



Center for Early Education and Development's
Assessment and Training Center (CEED-ATC)
Evaluation of Hennepin County Library's
Growing a Family of Readers (GFR) program
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Emergent literacy is an essential building block of children's later reading success and overall school readiness. In recognition of the vital importance of fostering emergent literacy skills in young children combined with the challenges faced in doing so by specific groups of parents, Hennepin County Libraries have developed and implemented the Growing a Family of Readers (GFR) project. The GFR project is a partnership between Hennepin County Libraries and Minneapolis Public School's Teenage Parenting and Pregnancy Program (TAPPP), the mission of which is to increase teen mothers' understanding of early literacy development and every day activities they can do with their children to improve their literacy development.

Specifically, the primary goal of the GFR Project is to increase teenage mothers' ability help their children develop emergent literacy skills as a way to increase their school readiness and to improve their overall quality of life. The project hopes to accomplish this through focusing on three target areas, including: (1) increased shared reading time (between parent and child?) or time spent with books, (2) increased talking and singing with children, and (3) increased visits to the library and the use of library books.

In order to demonstrate a strong match between best practices in the field of emergent literacy development and the design and implementation of the GFR project, several evaluation activities were conducted including: a literature review of relevant fields of research, structured observations of GFR sessions, and structured interviews with GFR Liaisons and a TAPPP coordinator. In addition to clarifying the GFR project's best practice basis, HCL hoped to gain valuable information to inform methods for strengthening the project's design for future scaling or more rigorous program evaluation.

Literature Review

Methods

In order to examine the overlap between the design and implementation of the GFR program and best practices in the field of emergent literacy, CEED conducted a literature review using the following search engines: ERIC, Psych INFO, and Google Scholar. A series of searches moved from a specific to a more general focus, utilizing a combination of major descriptors and keywords including: emergent literacy, adolescent mothers, family literacy, literacy, family, language, teen mothers, toddlers, preschool, school readiness, and cultural competence. The search was limited to articles from 1986 to 2007.

Twenty-two articles met the designated search criteria, which included: a) the study was either qualitative, quantitative, or used mixed methodology; b) the target population included children birth to age six, who were the children of teenage mothers [this was expanded to include all children from birth to age six]; and c) if the study contained an experimental intervention, the outcome measure was child focused (i.e.: increased language or literacy development). Analysis and synthesis of these articles was conducted to identify areas of best practice in emergent literacy, broadly, and more specifically for children of teenage mothers. This synthesis is summarized below.

Introduction

Children of teen mothers lag behind in many areas related to school readiness and this can establish a pattern for the rest of the children's lives. Differences in school readiness are related to parent's income level, and the majority of teen moms have an income level well below the poverty line. In addition, many teen mothers also exhibit the additional risk factors of lower maternal education level and single parenthood, which are often concomitant both with a lower socio-economic status, and differences in school readiness (Moore, Morrison & Greene, 1997).

Children of teen mothers fall behind in several major areas of school readiness including: cognition and knowledge; language and communication; approaches to learning; and emotional well-being and social skills (Terry-Humen, Manlove, & Moore, 2005). This lag in development of language and communication skills translates into differences in reading skills in later grades. The difference in reading skills of children from lower SES brackets can be seen as early as first grade. This trajectory continues through elementary school, with the same children falling behind in 4th grade (Juel, Griffin and Gough, 1986). Some of this difference can be attributed to a lack of emphasis on literacy within the home environment for children of teen mothers (Burgess, 2005).

The home literary environment has a significant impact on children learning to read (Saracho, 1997). There is a significant difference between the school readiness skills of children read to at least three times a week and those read to less frequently (Early Childhood Longitudinal Study [ECLS-K], 1998-99). Teenage mothers are less knowledgeable about the importance of reading to their children, and children of teenage mothers are one of the largest populations that lag behind in school readiness (Terry-Humen, Manlove and Moore, 2005). This

school readiness gap tends to continue throughout a child's academic career unless intervention strategies are implemented (Brooks-Gunn, Guo & Furstenberg, 1993).

The Public Library Association/Association for Library Service to Children (PLA/ALSC) Early Literacy Initiative (2003) study has shown that targeted interventions can increase teenage mothers' understanding of the importance of shared book time with their children. The results of this study form the foundation of the Growing a Family of Readers project.

