Effects of Family Literacy Programs: Results of a Meta-Analysis". While the focus of that paper is on family literacy programmes only, the combination of keywords was considered appropriately broad for our own study.

A search for all possible years using this search strategy returned 9767 results.

Comparing the search results

The research team analysed the 100 most recently published results returned in each search, comparing them against our inclusion criteria.

This comparison strongly favoured the "thesaurus plus selected keywords" approach. Given the fact that the keyword-only search returned nearly three times as many results, it should not be surprising that this search strategy proved to be less precise: of the 100 results sampled, 22 were selected for the next stage of the inclusion process. In comparison, the thesaurus-driven search was more precise: 51 out of 100 results made it to the next stage of the inclusion process.

It is often the case that more precise searches run the risk of being less comprehensive; just as many irrelevant results or omitted, so too are many relevant ones. In this case, that did not occur: the thesaurus-led search picked up many relevant results that were missed by the keyword only search. However, a small number of potentially relevant studies picked up by the keyword-only search were missed by the thesaurus search.

Looking only at the years 2009-10, at the time of our test (2 February 2010), the keyword-only search returned 103 results, and the thesaurus-driven search returned 94.

For these reasons, we opted to use the "thesaurus plus selected keywords" search strategy in the Eric database.

Later, however, the research team came across a study cited in the ERIC database that had not been found in our search of that database. To ensure that we did not miss other studies of this nature, we performed one additional search utilising key descriptors of that study.

These descriptors were: (family literacy and (parent education or parent participation or parents)).

Database	Search strategy	Results
ERIC	(DE=("emergent literacy" or "family literacy" or "reading")) and(((DE=("family support" or "parents")) or(DE="family sociological unit")) or(DE=("family attitudes" or "family school relationship" or "family influence" or "family literacy"))))	1779
ERIC (additional search)	When the research team came across a study cited in the ERIC database that had not been found in our search of that database, we performed one additional search utilising key descriptors of that study. These descriptors were: (family literacy and (parent education or parent participation or parents)).	348
Psycinfo	AB ("Intervention" or "Early Intervention" or "Family Intervention" or "School Based Intervention" or "Strategies" or "Programme Development" or "Educational Programs" or "Programme Evaluation") <u>and</u> AB ("Literacy" or "Literacy Programs" or "Phonological Awareness" or "Reading Development" or "Reading Education" or "Reading Skills" or "Writing Skills") <u>and</u> AB (("Parents" or "Family Members" or "Fathers" or "Mothers" or "Single Parents" or "Parental Characteristics" or "Parental Expectations" or "Parent Child	1310

	Communication" or "Parent Educational Background" or "Parent School Relationship" or "Parent Training" or "Parental Attitudes" or "Parental Characteristics" or "Parental Investment" or "Parental Involvement" or "Parental Role" or "Parenting" or "Parenting Skills" or "Parenting Style") or (child* OR preadolescen* OR young OR boys OR girls OR schoolchild*))	
ISI Web of knowledge	Topic=(Literacy) AND Topic=(Child*) AND Topic=(parent* OR mother* OR father* OR family) AND Topic=(involvement OR program* OR participation OR support)	437
Campbell collaboration	All text = literacy AND child* AND program	13
DART-Europe E-theses Po	All fields = Literacy AND child	25
Index to theses	Literacy AND child	325 citations (UK) 16 citations (Ireland)
British Library Direct	AB: Literacy AND (programme OR intervention OR support) AND (child OR children) AND (parent OR parental OR parents OR mother OR mothers OR father OR fathers)	51 citations
British Education Index	(Literacy.TI,AB. AND child\$.TI,AB.) and (Parent\$ OR family OR mother\$ OR father\$).TI,AB.) 54 citations	54
Australian Education Index	(Literacy.TI,AB. AND child\$.TI,AB.) and (Parent\$ OR family OR mother\$ OR father\$).TI,AB.)	455

ERUK (Current Education and Children's Services Research / CERUK plus)	free text search for "literacy and child*"	29
International Bibliography of the Social Sciences	(Family literacy) or (("Parent* involvement" or "Parent* participation" or Parents-as-teachers "Family involvement") and (literacy or read*))	27

Selection

Once duplicate references were eliminated, this search yielded 3567 potentially relevant articles. Titles and abstracts of all articles then read by members of the research team in order to exclude irrelevant research. This process led to the elimination of approximately one-half of the citations we had retrieved, leaving us with 1854 potentially relevant articles. Of these, 1285 were potentially relevant to the questions of 1d and/or 1e. The remaining 569 references were potentially relevant to research questions 1a-1c. A large majority of the citations in both these categories were from outside Europe.

Scope of primary research sources

Using the search strategy detailed in Appendix 1, citations were found for 160 primary research articles in the academic and grey literature of potential relevance to this investigation. Of these, slightly more than half (82) did not describe parental support interventions designed to improve child literacy; 30 of those 82 articles were nonetheless useful as they described investigations of familial and other relevant factors influencing child literacy development. Searches were also carried out of French and German research databases. The small number of relevant articles is in keeping with McElvany and Artelt's observation (2008, p. 81) that in Europe 'there is a surprising lack of effective, systematic reading programmes that can be implemented within the family context'.

This review also draws on non-European sources where the findings and messages from that research are particularly salient to the issues under investigation.

Appendix 2 Case Studies

2.1 Case Studies

In this appendix, we provide full details for the case studies summarised in Chapter 10 of the main report.

2.1.1 Germany

Ensuring Early Acquisition of Literacy: Study on parental support

Case study

Name(s) and job title(s) of the interviewee(s):	Sabine Bonewitz, Spokeswoman Family and Pre-School and Lesestart-Manager
Country:	Germany
Organisation:	Stiftung Lesen (Booktrust Germany)
Name of case study lead:	Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Date of interview and name of interviewer:	23 rd June 2010 (telephone) Mandy Thomas
Name of programme:	Lesestart – Die Lese-Initiative für Deutschland

Introduction

Stiftung Lesen was founded in 1988. The foundation sees itself as a forum for creating new ideas and ways to promote reading in the media-age. Stiftung Lesen leads campaigns and projects throughout Germany. The organisation and its work are financed by sponsors and project partners (some of whom are long-standing), mainly from private enterprises and partly from the government.

One important main focus is on reading aloud and storytelling to pre-school children in the family context. The project is directed primarily at parents and teachers. Stiftung Lesen is especially dedicated to this issue because they believe that reading habits and the familiarity with books must be established at an early age and builds the basis for lifelong reading.

The Lesestart project, which is the subject of this case study was started as a result of Stiftung Lesen's involvement in EU-Read, a consortium of European reading promotion organisations. Lesestart is affiliated to Bookstart in the UK having been inspired by the success of this programme.

Key messages from the case study

- The Lesestart model is based on the UK's Bookstart programme and works through supplying tailor made babies' and children's books through paediatricians who offer health checks to new born children;
- The programme started with a pilot in Saxony, then gained funding through private sponsors for a two year national roll out;
- The success of the programme depends very much on getting buy in from the paediatricians, who are self-employed specialist children's doctors and who can reach 95% of families;
- Decisions about targeting are left to the paediatricians;
- The federal nature of German government means that policies and programmes are developed and implemented differently in different states.

Policy context

The programme corresponds with the objectives of Germany's National Education Plan. In Germany there is currently discussion around starting to educate children as early as possible. Literacy is seen as key to learning so the idea of promoting literacy education from an early age is one that chimes well with current thinking.

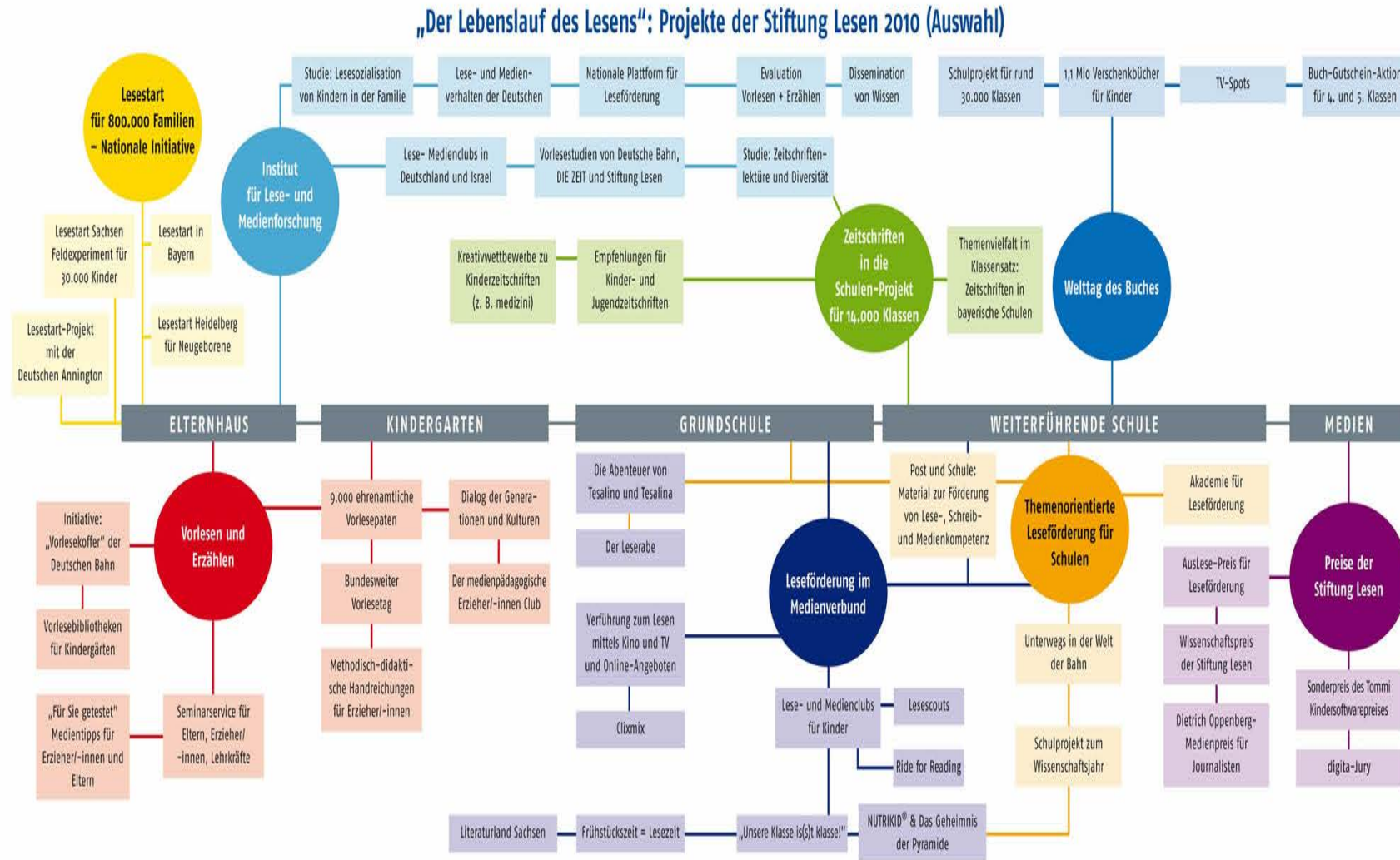
Germany has not in the past used polling data to establish the definition or extent of its population's literacy. However, a current project 'Level One (leo)' (2009-2012) proposes to establish a benchmark of adult literacy in the country. This research will be important for initiatives like Lesestart as developers will be able to better measure the impact of the programme. The findings should also allow for more targeted initiatives when researchers identify levels of literacy and potentially 'at risk' groups.

Overall Project Context

Stiftung Lesen is an organisation that promotes reading in Germany. It was founded in 1988 as a forum for creating new ideas and ways of promoting reading. It is financed by private sponsorship and some government funding. It develops and manages many projects aimed at promoting different aspects of reading. One important focus is on storytelling and reading to children in the family, another on developing teachers' guides. As well as the Lesestart project which this case study explores, Stiftung Lesen runs a variety of projects including:

- An 'Idea Forum School', supporting teachers with materials for school lessons, information, events and workshops on literature, media education and reading research;
- 'Reading Suitcase for Children in Care', equipping children in care homes with 'Read Aloud Suitcases' which contain children's books, didactic games, children's magazines and reading suggestions;
- 'My Daddy Reads to Me', which addresses working fathers of children aged 0-12 in the state of Hesse. Working through employers, the project provides a free intranet-based reading service including regularly updated stories, background information and suggestions for reading out loud.

The diagram below, copied from Stiftung Lesen's website at <http://www.stiftunglesen.de/wirueberuns/default.aspx> illustrates how Stiftung Lesen sees its projects feeding into the various stages of reading development.



Case study context

The initial Lesestart project ran in Saxony from November 2006 for three years. This was based on the UK's BookStart model and formed the pilot for a national rollout of the scheme from May 2008. A feasibility study funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth identified that through specialist child doctors (paediatricians) the 95% of parents, visiting for checks on their children, would be the best facilitator for the model.

The national scheme was funded for two years to the tune of €2m by corporate sponsors, publishers and printing houses. It worked with the paediatricians who see children for checks at the ages of three months, five months, one year, one and a half years and two years. It also worked with libraries who hand out the final book pack when the child is three years old.

Since the end of May 2010, when the initial funding ran out, the scheme is continuing on a paid-for basis, where the paediatricians and libraries pay for the packs they need. In some areas state governments are contributing to the continuation of the scheme.

Target families

The project is particularly interested in families where reading is not part of their everyday life. However, decisions about targeting families lie with the paediatricians. They decide whether they will give packs to all the families that attend for checks, or will target those who are not familiar with books and reading.

Regional projects have been set up to target particular groups, or using different approaches:

- The project in Heidelberg issues the packs through hospitals after the birth of the child. This means that a higher proportion of families receive them at an early stage;
- In Hessen packs are distributed to paediatricians by an intermediary organisation that works with immigrant families. As many of the families speak Turkish the translation of the parents' guide is particularly helpful. Anecdotal evidence and evaluations from other Stiftung Lesen projects show that looking at picture books with their children helps non-German speaking adults to learn some German;
- In North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Deutsche Annington a large company that rents out apartments offers Lesestart packs to its tenants when their children are one year, three years and when they start school.

Case study programme delivery

Recruitment

Recruitment for the programme is through health checks for babies and young children; all families have access to health checks for their children by paediatricians. Currently 95% use them. The service is paid for through the German health insurance scheme which individuals pay into, or is paid for them by the state if their income is low. The service is not currently compulsory but there are discussions about making it so. If this happens it will widen the potential reach of the Lesestart scheme even further.

During the two year life of the funded project 800,000 packs were distributed.

Course content

The Lesestart packs include an age-appropriate picture book for parents to read with their children, a reading guide for parents which includes tips on reading with young children, information about child development and practical suggestions on integrating reading into everyday life. The guide includes chapters translated into Turkish and Russian, as these are the two of the main immigrant languages spoken in Germany. The Lesestart pack also contains a list of book recommendations and a diary for parents to keep of their best memories of reading with their child. Posters and stickers also form part of the pack.

Mode of delivery

There are about 5,500 paediatricians across Germany and the project initially contacted them through their professional association, the Berufsverband der Kinder- und Jugendärzte (BVKJ). As the paediatricians look at various aspects of the child's development, including speaking and listening, they were seen as an ideal equivalent to the UK Bookstart's approach of working with health visitors.

The paediatricians order the number of sets of the Lesestart packs that they need, and hand them out to families when they come for their health check, when their child is aged one year. They talk to the parents about reading and explain what they can do in looking at a book with their child. The next set is handed out again by the paediatrician when the child is two years old. The third and final pack is issued through the library when the child is three years old and ready to go to kindergarten, under the German system.

Teaching the parents and looking at their literacy needs is outside the remit of this project, the paediatricians are focused on the needs of the child. However, the paediatricians know the families they work with well and understand their backgrounds. They enjoy being able to give a 'present' to the families and the opportunity to focus on the positive aspects of parenting.

The programme shows strong delivery in the following areas:

- **Content:** The project uses an approach to developing resources that is tried and tested in the UK and adapts it for use in Germany;
- **Model of delivery:** By using paediatricians to deliver the packs the project reaches 95% of parents;
- **Buy-in:** Paediatricians and politicians see the benefits of the scheme and are willing to draw in additional funding.

Pedagogical approaches

The Lesestart programme has a strong focus on supporting the development of reading habits and familiarity with books at an early age to build the basis for lifelong reading. Families are valued and encouraged to support children's early learning through interaction with their child, all children and families should have the opportunity to develop early reading skills, and storytelling and language skills underpin reading.

Resources

See course content above.

Partnerships

The key partnership is with the paediatricians. This relationship has been built up through their professional association and through visiting their regional meetings to present and discuss the project.

Paediatricians are well networked within their local area and can often form partnerships with local businesses and organisations who can supply sponsorship.

Relationships have also been developed with politicians and with local and national celebrities who are important in raising the profile of the project.

Staffing

Paediatricians give the book packs to families when they come for their health check, they talk to the parents about reading and explain what they can do in looking at a book with their child.

Assessment

There is no individual follow-up assessment.

Programme evaluation and impact

The original model project in Saxony was accompanied by an evaluation carried out by the University of Leipzig in 2009 which stated that of parents questioned 10% said that they had started to read with their children and 30% that they read more to their children as a result of taking part in the Lesestart programme.¹

The model was based on the UK Bookstart approach seen as good practice and an effective model for assisting parents to support their children's literacy in the early years. An evaluation of the Bookstart approach carried out in 2001² reported evidence of changed behaviours and attitudes in parents who were part of the Bookstart programme. Significantly 47% of parents reported that although many of them already read with their babies prior to receiving the Bookstart pack they read more with their babies afterwards. Receiving the pack "... stimulated those parents who were not reading to their babies to do so and encouraged those who were already reading to do more" (p21). The evaluation also showed that Bookstart parents visited the library more frequently. This is seen as especially important in light of evidence which links academic achievement to whether or not young children visit the library regularly³. Finally the evaluation stated that "Bookstart is valued by those parents/carers who encounter it" (p34).

The Bookstart National Impact Evaluation carried out in 2009 provides a more recent analysis of the impact of Bookstart initiatives on families focusing on reading behaviour and reading-related activities as reported by parents. Although the study is based on a larger sample size than earlier research, unlike them, it lacks a control group to compare against.

Parents were interviewed in two phases; in phase 1 they were interviewed within a month of receiving the pack and in phase 2 the same parents were interviewed three months later.

Overall findings around reading frequency were mixed. Interestingly, although the percentage of parents reading with their children once a day increased between phase 1 and phase 2 from 35% to 44%, the numbers doing so more than once a day decreased from 40% to 33%. This perhaps reflects an optimal frequency to fit in with other family activities.

¹Schorb, B. et al. (2009) Evaluation des Modellprojektes "Lesestart mit Buchern Wachsen".
University of Leipzig

²National Centre for Research in Children's Literature (2001) *Sainsburys Bookstart Evaluation*.
London: Booktrust

³Weingberger, J (1996)' Longitudinal study of children's early literacy experiences at home and later literacy development at home and school' in *Journal of Research in Reading*, Vol. 19, No. 1

However the fact that the frequency of reading with children once or more a day is at a level of 75-77% does perhaps indicate that the Bookstart message has become a cultural norm. The results become more interesting, however, when the impact on less active readers is analysed. None of this group reported reading with their children once a day or more in phase 1, but by phase 2, 30% were reading with them once a day and 7% even more. The number reading together a few times a week or less reduced from 86% to 61% and the number that never read with their children reduced from 14% to 2%.

