The United States has a literacy problem. The National Center for Family Literacy estimates that over 34 million people struggle with basic literacy skills. In order to determine the involvement of the Triangle Area (North Carolina) elementary public schools in family literacy programs, school literacy specialists were surveyed. Unfortunately, there were insufficient responses to provide meaningful results. A community assessment was then conducted that found the Augustine Project to be the best active program to help students struggling with literacy. The amount of training that the Augustine Project provides far surpasses the America Reads Program, the other active program in the area. During the 2008-2009 school year, the Augustine Project served 400 youth from 74 schools in four school districts within the Triangle Area while America Reads served 216 students. Recommendations are offered that will lead to a better assessment of existing programs and how to address future needs.

Headings:

Literacy Services -- North Carolina

Illiteracy and Families

Literacy and Families

Children's Reading

Surveys -- Literacy
FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS
IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
TRIANGLE AREA, NORTH CAROLINA

by

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of the School of Information and Library Science
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Approved by

Sandra Hughes-Hassell
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Introduction

The United States has a literacy problem. According to the National Center for Family Literacy (2008), more than 34 million adults have low literacy rates. A low literacy person can read at the grade levels 1-2, but they will have difficulty filling out forms and following complex or unclear instructions. Adult literacy rates did not change from 1992 to 2003 (National Center for Family Literacy, 2008). Planty et al. (2007) used four levels (below basic, basic, intermediate, and proficient) to rate adult literacy. Only 13% of those surveyed were ranked as proficient, which means they possess the skills necessary to do complex literacy activities. This finding suggests that millions of children do not have literate family members supporting their learning by either directly teaching basic skills or by serving as role models for reading and writing skills.

Family members and caregivers play a very important role in educating their children. They teach the skills, knowledge, and attitudes believed to be precursors for reading and writing (Sulzby & Teale, 2003). Having good literacy skills is essential for achieving the American dream. Recognizing that our nation has a literacy problem, the U.S. government has enacted several legislative acts such as Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Workforce Investment Act, 1998) and Reading Excellence Act (Title VIII Reading Excellence Act, 1998). The goal of these acts is to provide services to improve the literacy of educationally underachieving adults and their children. These services are referred to as
family literacy programs. Amending Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, the Reading Excellence Act adds reading readiness skills and support in early childhood. Its goal is to teach every child to read by the end of third grade.

There are many definitions for family literacy. Tracey and Morrow (2006) defined family literacy as the study of the impact of family on the literacy development of a child (p. 87). In this paper, the term “family” includes parent(s), relatives, caregivers, and those legally responsible for the child’s care. The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, defines family literacy programs as:

… services that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family, and that integrate all of the following activities: (1) interactive literacy activities between parents and their children; (2) training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children; (3) parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and (4) an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, 1998, Sec 203).

I will be using this definition in my survey of family literacy programs offered in the school districts of Durham, Orange, Wake, and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools within the Triangle Area in North Carolina, as well as those offered by non-profit community organizations. The two questions that I will explore are:

1) What services/interventions are offered for children in grades K-5?

2) How are these programs evaluated?
Literature Review

Families play a crucial role in their children’s education. Parents and other family members are the first educators of their children. Before the average child enters the school system, he/she is often exposed to a large amount of vocabulary, stories, signs, and written words. Parents can help their children be successful in school by reading to them on a regular basis, by listening to their children read, by asking questions to probe for understanding, by helping with letter recognition, and so forth. If children are not exposed to a literacy rich environment before entering kindergarten, research suggests they will be at a significant disadvantage (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; McCarthy, 2000; Morrow & Young, 1997; Storch, S. A. & Whitehurst, G. J., 2002). In order to address the deficiencies many children have experienced, the federal government enacted five pieces of legislation (Reading Excellence Act, Adult Education and National Literacy Act, Head Start, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and Workforce Investment Act) designed to provide services to improve the literacy of educationally underachieving adults and their children. The majority of these programs are found in local public schools (Amstutz, 2000). In 2000 the federal government signed the Literacy Involves Families Together Act that encourages the use of Title I funds at the local level for family literacy programs. It also amended the Even Start Family Literacy legislation to serve children older than eight if their school uses Title I funds (National Center for Family Literacy, 2001).