Language and Literacy Development

There Hennepin County library designates six major components of emergent literacy in their research-based outreach materials. These include: print motivation, print awareness, letter knowledge, narrative skills (oral language), phonological awareness, and vocabulary (<http://www.mplib.org/els.asp>). The development of these skills is necessary for children to learn to read. Not only are these emergent literacy skills related to later reading achievement, they are also related to overall school readiness and later school success (PLA/ALSC, 2003; Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). Children's oral language skills and vocabulary development can be promoted by teaching parents to increase their level of responsiveness to children's speech and their attempts to initiate joint attention to print in their everyday environment (Snow et al., 1991).

The process of children becoming ready to read starts in the family, with parents as their children's first teachers. The process of learning to read begins when parents read to their infants, modeling the sounds and patterns of every-day language. Being read to aloud by a parent or caregiver is a vital component of the language development process for young children (Snow et al., 1998). Specifically, shared reading time promotes oral language development, which is one of the main areas of emergent language and literacy skill development. This is especially true when parents and caregivers engage in shared reading time with their children on a regular basis (Whitehurst, Epstein, Angell, Smith & Fischel, 1994).

Dialogic reading is a specific type of shared picture book reading, where parents use who, what, why, when and other open-ended questions to repeat and extend the child's speech to the point where the child becomes the story teller and the adult listens (Arnold, Lonigan, Whitehurst, & Epstein, 1994). In turn this can increase expressive vocabulary development, a component of oral language development (Lonigan and Whitehurst, 1998). The dialogic reading technique has been found to have a significant positive effect on the emergent literacy skills of low income

preschool children (Lonigan and Whitehurst, 1998). The dialogic reading technique has also been shown to be effective with toddlers. When parents use a highly responsive reading style while reading to their toddlers, children demonstrate gains in expressive vocabulary development (Huebner, 2000).

Children of Teen Mothers and Emergent Literacy Development

Teenage mothers are a specific and unique sub-population of typical family structures. As discussed earlier, teen mothers experience numerous risk factors and often need additional support to effectively promote the language and reading development of their children. The limited home literacy environment provided by teens is partially due to a poverty-driven lack of resources, specifically limited access to books and other print materials (Snow et al, 1991) (Neuman, 1999). Other contributing factors include low maternal education and single parenthood (Moore et al., 1997). Adolescent mothers have also been shown to talk to their children less frequently and to parent in a more directive than responsive manner (Keown, Woodward, & Field, 2001). Teen mothers' limited time spent talking with their children is a concern, as children who are talked to more frequently by their parents before the age of three years have been shown to have higher reading achievement in later grades (Hart & Risley, 1995).

However, it should be noted that interventions designed to boost the frequency and depth of maternal speech patterns and increase maternal responsiveness of teen mothers have shown significant positive results. The intervention effects are especially robust when mothers are coached and mentored on how to engage with their children in a more responsive, positive and stimulating way (Deutscher, Fewell & Gross, 2006). The dialogic reading technique focuses both on maternal speech and responsiveness, and thus is an excellent strategy to teach teen mothers to promote the language and reading development of their children. The use of shared reading (dialogic reading) techniques with young children has resulted in significant gains in children's emergent literacy skills and overall school readiness (Neuman, 1997).

Effective Provision of Services to Teenage Mothers: TAPPP

Teen mothers fare best in programs that offer centralized and coordinated services including: health care, financial services, school programming, daycare, etc (Stephens, Wolf & Batten, 1999). The public school system has been an effective venue for provision of such centralized and coordinated services to teen moms, particularly when programs include parent support and childcare services (Sadler et al., 2007). Because the GFR project recognizes the value of centralized services for this population, it was designed to partner with Minneapolis Public School's Teenage Parenting and Pregnancy Program (TAPPP) program. Typically, these coordinated services include health care, county services, and onsite childcare.

To ensure that services are coordinated smoothly and efficiently, the TAPPP program has a program coordinator at each site. The coordinator is responsible for helping teen parents access available services and serve as the main point of contact between TAPPP and the GFR Project.

Linking Early Literacy Development with Best Practice in Working with Teenage Mothers: GFR

As stated previously, GFR builds upon TAPPP's strong foundation of best practice services for working with teenage mothers with the added layer of a focus on emergent literacy. GFR employs Liaisons who travel to the high school in which the TAPPP program is located, in line with the nature of centralized services. The Liaisons work directly with the teenage mothers within the setting of the TAPPP programs to provide education on methods to promote early literacy development. In addition, GFR increases the teen mothers' ability to access books and other print materials by supplying a book-mobile that brings library books and services directly to the TAPPP sites

An additional strength of the Growing a Family of Reader's Program is that the Liaisons share the cultural background of the participants at each site. This shared cultural identity promotes a sense of trust, receptivity, and relationship-building, which encourages the participants' acceptance and adherence to the ideas and practices being taught by the Liaison. In addition, it has been demonstrated that mothers are more likely to follow the lead of teachers with whom they have built trusting relationships (Roskos & Neuman, 1993).