The research found that library membership among Bookstart parents increased following receipt of the pack. However it found that parents who were less active readers tended to use library resources such as borrowing books or attending events less frequently than more active readers. It would seem that more work with this group would be useful in encouraging and supporting them to participate in library activities.

Overall, Bookstart has been successful at getting parents to engage their young children in reading activities and is particularly successful at reaching less active readers and encouraging them to read with their children. By providing free reading and other materials Bookstart supports parents who want to read with their children and encourages parents who would not have thought of reading with their children to do so. In addition the use of Health Visitors, nursery workers and Librarians ensures that the programme reaches significant numbers across the country and because they hand out the packs personally they can also offer parents additional guidance and information about the benefits of reading in the early years.

Funding

Private sector sponsorship forms the bulk of funding for the Lesestart project. The original project in Saxony was sponsored by German publisher, Ravensburger. The national roll-out was funded by a variety of publishers and printing houses and a range of local and national companies have sponsored the programme in different regions. Increasingly state governments are providing funding to support the programme.

In 2010, the Ministry for Science and Culture in Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony) provided funding to equip families with Lesestart packs for three years. This project works with both the paediatricians and libraries.

In Bavaria, the Ministry of Family Affairs has provided packs for working parents of two and three year old children.

Aims of the programme

The programme aims to introduce reading to children as early as possible in order to promote literacy and language acquisition.

Outcomes of the programme

The programme introduces reading and associated home-based activities to families who would not necessarily see this as part of their parenting role. It also introduces ideas for activities that parents and children can do together, such as visiting libraries and museums. It suggests ways that parents can be involved in the child's kindergarten or school activities.

The successful roll out of the programme has raised the profile of early reading within Germany and has gained political and popular support.

Success factors

The partnership with paediatricians is key to the success of the project both in terms of delivery and sustainability. Paediatricians are self-employed, usually well networked within their communities and can bring in additional sponsorship from local businesses and organisations. They reach many families and have continual contact with them through the first two years of the child's life.

The two year funded programme, following the initial pilot project, allowed the project to be rolled out nationally to demonstrate its impact and to raise its profile, thereby increasing sustainability after the funding came to an end.

The flexibility of the programme enabled it to be developed to meet the needs of particular communities in particular areas.

Challenges

The end of funding for the programme on a national basis means that the future is dependent on paediatricians being willing to buy the materials for the families they see and on state governments being willing to support the programme, in an increasingly restrictive economic climate.

The lack of research on literacy in Germany also makes it difficult for programmes to be targeted in an effective and evidence-based way. Targeting is left to paediatricians based on their knowledge of their local communities.

Transferability of programme

The model has been transferred from the UK to Germany and other countries including Portugal and Belgium. A new project is due to start in France in 2010. Each country adapts the materials used to its own culture and communities.

The model uses health care professionals to reach families who have recently had a new baby and is therefore dependent on a universal healthcare system that offers support and health monitoring for new babies. It also requires training and support for the healthcare professionals to enable them to understand the importance of families reading together and the impact on children's development.

Conclusion and implications

The Lesestart programme, based on the UK Bookstart model, was rolled out nationally in Germany following a three year pilot programme in Saxony. It aims to introduce reading to children as early as possible, particularly in those families where reading is not part of their everyday life. Emphasis is placed on early literacy acquisition as a basis for future learning.

The key successes of the programme are in its partnership with paediatricians who give out the packs to parents and in its flexibility which allows it to be developed according to the needs of particular communities.

On the basis of this case study, there could be ways of developing the programme to provide greater impact for disadvantaged families as follows:

- The programme is developed into a two stage model. Firstly a universal model that raises the profile and understanding in all families of reading with children from an early age. Secondly a targeted approach that recognises the specific needs of less active readers and the support they might need to develop literacy levels in order that they may engage with services such as libraries and nurseries etc;
- Parents' own literacy and reading development is taken more into account so that they can continue to support their children's reading and that the programme is used to encourage parents and other family members to progress to further learning;
- The programme develops in a more joined-up way of linking not only to health professionals and libraries but also to nurseries, kindergartens and schools, with the role of the parent/ carer in helping to develop the child's skills being recognised and worked with;
- Follow-up assessments are included as part of the model to measure impact.

2.1.2 Ireland

Ensuring Early Acquisition of Literacy: Study on parental support

Case study

Name(s) and job title(s) of the interviewee(s):	Mary Flanagan, Coordinator Clare Sheahan, Resource Worker
Country:	Ireland
Organisation:	Clare Family Learning Project
Name of case study lead:	Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Date of interview and name of interviewer:	30 th March 2010 (telephone) Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Name of programme:	English to support Parents of Primary School Children

Introduction

The Clare Family Learning Project (CFLP) holds a key position in Ireland for the development of family literacy and numeracy programmes.

Their perspective on family literacy is one which sees:

- The home environment not as a site of deprivation but a site of learning opportunities;
- Increased awareness that family members are best placed to stimulate early language and literacy development;
- There is always a social context for literacy;
- The prime motivating factor in learning to talk also motivates a child to read and write, that is, the desire to be socially communicative.⁴

The case study focuses on one programme “English to support Parents of Primary School Children” which is part of the offer of a variety of family learning programmes provided by CFLP (see appendix 1). The case study covers the wider context of family learning work in the case study organisation, the relationship to major EU policy areas and priorities, the context, target groups, aims, delivery methods and outcomes of the case study programme and draws out success factors and challenges linked to literacy acquisition.

⁴ Clare Family Learning Project (2000) *Family Learning Resource Guide*. Ennis, Co. Clare.

Key messages from the case study

The development of the parents' abilities, interest and knowledge to support their children's learning encourages more regular school attendance and the children's greater achievement in school.

A flexible and informal approach to family literacy work encourages attendance from target families. Embedding literacy in a variety of topics gives opportunities for developing literacy skills and a wider interest in learning.

The model provided by the parents as learners on the programme helps to develop learning aspirations in the children to support achievement. Improvement in adult skills is seen as a key component in the programme.

Case study March 2008 – December 2009: Clare Family Learning Project, Co. Clare, Ireland

RK from Poland is a parent of 2 young children ages 4 and 6. Both children now attend the Educate Together primary School.

She first attended a family learning class in March 08, Family Learning and Health. She then attended two family learning coffee mornings in the school which led to her enrolling in an ESOL class at the adult education centre and shortly after joining the English for parent's class held in the school for two hours every week.

Through 2008 -2009 she attended two storybags classes, one of them bilingual storybags, Christmas Crafts for parent and child and Family learning songs and rhymes and maintained a steady presence at the English for parent's classes in the school. However, she only attended the ESOL classes at the adult education centre for one term.

The progression of this parent has seen her now in employment since attending family learning classes. She also recorded on her progression form that she got promotion in her job since attending. The personal progression recorded showed more engagement and confidence around helping with the children's homework and feeling more ambitious for her children as a result of attending. At the end of 2009 she began volunteering in class to support children's reading in junior infants (4-5 years).

Policy context

The **Clare Family Learning** project including the case study programme “**English to support Parents of Primary School Children**” is seen as an important tool for engaging adults into learning who are parents and who have low levels of English oral and literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. The programme encourages integration and participation of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers in education as recommended in the Irish government’s White Paper on Adult Education (2000) and contributes to an improvement in adult participation in lifelong learning.

The skills gained by attending the programme contribute to upgrading the skills of the population, an improvement of basic skills in reading and writing and an improvement in achievement levels of learners with migrant backgrounds or from disadvantaged groups. Parents completing the programme frequently progress to further learning and volunteering.

The programme helps to promote the key competencies, learning to learn and communication skills, problem solving, digital competence and cultural awareness.

As part of Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools provision nationally (DEIS programme)⁵ CFLP is supporting the parental involvement strand through its family literacy and numeracy work. The action plan recognises the vital role of parents and other family members in children’s literacy development. It cites a range of strategies to be considered including strategies for supporting learning within the home, without the necessity for attendance at formal classes. With regard to early childhood provision, it puts a strong emphasis on developing, through structured play, and the involvement of parents, the cognitive and oral language skills that underpin children’s subsequent acquisition of literacy and numeracy capability in school learning.

The 2009 Child Literacy and Social Inclusion report⁶ focused specifically on the implementation of the *Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools* (DEIS) programme. The report cites the Clare Family Learning Project as an example of best practice in Ireland in supporting child literacy outside formal school learning.

The case study programme supports the national provision by Department of Education and Science of language support for non-English speaking newcomer children in Irish primary schools by working with the parents and children in non-English speaking families.

CFLP report that they have successfully integrated a number of learners on programmes. Irish parents, immigrant parents and parents from the Travelling community are learning together in cooking, computers, online safety, stained glass and car mechanics courses. The

⁵ Department of Education and Science (May 2007) *DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) An action plan for educational inclusion*. Department of Education and Science: Dublin

⁶ National Economic and Social Forum (November 2009) *Child Literacy and Social Inclusion: Implementation issues. Report 39*. National Economic and Social Forum: Dublin

feedback from these integrated classes has been overwhelmingly positive. As a result of requests from immigrant parents to meet more Irish parents CFLP have set up successful coffee mornings as part of the programme. Cross-cultural Storybags help build understanding and knowledge of different cultures and traditions. Participants on the course create their own 'Storybag' made up of props related to a specific book. This is developed week by week as a different part of a book is focused on and the appropriate items are made and collected together in the bag. The process gives participants an opportunity to think about what elements there are to a book, the value of sharing books with children as well as engaging in fun and creative activities (see appendix 2).

The programme is working in line with the National Adult Literacy Agency's policy brief on family literacy (2009) which describes Family literacy as "a win-win scenario to policy makers. Family literacy programmes improve the literacy practices of parents and other family members. This has a very significant knock on effect on school performance of children."⁷

Overall Project Context - Clare Family Learning Project

The case study programme "**English to support Parents of Primary School Children**" is part of a schedule of family learning courses planned and delivered by CFLP starting with short engagement sessions leading to fully accredited courses.

The first family learning programme in County Clare was set up in 1994 in response to a need identified by the local adult literacy service for a programme which would help parents with poor literacy and numeracy skills to help their own children with learning. A six week course was set up in one rural town focusing on enhancing parent and child interaction to support language development and awareness of environmental print. This short course was repeated in various locations in County Clare.

Clare Family Learning Project was established in 1996 and delivered three programme models in an adult learning centre:

- 'Learning is fun' a 60 hour programme for parents and children designed to enhance school performance;
- 'Homework help' a 16 hour programme to build parental confidence and assist parents in helping their children with homework;
- 'Moving on' a 12 hour programme allowing parents to address any fears or concerns associated with their children's transition to second level school.

⁷ National Adult Literacy Agency (September 2009) *Seeking a refreshed Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. Policy Briefing*. The National Adult Literacy Agency: Dublin

By 1999 the project decided that the effects of a centre based approach were limited and the Clare Family Learning Resource Pack was developed as a more portable model. The pack was based on sound theoretical background and research on emergent literacy and numeracy and includes a Resource Guide for tutors, 7 parent booklets, a 50 piece photo pack and a poster. This was launched in 2000. Tutors attend a two-day training on how to use the pack and how to set up and deliver programmes. To date the project has trained 457 tutors nationally and internationally. This training has been increased to three days as the project now covers delivering a wider range of programmes.

The resource pack focuses on the everyday opportunities in and around the home to support children's learning.

This Family Learning programme includes a wide range of programmes delivered to families around the county including Number Storybags, Bilingual Storybags, Irish Storybags, Growing Together -parent and child gardening, Making puppets, Cooking on a Budget and Sewing for the Family. The bilingual Storybags class supports the part played by first language in the learning of the target language, English. This is in line with current research which stresses the importance of valuing first language so that children are supported in becoming independent and successful learners in order to fulfil their learning potential. Adults can also access other learning opportunities at local education centres and are encouraged to do so by family learning tutors.

As an engagement tool a number of short taster courses are provided including Computers, Online Safety, Family Stories in a Box, Healthy Cooking for the family, Baking on a budget, Sewing for the Family, Car Maintenance, Stained Glass, Family Health and Drama.

From the taster courses parents are able to progress onto other courses, including more formal learning, in some cases leading to accreditation. In many cases target families need some informal, positive experience of learning to encourage them to progress onto more formal learning. Many of the parents left school early with no qualifications.

In recent years the programme has also provided a range of programmes in the evenings and on Saturdays for dads or significant males in the family; Dads and Lads computers, sport, fun science experiments, games, gadgets and machines and number games to make and play.

CFLC is seen as a national resource centre for family learning. Tutors across Ireland contact the project for support on many different issues e.g. setting up new programmes, how to work in partnership, where to find resources for specific programmes etc.

CFLP has developed a range of resources for tutors – the most recent publication 'Family Learning Programmes in Ireland' is a snapshot of family learning work around Ireland in 2009.

In 2009 the project worked with a total of 580 adult learners (157 males and 423 females) and 190 children on parent and child programmes.

Family learning with CFLP offers an informal non-threatening re-entry into learning for parents who are unconfident to join more structured provision. Many of the courses are non-accredited because parents have said that they will not come back to the programme if they are tested or assessed.

However some parents have requested accreditation on family learning courses. In 2006 two Level 3 modules were developed locally by the project and accepted by the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC the Irish accrediting body). Both of these modules help parents to support their children's homework and primary school learning.

There is one full time coordinator, one full time resource worker and 12 part time tutors delivering programmes in CFLP.

Case study context “English to support Parents of Primary School Children”

The programme is currently being delivered in a primary school receiving additional funding under the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools programme. This initiative gives additional funding to very disadvantaged schools.

The school has 190 pupils (age range 4 – 13) with 60 Roma children. It was recently evaluated by the Dept of Education and Science as needing to give immediate priority to the raising of literacy and numeracy standards.

The programme was set up in response to identified needs of the high number of immigrant parents in the school who were not familiar with the Irish education system or how their children were taught but were anxious to support their children's learning. The parents also found it difficult to communicate with the school and to understand communications from the school. At the start of the course very few of the learners were accessing any English language provision in the Adult Education sector.

Target families

The target group are immigrant parents and those identified by the Home School Community Liaison (HSCCL) teacher as being disadvantaged with literacy and numeracy needs.

The programme has now been developed to suit any parent who would benefit from an overview of the Irish Education system and how schools work especially parents with their first child going in to school and those who had a negative experience of school themselves.

Case study programme delivery

Recruitment

Parents are recruited individually in person by the HSCL teacher in addition to this poster and flyers in different languages are displayed and sent home with the children.

As the programme has developed some parents are now told about the programme by other parents in their language/cultural community and begin to attend even though they do not have children in the school. This has been encouraged and as a result more parents have attended.

Recruiting Roma parents has been challenging as they find it difficult to engage within the school context. The most successful way of recruiting within this community has been through engaging with individual parents when they drop the children at school.

The HSCL teacher also visits some of the parents in their homes and promotes the programmes. Clare Family Learning project staff have made links with the school parents' council and attend their coffee morning to promote the courses. This was moderately successful in terms of recruitment but very successful in promoting awareness of the family learning project amongst other parents and staff.

The HSCL teacher's job is to encourage parents to send their children to school, for parents to encourage their children to get their homework done and to take a full part in school life. In some cases the teacher is getting children to attend school or directing help from other agencies to deal with social problems at home.

The teacher usually knows from the parents what support is needed as they have very personal contact with families. In this way the teacher lets the CFLP know what is needed. She then invites parents to meet with the CFLP Resource Tutor (Clare Sheahan) and have a discussion on what might be included in the classes.

Course content

The course has two basic units: English for parents new to Ireland and Storybags. In the past year the curriculum offer has been extended to include a wider range of topics. Learners choose different units depending on the needs and interests of the families to make up the total hours of the course.

The units include fun maths, games to make and play (dads and children evening class), English and Bilingual Storybags. The dads and kids and fun maths programme supports numeracy in the school.

Literacy and numeracy are embedded in the course activities. CFLP considers literacy and numeracy side by side and literacy teaching automatically includes numeracy skills on the

basis as part of the CFLP holistic view on family learning. Examples of planning for embedded literacy are given in Appendix 2 pages 7 to 11.

Mode of delivery

The programme takes place during school term made up of 3 x 2 hour sessions each week. Generally classes start a week or two after the school starts to allow parents to get back into the routine. The delivery pattern is two hours once a week for English for 10-12 weeks September to Christmas followed by 40 hours in total between January and June. However due to cut backs some classes are being limited to 1.5 hours a week. The Storybags element of the course usually runs for 6-8 weeks x 1.5 hours session to a maximum of 12 hours.

Enrolment for the programme is roll-on/roll-off. Learners make their choice of which units to attend. There is great flexibility in Ireland still and CFLP hopes that it will stay this way. In their experience learners feel frightened of long term commitment and so courses are initially offered for a fixed period up to e.g. Halloween (31st October) and then learners can continue if they wish. In this way learners are not put off by having to commit to a year long course, staff feel that this encourages people to start learning.

Learning takes place in groups with ten or more adults as the core group. The course has been for parents only. The additional sessions will be adults and children together. For the dads and kids fun games sessions in the evening, the dads/carers bring the children and stay with them. The Growing Together (horticulture) programme and Having Fun with Maths will involve some sessions with children from different classes being brought out to join the parents in the garden or working in small groups in class.

Since Easter 2010 in response to requests from learners two new areas of learning have started: Parent and child gardening and maths in the classroom with parental support. The horticulture is targeted particularly to include parents from Roma communities. This maintains the total number of hours of delivery to six per week.

The course does not offer accreditation/qualification.

The current programme has been running in the target school since 2007 and delivered the following units of the main programme:

English to support parents of primary school children	Autumn 2007	10 hours 5 women
English to support parents of primary school children	Spring 2008	16 hours 10 women
English to support parents of primary school children	Summer 2008	24 hours 10 women
Coffee morning to promote service to parents	Spring 2009	2 hours 8 females & 4 babies
Coffee morning to promote service to parents	Spring 2008	2 hours 4 males and 9 females
Storybags	Autumn 2008	16 hours 8 females
English to support parents of primary school children	Autumn 2008	20 hours 16 women 4 men
English to support parent of primary school children	Spring 2009	30 hours 12 women
Storybags		16 hours 5 women
Bilingual Storybags	Summer 2009	22 hours 11 women and 1 man
English to support parents of primary school children	Autumn 2008	18 hours 12 women
English to support parents of primary school children	Spring 2010	20 hours 8 women
Storybags	Spring 2010	9 hours 6 women
Number games to make and do	Spring 2010	10.5 hours 8 dads & 8 children
Maths games in the classroom	Spring 2010	9 hours 6 women

12 parents have enrolled for the new unit “Growing together in the garden.”

Pedagogical approaches

The programme promotes active learning, learning through play, peer learning and experiential learning methodologies in order to suit all learning styles and value the real life experiences of the learners.

The programme has explicit activities to encourage:

- Parent/carer reading to the children, talking about books with the children, sharing books with the children, visiting the library with the children, using home language, interacting between home and school;
- Parent/carers to improve their own skills and knowledge e.g. how to support their children at school;

- Parent/carers to improve their literacy, spoken language or numeracy skills.

The programme shows strong delivery in the following areas:

- Has explicit outcomes for adults and children;
- Builds on and includes home culture using bilingual Storybags to value the home language and culture;
- Provides advice and guidance to adults for other learning/training opportunities;
- Provides progression opportunities for adults;
- Builds confidence and self-esteem in parents/carers and children;
- Builds in enrichment activities e.g. outings to the countryside, library, museum;
- Includes better interaction between parent/carer and child on literacy and numeracy activities;
- Increases parents/carer's involvement with their children's school.