Defining Family Literacy and Family Literacy Programs

There is a general lack of agreement on the various elements associated with family literacy such as definitions, practices, participants, measures, and research
According to the National Center for Family Literacy it is difficult to define and describe these programs because family literacy programs encompass a wide variety of services that vary according to the needs of participants and resources available. For the purposes of this study, I will use the definition of family literacy programs provided by The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998:

... services that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family, and that integrate all of the following activities: (1) Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children; (2) training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children; (3) parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and (4) an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, 1998, sec 203).

Description and Evaluation of Family Literacy Programs

There are some common features shared by all family literacy programs. Most programs offer literacy instruction to members of the family in a supportive environment. For most programs, the activities and curriculum are determined by the teachers. However some programs involve the parents in planning the activities. Many have a supervised component that involves the family working with their child. Activities are designed to impart skills such as the reading techniques of activating background information, making predictions, conducting a picture walk-through of the book, asking questions, and relating stories to real-life experiences. Teachers lend support to overcome some of the obstacles in family learning. The environment of these programs encourages a positive attitude toward learning. Below I will discuss
specific programs that have published empirical studies of their program effectiveness.

In evaluating the program’s effectiveness, it is important to consider the program’s goals and activities offered to reach these goals.

Davis Elementary is a small, low-income, rural school that had a poor student performance record. Jayroe and Brenner (2005) reported on a two and a half year program that provided after school and summer literacy activities. Eighty children in pre-K through third grade received tutoring, writing and reading assistance. Family members, professors, and teachers met weekly to plan learning experiences. There were also professional development sessions for the teachers and family members. Each after school program began with a read-aloud. In small groups of students, the teachers worked on writing, comprehension skills, phonemic awareness, and phonics. Over time, the number of family members assisting with the program increased significantly. The researchers asked two major questions. Did parents become better at working with their child as a result of this program? They looked at parent’s confidence levels to answer this question. The other major research question was how much of the school’s learning transferred to home activities? All participants (80-90) were included in the experimental group. Field notes and observations, tapes of sessions, journals, and interviews attempted to answer these questions. The authors reported that the participants were spending more time on literacy activities at home. Family members became better at asking open-ended questions, reading with expression, and encouraging their child to discuss the readings.

For his doctoral work, Marion (2004) examined a newly established family literacy program in a rural county of North Carolina. The program was held twice a
week for three hours in the evening at Smith Elementary School. Both Hispanic parents and students received English language instruction. Tutorial services and homework assistance was also offered. Children often worked on reading, spelling, and math activities. The author noted that the program was not designed to provide a comprehensive model of family literacy. Besides researching the impact of a family literacy program on participating families and schools, Marion (2004) explored how the program affected the beliefs and actions of the stakeholders. To collect his data, he used interviews, surveys, observations, attendance records, report card grades, test scores for grades 3 and above, and test scores for adult participants. His sample size was extremely small, being composed of 10-16 students and 12 adults. Conclusions drawn from this work are as follows:

…family literacy programs operating within a school context improve school community relationships … participants and stakeholders articulate the purpose of such a program from varied perspectives; the implementation of such a program within a school setting impacts the attitudes of staff within the school regarding the importance of parental involvement (Marion, 2004, p. 193).