Methods of Evaluation

Structured Interviews

In order to capture the TAPPP coordinator and GFR Liaisons' ideas regarding the strengths of the GFR/ TAPPP partnership, as well as their ideas on ways the program could be improved, evaluators conducted several structured interviews with the GFR Liaison for the North High School TAPPP program and the GFR Liaison for the Southwest High School TAPPP program. In addition, the TAPPP coordinator for Southwest High School was also interviewed. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes and one hour. Interviewees were asked a predetermined set of questions that focused on unique considerations for working with teen parents, how being a teen parent might impact one's ability to foster emergent literacy skills, the role of relationship-building within the program, use of and specific adherence to a set curriculum, the role of cultural identity and language within the program, and specific barriers to program success (see Appendix A and B for interview questions). A digital voice recorder was used to record the interviews, which were then transcribed. These transcripts were then reviewed to identify important ideas and common themes of best practice implementation or areas for targeted program improvement.

Identified Strengths

One common theme that emerged from the structured interviews was the importance of a shared cultural identity between the program participants and GFR Liaison. One example of the benefit of a shared cultural identity is that the Liaison is able to recognize and work to overcome culturally-based barriers to program acceptance. For example, one Liaison pointed out that for cultures with a significant history of oral storytelling, that practice may be recognized as the primary way to teach oral language skills, while simultaneously providing an opportunity for older generations to bond with their grandchildren and keep cultural traditions alive. This Liaison acknowledged the participants' concern that reading to very young children is not a typical practice in their shared culture, and was able to reinforce the importance of reading with children as an added beneficial layer to oral storytelling.

Another significant idea that emerged was the importance of conducting sessions in participants' native language. The TAPPP coordinator and GFR Liaison working at for the

children to receive a high dose of interactional language modeling in their first language, which has been shown to be extremely helpful for bilingual children (Snow, 1991; Hammar, Miccio & Wagstaff, 2003; Bialystok, 2007). The GFR program does this at the Southwest High School location. The Liaison teaches mostly in Spanish and conducts most of the story times in Spanish as well.

Although the interviews did not present similar views on the impact of being a teen parent on the participants' ability to foster emergent literacy skills in their children, they did all discuss the vital role that relationships played in overall program success. Each interviewee approached the process of rapport-building a bit differently, but agreed that the relationship was essential to the participants' willingness to be open to the information and ideas that were being presented, internalize those ideas, and incorporate the strategies into their day-to-day lives.

Challenges and Barriers

Lack of consistent attendance was the largest barrier to the success of the GFR program. Attendance varied from week to week. During interviews, both the North High and Southwest High Liaison stated that they felt inconsistent attendance interfered with the effectiveness of the GFR program. Specifically, both Liaisons stated that due to uncertainties about attendance, they were not able to effectively plan their curriculum from week to week. Because of the sequential nature of the GFR curriculum, both Liaisons felt it necessary to go back and re-visit topics already covered for those who had missed previous sessions. Since they frequently could not anticipate the exact constituency of the participants, it was difficult for them to plan and conduct the curriculum in an organized manner.

The Southwest Liaison experienced a unique challenge due to the large percentage of Spanish-speaking participants. She preferred to conduct the sessions mainly in Spanish when the participants were all Spanish-speaking. However, she was never able to determine prior to the start of the session whether she would be conducting it in English or Spanish. In addition, both Liaisons felt that relationship-building and trust between the teen moms and the Liaisons suffered as a result of fluctuating attendance, which in their opinion limited the effectiveness of the program. The Liaisons also were frustrated by the occurrence of unexpected school-based events that prevented the participants from attending certain sessions.

A final and important challenge encountered by the GFR Liaisons was effectively planning for and providing services to those TAPPP participants who did not share their cultural identity. Although the GFR Liaisons for each site were selected in part due to their shared cultural identity with the majority of the participants, at each site there were a handful of participants who were from other ethnic and cultural backgrounds. For example, the majority of the teen moms served by the North High program shared the Liaisons' African American heritage. However, there also were several Hmong parents and children. Due to the lack of shared cultural identity and resultant lack of a trusting relationship, the North High Liaison determined that she did not feel adequately prepared to do parent education with these participants, and therefore the Hmong participants did not receive the same targeted parent education as the African American participants. The Southwest High Liaison also stated that she did not feel that she was able to establish the level of trust with the English-speaking participants that she was able to foster with the Spanish-speaking participants, thus limiting her ability to effectively teach and mentor the English-speaking moms.