These elements have contributed to successful outcomes for the learners by providing a relaxed, stimulating positive learning environment where parents are able to become more confident in their ability to learn and help their children. Where parents need more support with parenting skills support is provided by a local social services agency.

Resources

The programme prioritizes the use of authentic materials e.g. school reports, letters, guidelines, school policy documents and environmental print found in the home. Children's books, including bilingual books were used in the Storybags. Other resources are on the programme are made by the parents including numeracy and literacy games based on the Storybags.

Items for the number games are included in the Storybags e.g. dice, playing cards and commercially produced numeracy and literacy games.

Additional resources came from the Clare Family Learning Resource Pack.

Learners also develop learning to learn, problem-solving and communication skills through using real life scenarios in class for discussion.

Partnerships

The programme works in partnership with the school who provide the venue and refreshments. The HSCL teacher plays a central role in setting up and reaching the target group parents. The school also provides funding for some materials for the programme. Partnerships with other agencies maximize the limited budget and enable the programme to reach as many parents/carers as possible and to prevent duplication of services.

Staffing

The programme is staffed by an adult tutor who teaches the parents. Where the children are also involved a teacher from the school takes part. No crèche is offered.

Adult tutors are qualified second level teachers with family learning and adult education training.

Assessment

Progress is assessed using evaluation sheets and one-to-one discussions. There are no formal tests. In many cases parents attending say they will not attend if there is a test. Learners complete progression forms.

Programme evaluation and impact

Internal evaluation for adults and children is based on attendance, ability to communicate effectively, progression for the adults to other learning or work and children's improved attendance in school.

Examples of impact include progression routes taken up by parents who have attended the classes, improved language skills, better communication with school and more parental involvement in school.

The programme has not been externally evaluated.

Evidence of impact on children's literacy achievement is not formally collected but tutors and parents involved have made the following comments:

“Children were very excited to attend with their Dads/significant male in the classes.”

One mother said after the Dad and lads course that her daughter really felt very special having time with her Dad as there were three other children in the family.

One dad commented “Loved having fun with my son, learning about things and learning by doing.”

Parent’s comment “My child pushed me to do this ‘Storybags’. I did it because it seemed to be something to help my child, and the kids are very keen for us to do it.”

Some parents said they enjoyed reading to their children on and after the course.

Child's comment “I liked learning new things and doing experiments' Fun Science classes '. I liked doing things with my Dad.”

One child asked for homework when asked how to improve the course.

The majority of children asked for follow on courses showing an interest in learning.

During the parent and children courses e.g. Fun Science there were lots of opportunities for children to explain what had happened in their experiment to the others thereby reinforcing the learning.

Funding

Funding is provided for adult tutor teaching and planning time. The main funders for the programme are the Adult Literacy Budget from the Department of Education and Science. There is also extra funding from the Department of Education and Science under Delivering of Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS).

Aims of the programme

The aims of the programme for the parents are:

- To encourage parents to see themselves as their child’s first teacher and value the home as a learning place
- To affirm what parents are already doing at home as valuable
- To encourage parents to become involved in their child’s education at an early age
- To help parents develop strategies for extending their children’s emergent literacy and numeracy skills
- To build a partnership between home, school and the community in order to maximise support to parents
- To provide parents with opportunities to improve their own literacy and numeracy skills
- To foster the notion of lifelong learning

- To learn how the education system works in Ireland
- To learn the language skills to communicate effectively with the school
- To learn ways of supporting their children's schoolwork
- To improve competency in the target language

The aims were selected as meeting the needs of the parents and have not been changed as the programme develops.

The aims and objectives of the programme for the children are:

- To increase parent and child interaction time on literacy and numeracy based activities in and around the home
- To have fun learning together
- To increase children's achievement through parents involvement in their children's school activities (Desforjes)
- To build a more positive relationship between home and school for the children
- To improve competency in the target language

Outcomes of the programme

The level of parents' English language improves as a result of the programme. Some parents are now involved in classroom activity, parents are better able to attend parent teacher meetings and the parents become more used to being in the school environment.

Parents are more confident in supporting their children's learning and in helping with homework.

Increasingly they are able to help with homework and are more aware of literacy and numeracy in everyday tasks in and around the home.

They are also moving into other progression areas. The majority of learners move on to more formal learning opportunities in the adult education centre.

The programme has brought learners to the local museum, a local history project and the local library.

The programme does not measure specific impact on the children's literacy levels. One impact measure is improved school attendance and this is reported positively by schools involved in the programme particularly among Roma and Irish Traveller families. Teachers also comment that following completion of the programme, children are getting their homework done and done better.

Success factors

Attendance is good and parents are now more involved in school, two parents are now volunteering in the classroom supporting children's reading. Parents' English has improved and some have progressed onto other learning opportunities within the adult education

centre e.g. cookery, sewing, stories in a box, computers. Others have joined formal English language classes.

The programme responds to needs identified by HSCL teacher who also promotes the programme to parents. The classes are seen by parents as immediately relevant to their lives and their children's education. The learning also supports integration and understanding and offers opportunities for making friends.

There is a good partnership with the school through the HCSL teacher and the school also provides a room and refreshments.

The tutors are well trained, experienced and adaptable.

The programme meets an identified need amongst the families and community. It is flexible and adapts to support new needs as they develop.

There is very good communication between parents, tutor, school principal and HSCL teacher in the school.

Challenges

- Attendance can be affected by choice of topic e.g. numeracy Storybags were not as popular as expected, Irish parents do not seem to be interested in bilingual Storybags.
- Attendance was low on some elements of the programme e.g. small numbers attended Dads and Kids evening classes.
- Timing of follow-on elements e.g. followed Numeracy Storybags too soon after bilingual Storybags.
- A fresh approach is required to recruit new groups of parents with different needs and skills levels for example the new unit Growing Together is planned with the Roma community who enjoy activities outside.
- A decrease in funding will affect ability to offer a wide range of units for different levels and areas of interest.

Transferability of programme

The model has been transferred to other parental involvement programmes in Ireland. The work and ideas have been recognised nationally as CFLP regularly train tutors in delivering family learning.

Their work and ideas are shared through a quarterly e-newsletter so other programmes can use what has worked successfully.

The model is being transferred to other countries. Tutors from Romania and Norway who attended CFLP Family Learning training liked the approach to working with immigrants. An integration project in Tosberg, Norway has established a partnership with the local library to deliver a programme called “Digitally told”. They based the programme on the CFLP Family Stories in a Box outline which they learnt about whilst attending a CFLP Grundtvig tutor training. CFLP also delivered a workshop in Estonia to parents and crèche staff who wanted to develop a family learning approach. There has not yet been feedback/evaluation of the impact of the programmes transferred.

Conclusion and implications

The case study programme is part of a wider and innovative family learning offer which aims to improve the skills of parents so that they are better able to support their children’s learning and take an active role both at school and at home in their learning. Progression for the adults as learners is seen as a vital component in raising children’s literacy achievement.

Emphasis is put on oral communication and an interest in learning as being vital to literacy development.

The informality and flexibility are seen as great strengths of the programme matched by professionally qualified teaching staff and well-prepared materials often drawing on real life situations.

As it is organised the programme is clearly successful in reaching parents not already engaged in learning and where the children need extra support. The partnerships with schools and HCSL workers allows for the most vulnerable families to be reached. The broad view of parental involvement in a variety of learning opportunities where literacy is embedded takes a holistic view of literacy development. Weight is given to the parents as learners and the part this plays in supporting children’s literacy acquisition.

Supporting information



The Clare Family Learning Project
Adult Education Centre, Clonroad, Ennis, Co. Clare



Programme Types

Supporting parents of young children

Family Learning

Family Learning Pack is used for this course.

Once a week, 2 hours for 8 – 14 weeks.

Storybags

By developing props and games for a storybook, the wide learning from books is highlighted.

Once a week, 2 hours for 8 – 10 weeks.

Family Learning through Play, Rhymes and Songs

Building communication skills through play. Stress is put on the importance of play, rhymes and songs in children's learning environment.

Once a week, 1 hour for 4 weeks.

Having Fun Getting Active

Clare Family Learning together with Health Promotion Unit, Clare Sports Partnership, Co. Clare Childcare Committee developed a pilot project to encourage children to be more active.

Supporting parents of primary school children

Supporting School Learning at Home

How home and community activities support children's learning in school.

Family Learning and English for Speakers of Other Languages

Developed in response to requests from principals in primary to support parents in a new educational system. Classes provide the language of interacting with school staff, homework etc.

Themed Family Learning

Ideas for extending children's literacy and numeracy skills using themes:

Cookery

Art

Crafts

Stained glass

Gardening

Music and drama

Family Learning and Computers

Building communication skills through Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

Write a story for your child using computers.

Supporting Your Child's Maths

A practical hands on approach that takes the myth out of maths at primary level.

Fun things to do with your child

Parents and children cook and make crafts together using literacy and numeracy skills in a natural way.

Family Learning and Irish

Short courses for parents of primary school children. Parents have requested help to learn Irish alongside their children to support homework. Practical and fun activities in Irish.

Dads and Lads

Fun activity programmes aimed at reaching more Dads/Male Carers and their sons.

- Sport: Soccer, Bowling, Sports Quiz, Scrapbook about sport.
- Fun Science Experiments: Make a volcano erupt, Make raisins dance. Light a bulb using a lemon, magnet fun etc.
- Games, Gadgets and Machines: 6 week programme using magnets, marbles, make land yachts etc.
- Fun 4 Health: 5 week programme, keeping healthy, healthy hearts, balancing the body, making faces, senses games.

Weekend Action for Dads and Kids:

Fun Science/ Games Gadgets and Machines/ Art and Craft/ Drama and rhythm/ Cookery/
Make a movie

FETAC Accredited Family Learning Courses

Learning Skills LF 2492

Focuses on the growing child, the personal, social, creative and reflective aspects. The way people learn and how parents can support school learning at home.

Home Study Skills LF 2493

The different areas of literacy and maths are highlighted, broadening the understanding of activities that support the learning in these subjects.

Supporting parents of second level students

Settling into Second Level School

Information and ideas to help support your child's move to second level.

Maths and Computers for Parents of Incoming Second Level Students

How to support their children with maths at second level. Using the computer to support project work in second level.

Courses for parents

Family Health

Focusing on the language skills and terms needed when meeting health care professionals. Classes are based on the health needs of both children and parents.

Money Wise Ideas

Helping families budget, ideas for shopping wisely, ideas for free, fun family days out, learning about your entitlements.

Family Stories in a Box

Using family stories, objects, photographs and treasured items to make an individual mini museum using a decorated shoe box.

Family Learning and Active Citizenship

This programme helps learners to identify local issues and understand how to become more active citizens. The course gives learners information on how the community works and helps to make sense of the political system.

Games, gadgets and technology

Goals for these sessions:

Talking about technology with children in a natural way

Utilising scrap materials for experiments at home

Exploring the technological application of scientific principles in day to day life in a fun way

Exploring the historical development of technology

Topic	Content
1.Introduction to technology	Introducing the idea of technology and its application. Looking at historical developments. Thinking about types of energy. Developing a simple catapult.
2.Magnetism and gravity	Exploring the principles of magnetism and gravity. Talking about ideas and designs for games. Creating a game.
3.Marbles and magnets	Demonstrating the effect of stored (potential) energy. Designing a game using principles of stored energy.
Structures and stability	Examining various structures for stability and centre of gravity. Building and testing structures.
Land yachts, wind power	Demonstrating the power of moving air. Designing a yacht that uses wind power. Creating a means of transport.
Robots	Discussion about how robots are used in everyday life. Designing and creating a robot using recycled materials.
Fabricated materials and structures	Introducing basket making as an old technologyLearning about weaving and its usesDemonstrating techniques.Practising using various techniques with different materials. Creating woven item.
Website: www.teachingideas.co.uk http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/kids/resources/teachers/pdfs/Activitybook_web.pdf	

Topic 4: Structures and stability

Materials: Newspapers, sellotape, card squares, set of kitchen weights.

Task	Suggested activities
Examining various structures for stability and centre of gravity	Talk about structures in the environment. Roll tubes from A3 newspaper sheets and secure with tape. Show example of simple bridge made from tubes. Test for strength with weights and stability by simulating wind and earthquake effects. Discuss how to make stronger.
Designing and building tower/bridge from card or newspaper and testing for strength and stability	Parents and children design and make their own newspaper or card tower or bridge. Test for strength and stability. Record number of weights used.
Exploring stability and centre of gravity	Children stand with legs together then legs apart and are pushed to discover which is more stable. Brainstorm for reasons why e.g. legs make a triangular shape which is more stable. Test for centre of gravity by standing against a wall, lean forward to pick up object. Brainstorm reasons for falling forward.
Designing and creating an animal/creature.	Parents and children together design and create an animal/creature using the newspaper tubes for body, arms, head etc. Discover how to make the creature support itself. Discuss function of tail for balance
Literacy links Exploring and discussing ideas Following instructions to make a structure Reporting findings about balance	Numeracy links Estimating weights Recording data from the tests Drawing shapes for the designs

Storybags

Goals for these sessions:

Improve parental confidence and interest in books by making a storybag

Identify what makes a good book and choose books for their children

Practice using voice control to introduce drama and emotion into storytelling

Learn about opportunities to extend talk and vocabulary through sharing stories

Make a storybag with props and game for a chosen storybook

Topic	Content
Sharing books	The importance of sharing books with very young children. Recognising early print

	concepts. Developing narrative skills.
Choosing the book	Choosing a picture storybook for making a storybag. Identifying criteria for selection e.g. age group and interest of children. Reading the selected books and using who, what, when, where, why to identify main characters, props that would help tell the story. Brainstorming where to gather additional materials for storybags.
Different types of stories	Exploring characteristics of factual and fictional books for children, e.g. story settings, types of characters. Choosing a factual book to complement the picture storybook.
Story plot	Examining storylines. Identifying the plot of the story and the narrative techniques used to tell the story. Exploring how narrative skills are required in primary school e.g. show and tell, relating events, composition, reports.
Making a game	Identifying what children learn from playing games. Examining samples of games to match stories and identifying the learning in each. Gathering materials for making games. Making an age appropriate game.
Making the storybag	Looking at sample Storybags. Sketching plan for book title and illustrations. Working on making the bag using appropriate paints, markers etc.
Completing the storybag	Completing the Storybag by writing title, checking contents, props, games etc. Demonstration of sacks to group
Websites:	http://www.storysack.com/sacks/show/66 http://www.uk.sagepub.com/upm-data/9851_039749.pdf

Topic 1: Sharing books

Materials:

various samples of homemade storybags
 samples of homemade props
 flipchart paper
 wide selection of picture and factual books

Task	Suggested activities
Introduction to storybags	Display a sample storybag. Read and discuss the storybook. Use the props and play the game. Read the factual book. Discuss how the factual book and storybook are related.
Why do children enjoy books?	Discuss what makes a good book. Record ideas on flipchart, e.g. colours, artwork, predictable writing, rhymes, appealing character. Discuss bonding opportunities in parent-child interaction around books
Reading and talking about books	Explore early print concepts essential for reading preparation. Use a book to demonstrate what children learn about books just by being read to e.g. that print goes left to right, how to hold book, turn pages, top and bottom of page etc. Invite parents to suggest reasons why children often want a 'favourite story' repeated many times. Discuss strategies to extend sharing books e.g. prediction, giving an opinion, summarising, recalling events, explaining cause and effect, sequencing, relate to real life.
Choosing a book	From a selection of books ask parents to choose a few that would appeal to their children's interests. Ask them to read over the stories and look for examples of storytelling techniques used in children's stories e. g. use of stock characters/phrases, use of repeated actions/phrases, exaggeration, contrast, time sequence, problem solving etc. How do these techniques help make the story memorable?.
Talking about and making up stories	Discuss narrative skills and children's language development. Encourage parents to make up stories from memory or retell favourite children's stories using concepts that aid narrative memory.
Literacy content: reading familiar words, recognising keywords, reading short texts,	Numeracy content: using directional language, reading numbers, ordering and sequencing story details, relating past, present and future, using maths concepts in a

understanding print concepts, scanning/skimming texts, using narrative skills, expressing fact, feeling, opinion, recalling events/retelling stories, following instructions.	board game (e.g. turn-taking, throwing dice)
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Definition of a Story Sack (Bag)

Participants of the course create their own 'Story Sack' made up of props related to a specific book. This is developed week by week as a different part of a book is focused on and the appropriate items are made and collected together in the bag. The process gives participants an opportunity to think about what elements there are to a book, the value of sharing books with children as well as being fun and creative.

Clare Family Learning Project-Story Bag Course

Participants of the course create their own 'Story Bag' made up of props related to a specific book. This is developed week by week as a different part of a book is focused on and the appropriate items are made and collected together in the bag. The process gives participants an opportunity to think about what elements there are to a book, the value of sharing books with children as well as being fun and creative.

Aims

To encourage parents to:

- Improve their confidence and stimulate an interest in books and stories
- Identify what is a good book is
- Choose suitable books for their children
- Be aware of use of voice and tone when sharing /reading stories
- Realise that there are opportunities to extend talk and vocabulary when sharing books
- Realise that books have component parts
- Understand there are different sorts of books
- Create games that compliment the stories

Programme

Learning outcomes for each session

Participants:-

Session 1

Realise the importance of sharing books with children from an early age.

Relate this to children learning to read later

Session 2

Make a calculated choice of book to have for their children

Decide on items to include in their story bags

Decide what is going to be made and what is going to be found

Think what sort non fiction book might be appropriate

Session 3

Acknowledge the importance of settings of stories.

Realise there are different genres of books and that different children like different genres

Can identify a theme from the story and link it to a non fiction book

Session 4

Realise the importance of settings to the story plot.

Calculate the advantages / disadvantages of taping stories for children

Session 5

Identify the learning that children gain from playing games

See that different types of games have different learning objectives

Identify that different sorts of materials are needed for different games

Realise that some types of games are more suitable than others for different age children

Session 6

See how a bag can be made

Think about how the title can be put on the bag and what would be appropriate illustrations

Think about other items that are important to be included in the bags

Session 7

Complete bags by writing title on the bags and checking contents, props, games, etc.

Demonstrate bag to the rest of the group

Evaluate the programme

Evaluation

2.1.3 Netherlands

Ensuring Early Acquisition of Literacy: Study on parental support

Case study

Name(s) and job title(s) of the interviewee(s):	Nynka Walstra director ASWA Saakje van der Veen Opstap co-ordinator MOS Gada Alsayed Opstap paraprofessional MOS
Country:	Netherlands
Organisation:	Algemene Stichting Welzijn Appingedam (ASWA) and Maarschappelijke Onderneming Smallerland (MOS)
Name of case study lead:	Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Date of interview and name of interviewer:	16 th June 2010 (face-to-face) Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Name of programme:	Opstap

Introduction

Opstap is a national programme offered throughout the Netherlands. National responsibility for the programme lies with The Netherlands Youth Institute (Nederlands Jeugdinstituut)

who, inter alia, promote evidence based interventions to support children's development and wellbeing. Funding for the Opstap programme is delegated to local government and is subject to local priorities and funding restrictions.