In an urban inner city, Morrow and Young (1997) looked at how a family literacy program enhanced the children’s achievement and interest in literacy. Family members of students in first through third grade attended monthly meetings throughout the school year. There were two parts of the study: an in-school component for both treatment and control groups and the home-based component for the treatment group. The school portion of the program consisted of literature circles where teachers would conduct a read-aloud and build vocabulary. After this activity, students would either create stories and/or write in their journals. Several times a week for 30-40 minutes
children would work either independently or in groups in the literacy center, where reading and writing activities occurred. Parents of the treatment group were invited to these sessions. Teachers used the magazine “Highlights for Children” as the inspiration and guide for many activities. In the home-based portion of the program, each parent received a bag with the following items inside: storyboard for storytelling, two spiral notebooks for journal and other writing, a file box with 3" X 5" cards for vocabulary words, “Highlights for Children”, and a Parent Literacy Program Handbook. Parents used the materials provided in a similar way as the teacher modeled. They would read with their children and discuss the book, encourage their children to use journaling, build vocabulary, etc. Parents were supposed to attend monthly meetings, meet with a mentor monthly, and keep records of the activities done with their children. To answer the question, does literacy improve by heightening the awareness of parents’, teachers’, and children’s roles in literacy education, Morrow & Young (1997) studied 56 first through third grade students equally divided in experimental and control groups. Students were randomly selected and participated during a single school year. Parents and children kept journals to document their activities. The study used story retelling and rewriting tests, comprehension tests, the California Test of Basic Skills, and teacher ratings of students to assess the program’s effectiveness. Analysis of covariance and other statistical measures were used for the analysis. The study concluded that there were clear benefits to the students who participated in the family literacy program. For example, the teachers learned that by bringing parents and students together, major accomplishments could be made in the attainment of literacy by their students. Pre and
post-test data showed positive achievement and motivation differences in those participating in the program.

In Israel, Hertz-Lazarowitz and Horovitz (2002) critiqued a 5-year school family partnership whose goal was to improve first graders’ reading and writing abilities. Seven schools (21 classrooms) used Epstein’s holistic approach in combining educational, social, and psychological perspectives in the learning environment. Although the majority of the students came from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, many different income levels were involved in this project. Teachers and parents in the treatment group participated in learning workshops, parent-child reading and writing activities, individual guidance sessions, and home visits. The longitudinal experimental design included 236 parents in the experimental group and 274 parents in the control group. Using data from participation, interviews, teachers’ activities, and parent feedback, the group was subdivided into four levels of implementation (low, medium, high, zero) of which the control group was the zero implementation group. Test instruments included parent attitude measures, teacher attitude measures, and citywide standardized reading and writing tests of the children. Children participating in the experimental group had higher scores for reading and writing than the controls. The researchers concluded that the “impact of School-Family-Partnership was significantly positive and higher for all participants” (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Horowitz, 2002, p. 8).

For his doctoral dissertation, Steiner (2008) studied the effects of a family literacy intervention in a low-income Northeastern urban school district using two different schools. One school served as the control while the other was the treatment group. Both schools followed the same first-grade curriculum and read the same six
fiction and two non-fiction texts. The treatment group received eight weekly 45-60 minute sessions on effective read-aloud techniques, methods of engaging their children in understanding the story and selection methods for children’s books. Teachers modeled storybook reading techniques including choral reading and provided guided practice time for the parents. Participants used weekly templates, literacy logs, and reading response forms which would be filled out and shared at the next meeting. The researcher worked with the teachers to build on the families’ home literacy practices. The Steiner research looked at the impact of teaching parents how to support their child’s literacy learning and teaching teachers how to incorporate home-literacy practices in the classroom. Part of his study was classroom observations, interviews, and an attitudinal survey of parent’s and teacher’s beliefs about their role in children’s literacy development. The other part of the study measured first grader’s progress in phonemic awareness, alphabet recognition, word recognition, and comprehension using the following assessments: Concepts About Print, Developmental Reading Assessment, and Basic Early Literacy. Children were assigned to one of three groups. One group was the control and another had a teacher who was involved in the intervention. The third group had both teacher and parents involved in the interventions. Those in the intervention groups scored higher on the Concepts About Print test. There was little evidence to support a difference between groups for the other tests. Parents reported that they better understood their child’s literacy development and had better relationships with the teachers. It should be noted that 40 % of the parent data came from a single person (Steiner, 2008).
The Promising Readers program is for students in kindergarten through third grade who are struggling with reading and writing skills. This program occurred at the Thomas Elementary school, a small low-income school in the rural south. The Promising Readers program had a summer program and an after-school program. The after-school program was held three days a week for 80 minutes and serves approximately 50 students. During the school year, parents took part in reading to children, helping to plan daily activities, listening to children read, playing games, etc. Teachers’ instruction included small group skill and strategy instruction, learning centers, one-on-one reading with a partner or adult, and dramatization plays that allowed students to enact what they had read to demonstrate comprehension and understanding in lieu of oral retellings. The summer program was held for four weeks and served approximately 75 students, five days per week and focused on reading, retelling, and dramatization. A key component of the Promising Readers program was the weekly professional development meetings for teachers and parents. In their design of the Promising Readers Program, Jayroe and Boutwell (2003) assumed the following three attributes: (1) low-income, minority families are interested in children’s education; (2) these family members are able to support the children’s learning; and (3) the school staff is responsible for helping families and children understand literacy practices that can lead to improved economic and political wellbeing. The objective of this program was to support the children’s literacy achievement. The summer program included 75 participants and the after-school program included 50 students. Students were hand-selected due to their previous poor performance in literacy. The following
conclusions were drawn from entries in field notes, tapes of development and class
sessions, and interviews with adult family members in the program:

