

Raising a Reader Draft Evaluation Survey Results January 2006

Surveys to gauge the effectiveness of Raising a Reader were distributed to parents before and after enrollment in the program by First 5 contractors. A total of 106 surveys were completed, including 77 before joining the program, and 29 after involvement in the program. Of these, only 23 consisted of matched pre and post surveys. Descriptions of families given are based on the 77 available pre-tests. Changes in parent behavior described here are based only on the 23 available matched pre and post tests. Almost half of these came from the Indian Valley preschool.

Location	Indian Valley Family Resource Center	Roundhouse Council Indian Education Center	Early Intervention	Portola Even Start	Indian Valley Preschool	TOTAL
Pre	7	10	20	19	21	77
Post	1	10	4	1	13	29
Matched Pre/Post	1	6	4	1	11	23

FAMILY INFORMATION: 22% of parents enrolling in the program were college graduates, 17% had completed a two year college or training degree, and 45% were high school graduates. 16% had not completed high school. 79% of parents spoke English primarily, while 21% spoke Spanish. 58% of children were attending preschool, of these 52% had attended for a year or more. 28% had attended for less than 6 months and another 20% had attended between six months and a year. Parents surveyed at Portola Even Start (44%) and the Indian Valley Family Resource Center (29%) were the least likely to have a high school degree, while parents of special needs children served by the Early Intervention program were the most likely to have a college degree or higher (50%). Spanish speakers were significantly less likely to have graduated from high school (50%).

IMPORTANCE OF READING WITH CHILDREN: Parents overwhelmingly agreed on the importance of reading and sharing books with children to their development and future reading success. 83% rated this as a 10 on a one to ten scale, with 10 representing absolutely essential. 10% rated reading an 8 or 9 out of 10. 7% rated reading 5 or 6 in importance. These ratings did not change after enrollment in the program.

FREQUENCY OF PARENTAL READING: 56% of parents in the program spent time reading or sharing books with their child at least 5 times a week before enrollment. 25% of parents read to children 3 to 4 times a week, and 18% read once or twice a week. Only one parent (1%) did not read to their child at all before enrolling.

58% of English speaking parents and 43% of Spanish speaking parents read to their children at least 5 times a week at enrollment. English speaking parent's educational level had a significant effect on the frequency of reading before enrollment. Parents with a graduate degree were most likely to say they read to their children more than 5 times a week (100%) and had an established routine for reading (100%). Those with less than a high school education were the least likely to read 5 or more times a week (50%) and have an established routine (25%). Educational level did not have a significant influence on reading frequency for Spanish speaking parents.

39% of parents increased the frequency of reading to their children after enrollment in the program, while 4% decreased. 56% read with the same frequency as before enrollment.

FREQUENCY OF READING ROUTINE: 57% of parents in the program had established a regular routine time for reading or sharing books with their child before enrollment. 43% had no established routine. 40% of parents with no established routine before enrollment reported having set up a regular reading time after enrollment in the program. This led to 74% with an established reading routine after enrollment in the program.

Do you have an established routine time for reading or sharing books with your child?	Pre		Post		Change
	#	%	#	%	
No	10	43%	6	26%	
Yes	13	57%	17	74%	+17%
Total	23		23		

Parent’s educational attainment had a significant effect on routine establishment. College graduates (40%) and those without a high school degree were the most likely to develop a reading routine after enrollment in the program (100%).

FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USE: 36% of parents enrolling in the program did not take their child to the library before enrollment. 17% visited the library with their child only once to twice a year, 22% a few more times a year, 13% once a twice a month, and 12% a few times more often. Only 13% of parents increased their frequency of library use after enrollment. 70% maintained the same frequency and 17% decreased their use frequency.

FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY SERVICE ACCESS: When asked about what they had done at the library, 48% of parents reported browsing and playing the children’s section, 9% receiving advice from librarians about children’s books, 26% listening to story time with library staff, 43% checking out children’s materials from the library. Spanish speakers were much less likely (13%) to have browsed for children’s books. English speaking high school graduates (24%) and Spanish speakers (37%) were the least likely to have checked out children’s library materials at enrollment.

After enrollment, the percentage reporting browsing the children’s section, receiving librarian’s advice increased and checking out materials from the library increased substantially. The percentage listening to story time at the library remained the same.

Parents engaging in library behaviors	Pre		Post		Change
	#	%	#	%	
Browsing and playing the children’s section	11/23	48%	14/23	61%	+ 13%
Receiving advice from librarians about children’s books	2/23	9%	5/23	22%	+13%
Listening to story time with library staff	6/23	26%	6/23	26%	--
Checking out children’s materials from the library	10/23	43%	14/23	61%	+19%

Summary

Pre and post surveys completed by parents show that the Raising a Reader program helped parents to increase reading and other desired literacy behaviors with their children. The program helped 39% of parents to increase the frequency of reading to their children. 40% of parents with no established routine reported establishing a regular reading time after enrollment in the program. Those without a high school degree were the most likely to develop a reading routine as a result of the program (100%). The percentage of parents reporting browsing the children’s section, receiving librarian’s advice, and checking out children’s materials from the library also increased after enrollment in the program.