The case study highlights the experiences of two organisations who are involved with delivering Opstap in different districts of the Netherlands. The attitudes of their local Councils to Opstap and resulting funding priorities affect how the delivery of Opstap is organised. Maarschappelijke Onderneming Smallingerland (MOS) are currently funded to deliver Opstap while Algemene Stichting Welzijn Appingedam (ASWA) are developing a new model using trained volunteers rather than paid paraprofessionals in response to re-allocation of local government funding away from the Opstap programme in favour of increasing the frequency of nursery education for 2 and 3 year old children.

The case study covers the wider context of the Opstap programme, the relationship to major EU policy areas and priorities, the context, target groups, aims, delivery methods and outcomes of the Opstap in the case study organisations and draws out success factors and challenges linked to literacy acquisition.

Key messages from the case study

The programme is a national programme with set resources available for providers to buy. The programme is welcomed by primary schools as a tool in children's literacy achievement. It is very closely linked to the children's learning programme at school and the school is closely involved in recruitment.

The use of "paraprofessionals" who come from the same ethnic community as the families involved helps to ensure that the activities are understood and put in the context of home culture and school expectations of parental involvement. The paraprofessional acts as role model in home support for children's literacy and this is seen as very important.

The programme has value-added as it evidences changed behaviours not just in the family involved on the programme but also the paraprofessional and her family. The length of programme (2 years) supports the building of a relationship between the paraprofessional and the family which in turn supports changes in attitude to learning.

The programme is seen as part of a holistic approach to supporting families with multiple needs. There are possibilities for adapting the programme where funding is reduced although there is a danger that the success of the programme will be jeopardized by underfunding with insufficient support for the paraprofessionals and a breakdown in partnerships to support the families' wider needs.

Comments from Gada Alsayed paraprofessional Opstap programme with ASWA

I am working with a family from Afghanistan. The parents were born there and the children were born in Holland. There are two children in the family. The first child is 5 years old and the second 2 ½ years old. The mother is trained has been trained as a beauty therapist and the Father is still working on his Dutch language (NT2). They have lived in Holland since 1997.

The family joined the Opstap programme nearly three years ago through referral from the pre-school and child healthcare worker. The mother asked for support around playing with the children and developing concentration techniques and language development.

As a result of taking part in the programme, the mother is more patient with the children and better able to deal with them. She comments:

“My children’s skills have improved. Before we started the programme, they had poor language skills and bad concentration. I had little patience or energy for them. I often used to yell at them. I wanted to give them attention but I did not know how.

Now I’ve improved my skills and the interaction between myself and my children. I notice that my kids can play and concentrate better now and their language has improved.

My kids have great fun doing the Opstap activities with me, which I get from my paraprofessional. . I think that the programmer is very instructive for parents and children. The programme covers all of the developmental stages of children - movement, gesture and language. I would not know how to improve the programme.”

Policy context

Opstap is an evidence-based intervention programme linked to early child education supported by the Netherlands Youth Institute. It targets listening, speaking and reading skills. It is seen as having an important place in local educational policy which is placing a heavy emphasis on early year’s education following the lead from national government. It also responds to the integration policy for first generation immigrants and refugees.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture aims is to involve parents closely in the life of the school. To achieve this since 1999 schools have to produce a school prospectus to inform parents about the curriculum they offer and the results achieved. Central government also publishes a national guide to primary education providing general information about the education system and about the rights and obligations of parents. Schools have their own participation council and many also have a parents' council or parents' committee. The participation council includes representatives of both the parents and the staff and consults with the head on matters such as resource allocation, holiday dates, the use of textbooks and parental involvement in school activities.

Opstap is concerned with school-readiness and aims to help parents stimulate children's cognitive and social-emotional development. It stresses that encouragement and participation by parents are essential to children's learning and development, particularly during the first six years of the child's life.

It encourages learning through play and promotes an enjoyment in learning. It is also seen as developing social integration and community involvement. As the parents become involved in the children's learning they often also start to take a more active part in school life and participate more generally in society. The adults involved also improve their reading, writing and spoken Dutch skills where appropriate, the programme stimulates their further interest in lifelong learning through e.g. enrolment on a language, ICT or sports course including further activities with their children. Key competencies such as problem solving, learning to learn and communication skills, cultural awareness and time management are also developed through different activities in the programme.

The Netherlands Youth Institute highlights the programme's success in working with parents who speak little or no Dutch, many of whom have had little education themselves, and are unemployed. Van Tuijl and Siebes (2006) reported that the programme had succeeded in engaging families in Turkish and Moroccan communities, groups that services have tended not to reach. This success was attributed in part to the fact that the paraprofessionals share the language and culture of families receiving the service, and work directly with the families.

Overall Project Context

Opstap is a home-based parenting support programme based on the Israeli HIPPY model working with predominantly mothers and their children between 4 and 6 years old from low-skilled families, including immigrant families.

Opstap belongs in a series of programmes aimed at families with children of different ages - Instapje 1 to 2 years old, Opstapje 2 to 4 years old, Opstap 4 to 6 years old. In the first year of primary school, there are also supported reading schemes Overstap and Stap Door. The programme is based on home-based peer-support delivered by paraprofessionals known as 'neighbourhood mothers' who are trained and supervised regularly by recognised professional coordinators with backgrounds in professions such as pedagogy, social work, or teaching.

Case study context

MOS and ASWA are both community organisations which run a variety of activities at their centres including activities for older people and cultural minority groups, adult education e.g. sport, ICT, youth work, crèches, kindergartens, outside school activities for school aged children and volunteer programmes. The organisation of the Opstap programme lies with them. In the case of MOS, the programme is fully funded by local government. ASWA has received no funding for Opstap since 2009 due to re-allocation of funding priorities for early

year's education within local government. They are now developing delivery through trained volunteers as there is a demand for the programme with schools.

Target families

The target group are families with low levels of education who do not have the skills to stimulate their children to read, families from ethnic groups who do not have Dutch as their first language and families where the children are developing and learning more slowly than the average. Generally about 33% of families on the programme are Dutch and the remainder from cultural minority communities.

Traditionally the programme has targeted mothers. However an increase in the numbers of fathers wishing to participate has been noted.

Case study programme delivery

Recruitment

Families are recruited through schools, the youth health programme or pre-primary education teams who have contact with the families and other parents. Schools talk to parents about problems which their children are experiencing and tell them about Opstap. Families may also be visited at home and told more about the programme. These methods of recruitment are proving satisfactory.

Course content

The programme takes place over two years. It is built round activities based on about 30 books each year which correspond to the level of the child's learning in kindergarten and includes activities to do at home with the child. There are 7 activities on each book, one for every day of the week. The activities are for the mother and child to do together and include reading and worksheets. Activities are highly structured to ensure that parents with low levels of literacy can follow instructions.

The families may also attend periodic sessions altogether at the school. While the mothers work with the paraprofessionals on different discussion topics such as parenting the children do play activities. This session is seen as an important part of the programme as it gives opportunities for peer support and the development of cross-cultural understanding. It is felt that schools know little of home life and culture. MOS reports that attendance at these sessions can be low and transport to the school is often a problem.

Mode of delivery

The paraprofessional visits the mother at home during the school day for a one-to-one lasting between one to two hours once a week or fortnight with a variety of early years activities based on the set books and to check how the joint activities went with the child. The paraprofessional also explains the rationale behind the activities e.g. why it is important to share books and how to do this. She also explains how school operates and helps the mother decide on questions she would like to ask the child's teacher about progress etc.

On the following visit the paraprofessional asks the mother for feedback on how the activities went with the child. The use of first language is encouraged e.g. sharing rhymes and songs and resources may be translated. The depth of discussion is helped by the paraprofessional and mother sharing the same language and home culture.

Once a month all the mothers and children involved meet together for a two hour session with the paraprofessionals involved and project co-ordinator. The children do activities while the mothers discuss issues about parenting and activities with the children. Apart from this session the paraprofessionals do not work with the mother and child together. The group session is an important part of the programme and gives opportunities for cultural exchange and peer support.

The mothers receive a certificate issued by the Youth Institute on completion of the course.

In 2009, 13 families in 7 schools took part in the programme with MOS with a 95% completion rate.

Pedagogical approaches

The programme stresses the importance of learning through play and learning as fun. It has explicit activities to encourage:

- Parent/carer reading to the children, talking about books with the children, sharing books with the children, visiting the library with the children, using home language, interacting between home and school;
- Parent/carers improving their own skills and knowledge e.g. how to support their children at school;
- Parent/carers to improving their literacy, spoken language or numeracy skills;
- More positive interactions between parents and children;

The programme shows strong delivery in the following areas:

- Explicit outcomes for adults and children;
- Builds on and includes home culture including using first language;
- Provides progression opportunities for adults including stimulating Dutch language learning and helping in school;

- Builds confidence and self-esteem in parents/carers and children including supporting the parents to promote learning in a playful way and to understand the importance of praise;
- Builds in enrichment activities e.g. visits to the library;
- Includes effective parenting and the promotion of “at home good parenting skills” through role modelling;
- Includes better interaction between parent/carer and child by developing and sharing fun activities;
- Increases parents/carer’s involvement with their children’s school by developing their confidence to do things at school.

Resources

The Opstap resources are set centrally by the Netherlands Youth Institute and purchased by providers. Each paraprofessional has a resource pack including the books, games, worksheets, weekly programme, pens and paper. There is a manual for the paraprofessionals and audio/visual materials.

Partnerships

The main partners are the schools involved. ASWA is working with the local School for Adults to deliver a training course for volunteers wishing to take on the paraprofessional role. Volunteers will be drawn from a variety of organisations including the Rotary and Humanitas.

Staffing

The main staff member is the paraprofessional who works with the mother on the programme and she is supported by the project co-ordinator. In the case of MOS, paraprofessionals are required to hold the “social pedagogewerkste” qualification (appropriate for a teaching assistant, crèche worker, activities with the elderly). Recruitment is through advertisement and applicants come from communities speaking the languages of the target families.

Due to funding restrictions ASWA is developing a volunteer scheme for paraprofessionals. It is not felt that teachers in school would have the time to deliver Opstap. It is also unlikely they would share the first language of the family or be aware of their cultural and religious customs.

Assessment

Schools take on the responsibility of assessing which families would benefit from the programme.

Children are selected if their school record shows that they are underachieving.

Programme evaluation and impact

Evaluation is done informally through discussion of tasks by the paraprofessionals and reports from the school on children's progress. Completion of home tasks and attendance at the group sessions is monitored. MOS are developing a more formal system of evaluation.

Opstap has been externally evaluated and shows significant benefits in terms of children's school performance. Compared to a comparison group, children whose parents were engaged in the Opstap programme were less likely to have to repeat a year in school and there was evidence that the benefits of participation were sustained over time. Van Tuijl and Siebes (2006)⁸

Funding

Funding is received from the local government budget for early years work and MOS covers the staff costs (paraprofessional and co-ordinator) for teaching and planning time. Adults who participate pay a fee of 12 euros per course.

Because of budget restrictions ASWA is unable to deliver Opstap using paid paraprofessionals and is developing a delivery model using trained volunteers.

Aims of the programme

The aim for the adults include:

- To increase parent/child interaction
- To give the tools and skills to support the development of the child

The aims for the children include:

- To stimulate literacy
- To stimulate interest in active learning
- To develop a stimulating environment at home

The aims reflect the need amongst families where the parents have a low level of education to develop the early literacy of their children between four and six years old and to empower the parents particularly the mothers.

The programme successfully supports children in acquiring the skills and knowledge needed in the first years of school. This is enhanced because the mothers receive positive support from the paraprofessionals who themselves understand the cultural and educational challenges for the families.

⁸ <http://www.youthpolicy.nl/youthpolicy/Publications/Effective%20home%20based%20early%20intervention%20programmes.pdf>

Outcomes of the programme

Schools report better performance from the children on the programme. The mothers gain confidence in their role for their children's education and are better able to support the children's literacy. They also improve their own skills and confidence which can lead to further training and work.

The children involved are encouraged to take a greater interest in reading and books as they experience sharing books with their parents as fun. They become interested in the story and the letter shapes and sounds and talk about the story with their parents and siblings.

Comments from Roelie Aldershof: Primary School teacher

The Opstap programme has run in my school very successfully for several years.

Most of the families on the programme are from the immigrant communities. Also in this province the families talk Frisian. So that means that Dutch is always the family's second language

Recruitment has to be done very carefully. You have to know something about the family and it is very important to visit them at home. Then you can see what family interactions are in place. . Are the parents playing with their children? Are they communicating with their children? Are they talking in their own language? Are they doing a lot of activities with their children? If the answer is "no" then you can talk about the Opstap programme with them.

I see the impact of the programme on children's and family behavior. The children and adults talk together more, share more activities together and the parents became more positive. The children are proud to receive a certificate for completing the course. It is noticeable that as a result of the programme, they talk more often and more fluently. They develop more skills for play and become more sociable.

A major success factor in the programme is the choice of the right person as paraprofessional. Every family has its own paraprofessional, usually speaking the same language as the family and with an understanding of their culture.

Success factors

MOS reported a high percentage of families (95%) completed the programme. It was felt that the weekly visits by the paraprofessional over a long period of time and the positive approach this engendered, contributed to the high completion rate. Over the two year period of the course, a relationship of trust and respect is built between paraprofessional and the family and this supports successful learning and social outcomes.

Well-trained and supported paraprofessionals are the key to success. At MOS the Opstap project co-ordinator has a meeting with the team of paraprofessionals every week and meets each of them on a one-to-one basis once a month. There are also occasional regional meetings on different topics for the paraprofessionals and they keep in contact between themselves by email.

Schools value the Opstap programme as a means of developing parental involvement in the children's early literacy acquisition and demand for the programme is steady. The paraprofessionals are trained to set clear boundaries in their relationship with the families with whom they work. This protects them from being drawn in to the multiple problems which many of the families face and allows them to concentrate on Opstap activities. The co-ordinator meets regularly with other professionals e.g. police, housing department, social services to discuss situations and joint solutions for the families' different needs.

The positive teaching approaches and variety of activities encourage parents to experience that they can change their attitude and improve their relationships with their children, leading to greater support with their learning. Learning at home is a safe environment and the parents are encouraged to be ambitious for their children and to realise what their children are capable of achieving at school.

Challenges

The programme has so far been targeting mothers. Fathers are now asking to attend and it is intended to extend the programme to them. This has implications for paraprofessional recruitment and training.

There are issues with attendance at the family joint session and different venues and times are being investigated.

There are issues about prioritization of funding away from Opstap as local government budgets are restricted.

Transferability of programme

Opstap has already been transferred to other EU countries including Germany.

Conclusion and implications

Opstap is part of a nationally recognized scheme aimed at working with the mothers in disadvantaged families to support children's literacy achievement in school. It works with set resources which mirror and build on literacy work undertaken by the children in school.

Work is undertaken with the mothers at home on a one-to-one basis by trained and generally paid paraprofessionals. It is funded from central government and administered at local government level where funding competes with other priorities resulting in different amounts being available for the delivery of Opstap.

The programme is valued by schools as improving children's literacy achievement and schools are anxious to offer it to their targeted families. It has wider implications for the whole family in terms of new skills, changed behaviours and social inclusion. Feedback shows that the mothers involved gain in confidence and skills, including the Dutch language where appropriate. Community cohesion and social inclusion are supported by closer understanding and contact with the school community, in many cases leading to volunteering and finally into paid employment.

Major success factors for the programme are reported as including the length and intensity of the course and the use of trained and paid paraprofessionals working at home with families with whom they share first language.

Opstap has to compete for funding with other early years education interventions as government funding becomes tighter. A reduction in funding could jeopardize the quality of the programme and lead to reduced impact across different priorities. The model of using volunteers rather than paid paraprofessionals may get round this but there may be issues with training and sustainability as volunteers move on.

2.1.4 Norway

Ensuring Early Acquisition of Literacy: Study on parental support

Case study

Name(s) and job title(s) of the interviewee(s):	Elin Warne, School principal
Country:	Norway
Organisation:	Åsen School, Lorenskog
Name of case study lead:	Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Date of interview and name of interviewer:	11 th October 2010 (telephone) Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Name of programme:	Reading Friends

Introduction

The Reading Friends programme involves parents and their nine year old children in Primary School (reader children) and children in Kindergarten. The reader children are supported through specific reading activities by their parents and school teachers to become "reading friends" to the younger children. Children with the same first language are paired or put

together in small groups where the older children read stories to the younger children in first language.

The case study covers the wider context of the Reading Friends programme and the relationship to major EU policy areas and priorities. It also looks at context; target groups, aims, delivery methods and outcomes for the children and adults involved and draws out success factors and challenges linked to literacy acquisition.

Key messages from the case study

The programme has developed from a partnership between four kindergartens and Åsen School with the vision of bringing together different aged children to encourage a love of reading and library use. The parental involvement in the programme fosters an interest and pride in their children's achievement as reading volunteers.

The use of first language values home culture and supports the development of spoken communication.

The way the programme is structured and delivered involves no additional budget to the standard funding allocations to schools, kindergartens and libraries for their main services.

The programme has the potential to be extended to different age ranges of children and has already been taken up by about 200 schools across Norway. The outcomes of the programme link to the school national curriculum aims for 6 to 18 year olds and those set by the National Centre for Language Minorities (NAFO) for work with immigrant families.

Policy context

The Act of Primary and Secondary Education places a duty on schools to collaborate with parents around plans for the school and the curriculum. It also includes a duty to include resources from home and to provide differentiated learning for parents. These elements are seen as important in raising children's achievement.

The Norwegian Government's strategic plan for equal education 2004–2009 includes a legal requirement of support for bilingual parents. There is currently a move towards promoting early intervention to support children's learning and development.

In Norway no family is viewed as "disadvantaged" but every family is looked on positively and accepted as a resource for learning.

Case study context

Lorenskog has one of the highest immigrant populations in Norway and twenty-nine different languages are spoken in Åsen School.

“Reading Friends” was developed in 2000 by Åsen School head teacher Erin Warne with activities in the Norwegian language.

In 2006, encouraged by developments to provide a more inclusive education for immigrant children and the need to value to a greater degree home language and culture, it was decided to use the families’ first language for the programme.

In Lorenskog, about 170 children from Åsen School and four kindergartens take part in the programme every year. No families have dropped out of the programme.

The programme was developed to support the transition between kindergarten and primary school and to boost reading levels of the reader children by giving them a real life reason for practising their reading skills. The programme also helped build their confidence and self-esteem and involved the parents in their children’s reading development.

Target families

The families are those who do not have Norwegian as their first language and pupils who have Norwegian as their first language.

Case study programme delivery

Recruitment

The parents of the reader children are invited to a meeting at school in the autumn at the beginning of the school year and letters from the head teacher are sent home. The reader children are told about the programme in class and sometimes the head teacher shows slides to the target parents and children of previous “Reading Friends” groups.

Course content

The programme takes place in four episodes over the school year totalling about 35 hours. At the centre of the programme are books selected by the children and teachers and borrowed from the library. In addition there are “training” activities for the reader children in class e.g. role-play to practise reading aloud and discussion on how to share books with younger children including appropriate questioning. There are also activities on a weekly plan, to do at home with their parents for two weeks before the reading episode with the kindergarten children. This involves reading every day with their parents and writing a record of their experiences. Children and teachers visit the library to make book selections for the programme.

Mode of delivery

At the first parents' meeting early in the autumn term the teacher tells parents about the programme. This is followed up by a letter from the head teacher. Meanwhile she visits the 9 year old children in class to show slides of previous "Reading Friends" programmes and to tell the children and teachers how the programme works. The local library is alerted to the first languages of the families involved in the project to ensure that there is a good selection of books in those languages and orders additional books from the central bilingual library as needed. Teachers work with the librarians on a selection of the books and the reader children then visit the library with their teachers. The library staff provide special library cards so that each project has its own card for borrowing books.