We suggest that teachers and others hoping to increase
family involvement or support families’ acquisition of
literacy practices: (a) assume that family members bring
strengths; (b) allow family members to have as much
decision-making control over the ways they participate as
possible; (c) make sure the work that family members do is
meaningful; (d) engage in regular discussion about
particular children, curriculum, and decisions made in the
classroom; and (e) reflect with family members on the
success and failures of decisions that all adults make as
they work with children (Jayroe & Boutwell, 2003, p. 282-
283).

Some of the family members dropped out within days and others participated
infrequently. Several students did not see the value in the program and felt that they
were wasting their time in a place they did not enjoy.

Three programs, Prime Time Family Reading, EASE, and Even Start Family
Literacy Program, are offered throughout the year in many states. Prime Time received
the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities prestigious national Coming Up
Taller Award and the Helen and Martin Schwartz Prize in recognition of outstanding
public humanities programming. This program can be found in over one hundred sites
in seventeen states. Even Start has 1,200 state administered programs, 17 migrant, and
26 Native American programs, and EASE has programs in Ohio and Minnesota (“Even
Start Facts & Figures,” 2004). All of these programs involve low-income and low
literacy families.

Featuring professional storytellers and college professors, the Louisiana pilot
Prime Time Family Reading Time Program’s goal was to demonstrate family-fun
activities, other than watching television together. This six to eight week program
encouraged parents to read to their children, talk about the books read, and visit the library. It did not concentrate on improving mechanical reading skills or mirroring the school’s reading program models. Instead, it used award-winning books on specific themes to encourage a love of reading and discussion of the stories. The Prime Time Reading program incorporated outcome measures related to the use of the library and the love of reading to determine the program’s success. Researchers tracked the number of new library cards issued, the average number of participants per session, and the program retention rate. They also surveyed each family that participated to find out how their behaviors changed because of the program. Participants seemed to enjoy the program that had discussions conducted by humanitarian scholars. Data showed a 99.7% retention rate with an average attendance of 40 participants per session.

Seventy-four percent of the survey respondents reported that the program improved the way parents interact with their children. Based on the number of new library cards issued and number of participants reading to their children, the researchers concluded that the library setting promotes a love of books and lifelong learning. They felt that a humanities-based program strongly appealed to the program participants. Using professional storytellers and humanities scholars provided a model for families to use when working with their children (Langley, Brady, & Sartisky, 2001, p. 163-165).