GFR Session Observation

Observations of GFR sessions were conducted at both TAPPP sites: two at Southwest and one at North. The two observations at Southwest captured two different types of activities, with the first observation occurring during a visit by the Readmobile and the second occurring during the typical parent education/ shared story time format. A structured observation form (Appendix C) was used in an attempt to identify the frequency with which early literacy best practices were being implemented across sites.

The observation form was developed to capture behaviors associated with the previously discussed major components of early literacy, the development of which is essential to later reading success (PLA/ALSC, 2003). The form also was developed to capture the frequency of behaviors that exemplify close, warm interactions, as the provision of literacy experiences within the context of warm interactions is what makes the family environment particularly conducive to children's acquisition of skills necessary for learning to read.

Tables 1 and 2 below list the frequency with which target behaviors associated with emergent literacy best practice occurred during the half hour observation period (frequency of behaviors at Southwest is an average across two observation periods).

Table 1. Frequency of Observed Liaison Emergent Literacy Behaviors

Early Literacy Skill	Behavior	North High School	Southwest High School
Print Motivation/Awareness	Shows front and back cover of book	Not observed	3
Print Motivation/Awareness	Discusses author/illustrator	Not observed	2
Vocabulary	Labels pictures/objects	Not observed	10
Narrative Skills	Asks open-ended questions	1	5
Narrative Skills	Asks closed-ended questions	Not observed	12
Phonological Awareness	Leads songs	2	3
Phonological Awareness	Leads rhymes	1	2
Phonological Awareness	Leads finger plays	Not observed	3.5

Table 2. Frequency of Observed Parent/ Child Emergent Literacy Behaviors

Early Literacy Skill	Behavior	North High School	Southwest High School
Print Motivation/Awareness	Close proximity to child while reading	5	3.5
Print motivation/Awareness	Child interacting with book	5	6
Vocabulary	Mother labels pictures in book	10	8
Phonological Awareness	Parent Engagement in Liaison led songs	5	2.5
Phonological Awareness	Child Engagement in Liaison led songs	5	7

Phonological Awareness	Parent Engagement in Liaison led rhymes	5	3
Phonological Awareness	Child engagement in Liaison led rhymes	5	7
Phonological Awareness	Parent engagement in Liaison led finger plays	Not observed	3
Phonological Awareness	Child engagement in Liaison led finger plays	Not observed	6

At both TAPPP sites, the Liaisons, coordinators, staff, parents and children participated in a half hour of shared reading, singing, rhyming, dancing and finger-plays. Each of the two sites conducted this in a somewhat different manner.

At North High, the group gathered with a song and the Liaison then passed out books to the mothers to read to their children. Each mother-child(ren) group sat together and read the featured books at their own pace. It was evident that mothers had learned the dialogic reading techniques, as they were repeating words in the books and extending the stories by asking “wh” questions. Some mothers were following their child’s lead and listening to the child label the pictures and tell the story in their own way. In addition, the participants had learned to promote a positive shared experience with their children, as was demonstrated by children sitting on their parent’s laps and mutual smiling and laughing.

At Southwest High, the GFR Liaison played a more directive role in leading the group of teen moms. Instead of passing out books and monitoring/ facilitating mother-child shared reading time, the Liaison at Southwest led the participants and their children through a series of language and literacy development activities. She began the story time with a song that was related to the featured book of the day. The featured book and song were about colors, and so to extend the song and story, the Liaison asked the participants to find and point to the child wearing a certain color. After this story and song were completed, the featured books were passed out, in both Spanish and English.

The Liaison then modeled the dialogic reading technique to the participants, by asking questions, repeating rhyming phrases, and acting out the different characters while reading the story aloud. It was apparent that the children and parents enjoyed this teaching style, as they joined in and shouted out the repetitive phrases from each story. In addition to providing a highly

engaging book-related activity, the Liaison also led the participants in Spanish nursery rhymes, a Spanish song about naming body parts, and several finger plays. Because the Liaison of this group took a more directive role with the participants, opportunities for the participants to practice and receive feedback on the dialogic reading technique were not observed.