The kindergarten then issue invitations for the reader children to visit them to share and read the books to the younger children. Where a reader child is not yet a confident reader he or she can still share the book through the pictures. Each reader child will have 3 books to read.

Before visiting the kindergarten the reader children practise sharing the books in class with their teachers. This includes reading aloud, talking about the books and finding a comfortable place and way to read. The children role-play as reader and kindergarten children to simulate the real experience.

Letters are sent home to the families of the reader children with a weekly plan for the parents to practise reading the books with the reader children. This continues for two weeks and the children keep a record of their practice experiences. Where the parents do not have advanced literacy skills they are encouraged to help the children to share and tell the stories through the pictures.

Once they have finished their "training" the child readers visit the kindergarten to read the selected books to the children. This is followed by sharing some food and or staying a little extra time in the kindergarten and playing with the younger children.

The reading episodes in the kindergarten take place in September, November, February and April.

In May at the end of the programme there is a party for all the children involved. The reader children receive a diploma from the school. The kindergarten children receive a "good card for a helpful act" from their reader partner giving positive feedback on their participation in the programme. This system of feedback is used throughout all school activities. The children take their cards home to show their parents and this helps to build a feeling of pride in achievement.

The children in Kindergarten also receive a diploma which is given to them by their reading friends from school.

Pedagogical approaches

The programme focuses on supporting the development of reading skills. It has explicit activities to encourage:

- Parent/carer reading to the children, talking about books with the children, sharing books with the children, using home language and interacting between home and school;
- Parent/carers improving their own skills and knowledge e.g. how to support their children with reading;
- More positive interactions between parents and children;
- Visiting the library. The programme includes the making of a library in the kindergarten from which families are encouraged to borrow books.

The programme does not have explicit learning outcomes for adults but contributes to developing closer links with immigrant parents. It demonstrates strong delivery in the following areas:

- Builds on and includes home culture including using first language;
- Includes better interaction between parent/carer and child by developing and sharing fun activities;
- Builds confidence and self-esteem in parents/carers and children particularly through the use of home language;
- Builds in enrichment activities through visits to the library;
- Increases parents/carer's involvement with their children's school including making them feel more included in the learning process;
- Includes developing readiness for school by easing transition from kindergarten to school.

It also sets activities for families to do at home and reinforces school learning by giving opportunities to put in to practice the skills learnt at school in to real life situations.

There is no explicit further learning opportunities for the parents but the school are planning to set up adult learning opportunities in the near future.

Resources

The main resources are books borrowed from the local library. Teachers themselves are an important resource through their modelling of sharing books. The head teacher has a PowerPoint presentation including examples of previous “Reading Friends” programmes which is used in the recruitment process of the families and children to help them understand how the project works.

Partnerships

There is a strong partnership with the local library and with the parents and head teachers of the kindergartens involved.

Staffing

Library staff and teachers take part in the programme in their existing hours as part of their job. The programme requires no additional staffing.

Assessment

No assessment takes place. The reader children share the books in ways appropriate to their level of reading skills. The teachers are aware of which children do not have much support from their parents at home and may make a call to the parents to explain to them the support they need to give their child for the programme. The project emphasizes that every parent has the knowledge to listen to their own children and act in an interested way. Staff take the view that this the most important part of it, to make the children feel important and proud.

Programme evaluation and impact

The programme has not been externally evaluated. Internal evaluation is done informally through discussion with all the children involved reflecting on the stated aims of the programme. Completion of home tasks is monitored.

Elin Warne meets with the kindergarten head teachers involved in the programme twice a year to evaluate against the aims of the project. There are regular meetings between teachers, the library, the staff in kindergarten and Elin Warne to discuss how to make improvements to the programme.

Feedback about the programme from the parents involved is very positive. It engages the families in reading more with the children or sharing the book and telling the story if the parents’ literacy level is low. The reader children learn about the importance of reading and how to share a book with a younger child. This builds their confidence as readers and gives

opportunities for reading practice, including through activities at home. The younger children receive individual or very small group practice in enjoying and sharing a story which helps their early reading.

Funding

The programme is funded through standard funding allocations to schools, kindergartens and libraries for their main services.

Aims of the programme

The aims for the adults are:

- To increase collaboration between home and school
- To increase parents' confidence in their role as educators

The aims for the children are:

- To support children in their school work
- To ease transition between kindergarten and school for children from immigrant backgrounds
- To strengthen the multi-cultural perspective of school and kindergarten
- To strengthen an interest in reading
- To increase the value given to families' first language and understand its importance to children's language development

The aims reflect the requirements of the national curriculum for 6 to 18 year olds.

Outcomes of the programme

The programme engages the children in real life reading activities and supports the development of a love of reading in all the children involved including enhancing library use. The families also develop a pride in their home language and culture and the families become more engaged with school.

By using the home language the school learns more about the children involved and this supports their learning progress. For example, one reader child (aged 9) who was a slow reader in Norwegian was found to have a reading age in first language of about a 15 year old.

Success factors

The programme has no cost or staffing implications and is straight forward to implement. It fits in with the main school programme and gives the reader children a real reason to practice their reading skills.

The use of first language supports literacy development and draws the parents into closer collaboration with school.

Challenges

The programme has encountered no particular challenges.

Transferability of programme

From its set up in 2000 the programme has extended across Norway to about 200 schools. Its close links to the national curriculum support this transfer.

Conclusion and implications

The programme “Reading Friends” fits with the aims of the national curriculum for children aged 6 to 18. The promotion of home language and culture and the involvement of parents support government requirements for the inclusion of immigrant children and collaboration with parents.

It is an easy programme to set up and administer with no extra costs. Although not externally evaluated, those involved report favourable outcomes for the children in terms of developing a love of reading and using the library. It is clear that the use of first language is important in raising self esteem and developing links with parents. The head teacher Elin Warne who set up the programme sees it as a tool in children’s literacy development and she sets great store by the enjoyment experienced by the children involved.

The programme has already been taken up by about 200 schools in Norway and has the potential to become part of the general school offer to support bilingual families. It could also be re-started with mainstream families to support real life reading practice and the development of an interest in books and library use.

2.1.5 Romania

Ensuring Early Acquisition of Literacy: Study on parental support

Case study

Name(s) and job title(s) of the interviewee(s):	Lenuta Movileanu teacher
Country:	Romania
Organisation:	Scoala No. 8, Suceava
Name of case study lead:	Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Date of interview and name of interviewer:	8 th July 2010 (face to face) Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Name of programme:	Meserie de parinte sa invata (Parenting Profession Can Be Learnt PPCBL)

Introduction

Scoala No.8 is situated in Suceava in north-east Romania. It is a state-funded primary school and has about 400 students between the ages of 6 (clasa 1) and 11 when the students transfer to secondary school.

Between 2006 and 2010 the school took part in the Step-by-Step programme through which two teachers were funded to deliver a programme in addition to the general school programme. This included an additional four hours of learning a day outside school for the children involved and entailed a variety of enrichment activities such as karate. The parents were generally not actively involved in the programme activities. In fact the school felt that many parents saw the Step-by-Step programme as a way of becoming less involved with their children rather than more and having the children looked after outside the home.

The school has a head teacher and staff who value parental involvement as a valuable contribution to the children's literacy achievement. The school has an active parents' association.

The case study covers the wider context of the 'Parenting Profession Can Be Learnt' programme. It also covers the relationship to major EU policy areas and priorities, the context, target groups, aims, delivery methods and outcomes of the case study programme and draws out success factors and challenges linked to literacy acquisition.

Key messages from the case study

The school has built on staff commitment to involving parents in the children's learning to support an improvement in literacy. The connection between home and school learning is seen as important. The programme also covers how children learn to read and some

parenting skills to support positive behaviour and build relationships and includes project work done by the families at home.

Case study

CP attended Scoala nr. 8 for four years from 2006-2010. In class 1 her teacher noticed that she had attention deficit, was hyperactive and needed special attention from staff. At the end of class 1 she was the only child who could still not read fluently. Her teacher tried various methods to motivate her and encourage an interest in reading and writing. The teacher found that using a computer enabled her to set differentiated work for C. which she could get on with without disturbing the rest of the class. From drawing simple designs, C. went on to working with large and small letters and identifying different colours.

C's father took an interest in his daughter's learning and often came to school to see how she was progressing. He was considering moving her to a special needs school. However, through the PCBBL programme the teacher encouraged the father to buy a computer at home for C. to use. With the computer at home the teacher noticed a radical change in C's progress very quickly. C's father also started to buy C a lot of age appropriate books with many pictures and read to her more at home. By the end of class 2, C's reading level was the same as other children in her year group. C. became a very enthusiastic learner and in the morning would bring to class, and even read, the books her father had bought for her. Her literacy kept pace with other children in the class but she fell behind in maths. By class 5 her father agreed that she needed additional help in maths and C. now has teacher support for that subject.

Policy context

The Romanian school system requires parents to sign a contract agreeing to support their children's learning. However in practice this is not acted on and parents are not in general actively involved. Pedagogical approaches do not generally link to active learning outside school or include home practice and culture.

There are no immigrant families so far on the course but there are Romanian families who have been working outside Romania and have now returned due to the economic downturn across Europe. The children in these families no longer have Romanian as their first language and the programme supports their re-integration into the school system and re-acquisition of the Romanian language.

Overall Project Context

The case study does not form part of a larger project.

Case study context

Teachers in the school noticed that the parents of children who were taking part in the Step-by-Step programme showed very little interest in their children's learning and were not spending time interacting or playing with the children.

The school already employed a school counsellor so she took on the role of facilitating the course which blends positive parenting skills with practical ideas and activities to support the children's literacy and learning. It also develops a greater understanding of the importance of parental involvement and how children learn to read.

The children involved are drawn from class 1 (6/7 years old). This is the first year of formal school following on from nursery school (gradinita).

Target families

The programme is not targeted but the school is situated in a working class district and unemployment in the area is fairly high. It works with anyone who is caring for the child and includes mothers, fathers, grandparents (usually grandmothers) and aunts. Some parents attend together. Generally parents/carers have completed their own schooling and about 30% have continued to higher education. Complete illiteracy is rare.

Case study programme delivery

Recruitment

Parents/carers are recruited by telephone, personal contact by teachers, notices on classroom walls and through a weekly parents meeting in each class. These recruitment strategies are proving satisfactory.

Course content

The course is centred around instruction and activities to develop parental involvement in the children's learning and literacy. Parents learn about the school, the curriculum, the discipline of study, how children learn to read and write and how parents can support this at home. They also cover topics such as how to share books, how to build a positive relationship between parents and children and how to encourage library use. The importance of parental involvement in learning to read and write during the first year of school is emphasized because this has the most effect on later development.

Other activities include thematic studies on topics proposed by the children; which are undertaken with their parents at weekends and finding age appropriate books for the children.

Mode of delivery

The course takes place over the school year during school terms. Parents/carers attend a 2 hour adult only session every week outside the school day, generally between 17.00 and 19.00 so that working parents can attend. From this session activities are set for the parents to complete with the children outside school, usually at the weekend. This will involve some form of exploration generally using ICT and/or the library. On Mondays in class the children will report back on the family activities and the parents will discuss how the activities went as part of their adults only session. This encourages self-evaluation and reflective learning in the adults and children.

In the academic year 2009/2010 15 out of the 20 adults attending the course successfully completed. They do not receive a certificate however the school is looking into issuing an informal certificate.

It is expected that a higher number of parents/carers will enrol for the new course in September 2010 because of positive feedback from the families completing the course this year.

Pedagogical approaches

The programme stresses to the parents the importance of learning through play. Learning is interactive and fun. Pedagogical approaches include peer and experiential learning encouraged through discussion and exploration. Some parent/carers improve their literacy and confidence in spoken language as a result of learning about how the children develop literacy skills.

The programme has explicit activities to encourage:

- Parent/carer reading to the children, talking about books with the children, sharing books with the children, visiting the library with the children, interacting between home and school;
- Parent/carers improving their own skills and knowledge e.g. how to support their children at school;
- More positive interactions between parents and children.

The programme shows strong delivery in the following areas:

- Has explicit outcomes for adults and children;
- Builds on and includes home culture throughout of school activities;
- Builds confidence and self-esteem in parents/carers and children including supporting the parents to promote learning in a playful way and to understand the importance of praise;
- Builds in enrichment activities e.g. visits to the library;
- Includes effective parenting and the promotion of “at home good parenting skills” through role modelling;
- Includes better interaction between parent/carer and child by developing and sharing fun activities at home and school;
- Increases parents/carer’s involvement with their children’s school by developing their confidence to do things at school e.g. by taking a more active role in the school association.

The increased interest in learning and progress in literacy by the children, as evidenced by the staff, demonstrates the successful outcomes of the course.

Resources

Resources include PowerPoint presentations, questionnaires, handouts, videos. When a few resources are needed they are purchased with funds from school or the parents association. Early programme materials were made under guidance from a psychologist at CJRAE Suceava who undertook this work on a voluntary basis.

Partnerships

The main partners are the school and the parents, including the parents’ association.

Staffing

The programme is taught by a trained school counsellor already on the school staff and supported by the head teacher and a classroom teacher. Although the classroom teacher most involved in the project was a member of the Area Schools Inspectorate for 3 years and another teacher has recently joined the Schools Inspectorate team, there is no interest from the Inspectorate in the project.

The head teacher participates in some activities and tells the parents about the progress being made by the children.

Assessment

As the children start class 1 their parents complete questionnaires giving details of studies completed, their material situation, family details and the health of the children. In this way staff are aware of levels of skills and knowledge of parents as they start the PPCBL programme.

Programme evaluation and impact

The programme has not been part of an external evaluation. The impact is recorded informally by teaching staff through observation of improved active participation in learning and literacy skills.

Children's progress is assessed as part of the main educational process and recorded individually.

Funding

There is no funding for planning or delivering the course and staff work on it in their free time or as part of their school work, the work takes place during the school day. It is offered free to the parents/carers. The parents' association provides coffee and biscuits.

Aims of the programme

The aim for the adults is:

- To learn how to support their children's reading and writing

The aim for the children is:

- To improve their reading and writing
- To develop an interest in learning

These aims respond to the identified need to increase the involvement of the parents in the children's learning to improve literacy and develop a greater interest in learning.

Outcomes of the programme

The parents develop ideas for how to act more positively with their children and support their reading and writing. They also build their own confidence in discussion skills and expressing ideas in particular and improve their relationship with school staff.

Comments from the head teacher: Carmen Cristina Sima

The programme impacts on parents and carers, children, the family and the community as follows:

1. For the parents and carers:

More parents have a greater awareness of their role in their children's lives and their future careers.

2. For the children

The programme brings in a greater variety of teaching and learning methods through which children are motivated to learn reading and writing.

3. For the family as a whole

The programme succeeds in developing better communication between parent and child. Activities are devised so that the child cannot complete the task without the help of the parent.

4. For the community

More parents are involved, some are invited to take part in the activities. The discussions on the programme have resulted in better relationships between school and the community.

The key success factors for the programme have been human resources, especially work by the staff member who initiated and promoted the programme and support from the parents' association.

We would like to continue this programme because we have seen a growing number of children succeeding with reading and writing with all the repercussion which flow from that including, adjusting better to the school programme, achieving better in all disciplines, taking part in extra-curricular activities and better collaboration between school and family.

Success factors

The whole school backs the programme. Staff recognise the importance of parental involvement as vital to children's literacy improvement. They also value the place of enjoyment in learning and exploration in developing the children's interest in learning which leads to greater achievement.

Although the sessions are led by a school counsellor keen interest is taken by the head teacher and a classroom teacher, who frequently attend sessions.

Numbers of parents enrolling for the course is likely to rise dramatically when the course starts again in autumn 2010 because of positive feedback from parents who attended in 2009/10.

Challenges

The programme has no government funding and the staff involved are largely undertaking the work in their free time. This raises huge questions on sustainability and transferability (see below).

The programme does not address the skills levels of the parents and does not include any concept of progression for them into more formal learning as opportunities for this do not exist locally.

Transferability of programme

The programme has been developed locally and so far is limited to one school. However the model could transfer to other schools but this will be very unlikely unless funded, at least to some extent, by government.

Conclusions and implications

The school has developed a strong commitment to involving parents closely in a variety of ways despite no lead or support from the Schools Inspectorate or local government. The programme shows positive outcomes for adults and children including the development of parenting skills as these are seen as an essential component of active and successful parental involvement.

Involvement of parents is supported by an active Parents Association which helps to develop an ethos of partnership between school and families to reach the best outcomes for families.

The programme is successful in bringing in parents and is showing strong recruitment trends for the coming academic year. It takes place after school at a time when the most parents can be involved and although the sessions, are for the parents/carers only, it includes activities to do at home as a family.

However, sustainability is seriously jeopardized by no allocation of government funding and a reliance on the goodwill and enthusiasm of school staff who are acting in isolation.

The lack of other learning opportunities locally does limit the development of a more formal learning environment at home. To give the most disadvantaged families, adults and children, a real chance of sustained changes in attitude to learning, building on the success of intervention programmes, there needs to be other activities to stimulate further learning for both age groups e.g. adult classes, additional out of school activities.

2.1.6 Turkey

Ensuring Early Acquisition of Literacy: Study on parental support

Case study

Name(s) and job title(s) of the interviewee(s):	Deniz Şenoçak Deputy General Manager Nur Sucuka Çorapçı Early Childhood Education Development Manager Yeşim Çaylaklı Education Specialist Serkan Kahyaoğlu Organisational Development Department Projects Manager Sevda Bekman Professor Faculty of Education Boğaziçi University, Istanbul
Country:	Turkey
Organisation:	The Mother Child Education Foundation – AÇEV
Name of case study lead:	Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Date of interview and name of interviewer:	22 nd – 24 th November 2010 (face to face) Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Name of programme:	Mother Child Education Programme (MOCEP)

Introduction

The Mother Child Education Programme (MOCEP) was developed in 1982 and offers a free alternative to already over-subscribed Government funded fee paying pre-school education for children aged 5 and 6.

It targets mothers in families from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and as a home based programme places the children's home environment at the centre of learning. The programme runs for 72 hours with group sessions for the mothers followed by set activities to do one-to-one with the child at home. It focuses on the mother as first educator and aims to empower the mother to create a stimulating and enriching home environment for the children to help with developing their readiness for school.

The programme supports pre-literacy and literacy development through the promotion of a more positive relationship between mother and child and encouragement of oral communication and shared activities including inter alia, reading and comprehension, vocabulary development and the development of skills for analysis and problem solving. The home activities include pre-literacy exercises to develop fine motor skills and the sharing of books and stories.

Key messages from the case study

Children's literacy acquisition involves taking a holistic approach focusing on the children's cognitive, social and emotional development working to change behaviours within the home environment to support children's literacy and learning. This includes an improvement in family relationships and communication within the family and the building of self esteem and confidence in adults and children to underpin achievement.

The mother is seen as a key person in the child's general wellbeing and learning. The delivery style of the programme provides support from the teacher and peer learners to boost the mothers' confidence and skills to support the children. The published resources give structure to delivery. Organised delivery through adult learning centres means that qualified adult teachers are available to teach the programme. The two week trainer training delivered by ACEV upskills the teachers and ensures quality.

"I am much more confident, I feel I can do anything now. The MOCEP programme gave me lots of advice and support, including the importance of routines and learning every day. My daughter T. didn't behave well when she started school but I used some of the techniques which I learnt on the course about managing behaviour and now she is a very good student, getting top grades at school.