Unlike Prime Time Family Reading Time, EASE (Early Access to Success in Education) and Even Start are designed to help families learn and use literacy skills. Minnesota’s year-long EASE intervention program for kindergarten students stressed vocabulary building, story comprehension, letter recognition, and phonemic awareness. The program used modeling of reading and structured parent-child activities. After the
parent training sessions, a structured parent-child activity occurred. All participants were encouraged to do these activities at home along with labeling objects in the home. Jordan, Snow and Porche (2000) used a quasi-experimental design to explore the effect of family participation on language and literacy gains, controlling for home literacy support. Variables such as watching educational television, home libraries, and computers were considered home literacy support. One hundred seventy seven kindergarten children attended the EASE program and 71 kindergarten children served as controls. Families completed a self-reported questionnaire on their home literacy activities and multiple activity evaluation sheets. The researchers recorded family attendance at meetings/activities. Children received both pre-tests and post-tests to assess their progress during the program using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised and the Comprehensive Assessment Program (CAP). Correlation and regression analysis results showed a clear improvement in those students who tested low in the pre-test. The EASE children made significantly greater gains in vocabulary, sequencing, and comprehension than the controls.

Held in a Midwest school, Even Start offered 25 one-hour training sessions. The content of these programs mimicked the child’s kindergarten curriculum and was culturally sensitive to the Hispanics participating in the program. Modeling literacy skills, teachers provided resource materials for learning at home including talking books and reading programs on Play Stations. St. Claire and Jackson (2006) researched the effect of strong home-school partnerships on literacy achievement of kindergarten and first grade students. Using quasi-experimental designs containing experimental and control groups with a small number of subjects, the researchers employed pre-tests and
post-tests using the Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey (WMLS) and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-third edition. They concluded that:

…by the end of first grade, children from families participating in the parent involvement training program scored significantly higher on language measures than children in the control group. This suggests that equipping migrant families with new abilities to nurture their children’s language skills leads to positive language outcomes for their children (St. Claire & Jackson, 2006, p. 31).

The researchers also rated family attendance, quality of participation, and literacy practices at home using a 3 point Likert-like scale. Participation rate in the training sessions averaged fifty percent. The researchers concluded that their research design limited their ability to isolate the impact of a single factor affecting the literacy outcomes. Therefore, the combination of family involvement training, technology aids, and support resources all affected the results.

Literacy In Families Empowers (LIFE) supports struggling first-grade readers and their families in the Chicago suburbs. The program’s primary purpose is to promote listening comprehension and reading enjoyment. Unlike the previous programs discussed above, LIFE is open to families of all income brackets, is privately funded, and served by volunteers. Ten two-hour Saturday sessions are held in the mornings. After a 20-minute breakfast to promote socialization, the children and parents receive separate instruction for 70 minutes. Children are taught listening and comprehension skills during the read-aloud. Using informational books, children learn how to use the book’s features such as the table of contents, glossary, bold print, pictures, etc. Parents learn pre-reading strategies and learn to use the book’s features to enhance the child’s understanding of the book. After these sessions, parents and
children have a 30-minute shared activity to reinforce that day’s lessons (Sokolinski, 2008). Designed to promote listening comprehension and reading enjoyment, LIFE served 32 struggling first graders and their families. The researchers determined listening comprehension from the participants’ re-telling of big ideas, stating details, and making connections. A pre-test post-test design using paired sample t test indicated a significant difference in comprehension as a result of this program.

**Methodology**

I conducted an exploratory study of the family literacy programs in the Triangle Area of North Carolina. The study’s purpose was to identify the availability of these programs in public elementary schools and non-profit organizations. The following information was gathered about schools and organizations offering family literacy programs: 1) a brief description of the activities available to its participants; 2) demographic information about participants; 3) resources used in the program; and 4) evaluation criteria.

Two data collection tools were used to gather data for this study. First, a 25-item cross-sectional survey was emailed to the 147 public elementary schools in the Triangle Area, which includes the school districts of Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, Durham County, Orange County, and Wake County. The survey was addressed to either the literacy specialist or the school’s instructional resource teacher (IRT). Email addresses were obtained from the school’s web site.

