

Lit Scan

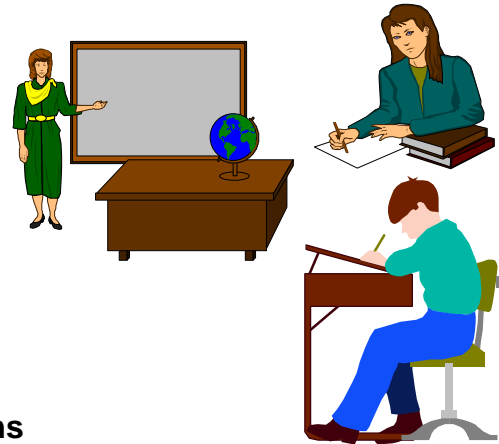
Facts & Figures from the Colorado Literacy Research Initiative

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The Impact of Family Literacy Programs on Children's Learning

During 1997, the Office of Adult Education commissioned three small research projects that shared a common purpose: to determine the impact of family literacy programs, especially on children's learning.



How Family Literacy Programs Affect Parents & Children *Adult Learning Source, Denver*

During its four years of involvement with the National Center for Family Literacy, Denver's Adult Learning Source has sought to address the education and parenting skills of participating parents as well as the early childhood education needs of their children. In 1997, 70 parents received job skills training, adult basic education, and/or GED preparation. That year, 59 children were served by the program—48 preschoolers and 11 younger children in the nursery program.

Two staff members presented this evaluation model—which includes rigorous tests of statistical significance—at the 1997 National Center for Family Literacy conference. Most of the findings were demonstrated to be statistically significant, despite the small number of cases.

Highlights:

Education of Parents

- ◆ Two out of three participating parents demonstrated increases in reading, writing, and/or math skills.
- ◆ Half of these parents have gained work experience in schools and other public agencies.
- ◆ A third of these parents enrolled in employment training programs, enrolled at institutions of higher education, or obtained jobs.

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Parenting Skills

- ◆ Half of the participating parents modeled increased interest in education, showed more positive parental attitudes, increased their interaction with their children, increased their involvement with their children's schools, and increased their comfort level and interaction with their children's teachers.

Early Childhood Education

- ◆ Three out of four participating preschoolers improved their test scores on development and school readiness skills.
- ◆ Eight out of ten children in the nursery program made developmental gains, according to their parents and caregivers.

How Family Literacy Programs Affect Parents

*Colorado Springs School District 11
Adult Education/Family Literacy Program*

During 1997, District 11's Adult Education/Family Literacy Program conducted in-depth interviews of 20 adults representing families participating in their program.



**"I got my GED. That was the most important thing. After I got my GED they offered me a job."
--a Colorado Springs parent**

Highlights:

- ◆ A majority of the interviewees report that they now read newspapers and magazines regularly. On the average, they reported reading with their children, especially younger children, from several times a week to daily. They also reported reading with their children more than they did before the program, that they enjoy this reading time, and that their children are more enthusiastic about reading as a result.
- ◆ Half of the employed interviewees reported that participating in the program had helped them to get a job or a better job than their last one. Of that group, more than a third are now in supervisory or paraprofessional positions.
- ◆ Almost one-third of the interviewees are preparing to take the GED tests. Of that group, two-thirds are making scheduled progress and one-third will be taking the tests very soon.



How Family Literacy Programs Affect Children *Trinidad State Junior College, Adult Education Center*

During 1997, the TSJC Adult Education Center had 84 families enrolled in its family literacy programs. More than one-third of those families were included in a survey sample, of which 55 percent responded.

Highlights:

In all responding families (100 percent), parents attended their child's last parent/teacher conference and started spending more time helping their children with homework.

**"My children love to be read to but, more so, they love to read to me."
--a Trinidad parent**

- ◆ In nine out of ten responding families (88 percent), family members started to read more books.
- ◆ In eight out of ten responding families (82 percent), parents started spending more time reading to their children and observed improvements in their children's school performance. (The established good reading habits of the remaining families were also reinforced.)
- ◆ In seven out of ten responding families (71 percent), parents began to observe improvements in their children's social skills.

Summary

Although each of these three studies involved a relatively small number of cases, their collective findings are remarkably consistent: all three family literacy programs have demonstrated powerful positive effects on the education, employment, and parenting skills of adult learners as well as both direct and indirect positive effects on the school readiness of young children.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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