I think MOCEP helped T. with her literacy. The activities we did together at home helped hand/eye coordination and her logical thinking has developed and she can analyse better. I see the difference with my other daughter (aged 10) who didn't do the programme. She's always needing help. And I see the difference with other children in T's class who didn't do the programme, crying about the homework.

I left school after Primary and I am just completing home based open Secondary School. I enrolled for this partly because I wanted to be a model for my two daughters. Now I want to enrol for the open lycee and eventually go to college to become a fashion designer."

The security of funding provided by the Government Non-Formal Education General Directorate allows the programme to flourish and grow.

Mother A. who completed MOCEP in 2009 home visit 24th November 2010

The evaluation and research of the programme over more than two decades provides a firm basis for measuring short and long term impact.

Policy context

The Government has set a target of 100 % of 5/6 year olds attending pre-school by 2013. At present only 51% of this target age range attend pre-school and there is a big over-subscription for these places. Pre-school is not offered as free provision by the Government.

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are most likely to be those not attending pre-school because their parents often cannot afford the fees or do not have the expectation or understanding of the importance of early learning and do not give priority to paying for pre-school provision from the family budget. Parenting styles may not be providing the optimum emotional, social and intellectual environment for learning. Mothers are nonetheless often very keen to help their children learn but want support with this. They do not see themselves as educators or that learning takes place at home.

The programme improves adult participation in lifelong learning and contributes to upgrading the skills of the population and an improvement in achievement levels of learners with migrant backgrounds and those from disadvantaged groups. It particularly promotes the key competencies of learning to learn, communication skills and problem solving. Where the programme works with Turkish immigrant families cultural awareness is also a focus.

Overall Project Context - The Mother Child Education Foundation (AÇEV)

ACEV is an NGO which has been developing and implementing programmes since 1993 in its two main areas of expertise: early childhood and adult education. ACEV aims to empower and improve the quality of life of beneficiaries through education and training.

To boost the number of children attending pre-school education, particularly from within disadvantaged families. ACEV has developed three main programmes for working with children and their parents to develop “readiness for school” and to encourage changed behaviours at home in terms of positive relationship building, creating a home learning environment and support for school learning. All the programmes aim to promote access, family involvement and quality in early childhood education and provide parent training in order to support parents in their role as their child’s first educators.

The three main programmes are the Mother and Child Support programme, the Mother Support programme and the Father Support programme.

ACEV also develops and provides women’s empowerment and literacy programmes for women, prepares educational television programmes to reach broader audiences and engages in awareness-raising and advocacy activities to inform the public and change policies and practices. In this way, the organisation is able to reach millions of families every year. It also partners extensively with the Ministry of Education-primarily utilizing their existing premises and staff.

Case study context - Mother Child Education Programme (MOCEP)

MOCEP is a multi-purpose programme that targets not only children's development but the mother as well bringing together adult and preschool education.

MOCEP was developed in 1982 as part of a 4 year longitudinal research project "Turkish Early Enrichment Project" undertaken by Bogazici University Istanbul. In 1992 the programme was revised and small scale co-operation with the Non-Formal Education General Directorate (MoNE) was started. The following year AÇEV was established and the implementation of the MOCEP programme was increased. In 2010 the programme was adopted as the National Parent Education Programme under MoNE. AÇEV remains responsible for trainer training, programme and resource revision and research.

The programme has an annual target of 25,000 mothers and children. So far 6657 courses have been delivered to 292,076 mothers and children in 78 provinces in Turkey. The completion rate is 80%. The programme has also been transferred to Turkish emigrant families and mainstream families in other countries (see details under transferability).

The programme is implemented by the Ministry of National Education's General Directorate for Apprenticeship and Non-Formal Education with whom AÇEV works in close consultation.

Target families

The programme works with socio-economically disadvantaged mothers and their children between 5 and 6 years of age who do not have access to pre-school education services and who are "at risk" because of their environmental conditions. The majority of the mothers involved left school after completing the primary level.

Case study programme delivery

MOCEP is a home-based education programme which involves the mothers in weekly group sessions at an adult education centre for input and discussion of the week's topics followed by activities at home to do with their child aged 5-6 and aimed at developing his/her cognitive and/or social skills.

Recruitment

Families are recruited through word of mouth between mothers, notices in primary schools and teacher contact where the mother already has an older child in school and referrals from Adult Education Centres where a mother is enrolled on another course or seeking counselling.

The job specification of the teacher at the Adult Education Centre includes fieldwork (outreach) so he/she may visit families but this is less needed now as most Centres have waiting lists for the programme.

Course content

The programme is made up of three sections:

1. The Mother Support Programme

This section aims to inform mothers about child rearing issues and bring about attitudinal and behavioural changes within the family.

Topics include children's developmental areas and their characteristics, discipline in child rearing, communication with children, nutrition, sexual education, study habits, and school-family cooperation.

2. Women's Reproductive Health and Family Planning

3. The Cognitive Education Programme (CEP)

This section aims to support pre-school children's cognitive development and boost school readiness. It consists of 25 booklets of 20 to 25 pages in length that have exercises to support cognitive and early literacy development and eight picture storybooks to be read and used with the booklets.

While the activities carried out with the CEP support children's cognitive development in different ways and prepare them for school, they also place the mothers in the role of an "educator" and support their efforts to take a more active role in their children's development. Moreover, children and mothers improve their relationship as a result of working and sharing together on a daily basis.

Mode of delivery

The group sessions led by a qualified and MOCEP trained adult teacher take place during weekdays in an Adult Education Centre for three hours a week over 25 weeks – 72 hours in total. There are usually between 20 and 25 mothers in the group. In addition to the group session the mother works with her child at home for about 30 minutes a day on activities set in the group session. The teacher visits each family at home two or three times during the course to observe the mother/child session and provide one to one support as needed. Up to five mothers of the mothers in each group become aides and lead the part in each session where they look at the current week's home activities.

The group session is broken down into about two hours of discussion based round topics in the Mother Support programme followed by about fifteen minutes on reproductive health and family planning. The session concludes with the cognitive training programme led by the aides.

Teaching methodology follows a mediated learning approach and includes teacher led group discussions, case studies, sharing experiences and role play.

Pedagogical approaches

The programme takes a holistic approach to developing the best possible opportunities for children to learn and achieve recognizing the home and family relationships as crucial to this.

It has explicit activities to encourage:

- mothers reading, talking about books and sharing books with the children and encouraging interaction between home and school
- mothers improving their own skills and knowledge e.g. how to support their children with reading, better parenting
- more positive interactions between mothers and children
- a change in behaviour around attitudes to learning and aspirations for the mother and children

It shows strong delivery in the following areas

- has explicit outcomes for adults and children
- builds on existing home practices to bring about change
- includes better interaction between mother and child by sharing activities at home
- builds confidence and self-esteem in mothers and children
- provides advice and guidance to mothers for other learning and training opportunities
- sets activities to do at home
- includes effective parenting and promotes “at home good parenting skills” through the Mother Support part of the programme in particular
- increases mothers’ involvement with their children’s school including making them feel more included in the learning process
- includes developing readiness for school by easing transition to school

Resources

The programme follows a published teacher’s manual. This includes background and activities for each group session, case studies for group discussion and handouts of the points covered in the sessions. There are set materials for the home activities each week and eight children’s story books for activities and reading at home.

Partnerships

AÇEV has worked closely on the programme with MoNE the Non-Formal Education General Directorate since 1991 and the Social Services and Child Protection Agency since 1994.

There is also close contact with the Adult Education Centres and their staff where the programme is delivered.

Staffing

The group sessions are led by a qualified adult education teacher, employed by an Adult Education Centre, who has completed the two week trainer course provided by AÇEV. The teacher also supervises the recruitment and fieldwork if it is necessary and makes the home visits. She holds a first qualification in any subject e.g. crafts. The teachers are recruited through recruitment seminars run by AÇEV and sanctioned by MoNE.

There is also peer support in the sessions where mothers are supported by co-learners as mother aides, usually four or five to a group who go through with the mothers in small groups the resources to be used at home with the children for the week in question to ensure that they understand them and have the skills to complete them with the child. The mother aides stay on at the end of each session for about 30 minutes to go through the resources for the following week with the teacher.

The mothers act as teachers with their children when they do the home activities.

Assessment

No formal assessment of mothers or children takes place. However the group offers peer support with reading tasks if necessary and the mother aides support the mothers in preparing for the home work.

Programme evaluation and impact

The programme has been regularly researched and evaluated since the 1980s to assess both the short-term and the long-term effects of the programme. These studies showed that:

- the programme has positive effects not only for children but their mothers as well
- the children of participating mothers achieved higher scores in intelligence and general aptitude tests, they were more successful academically, continued their schooling for a longer period of time, developed a more positive self-concept and in their adult lives worked at higher-status jobs and obtained higher salaries
- the participating mothers communicated better with their children and husbands, experienced increased self-confidence regarding their parenting skills and enriched their children's living environment based on what they learned.

A 1998 evaluation (Bekman (1998) A Fair Chance: An Evaluation of the Mother-Child Education Programme) in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education looked at children's progress at the end of the programme and a year later when the children involved had completed their first year of formal schooling. In comparison to the control group, the children from the programme showed a difference in cognitive development especially in literacy including reading and numeracy skills and attained higher grades in school.

The evaluation also found a difference in child rearing attitudes of the mothers who had stopped using authoritative attitudes and behaviours and replaced these with more democratic methods.

Funding

100% of funding is now provided by the Government and Social Protection Agency. In this case AÇEV do not hold data on programme cost per learner. However teaching costs come within the teacher contract at AECs involved and there is the cost of printing and distributing the programme materials. Courses do not generally offer crèche facilities and this does prevent some mothers with young children attending.

Aims of the programme

The programme aims to create a literacy friendly environment in the home and to provide the necessary tools for fostering the cognitive and socio-emotional development of the children involved.

For the mothers it aims to support them in their parenting and educating roles by learning to support the holistic development of their children as well as developing the skills and attitudes which impact on their own and their child's well being.

For the children it aims to develop a readiness for school and support their cognitive and social development.

The aims were developed in response to the lack of universal take up of early years education particularly amongst the target families.

Feedback from the families involved and evaluation and research over a long period evidences the success of the programme in meeting these aims which have not been revised over the years.

Outcomes of the programme

Research on the programme has shown sustained gains for the children in cognitive development, literacy skills and learning generally. The mothers showed improvement in positive parenting and moving on to higher education.

Talking to mothers at the end of a group session, they reported changes in their parenting style as a result of the programme. They were now less aggressive and less nervous with their children. They kept a better control on their body language and felt more relaxed and confident. They felt that they now understood their children better and had better communication with them. Life had changed for the better at home with better modelling, a better sharing of responsibilities and more quality time spent together.

They felt that the programme helped their children literacy through the home activities and had noticed that the children concentrated better and were more communicative. They seemed more confident and responsible and played more games linked to real life situations.

One mother commented:

*"I used to worry about my daughter starting school, but now I know she will be all right."
(Focus Group MOCEP 23rd November 2010)*

Success factors

The programme is based on research findings over a period of time. It takes a holistic view of educational achievement, including literacy, seeing achievement as closely linked to positive family relationships and constructive communication at home. It values parents as educators and raises the self-esteem and confidence of mothers and children who take part.

The course is structured to encourage good group dynamics and support amongst the mothers at the group sessions. The home visits give the chance for the trainer to experience the families' home conditions and observe the mother/child interactions.

The introduction of the course story books to the families brings books into homes where there are unlikely to be any reading materials.

The families involved see the impact of the programme very quickly on their lives in terms of changed behaviours around learning and family relationships leading to early achievement for the children when they start school.

Challenges

The programme has encountered no particular challenges. The lack of a strong lending library service makes it difficult for the families to access more books.

Transferability of programme

The programme has transferred to Belgium, France, Switzerland and Germany and in the Middle East Jordan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Cyprus, working mainly with emigrant Turkish families but later with native Arabic speaking families. The programme materials and trainer handbook have been translated into Arabic. The course content's has been changed slightly on some programmes to take account to local needs and culture.

To ensure quality AÇEV deliver training to the adult teachers. With emigrant families in particular the programme is seen as supporting integration including the adaptation of families to the new culture's influence on the children's behaviour.

Between 1998 and 2009 over 2000 mothers took part in MOCEP outside Turkey (Mothers Reporting: The Mother-Child Education Programme in Five Countries (2010) Bekman and Kocak).

Conclusion and implications

Based on 23 years of research and experience MOCEP shows itself to provide a proven low cost alternative to centre based early education programmes. Longitudinal studies show sustained improvement in children's literacy skills and school success backed by positive changes in child rearing and mother's interest in schooling. Mothers too are shown to be more likely to enrol in higher education following completion of the course.

The programme highlights the importance of the home as a learning environment and the need to take a holistic approach to literacy acquisition to bring about changed behaviours within the family to support learning.

The transfer of the programme to European and Middle Eastern countries shows positive results and is backed by training and support from ACEV to ensure quality. There is a need for cultural and social sensitivity on transfer, including taking account of the starting point of learners and their previous experiences of learning, including the school system.

The adoption of the programme backed by funding as part of the Government's pre-school programme encourages the spread of the programme to more families and gives some security for its continuation. AÇEV's continued role in trainer training, research and programme revision works to ensure that the quality of the programme is retained.

2.1.7 United Kingdom

Ensuring Early Acquisition of Literacy: Study on parental support - Case study

Name(s) and job title(s) of the interviewee(s):	Moira Aldridge: Family Learning Co-ordinator Diane Lamb: Training and Development Officer
Country:	United Kingdom
Organisation:	Birmingham Churches Together
Name of case study lead:	Karen Fairfax-Cholmeley
Date of interview and name of interviewer:	16 th June 2010 (face to face) Clare Meade
Name of programme:	Parent and Child Language Group

Introduction

Birmingham Churches Together is a key voluntary organisation working with families with English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) in Birmingham. The family programmes have been a more recent development which they set out in their strategic plan.

This programme improves the basic skills of parents and their children with migrant backgrounds through shared activities which:

- Increase parental aspirations;
- Increase interaction and communication between parent and child;
- Encourage speaking and listening skills use of English, dual language or home language to develop literacy;
- Increase understanding of the education system in the UK culture, education system and services for families;
- Encourage parental interest and involvement in preparing their child for education;
- Improve the educational outcomes for the child;
- Encourage the sharing of responsibility for the child's education between the parents and school;
- Support parent-child relationships which in turn have a positive impact on communities;

- Encourage positive parenting, an understanding of the needs of the developing child and the importance of play for early learning;
- Model, support and nurture developing skills at any level;
- Are catalysts for interaction and communication and can be made easily and carried on at home;
- Identify parenting interventions which can substantially improve childhood behaviour.

The case study focuses on one programme “Parent and Child Language Group” which is part of the offer of family learning programmes provided by Birmingham Churches Together Training.

Key messages from the case study

The development of the parents’ speaking and listening skills and use of English language and literacy through activities related to their child’s learning encourages greater confidence and interaction with schools and services and supports children’s regular attendance at school/ nursery to ensure the most positive educational outcomes.

The informal approach to family literacy work through play encourages families from target groups to attend. Embedding literacy in a variety of related topics, for example a visit by the Red Cross, gives opportunities for developing literacy skills in a wider context through health and first aid.

Modelling positive interactions with children supports parents’ to focus on their child and their learning and to understand the cultural differences within the education system in England.

The model provided through ‘parents as learners’ on the programme helps to develop an understanding of the importance of play, increases the culture of learning for children and adults and supports achievement. Improvement in adult skills is seen as a key component in the programme.

Case Study
ESOL and Family Learning.
Birmingham Churches Together

Background

Evidence gathered by BCT from staff at nursery and reception classes in local schools indicates that many parents are unaware of the Early Years targets and how to prepare their child for the world of education. Research shows that families of low skilled immigrants particularly those from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Iraq and Iran and some of the African countries suffer the most from poverty and isolation. Decreases in public funding for language support make the situation critical.

During 2008/9 BCT employed a Family Learning Co-ordinator to develop programmes and build partnerships in three areas of deprivation in the city.

Data

The Family Learning Co-ordinator delivered two Parenting Programmes which embedded ESOL and Literacy to 16 learners during 2008/9 at St Joseph's Centre. The groups represented white and black British as well as asylum seekers from Iraq, Iran and Ethiopia. Contact was also made with Cromwell Primary School, Nechells where the Head teacher asked the Family Learning Co-ordinator to design and deliver two programmes which would assist parents to prepare their children for nursery and reception. These were delivered in the summer term to 15 mothers who all had English as a second language from Somalia, Pakistan and Bangladesh most of whom had been in the UK between six and ten years.

Impact

The outcomes from the courses delivered at St Joseph's Centre indicate that there is a need to continue to deliver ESOL with a parenting focus. Three students applied to go on to ESOL courses at local colleges but said they had found the focus on family life with BCT helpful. The status of others prevented them from accessing public provision. One young asylum seeker referred by social workers who had been badly traumatised said how much she needed to continue to be supported both with English and parenting in order to help her young child settle at nursery. A mother from Iraq who had recently joined her husband with her children learned how to relate in English basic information concerning the children to service providers.

The Preparing your Child for Nursery/Reception programmes were very well received by the parents at Cromwell School. They enjoyed learning how to play games with their children, supporting them with language, co-ordination, social skills and ideas for story-telling. It was clear from the feedback that they appreciated being given an overview of the Early Years Curriculum and ideas on how they could support their children at this stage.

Outcomes:

- Increased understanding of the differing job titles and roles of staff within school;
- Increased understanding of the importance's of early play and its value to the developing child;
- Increased understanding of the importance's of the school community and the part as parents that they play;
- Increased awareness of key people who can help when we need support with our children – signposting within our local community developing awareness of local knowledge.

Policy context

BCTT has responded to the UK Government's priorities by contributing to key policy agendas.

Contributing to the **new approach to ESOL through local partnerships and provision; improving outcomes for children and young people** through family learning programmes supporting outcomes for Every Child Matters⁹. Programmes BCTT offer to families, adults and children help them to develop skills and knowledge and also gain more generic outcomes¹⁰ like confidence and improving relationships within the family and in the community.

Tackling child poverty the government's policy as set out in the 2008 budget, included a range of initiatives designed to help people move into employment. BCCT programmes have contributed to this through providing learning opportunities and supporting people into employment. The programmes have also contributed to reducing social exclusion in families. The current economic situation is highlighting the need for transferable skills which can enable people to respond to changes in the job market and the development of speaking and listening skills underpins these.

Raising achievement, the 2009 DCSF report *Deprivation and Education: the evidence on pupils in England, Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4*¹¹ looks at the connection between social and economic factors and children's achievement including health, family stress, parental education and parental involvement in their children's education including experiences of schooling and low aspirations and levels of literacy. BCTT works with those families most excluded through economic factors, language, literacy and culture where many of these factors are prevalent.

⁹ Connect Five – Family Learning and Every Child Matters NIACE Lamb et al <http://www.niace.org.uk/development-research/connect-five>

¹⁰ Lamb, P., Fairfax-Cholmeley, K. and Thomas, M. (2008) *Families, Learning and Progression*, Leicester, NIACE. www.niace.org.uk/FLprogression

¹¹ DCSF (2009) *Deprivation and Education: the evidence on pupils in England, Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4*. London: DCSF

Family background and educational achievement research shows that the economic position of the family and the level of education of the parents affect children's achievement¹². In addition, there is an intergenerational impact on aspirations for moving into employment which impinges on social mobility¹³.

