



Summary of Raising A Reader Independent Evaluations (2000-2009)

Early literacy for lifelong achievement

Overview

Raising A Reader MA aims to give every child an equal opportunity for achievement by engaging parents from high need communities in a routine of daily book sharing with their children ages birth through five. An affiliate of a national organization, Raising A Reader MA uses an early literacy change model that is proven to impact school readiness, academic performance and lifetime achievement for children.

35% of children enter kindergarten unprepared to learn, according to the *Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching*. This achievement gap is much higher for low-income and other high need children. Raising A Reader MA directly addresses this need, **annually working with more than 8,000 children**, their families and the early education and care system in strategically selected, high need communities. Our service model involves three components:

1. Our signature red bag rotation program, which puts high quality, developmentally and culturally appropriate books in the hands of families and early education and care centers
2. Delivery of an evidence-based, family engagement training series that teaches parents dialogic reading skills so they can read and share stories at home in a way that builds their children's vocabulary, critical thinking skills, executive function, oral language development and other pre-literacy skills
3. Training and support for early education and care providers in the development of children's pre-literacy skills through storytelling, book sharing, and related activities.



"Ten years of evidence shows that Raising A Reader works; and for ten years we have refined and updated our program model to increase the positive impact on the lives of children and families."
-Donna DiFillippo, Executive Director, Raising A Reader MA

Gold Standard Study Shows Raising A Reader Affects 5 Key Child Outcomes

In 2010, a partnership between the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the University of Texas Health Sciences Center completed a four-year, randomly controlled evaluation of the effectiveness of the three-part Raising A Reader MA program model with the addition of a five-part, evidence-based family workshop series. Results indicate that this model has **statistically significant effects on five key drivers of student lifetime achievement**: vocabulary, grammar, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and memory for language skills.

In 2011, Raising A Reader MA expanded its core program model to include the five-part, evidence based family engagement workshop series. This program enhancement was informed by local evaluation work completed by Dr. Nonie Lesaux at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education which recommended the intensification of family training services to enhance the overall impact of the program on the development and maintenance of home book sharing routines..

Program Evaluation Research

More than 20 independently conducted program evaluations show that the Raising A Reader MA model impacts:

Parent Engagement

- Parents engaged in Raising A Reader experienced an **82% increase in knowledge about the importance of building literacy skills** from birth (Organizational Research Services, 2008).
- Raising A Reader participation was associated with a **greater than two-fold increase in the proportion of English Learner parents who read to their children** most or all days (25.4% to 62.9%) (Harder & Company Community Research, 2007).

Kindergarten Readiness/ Child Performance

- The number of children who met or exceeded the PALS **Pre-K test scores rose by 322% and 112%** respectively in the Letter Sounds and Beginning Sound Awareness subtests after implementation of Raising A Reader (PALS Pre-K—Head Start, 2005).
- Raising A Reader English and Spanish speaking participants **performed significantly higher in Book Knowledge, Comprehension and Print Knowledge** on the FACES assessment as compared to national norms and local Head Starts not participating in RAR (Pacific Consulting Group, 2001).

When implemented with integrity, the Raising A Reader MA program model is **proven to impact school readiness, academic performance and lifetime achievement for children.** Program implementation is monitored continuously by Raising A Reader MA using our Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database. Partners and program sites are offered individualized support during the year to improve their implementation of the core program, to ensure the children enrolled in their programs receive the documented benefits.

A summary of the program evaluation research, conducted at Raising A Reader sites across the United States, is listed below.

Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
North Carolina Partnership for Children-Smart Start	University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center	2009	662
1. Significant increase in girls sharing books with parents 2. Significant increase in the number of children’s books in minority households following Raising A Reader. This was primarily true for African American parents and parents of children in classes with high subsidized care enrollment. 3. Significant limitations of the study, no control group, no independent evaluation. Concerns regarding ceiling effect were noted. Evaluation primarily of 3-5 star rating programs, unclear if quality instructional practices masked possible effects of RAR.			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
Seattle Public Library Foundation, Seattle, WA	Organizational Research Services, Seattle, WA	2008	190
1. 82% increase in knowledge about the importance of building literacy skills from birth. 2. Significant increase in the number of parents who recognize the importance of sharing books to increase reading readiness (p.<.001). 3. Significant increase in exposure to books and everyday use of literacy activities (p.<.001).			

Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
Multnomah County Public Library	NPC Research, Portland, OR.	2008	404
<p>1. Reading at least 3x per week was increased 46% over previous level. 2. Parents reported using positive read aloud practices 63% more than before RAR. 3. Children chose to read books 35% more often than other activities; with an increase of 31% in frequency of asking to be read to. 4. 52% of families reported that RAR books were used by more than one child, with 20% of those families reporting the books were used by three or more children.</p>			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
Washington State Thrive By Five	Organizational Research Services, Seattle, WA	2008	148
<p>1. Significant increase in parents understanding of the importance of sharing ideas (p.= <.001). 2. Significant increase in parents access and exposure to books (p.=<.001). 3. 68% of parents reported establishing regular routine for reading. 4. 50% of parents increased everyday use of activities to promote literacy.</p>			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
First 5 San Joaquin	Harder & Co. Community Research, San Francisco, CA	2008	1628
<p><u>Parent Engagement</u> 1. Significantly more parents reported reading to their child most days of the week after participating in RAR. 2. The proportion of parents that 'rarely' or 'never' read to their child decreased by three-fold after RAR participation. 3. Before participating in RAR, English Learner families were significantly less likely to report reading to their child most days or every day compared to English Proficient families. 4. While a higher proportion of both English Learner and English Proficient families read to their child after participating in RAR, the increase among English Learner families nearly doubled.</p>			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
First 5 Shasta-McConnell Foundation	Evaluation Solutions Sharon Brisolaro, Ph.D.	2008	2976
<p><u>Outcomes: Family Literacy Behaviors</u> 1. Significant increase in parents having a regular time for reading (p<.0001) Increases were greater for respondents with no previous RAR experience, with a high school education or less, with some college, with an annual family income of \$0 to \$40,000 and \$40,001 to \$60,000. 2. A significant increase in the number of books parents reported having in the home with 5% more parents reporting having over 10 children's books in the home (p<.002). 3. Parents reported reading or sharing books with their children more frequently, three or more times a week, by the post-test (p<.033). 4. More parents reported increasing their reading time to 20 minutes or more (p<.0001) More parents reported reading or sharing books with their children more frequently, three or more times a week, by the post-test (p<.033)</p>			

Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
First 5 San Joaquin	Harder & Company Community Research, San Francisco, CA	2007	581
<u>Parent Engagement</u>			
<p>1. Nearly three-quarters (70.5%) of parents reported reading to their child at least five days a week after participating in the program, compared with less than half (46.0%) at the start of the program.</p> <p>2. Significantly fewer parents reported never reading to their child prior to RAR (28.7%) than subsequent to participating in the program (6.4%) (p<.05).</p> <p>3. RAR participation was associated with a greater than two-fold increase in the proportion of English Learner parents who read to their children most or all days (25.4% to 62.9%).</p>			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
First 5 Sonoma County Children and Families Commission	Lafrance Associates (now LFA Group), San Francisco, CA	2006	45
<u>Literacy Behaviors</u>			
1. Significant increase in frequency of reading to or sharing books with child five times or more per week 37% (pre) 76% (post) (p<.001)			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
Multnomah County Public Library	Essential Services, Beaverton, OR	2006	33
<p>1. Overall increase in parent knowledge of why literacy is important.</p> <p>2. Increased paternal participation in reading activities.</p> <p>3. Increased involvement of other family members.</p> <p>4. Increased awareness of culturally-diverse topics and range of potential materials.</p> <p>5. Use of reading time to calm over-stimulated children.</p> <p>6. Book bags as organizing tool for children.</p>			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
United Way South Hampton Roads, VA	PALS Pre-K--Head Start	2005	120
<p>1. Increase from 31% to 81% performance on Print and Word Awareness subtest of PALS Pre-K in SY 04-05.</p> <p>2. Increase of 322 % in the number of children who met or exceeded the PALS Pre-K Letter Sounds subtest (from 23 to 97 students).</p> <p>3. Increase of 112% in number of students who met or exceeded the PALS Pre-K Beginning Sound Awareness subtest.</p>			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
Roaring Fork Colorado Raising A Reader	Pacific Consulting Group, Palo Alto, CA	2005	137
<p>1. Percentage of parents reading or sharing books three or more times per week increased from 70-84%.</p> <p>2. Percentage of parents who have a regular or routine time to share books increased from 65-77%.</p> <p>3. Percentage of parents who visit the library once per month increased from 23-52%.</p> <p>4 Percentage of parents who use any library service increased from 69-89%.</p>			