In addition to the observation of the shared group time, at Southwest, an observation was also conducted during the sites monthly visit from Hennepin County Library's Readmobile. The observer learned that the Readmobile visited each site once a month so that parents and children could have easy access to books and other materials. Each parent was issued a library card and could check out library materials for themselves and their children. To ensure active interest by the moms and children, Readmobile, items were specifically chosen that matched the cultural identity and interests of the participants at each site.

Conclusions

Hennepin County Library's Growing a Family of Readers program demonstrates a match between program design and research-based components. The GFR program is structured to model behaviors that promote literacy development in young children within the context of the close mother-child interaction. In addition, GFR is unique in that it recognizes the importance of not limiting intervention to specific child-based factors, but rather attempts to support families across areas of need. This model espouses Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of child development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), in that its stated goal is to improve children's emergent literacy skills, yet it doesn't limit educational focus to emergent literacy skills. Rather, GFR intentionally layers its services on top of those provided by TAPPP, in an attempt to address the numerous health, financial, emotional, and daily life skill needs of the teenage mother population.

This report, which was based on an extensive literature review, program observations and structured interviews, demonstrates support for the strong theoretical basis of GFR's program design. However, conclusions about the effectiveness of program implementation are not able to be made at this point due to: inconsistent attendance of the participants, lack of adherence to a specified curriculum, lack of specific and rigorous measurement of changes in the teen mothers' behavior, questions about carryover to settings outside of the school program, and maintenance

over time. Due to its potential, a larger scale trial of its effectiveness may be a next logical step. However, prior to implementing a large scale study, some areas of the program would need to be revised and piloted. Suggestions for revision to the program follow in Appendix D.

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Appendix A

GFR Interview Questions-Liaisons

I'm going to start out by asking some general questions about your thoughts on teen parenting.

Do you have previous experience working with teenage mothers and their children? How so?

How do you think being a teenager affects a woman's parenting skills and ability to interact with her child?

How do you think a child's development is affected by being born to and raised by a teenage mother? First I'd like to talk about different developmental categories.

Social/Emotional?

Cognitive?

School Readiness/Literacy/Language development?

Anything else?

Now I'm going to switch gears and ask you some specific questions about the Growing a Family of Readers Program.

What impact does the girls' attendance have on the effectiveness of your parent education time?

Does attendance influence the shared reading time? How so?

Do you have any ideas about addressing this in the program?

How do you make decisions about sticking to the curriculum as planned? For instance, are there times when you modify the activity or your style of interaction from what is suggested by the curriculum?

Can you tell me about these modifications?

How do you think these modifications benefit the teen moms?

Do you (or how do you) track these adjustments in the curriculum so that they are available for others who might use this program?

Please talk about the role that relationships play in the success of the program.

What specific skills do you use to build rapport with teenage mothers?

How does your cultural identity influence your work with TAPPP participants in general, and also specifically with literacy content?

How does the language you speak influence your relationships with the mothers and children at your site?

How important do you think sharing a language or cultural background is to developing relationships with the program participants?

How does having participants that are not African American (North High School) or Hispanic (Southwest High School) impact the effectiveness of your program?

Do you think that program participants should be limited to those with the same cultural identity as the liaison? Why? Why not?

If you do not share the same cultural identity, what traits would be the most important to build trust and relationships with the program participants?

With the Spanish speaking program at Southwest, do you think the participants should be limited to Spanish speaking mothers/children?

What do you think are the most important strategies to promote the goals of the GFR program? Would these strategies look different with a different population (i.e.: those other than teen moms)?

As you think about what the teenage moms and children are gaining from this intervention, what do you think are the most important gains?

Would you make any changes in this program?

In what ways do you think the GFR program could be improved?

Appendix B

GFR Interview Questions - Coordinators

I'm just going to start by asking some general questions about your thoughts on teen parenting. Just for some background information, what is some of your previous experience working with teen mothers and their children?

How do you think being a teenager affects a woman's parenting skills and her ability to interact with her child?

How do you think the child's development can be affected by being born to and raised by a teen mother? I have a couple different categories. You can talk just generally if you want. I'm going to talk touch social, emotional, cognitive, language development, and then anything else.

Now I'm going to switch gears and ask you some more specific questions about Growing a Family of Readers Program and about TAPPP. How well does the Growing a Family of Readers fit into the overall framework of the TAPPP program at your site? Do you see it as a worthwhile endeavor?

What changes in behavior or what impact have you seen on the mothers as a result of the program?

Same question but just for children. Have you seen changes or impact on the children themselves?

What impact does the girls' attendance have on the effectiveness of this intervention?