Research indicates that children learn best where there is a partnership between school and parents. A stimulating home environment and a family engaged in and with learning provide a firm basis for children's achievement. The BCTT fosters this understanding and support of children's learning through their family learning programmes and encourages engagement with services including children's centres and schools.

The funding for Local Authorities for family learning programmes comes through the Skills Funding Agency (SfA), formerly Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and while the model developed by BCTT is similar to those set out in the guidance document, as a voluntary organisation they have not been able to draw down funding through this route and have had to find alternative sources of funding.

Overall Project Context

Birmingham Churches Together Training (BCTT) was formed in 2002 as the 'training arm' of Birmingham Churches Together (BCT) a registered charity. BCT is an ecumenical organisation enabling the mainstream churches in Birmingham to collaborate in serving all within the community solely on the basis of need and without regard to religious, cultural, social or ethnic background.

¹² DCSF (2007). *Extended schools: building on experience*. Nottingham: Department for Children, Schools and Families; DfES (2007). *Every Parent Matters*, London. Department for Education and Skills; Leitch Review of Skills (2006). *Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills*, HM Treasury, London; Cabinet Office, Social Exclusion Team (2007). *Reaching out: think family, Analysis and themes from the families at risk review*. London: Cabinet Office. Feinstein, L., Duckworth, K. and Sabates, R. (2004). *A Model of the Intergenerational Effects of Parental Education*. Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning. Department for Education and Skills Research Brief.

¹³ HM Government (2009) *New Opportunities: fair chances for the future*, Cmd 7533, London, The Stationery Office; Nunn, A., Johnson, S., Monro, S., Bickerstaffe, T. and Kelsey, S. (2007) *Factors influencing social mobility*, Department of Work and Pensions Report, No 450. Norwich: The Stationery Office.

¹¹ University of Warwick July 2007. *Engaging Parents in Raising Achievement. Do parents know they matter? A Research project commissioned by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust and funded by the Department for Education and Skills. Professor Alma Harris and Dr Janet Goodall.*

The overall aim of BCTT is to promote wider access to learning for adults and families in Birmingham and Solihull by providing learning opportunities for adults and families within local communities who cannot access or who have difficulty in accessing public provision by:

- Engaging and maximising the human and material resources of church congregations in Birmingham and Solihull via BCT;
- Collaborating with public sector organisations with similar educational concerns by acting as an agency for delivering their programmes;
- Teaching basic literacy, numeracy, parenting and family learning programmes to a level at which people are enabled to act as responsible citizens and to access Level One courses in public institutions;
- Enabling people to make progress in achieving social and economic independence;
- Promoting effective voluntary participation by recruiting training and enabling suitably experienced adults to become 'learning champions'.

This case study programme improves the basic skills of parents and their children with migrant backgrounds through shared activities which:

- Increase parental aspirations resulting in improved early communication skills for children;
- Encourage parental interest and involvement in preparing their child for formal education;
- Improve the educational outcomes for the child;
- Encourage shared responsibility for the child's education between the parents and children's centre/school;
- Support parent-child relationships which in turn have a positive impact on whole Communities.

Birmingham Churches Together draws on the beliefs of 19th Century 'Sunday School' movement who offered educational opportunities to adults and children who were otherwise excluded by poverty and social status. Initially the organisation focussed on meeting the needs of children and young people; by 2007 the organisation recognised that this need was being met in other ways. The changing social and economic environment highlighted the need for work amongst people who were being excluded from society because of their inability to access education in basic skills. The strategic direction of BCTT was consequently changed to a focus on those most excluded from learning and training opportunities.

BCTT have developed a range of community adult learning and more recently family learning programmes in places where and at times when they can be accessed by those most excluded from other provision and society. Projects are based in localities of Birmingham which are ranked with some of the most deprived areas nationally. Outcomes are described both in terms of raised levels of competence and personal and social impact. During the 2008/9 academic year 326 students successfully completed their studies with BCTT.

BCTT family learning programmes put a strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills that underpin children's subsequent acquisition of literacy and numeracy capability in school learning. This is done through modelling positive interaction, structured play and parental involvement. Visits to the library and activities in the Local Park as well as centre based workshops are offered during the school holidays. These activities are a joint venture between BCTT ESOL groups in the area and the fun activities are designed to consolidate learning at every level.

Case study context

The Birmingham Churches Together Training programmes, including the Parent and Child language group, are seen as an important tool for engaging parents in to learning who have low levels of English and contribute to improving participation in lifelong learning.

The Parent and Child Language Programme was initially developed for mothers who had to leave ESOL provision to have a baby and wished to continue their language learning, focusing on the language needed to support their child in the early years. The programme supports the development of early communication skills through play and covers aspects of parenting and family life. The course was designed to develop the language of the parents so that they would feel confident to take a full part in community life; communicating with their children, school, professionals, friends and neighbours.

Target families

Target families are predominately parents who have English as a second language (ESOL) who are often new arrivals to this country and where the mother/carer is below Entry level 3. Children range from three months to 4 years old. Programmes are targeted in particular areas of Birmingham with the greatest needs.

Case study programme delivery

Recruitment

The initial parent and baby language course was set up two years ago in response to a need for some of the mothers, mostly Iraqi, who had left ESOL courses to have a baby and wanted to come back and continue their studies with their child. The programme now recruits a wide range of families, bringing together a mix of ethnicities, languages and cultures. Families continue to be recruited through word of mouth, but also through school teachers, parent support advisors (PSAs), children's centres, doctors' surgeries, dentist, health centres and other ESOL provision using fliers and posters but most of all through families talking to others about the programmes.

Course content

The course covers topics around rhyme, song and children's books. The course also looks at understanding the importance of play, developing children's language and has a focus on healthy eating and the language of health. Activities have included role-play of when and how to contact the emergency services and understanding the roles of health professionals. It has also provided opportunities to develop language skills related to key services and people within the local community, finding out how they can help. The course has linked children's stories to activities such as bandaging a doll, teddy and supported language to communicate needs for adults and children. The course involves visiting speakers, for example, from the Red Cross to talk about safety in the home.

The tutor welcomes families and allows time for the children to settle and discover the toys/play activities set out. At the start of the session parents and children often sit in a circle together to share rhymes and a story with parents taking turns to read, once the tutor has started the story. This is followed by linked activities for parents and children to do together. In the session observed, the story was 'Funnybones', the rhymes and songs were also related to the topic of health. The activity involved cutting out and making a moveable skeleton which families took home to finish. In previous sessions the group had looked at language related to visiting a Doctor or a Dentist.

Mode of delivery

The course runs for two hours a week over eight weeks in a community centre. It runs in the daytime, when parents and young children can attend, close to the children's centre and easily accessible by foot. Each session follows a similar pattern so that children and adults feel secure and comfortable with the session. It is part of the wider programme of courses run by BCTT.

Pedagogical approaches

The programme promotes developing English through speaking and listening skills, practical learning, learning through play and modelling positive interaction with children. Their perspective on family literacy is one which sees:

- The home culture as a positive foundation for developing communication and nurturing a culture of learning;
- The family and community as best placed to stimulate early language and literacy development;
- Literacy is always situated in a social, cultural context;
- Language communication as the foundation for developing literacy skills and social skills;
- Confidence in the use of English is increased when both parent and child learn together;
- Wider implications for families becoming active citizens in their local community.

The BCTT feel that the success of the programme has been partly due to the involvement of volunteers and by identifying a parent who can interpret on behalf of the tutor to other parents.

This has in turn given the learner greater status amongst the other parents and raised the desire to improve English. It is also culturally appropriate to draw on the help and support of other women.

The programme shows strong delivery in the following areas:

- Has explicit outcomes for adults and children;
- Builds on and includes home language and culture;
- Provides advice and guidance to adults for other learning/training opportunities;
- Provides progression opportunities for adults;
- Builds language skills of adults and children;
- Builds confidence and self-esteem in parents/carers and children;
- Builds in speakers from other organisations;
- Includes better interaction between parents/carers and children through literacy and numeracy activities;
- Encourages parent and child home activities;
- Increases the parents/carer's involvement with their children's centres, school and other services.

These elements have contributed to successful outcomes for the learners by providing a relaxed and positive learning environment where parents are able to become more

confident in their use of English language and their ability to learn and help their children. Where parents need more support with parenting skills support is provided by a local social services agency.

Resources

A range of resources are used and have been made for the group. Families can borrow resources to extend the activities at home and include story books.

Partnerships

There are strong partnerships with other organisations across Birmingham, including schools, children's centres etc. The Soho Road Children's Centre assists with the recruitment and provides the accommodation with the support of the Baptist Church Centre as part of the community provision.

Staffing

The programme is staffed by a qualified adult tutor who also has extensive experience and qualifications in child development and early years teaching. She is supported by two volunteers from the local community who can interpret for the families who attend.

Assessment

Initial assessment is carried out through a range of methods including completion of the enrolment forms, an assessment form, a question and answer sheet. Progress is assessed using evaluation sheets and one to one discussions. There are no formal tests.

Programme evaluation and impact

Internal evaluation is carried out through observations, feedback from guest facilitators, children's centres and schools as well as evaluations and student portfolios. Learning is recorded in tutor's reports along with photographic evidence and products of activities.

Examples of impact include progression routes taken up by parents who have attended the classes, improved language skills, better communication between school and parent/carer and increased parental involvement in school. For children impact includes; improved behaviour, communication and interaction. The programme has not been externally evaluated.

Evidence of impact on children's literacy achievements is not formally collected. However, feedback from parents is very positive:

“I would like more children’s stories”
“I enjoy nursery rhymes”
“I enjoyed the Red Cross lady.”
“I liked making my child’s hand prints as a keepsake forever”

Funding

The programme has been funded by the Westhill Endowment Trust and Birmingham Churches Together Training. The Soho Road Children’s Centre assists with the recruitment and provides the accommodation with the support of the Baptist Church Centre as part of their community provision.

Aims of the programme

The aims of the programme for the adults are:

- To develop awareness of language, literacy and numeracy skills of child and parent
- To develop parent’s awareness of child’s need to learn through play and experience different learning opportunities
- To develop the language of second language speaking parent’s and their children
- To encourage parents and child to speak, listen, read, draw and play together at home
- To develop language, literacy and numeracy skills
- To increase parents’ confidence and to empower parents’ as first educators to support their children’s learning
- To value the gift of dual language speaking

The aims of the programme for the children are:

- To incorporate the five principles of the Every Child Matters agenda within scheme of work
- To provide a stimulating nurturing child friendly environment which will support the developing language and literacy skills of the child

Outcomes of the programme

Parents’ English language improves as a result of the programme, with some parents becoming involved in classroom activity and attending parent-teacher meetings. Parents are

more confident in supporting their children's learning and helping with homework, they can also communicate better with school and are moving into other progression areas. The programme does not measure specific impact on the children's literacy levels, but observation showed increases in interaction and use of language.

Success factors

Attendance on the programme has been maintained at a reasonable level with a retention rate of 60%. The main reasons for parents leaving the group are that children enter nursery or school, the family move house or the parent finds employment or moves on to a college course. The learners support each other both inside and outside the group. The children have developed skills and confidence in communicating with family members and their peers in the group. Their co-ordination skills develop through the practical activities which encourage self expression and creativity.

The classes are seen by parents as immediately relevant to their lives and their children's education. The learning also supports integration and understanding and offers opportunities for making friends.

There is a good working partnership with services for example staff at the local children's centre, the pastor and congregation of the Baptist church centre where the group meets. There are also links with local schools. It should be noted that this programme is part of a wider BCTT delivery in the area and the organisation maintains partnerships with other voluntary organisations delivering similar programmes.

The tutors are well trained, experienced and adaptable. The programme meets an identified need amongst the families and community. It is flexible and adapts to support new needs as they develop. The tutors recognise the importance of getting to know parents and their life stories in order to build a picture of families and their needs.

The tutors ensure that:

- The groups are welcoming and there is acknowledgement of the skills and ability of previous life experiences;
- There is a non-judgemental approach to each individual;
- There is respect for the families wider life, culture, beliefs and background and the need to support and recognise and acknowledge the identity of the learner;
- Learners especially those from war torn parts of the world are given the time, space and understanding they need;
- Learners can take the lead;

- Activities are well planned, interactive and creative and reflective of interaction between parent and child;
- Materials are appropriate and of good quality;
- The sessions take into account the child's concentration span, building relationships with other children, resolving and supporting difficulties with fairness and a positive affirming approach to children. Activities are planned to stimulate and develop the child's imagination and to engage parent and child;
- Volunteers are briefed in advance of each session so that they can support the learners effectively;
- Learners are listened to and feedback is acted on to improve sessions.

The programme has succeeded due to the involvement of volunteers and by identifying a parent who can interpret on behalf of the tutor to other parents.

Challenges

- Sustaining funding;
- Appropriate training for staff;
- Lack of encouragement from senior family members for mothers to engage in activities outside the home;
- Where parents have no or very little experience of formal education there can be little value put on learning. Time needs to be allowed to develop an understanding of the need to support learning for child;
- Engaging fathers in learning activities.

Transferability of programme

The programme could be transferred to other settings and BCTT have delivered it in a variety of venues and with different target audiences. The key aspect would be to ensure that the course involved input from local services and encouraged, communication skills and home activities.

Conclusion and Implications

The case study programme is part of a wider and innovative adult community and family learning offer which aims to improve the skills of parents so that they are better able to support their children's learning and take an active role in family and community life through interacting at children's centre/school, with other services and at home in their learning. Parents are seen as learners in their own right as well as playing a vital role in

supporting children's literacy acquisition. Emphasis is put on oral communication and an interest in learning as being vital to literacy development.

The flexibility and informality of the programmes are seen as great strengths. Staff come with a range of relevant qualifications and experience drawing on local services as well as professionals and volunteers to provide a variety of support for learners, adults and children and to bring different perspectives and information. Materials and topics are based on relevant day-to-day experiences for the families and resources can be borrowed by families to embed the learning in the home environment.

In its current format the programme is clearly successful in reaching parents with English as a Second or Other Language who are not already engaged in learning. The partnerships with schools, children's centres and other local organisations allows for the most vulnerable families to access provision. Referrals to BCTT programmes are also made by NHS professionals and agencies working with asylum seekers/refugees and female victims of domestic violence. Speaking and listening is central to the programme and is seen as the foundation for further literacy development for adults and children, the programme takes a holistic view of literacy development as one that must be embedded in everyday situations and practice.

2.2 Focus group guide: adults

LEARNER FOCUS GROUP TEMPLATE (ADULTS)

Date of the focus group

Names or initials of learners taking part, gender and age

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.....

.....

.....

.....

Programme.....

Organisation.....Country.....

Venue.....

Name and job title of person facilitating the focus group.....

.....

Length of time the learners has been attending the programme.....

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1a) Do you live locally / how far is it from here?

1b) How long have you lived here?

1c) Where do you come from originally?

1d) How many children do you care for – ages / gender

1e) How do you travel to the programme?

RECRUITMENT

How were you recruited to the programme?

2. What do you like about the programme?

e.g.relevance / interests me / meeting people / time for self / confidence / tutor / activities /
enjoyment

3. What, if anything, do you dislike about the programme? E.g.tutor / the time /the activities)
4. What kind of activities do you do during the programme? e.g.making games /reading books
5. How does your child respond to you being here? (Looks forward to it /indifferent
6. Do you carry on with activities from the programme with your children at home/outside school? If yes, please give details of activities
7. If the programme is free of cost, would you still attend if you had to pay?

OUTCOMES:

8. What have you learnt on the course?

8a) to help your children learn

8b) for yourself

IMPACT

9. What difference has attending the programme made to:

9a) You? (unexpected outcomes / community participation/work/ confidence)

9b) Your child? (Improvements at school / confidence / concentration /changed behaviour)

9c) The whole family?

PROGRESSION:

10a) What are you planning to do when the programme finishes? (Further courses / job/ community work)

10b) Would you recommend the programme to others? (discuss why or why not and if they already have and to whom)

11 Any other comments / information

2.3 Learner focus group guide: children

LEARNER FOCUS GROUP TEMPLATE (CHILDREN)

Date of the focus group

Names or initials of learners taking part, gender and age

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Programme.....

Organisation.....Country.....

Venue.....

Name and job title of person facilitating the focus group.....

.....

Length of time the learners has been attending the programme.....

RECRUITMENT

2. What do you like about the programme? e.g.fun/interesting/gives me something to do

3. What, if anything, do you dislike about the programme? E.g.tutor / the time /the activities)

4. What kind of activities do you do during the programme? e.g. making and playing games /reading books

5. How do you like your mum/dad/carer being here with you? (look forward to it/ indifferent/embarrassed)

6. Do you carry on with activities from the programme with your family at home/outside school? If yes, please give details of activities and who you do them with

7. How did you hear about the programme?

OUTCOMES:

8. What have you learnt on the programme?

IMPACT

9. Do you think what you do on the programme helps with your learning at school? If yes, please give details e.g. more to talk about, more confidence, understand better what the teacher is talking about

10. Has attending the programme had any affect on how you are with your mum/dad/carers and other people in your family? If yes, please give details e.g. talking more together, doing more things together

11. Would you recommend the programme to your friends? (discuss why or why not and if they already have and to whom)

12. Any other comments / information you would like to make?

Appendix 3 Policy stakeholder interview guide

Strengths and weaknesses

- What are the strengths of current and past policies and programmes?
- What have been the weaknesses?

Barriers to success

What have been the policy barriers to good policy and programme development?

Policy-programme integration

Where are parenting support programmes aimed at improving child literacy situated in your country's policy environment?

Programme development

- In what ways has policy succeeded in supporting programme development or good programs?
- In what ways has policy failed to support programme development or good programs?
- What are the key policy conditions or requirements for successful and sustainable programme development?

Sustainability

What lessons have you learned with regard to developing sustainable parental support programs?

Economic lessons

What are the key lessons you have learned with regard to funding?

Programme users

Based on your experience, do programmes need to be tailored for specific groups? Please provide examples if possible.

Research and policy

What role if any has research evidence played in policy-making in this area, with examples?

Transferability

What positive lessons can other countries learn from your experiences?

Recommendations

What recommendations would you make to policymakers in other countries?

Appendix 4 Overview of family literacy programmes in Europe

This appendix provides an indicative overview of European family literacy programmes. This list is not meant to be comprehensive, but where we are aware of research on programmes, we provide bibliographic details.

Belgium, Flemish-speaking

Programme	Bookbabies
Description	Launched in autumn 2005 by the Flemish reading Association and the Flemish centre for public libraries
Research	Vanobbergen, B., M. Daems, et al. (2009). "Bookbabies, their parents and the library: an evaluation of a Flemish reading programme in families with young children." <i>Educational Review</i> 61(3): 277-287.

Belgium, French-speaking

Programme	Soutien en matière de prévention au sein des familles
Description	Implemented by the Foundation Roi Baudouin

Programme	Mother-Child Education Program
Description	In Turkish for Turkish migrants

Czech Republic

Programme	Celé Česko čte dětem (The Whole of Czechia Reads to Children)
Description	A programme aiming at the child's emotional development and at establishing a reading habit

Programme	Týden čtení (A Week of Reading)
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Description	Activity aiming at supporting child reading programmes to enhance literacy and promote a love for reading among children.
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France

Programme	Family Educational Activities (Actions Educatives Familiales)
Description	Coordinated by ANCLI, the National agency for the fight against illiteracy

Programme	Mother-Child Education Programme (mother support only)
Description	In Turkish for Turkish migrants

Germany

Programme	Mother-Child Education Programme (mother support only)
Description	In Turkish for Turkish migrants

Programme	Family Literacy Programme in Hamburg (FLY)
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Programme	Buchstart (Hamburg)
Description	Initiated by the Hamburg Ministry of Culture, this programme distributes book packs via paediatricians. The packs are given out at routine health checks for babies aged 10-12 months. The programme is scheduled to run for a minimum of six years and has an evaluation scheme component; the latter is run by the University Medical Centre Hamburg-Eppendorf.