5. Percentage of parents who check out children's materials from the library increased from 50% to 75%.			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
Home Visiting Nurses, Santa Clara, CA	Pacific Consulting Group, Palo Alto, CA	2003	198
1. 12% increase in frequency of reading or sharing stories with child. (p.<.10) 2. 18% increase in establishing regular routine for reading with child. (p.<.05)			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
United Way of the Bay Area San Francisco County.	Applied Survey Research Watsonville, CA	2003	214
<u>Overall Early Literacy Scores</u>			
1. RAR children had 20% higher raw mean scores on the FACES assessment than children in comparison group. 2. RAR children had an adjusted mean score of 26% higher than children in comparison group. 3. RAR mean scores were 43% higher than non-RAR mean scores, when the highest performing school in the study (a non-RAR school) was excluded due to its unique focus on pre-literacy. 4. Whether the data is analyzed in terms of raw mean scores or adjusted scores, RAR children performed better on the early literacy assessment than children in comparison group. 5. On the individual subscales, RAR children had substantially higher pre-reading skills, more story comprehension, and more book knowledge than children in comparison group.			
<u>Parent Reading Practices</u>			
1. The Parent Survey showed a dramatic increase in the percentage of parents who read to their child five or more times a week, from 7% in the pre-survey to 37% in the post-survey, an increase of 471%. 2. Increase from 13%-62% for English speaking parents who reportedly read to their children five or more times a week from pre- to post-survey. Spanish and Cantonese speaking parents did not experience the same level of increases in reading five or more times a week to their children. 3. Increase from 28% to 65% for Cantonese speaking parents who reportedly read to their children three or more times a week, from pre- to post-survey. 4. Before RAR, slightly more than 44% of parents never took their children to the library. After RAR, fewer than 21% reported that they never took their child to the library.			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
Peninsula Community Foundation Part I: Parent/Child Reading Behaviors	Pacific Consulting Group, Palo Alto, CA	2001	467
1. Significant overall increase in frequency reading to or sharing books with child 3 times or more per week from 50-66% (p<.05). 2. Significant overall increase in percentage of parents set regular routine for reading with child 71-77% (p<.05). 3. Significant overall increase in the frequency of library usage pre 17-32% (p<.05). 4. Significant overall increase use of at least one library services from 63-76% (p<.05). 5. Mean rating of parent perception of importance of reading for future success from 9.15-9.42 (p<.05).			

Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
Peninsula Community Foundation Part II: Kindergarten Readiness/ Pre Literacy	Pacific Consulting Group, Palo Alto ,CA	2001	96
<p>1. Significantly higher performance in Book Knowledge, Comprehension and Print Knowledge of children participating in RAR English speakers on FACES assessment compared to national norms. (p.=<.05)</p> <p>2. Significantly higher performance in Book Knowledge, Comprehension and Print Knowledge of Spanish speakers on FACES compared to national norms. (p.=<.05).</p> <p>3. Significant increase in performance on FACES in Book Knowledge and Comprehension when compared to local Head Start not participating in RAR (p.=<.05).</p>			
Raising A Reader Affiliate Agency	External Evaluator	Year	n=
Peninsula Community Foundation	Pacific Consulting Group, Palo Alto, CA	2000	266
<p>1. In the overall group, four of the six reading behaviors showed a significant improvement. (Number of times a week an adult reads to the child, the child has an at-home reading routine, the number of children’s books at home, and the frequency of visits to the library.) (p.<.05) Respondent’s enjoyment in reading to the child, showed improvement (p.<.10).</p> <p>2. Low-income respondents showed the same improvements as the overall group as well as an improvement in the number of times a week the child reads to him/herself. The overall improvements seem to be driven by the low-income improvements.</p> <p>3. For middle-income respondents, having an at-home reading routine was the only behavior that showed a significant improvement.</p> <p>4. Even though only one of the four books in the book bag is in Spanish, the Spanish-speaking respondents showed a significant improvement in all four reading behaviors that improved in the overall group (p.<.05). The number of times a week the child reads him/herself showed a somewhat significant improvement (p.<.10).</p>			