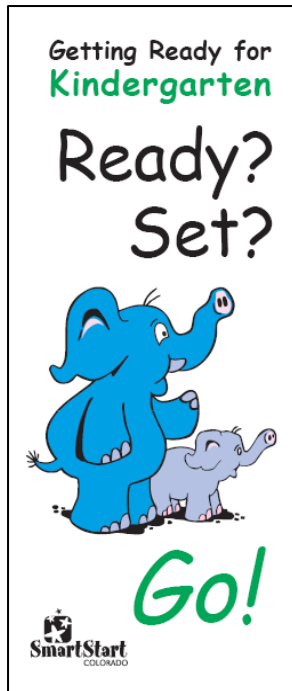


Early Literacy Initiative Impacts Public Library Services for Young Children

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Since early 2004, the Colorado State Library (CSL) has been encouraging and supporting public library efforts to teach pre-reading activities and skills to young children, their parents, and childcare providers. Through its multifaceted early literacy initiative, CSL:

- Provides resource materials about reading readiness for parents and caregivers
- Encourages outreach and visibility through partnerships with community, education, and business organizations
- Assists libraries that wish to train staff, volunteers, and parents and further develop their early literacy services
- Trains librarians to teach and model skill-building techniques.

Integral to this mission, in November 2004 and February 2005, CSL conducted a series of seven training workshops around the state.

Based on the program developed by the Public Library Association and the Association for Library Service to Children, *Every Child Ready to Read @ your library* <<http://www.ala.org/ala/pla/plaissues/earlylit/earlyliteracy.htm>>, each workshop provided attendees with early literacy research materials and hands-on skill building techniques. Approximately 125 individuals – librarians, child care providers, and others – participated in these workshops.

In order to understand and evaluate the impact of these workshops on public library literacy programs and services a year (or more) later, CSL created a survey and contacted over 100 workshop attendees in February and March of 2006. Thirty-seven librarian-participants from 35 different public library outlets around the state completed the survey questionnaire.

"The presenter and the workshop were wonderful. I have incorporated many of the ideas presented there in my storytime sessions..." Rita Curtis, Durango Public Library.

The results of this outcome survey show that since CSL's workshop series, public libraries and librarians throughout the state have earmarked both time and material resources toward enhancing their early literacy programming and services.

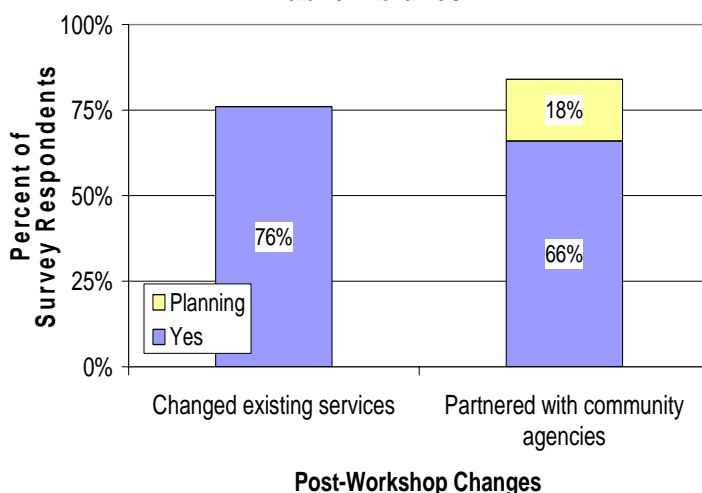


Changes to existing services:

More than 3 of every 4 respondents (76%) said that, since attending the CSL workshops, their library has made changes to existing early literacy services such as story times and outreach to parents and caregivers (see Chart #1).



Chart 1. Post-Workshop Changes to Early Literacy Services & Partnerships of Public Libraries



Community partnerships:

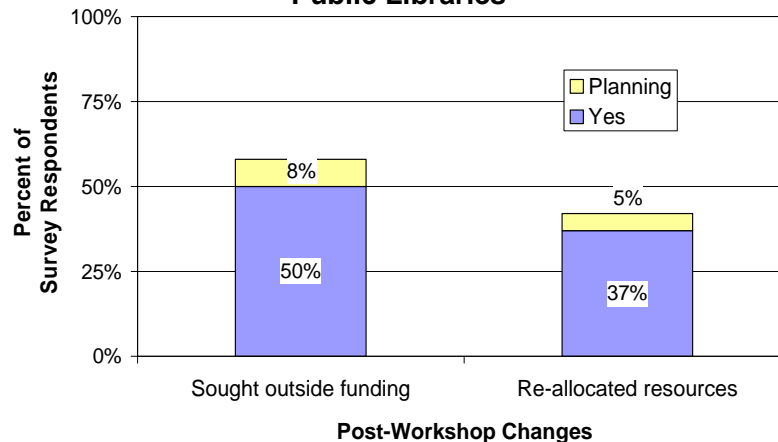
- Nearly 2 of every 3 respondents (66%) said that, since attending the CSL workshops, their library has contacted and partnered with community agencies (such as day care centers, preschools, and shelters) to further address early literacy.
- Another 18% of respondents indicated planning is in process at their libraries for developing such partnerships (see Chart #1).