Programme	HIPPY
Description	First introduced to Germany in 1992 "under the auspices of the Association for Workers Welfare. Today, There Are 10 Hippy Programmes in Germany." (Schuberth, 2003, in Westheimer 2003)
Research	(Schuberth, 2003, in Westheimer 2003) The Mutually Reinforcing Roles of

	Volunteers and Professionals: HIPPY as a case in point
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Programme	Lobo vom Globo
Description	A parent focused programme for the promotion of formal logical consciousness for preschool children.
Research	Koglin, U., L. P. Frohlich, et al. (2008). "Parent-oriented programme for promotion of phonological consciousness in preschool-age children." <i>Kindheit Und Entwicklung</i> 17(3): 173-181.

Programme	Berlin Parent-Child Reading Program
Description	A parent focused programme for the promotion of formal logical consciousness for preschool children.
Research	McElvany, N. and C. Artelt (2009). "Systematic reading training in the family: Development, implementation, and initial evaluation of the Berlin Parent-Child Reading Program." <i>Learning and Instruction</i> 19(1): 79-95.
	McElvany, N. and C. Artelt (2007). "The Berlin parent-child reading program: Conceptual design and evaluation." <i>Psychologie in Erziehung Und Unterricht</i> 54(4): 314-332.

Programme	Lesestart – mit Büchern wachsen
Description	Run by the Reading Foundation (Stiftung Lesen). See case study

Programme	Lesestart – mit Büchern wachsen (Saxony)
Description	Model project for the above, evaluated by the University of Leipzig.

Greece

Programme	Parents' Schools
Description	The schools provide training to parents so they are better able to address their children's needs and meet the challenges facing the contemporary family. Not sure how children's literacy is addressed/assessed

Ireland

Programme	Clare Family Learning (Co Clare)
Description	See case study

Italy

Programme	Bookstart (bilingual Italian and German) (South Tyrol)
Description	Has been evaluated by LeseForum, South Tyrol.

Malta

Programme	Hilti Programme
Description	After school, family oriented educational project initiated in 2001, which endeavours to complement and reinforce school-based teaching and learning.
Research	Evaluated in 2003. See Spiteri and Camilleri (2003) "Family Literacy in Malta: an Effective Strategy for Enhanced Literacy, Parental Involvement and Lifelong Learning".

Programme	A book is a treasure (Ill-Ktieb)
Description	Ill-Ktieb is a Bookstart-type pilot project which launched on World Book Day in Malta on 23 April 2007. The project gifted book packs to children aged 2-3 years when their parents registered them for school. Funding has been secured from UK publishers, the Merlin Library and local councils in Malta. It is hoped that the programme will reach approximately 4,500 children each year.

Programme	Id f'Id (Hand in Hand) Parent Empowerment Programme
Description	The programme has three main current projects based on focused in-home educational discussions and hands-on activities with parents: the Parent-to-Parent Meetings Project, the Parent-to-Parent Courses Project and the Community Literacy Outreach Project.

Programme	Malta Writing Program
Description	The focus of this programme is on creative writing rather than emergent literacy. However, through the programme parents are taught how to nurture their children's writing skills and how to develop their own reading and writing skills.

Programme	NWAR ('Late Blossoms') (Birkirkara, Hamrun)
Description	Initiated in 2002 as a variation of the Hilti program. Designed for parents of children with severe reading and writing difficulties.

Netherlands

Programme	Unnamed training programme based on the "Word Building" technique, originally developed by Beck (1989). The programme being investigated was adapted to pre-literacy levels
Description	Computer-assisted, home-based reading instruction programme with parents acting as tutors. Training effectiveness was evaluated for children at high familial risk of dyslexia, and in their second year of kindergarten.
Research	Regtvoort, A. and A. van der Leij (2007). "Early intervention with children of dyslexic parents: Effects of computer-based reading instruction at home on literacy acquisition." <i>Learning and Individual Differences</i> 17(1): 35-53.

Programme	Sounding Sounds and Jolly Letters (Klinkende Klanken en Lollige Letters)
Description	This home-based pre-reading programme utilises parents as tutors, and is a translation and adaptation of a Danish school-based kindergarten phoneme awareness and letter programme called "Towards initial reading: phonological awareness". Dutch children at a higher familial risk of dyslexia received this home-based intervention programme.
Research	van Otterloo, S. G., A. Van der Leij, et al. (2006). "Treatment integrity in a home-based pre-reading intervention programme". <i>Dyslexia</i> (10769242) 12(3): 155-176.

	(This study is associated with the research programme ~Early diagnosis and treatment of developmental dyslexia: The role of learning mechanisms, speech.")
	van Otterloo, S. G., A. van der Leij, et al. (2009). "Early Home-Based Intervention in the Netherlands for Children at Familial Risk of Dyslexia." <i>Dyslexia</i> 15(3): 187-217.
	van Otterloo, S. G., A. van der Leij, et al. (2009). "Early Home-Based Intervention in the Netherlands for Children at Familial Risk of Dyslexia." <i>Dyslexia</i> 15(3): 187-217.
	van Otterloo, S. G. and A. van der Leij (2009). "Dutch Home-Based Pre-Reading Intervention with Children at Familial Risk of Dyslexia." <i>Annals of Dyslexia</i> 59(2): 169-195.

Programme	Opstap
Research	Eldering, L. and P. Vedder (1999). "The dutch experience with the home intervention programme for preschool youngsters (HIPPY)." <i>Effective early education: Cross-cultural perspectives</i> : 235-258.
	Eldering, L. and P. Vedder (1992). "Opstap: een opstap naar meer schoolsucces." (Opstap (Dutch Hippy), A step up to more success in school for ethnic minority children?) Eindrapport van het OPSTAP experiment in Amsterdam. Amsterdam/Lisse: Swets and Zeitlin-ger.
	McElvany, N. and R. van Steensel (2009). "Potentials and Challenges of Family Literacy Interventions: The Question of Implementation Quality." <i>European Educational Research Journal</i> 8(3): 418-433.

Programme	Opstap Opnieuw (Step-up Anew)
Research	Kohnstamm, G. A., G. Meesters, et al. (1997). "Je kunt het waarnemen maar niet meten. Onderzoek naar de effecten van Opstapje op van huisuit Turkse kinderen ("you can observe it, but you can't measure it. A study into the effects of Opstapje ("junior step up") on Turkish-Dutch children)." Unpublished report.
	van Tuijl, C. and P. P. M. Leseman (2004). "Improving mother-child interaction in low-income Turkish-Dutch families: A study of mechanisms mediating improvements resulting from participating in a home-based preschool intervention program." <i>Infant and Child Development</i> 13(4): 323-340.

	McElvany, N. and R. van Steensel (2009). "Potentials and Challenges of Family Literacy Interventions: The Question of Implementation Quality." <i>European Educational Research Journal</i> 8(3): 418-433.
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Programme	Opstapje (Junior Step up)
Research	Kohnstamm, G. A., G. Meesters, et al. (1997). "Je kunt het waarnemen maar niet meten. Onderzoek naar de effecten van Opstapje op van huisuit Turkse kinderen ("you can observe it, but you can't measure it. A study into the effects of Opstapje ("junior step up") on Turkish-Dutch children)." Unpublished report.
	van Tuijl, C. and P. P. M. Leseman (2004). "Improving mother-child interaction in low-income Turkish-Dutch families: A study of mechanisms mediating improvements resulting from participating in a home-based preschool intervention program." <i>Infant and Child Development</i> 13(4): 323-340.

Norway

Programme	Reading friends
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Programme	Read to your child
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Portugal

Programme	Read and Win (part of the National Reading Plan, a government initiative designed to promote reading and writing skills through a broad range of interventions, including those targeting the family)
Description	Run by National Reading Plan. "Schools Receive Books to Be Given to Each Child, and Teachers Are Encouraged to Organise Parent Meetings to Present the Advantages of Family Daily Reading Aloud for Language and Literacy Development."

Programme	Crescer a ler ("growing up reading"), APEI
Description	Bookstart-type programme designed to provide book gifts to all newborn babies and at public libraries to children up to age 6.

Romania

Programme	Parent Empowerment for Family Literacy
Description	Romanian manifestation of the PEFaL programme developed as an EU Grundtvig project in 2001. The programme and its benefits are summarised in the UNESCO publication "Family literacy: a global approach to lifelong learning" (2008).

Programme	"Parenting Profession Can Be Learned"
Description	Meetings with first graders' parents, twice a month, where they discuss how to help children to read at home and do their homework. Local programme: Suceava, Romania

Slovenia

Programme	Read and write together family literacy program
Description	Family literacy programme developed by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. Aimed at parents with limited education whose children are in the early years of primary school. The school programme involves two teachers, 50 hours of organised schoolwork and 25 hours of planned homework.
Research	Knafljic, L. (2005). "How we started: the family literacy programme in Slovenia." Literacy 39(2): 81-84.

Switzerland

Programme	Mother-Child Education Program
Description	In Turkish for Turkish migrants

Programme	The Book Caterpillar, run by the Swiss Institute for Children's and Youth Media
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Programme	Family Literacy Project, run by the Swiss Institute for Children's and Youth Media
Description	Kreibich, Heinrich/Aufenanger, Stefan (Hrsg) (2009): Bibliothek1 "Schenk mir eine

	Geschichte -Family Literacy". Evaluation in der Leseförderung. Stiftung Lese :43
Research	Edelmann, Doris (2010). Frühkindliche Bildung, Betreuung und Erziehung. Was kann die Schweiz lernen. Rüegger Verlag: 211-212
	Bildungsdirektion Kanton Zürich (2009). Frühe Förderung. Hintergrundbericht zur familienunterstützenden und familienergänzenden Förderung im Kanton Zürich:96-97

Programme	Buchstart,Nati per leggere, Né pour lire (Bookstart model)
Research	Kovalik, Claudia(2010). "Buchstart" Masterthesis to be published HTW Chur

Programme	
Description	Kreibich, Heinrich/Aufenanger, Stefan (Hrsg) (2009): Bibliothek1 "Schenk mir eine Geschichte -Family Literacy". Evaluation in der Leseförderung. Stiftung Lese :43
Research	Lanfranchi, A., & Neuhauser, A. (2010). Frühe Förderung ab Geburt: ZEPPELIN 0-2 - Forschungsgesuch an den Nationalfonds vom 1. März 2010. Zürich: Hochschule für Heilpädagogik (unveröff. Projektgesuch an den SNF, 22 S.).
	Neuhauser, A., & Lanfranchi, A. (2010). Frühe Förderung ab Geburt: ZEPPELIN. Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Heilpädagogik, 16 (4), 16-20.

Turkey

Programme	Turkish Early Enrichment Project
Description	The programme initially included two components: HIPPY plus a mother enrichment program. After initial piloting, the HIPPY component was replaced with a new cognitive training programme, and the overall intervention was shortened to one year.
Research	Bekman, S. (1998a). Long term effects of the Turkish Home-based Early Enrichment Program. In U. Giellen & A.L., Comunian (Eds.), Family and family therapy in international perspective(pp. 401-407). Italy: Edizioni Lint .
	Bekman, S. (2004). Early Home Intervention to Promote School Readiness: A Turkish Experience. NHSA Dialog, 7, 16-34.
	Kağıtçıbaşı, Ç., (1991). The early enrichment project in Turkey. UNESCO-UNICEF-WFP Notes comments. (No:193). Paris: UNESCO.

	Kağıtçıbaşı, Ç., (1992). Research on parenting and child development in cross cultural perspective. In M. Rosenzweig (Ed.), International psychological science (pp. 137-160). Washington, DC: APA.
	Kağıtçıbaşı, Ç., (1996). Family and human development across cultures: A view from the other side. New Jersey: Lawrance Erlbaum Associates.
	Kağıtçıbaşı, Ç., (1997). Parent education and child development. In M.E. Young (Ed.), Early child development: Investing in our children's future (pp. 243-272).New York: Elsevier.
	Kağıtçıbaşı, Ç., Sunar, D. & Bekman, S. (2001). Long-term effects of early intervention: Turkish low-income mothers and children. Applied Developmental Psychology, 22, 333-361.
	Kağıtçıbaşı, Ç., Sunar, D., Bekman, S., Cemalcılar, Z. (2005). Continuing effects of early intervention in adult life: Preliminary findings of Turkish early enrichment project second follow up study. Istanbul: Mother Child Education Foundation Publications.

Programme	Mother-Child Education Program
Description	Includes mother enrichment and cognitive training components over a total of one year. Also includes reproductive health and family planning module.
Research	Bekman, S. (2004). "Early Home Intervention to Promote School Readiness: A Turkish Experience." NHSA Dialog: A Research
	Bekman.S.(1998 b). Fair Chance: An Evaluation of the Mother-Child Education Program. İstanbul: Mother-Child Education Publications.
	Bekman, S. (2003). From Research Project to Nationwide Programme: The Mother-Child Education Programme of Turkey, in T.S. Saraswathi (Ed.), Cross-cultural Perspectives in Human Development (pp. 287-325). India: Sage Publications.
	Kağıtçıbaşı, Ç., Bekman, S., & Göksel, A. (1995). Multipurpose model of nonformal education: The Mother-Child Education Program. Coordinators' Notebook, 17, 24-32.

Programme	Father Support Program
Description	Volunteer-based programme targeting fathers of children aged 2-10. Aim of the programme is to increase fathers' awareness and knowledge of child development and education. The Father Support Programme has reached 13,000 fathers and children in 22 provinces of Turkey; 400 teachers have been trained.

	The yearly target is 6,000 fathers and children.
Research	Koçak, A. (2004): Evaluation report of the Father-Support Program. Retrieved February 28, 2006 from http://www.acev.org .

Programme	Preschool Parent-Child Education Programme (PPCEP)
Description	The Programme aims both to empower the child's emergent literacy skills and parent-school relationship. It consists of two parts: Cognitive Training and Parent Support. Here the target population is children who are attending nursery classes and their parents.
Research	Bekman, S. & Topaç, B. (2000). Ovçep Anadolu Pilot Projesi Değerlendirme Araştırması

United Kingdom

Programme	Bookstart (England, UK)
Research	See Brooks et al (2008) for full citation details: Booktrust (2003); Moore and Wade (2003); Wade and Moore (1996, 1998a, b, 2000); Hines and Brooks (2005); Moore, M. and B. Wade (2003). "Bookstart: A Qualitative Evaluation." Educational Review 55(1): 3-13. Wade, B. and M. Moore (1998). "An Early Start with Books: literacy and mathematical evidence from a longitudinal study." Educational Review 50(2): 135-145. Hall, E. (2001). "Babies, Books and 'Impact': problems and possibilities in the evaluation of a Bookstart project." Educational Review 53(1): 57 - 64. Hines, M. and G. Brooks (2005). "Sheffield Babies Love Books: An Evaluation of the Sheffield Bookstart Project." Sheffield: University of Sheffield. (mimeograph).

Programme	Boots Books for Babies (Nottingham, England, UK)
Research	Bailey, M., Harrison, C. and Brooks, G. (2000). The Boots Books for Babies Project Evaluation. Nottingham, University of Nottingham. Bailey, M., C. Harrison, et al. (2002). "The Boots Books for Babies Project: Impact on Library Registrations and Book Loans." Journal of Early Childhood Literacy 2(1): 45-63.

Programme	Dialogic reading programme (Sheffield, England, UK)
Research	See Brooks et al (2008) for full citation details: Morgan (2005)

Programme	Early Start (England, UK)
Research	Brooks, G., M. Cook, et al. (2004). Early Promise: The University of Sheffield national evaluation of Early Start for the Basic Skills Agency, London: Basic Skills Agency.

Programme	Supporting Parents On Kids' Education (England, UK)
Research	Sylva, K., S. Scott, et al. (2008). "Training parents to help their children read: A randomized control trial." British Journal of Educational Psychology 78: 435-455.

Programme	Kirklees Babies into Books project (England, UK)
Research	Hardman, M. and L. Jones (1999). "Sharing books with babies: evaluation of an early literacy intervention." Educational Review 51(3): 221-229.

Programme	Family literacy and numeracy in prisons (England, UK)
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Programme	Family Literacy Demonstration Programmes (England and Wales, UK)
Research	Brooks, G., T. Gorman, et al. (1996). Family literacy works The NFER evaluation of Basic Skills Agency's demonstration programmes. London, Basic Skills Agency.
	Brooks, G., T. Gorman, et al. (1997). Family literacy lasts The NFER follow-up study of the Basic Skills Agency's Demonstration Programmes. London, Basic Skills Agency.
	Brooks, G., P. Cole, et al. (2002). Keeping up with the Children: evaluation for the Basic Skills Agency by the University of Sheffield and the National Foundation for Educational Research, London: Basic Skills Agency.

Programme	Family Literacy for New Groups (England and Wales, UK)
Research	Brooks, G., J. Harman, et al. (1999). "Family Literacy for New Groups: The National Foundation for Educational Research Evaluation of the Basic Skills Agency's Programmes for Linguistic Minorities, Year 4 and Year 7." London: Basic Skills Agency.

Programme	Family literacy national evaluation 2007-09 (England, UK)
Research	NRDC (2009) Learning literacy together: the impact and effectiveness of family literacy on parents, children, families and schools. London: NRDC.

Programme	PEEP (Peers Early Education Partnership) (Oxford, England, UK)
Research	Evangelou, M., G. Brooks, et al. (2005). Effects of a birth to school programme: findings from the Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP). England.
	Evangelou, M., G. Brooks, et al. (2005). "Birth to School Study: A Longitudinal Evaluation of the Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP) 1998-2005." Department of Education and Sciences, DfES Publications, Nottingham, United Kingdom, www.dfes.gov.uk/research..
	Evangelou, M., G. Brooks, et al. (2007). "The Birth to School Study: Evidence on the Effectiveness of PEEP, an Early Intervention for Children at Risk of Educational Under-Achievement." Oxford Review of Education 33(5): 581-609.
	Evangelou, M. and K. Sylva (2003). The Effects of the Peers Early Educational Partnership (PEEP) on Children's Developmental Progress. DfES research report 489. London, DfES.

Programme	REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) (Sheffield, England, UK)
Research	Morgan, A., C. Nutbrown, et al. (2009). "Fathers' involvement in young children's literacy development: implications for family literacy programmes." British Educational Research Journal 35(2): 167-185.
	Hannon, P., A. Morgan, et al. (2006). "Parents' Experiences of a Family Literacy Programme." Journal of Early Childhood Research 4(1): 19-44.
	Morgan, A., C. Nutbrown, et al. (2009). "Fathers' involvement in young children's literacy development: implications for family literacy programmes." British Educational Research Journal 35(2): 167-185.

Programme	Early Intervention in Literacy and Numeracy (Scotland, UK)
Description	National evaluation led by Helen Fraser, University of Edinburgh

Programme	Family literacy, language and numeracy programmes for teenage parents
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Programme	Family literacy, language and numeracy programmes for grandparents
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