Do you think the attendance had as much impact on the shared reading time with the kids as it did on the parent piece, when Vivian was working with the parents versus when she was working with the children?

Do you have any ideas about how to address the attendance issue or do you think that's part of being teenage moms? I understand there are two issues: One was that the program was moved to a different school but say we're talking about just attendance.

How do you make decisions? Do you stick pretty well to the liaison schedule of doing the planned curriculum every Friday, or does your site end up having things—I don't know how to explain this. I guess at North a few times I went they had to disrupt the program or change it for other things. Have you been able to stick pretty regularly to Vivian doing the program and working every Friday?

Were there times when the immediate needs of the teenagers were more important than doing the planned curriculum so that you had to be flexible that way?

Please talk about the role you think relationships play in the success of the program.

What specific skills do you think are necessary to build rapport with teenage mothers? You're talking about respect.

How do you think that the cultural identity of the liaisons influences the relationship-building with the TAPPP participants in general? How do you think it impacts the literacy issues?

How important do you think sharing the language and cultural background is to developing relationships with program participants? How does having participants that are not Hispanic at the Southwest High School program impact the effectiveness of the program?

Do you think the program participants should be limited to those with the same cultural identity or native language?

What traits do you think are the most important to building trust and relationships when you're not sharing the same?

What do you think are the most important strategies that you can use to promote the Growing a Family of Readers program with the teenage moms?

As you think about what the teenage moms and children are gaining from this program or this intervention, what do you think are the most important gains for them?

Are there any changes you would make in the program?

Are there any other ways do you think the Growing a Family of Readers program could be improved?

Appendix C

GFR/ TAPPP STORYTIME OBSERVATION

Observation Site:

Date:

Time:

Number of Staff:

Number of Parents:

Total number of children:

Pre-talkers (0-23 mos):

Talkers (2-3 years):

Number of Parent Child Groupings:

Number of Pregnant Mothers with no previous children:

Books used:

BOOK/ PRINT AWARENESS AND MOTIVATION BEHAVIORS

LIAISON CHECKLIST

Showed front and back cover of book

Talked about author/illustrator

Notes:

PARENT CHECKLIST WITH FREQUENCY

Held child on lap _____

Sat next to child _____

Held book so child could see and touch _____

Let child hold book _____

PHONEMIC AWARENESS BEHAVIORS

Liaison Led Behaviors

SONGS

1.

2.

3

4.

Parent Engagement_____

Child Engagement_____

Observation notes:

FINGERPLAYS

1.

2.

3.

4.

Parent Engagement_____

Child Engagement_____

Notes:

RHYMING (leaving a word blank, emphasizing the rhyme)

1.

2.

3.

4.

Parent Engagement_____

Child Engagement_____

Notes:

USE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SOUNDS

[] Different voices/characters

[] Animal sound

NARRATIVE SKILLS

[] Explain meaning of word

[] Closed-ended questions

[] Open-ended questions

LIAISON CREATED CLIMATE

Liaison Behaviors:

- Used Names
- Smiling
- Eye contact with Parents
- Eye contact with Children
- Physical contact with Children
- Positive Climate Parent/Child
 - Parent Participation
 - Child Participation
- Physical Contact
- Mutual Smiling
- Labeling objects
- Pointing to print

Appendix D

Suggested GFR Program Revisions

- (1) Identify the essential components of the GFR curriculum. Re-design the current curriculum so that there is always a review of the essential components at the start of each session.

- (2) Identify the essential emergent literacy behaviors to be taught to the teen moms. These may include: use of “wh” statements, asking questions, repeating child statements, providing praise for child initiations, giving the child wait time, etc.

- (3) Make sure that GFR curriculum: (1) specifies procedures for modeling emergent literacy behaviors, with Liaisons describing the behaviors/ purpose while modeling occurs, (2) builds in time for the mothers to practice the behaviors and receive feedback during sessions, and (3) provides time for Liaisons to observe and record frequency and spontaneity of target behavior use during monitored mother-child shared reading time.

- (4) Provide cultural competency training to GFR Liaisons so that they can increase their ability to develop close and trusting relationships with all participants.

- (5) Provide GFR Liaisons with an academic calendar of school events at the beginning of the year and schedule programming so that programming does not overlap with special school events.

- (6) Ask the school secretary or communications staff to include the GFR Liaison on all group email lists that alert students and staff to unexpected or school events.

- (7) Determine what the participants would find reinforcing and include these as incentives for attendance, including a special incentive for participants with 90% or greater attendance.