"Since the workshop, I have added a preschool story time in the summer for groups (daycare, preschools, etc) and become involved in a coalition to implement a strategic plan for early childhood education in our county." Mary Vozar, Cortez Public Library.

Outside funding:

- Since attending the CSL workshops, half of the respondents (50%) have sought or procured additional funding (i.e. grants and donations) to support their early literacy activities.
- An additional 8% replied that planning is in process to do so (see Chart #2).

Chart 2. Post-Workshop Changes to Early Literacy Resources of Public Libraries



Resource allocation:

- Nearly 37% of respondents indicated that their libraries have re-allocated resources toward addressing early literacy issues since the time their librarians attended the CSL workshops.
- Another 5% said that such a re-allocation process is in the planning stages at their libraries (see Chart #2).

Staff/volunteers training:

- Nearly 40% of respondents stated that since the CSL workshops, they personally (or others in their libraries) have trained staff and/or volunteers to address early literacy issues.
- Another 16% said planning is in process to do so (see Chart #3).

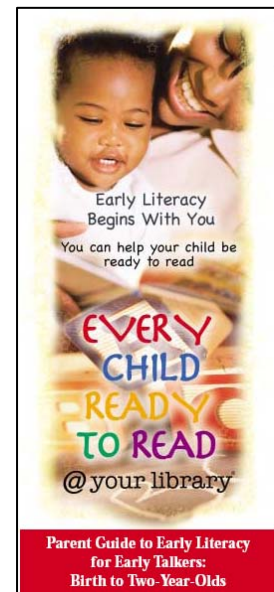
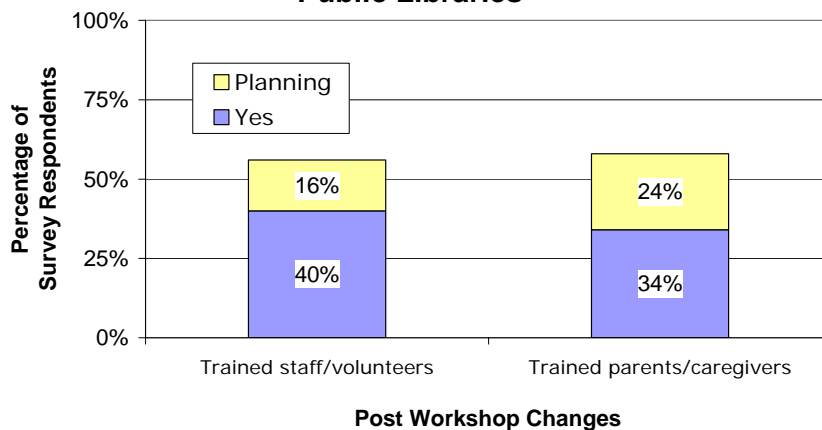


Chart 3. Post-Workshop Changes to Early Literacy Training of Public Libraries



Parents/caregivers training:

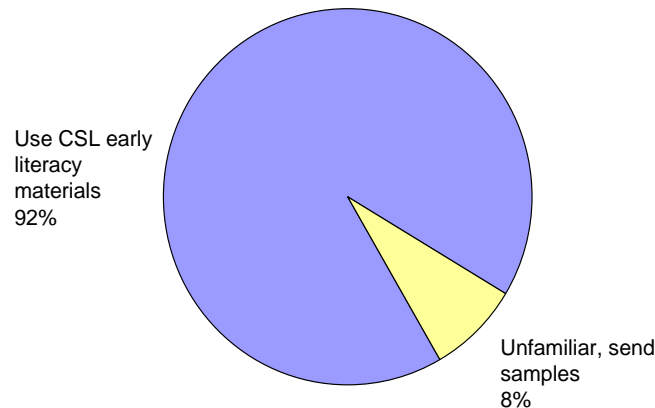
- More than one-third of all respondents (34%) said that since the CSL workshops, they personally (or others in their libraries) have offered workshops to parents and/or caregivers on early literacy skills and issues.
- Another 24% said planning is in process to do so (see Chart #3).

Early literacy materials produced by the CSL:

- An overwhelming number of respondents (92%) indicated that their libraries distribute and use early literacy handout materials produced by CSL (e.g. pamphlets such as *Getting Ready for Kindergarten: Ready? Set? Go!* and *Reading Tips for Parents*).
- The remainder of respondents (8%) said they were unfamiliar with the CSL pamphlets and would like to have samples sent to them (see Chart #4).



**Chart 4. Use of CSL
Early Literacy Materials at
Public Libraries**



The data from this survey and other input demonstrate that training public library staff to support and strengthen early literacy services is paying off. Such data is also enabling the Colorado State Library to improve and refine future training.

"The 'Reading Tips for Parents' and 'Getting Ready for Kindergarten' (in English and Spanish) are heavily used. I take them to every elementary school when doing school visits/literacy night."
 Melody Philbrick, Pikes Peak Library District.

For more information, contact project coordinator Bonnie McCune at: 303.866-6891 or mccune_b@cde.state.co.us. Visit CSL's early literacy web resources at http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/Childrens_literacy_Resources.htm.

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