Second, web pages and phone book yellow pages were searched to identify non-profit organizations providing family literacy programs in the Triangle Area, specifically literacy instruction for elementary school children in after school programs.
If insufficient data was available on an organization’s website, the organization was contacted to glean further information on its services, clientele, resources, and evaluation methods. This data will be used to identify outstanding programs in the community for replication or referral.

**Survey Instrument and Procedures**

A 25-item questionnaire (see appendix A) sought information about the activities and resources used in family literacy programs and how these activities were evaluated. A few questions addressed program characteristics and its participants. The vast majority of questions were closed-ended. Only a few short response questions were asked. Survey questions 3 and 14 asked respondents to check the types of literacy services and activities offered. Questions 4-11 gathered information about how long the program has been in existence; the number of families involved; eligibility requirements for the program; number of hours of training, and when the programs were offered. The survey also inquired about the instructional methods used (see question 13) and questions 15-16 asked if programs were adapted to meet the special needs of the population. Five questions (questions 12, 19, 18, 20, and 21) addressed the resources used in the program. Question 17 dealt with evaluation methods and questions 22-23 follow-up activities. Finally, there were two program evaluation questions (questions 24-25).

One cannot assume that all family literacy programs offer similar activities. This is why respondents were asked question 14. Question 4, which asks about how long the program has been offered, will be used to see if there are any differences between activities offered in “new programs” versus “older programs.” The number of
families involved in the program (question 5) may be related to “need” as well as when the program is held (question 10) and the availability of transportation and child care (question 21).

The amount of collaboration involved in family literacy programs was sought. This is the reason for questions 18 through 21. Is the media specialist involved in these programs? Does he/she have a leadership role? What community resources are utilized? Do the schools jointly work together to offer a program? Question 17, which asks for evaluation criteria used to rate the program, will be compared to the activities and resources used in the programs.

The survey was distributed via Qualtrics™ online survey. It was anticipated that it would take 15-25 minutes to answer the survey. In addition to gathering the data, the Qualtrics™ program provides statistical analysis capabilities such as counts, measures of central tendency, percentages, and measures of association (Chi-square). The questionnaire, its cover letter, and protocol were approved by the Academic Affairs Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and the Orange County Board of Education.

Early in October literacy specialists or IRTs were sent an email letter soliciting their support in gathering data for this research. Attached to this e-mail was a consent form (Appendix B) and the questionnaire. In late October, a second request for data was sent to non-responders.
Results and Discussion

Demographics

The Triangle Area encompasses three counties (Wake, Orange, and Durham) with four school districts: Wake, Orange, Durham, and the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools. Wake and Durham are largely urban while Orange is more rural. The Chapel Hill-Carrboro schools, while located in Orange County, serve the towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, both of which are urban. All three counties have a highly educated population. The U.S. Census Bureau, State and County Quickfacts (2009) reported the high school graduation rate for the state was 78.1% while the rates were higher for Orange, Durham, and Wake Counties (87.6, 83.0, and 89.3) respectively. There is even a bigger difference in the state’s rate of baccalaureate/masters/doctorate degrees (22.5%) than the rates in Orange (51.5%), Durham (40.1%) and Wake (43.9%) counties. Median household incomes reported for 2007 were $55,028 for Orange, $47,885 for Durham, and $61,706 for Wake. Both Orange and Durham had similar percentages of persons living below the poverty level, 14.2% and 15.9% respectively. Wake had only 8.5% of the population living below the poverty level. Over seventy-two percent of Wake’s and Orange’s population is white while only 56.3% of Durham’s population is white. Durham has a larger percentage (37.6%) of African Americans compared to Wake’s 20.6% and Orange’s 13.4%. There is a very small population (4.3-5.7%) of Asians in the three counties. Almost 12% of Durham’s population is Latino and/or Hispanic compared to 6% for Orange and 1.4% for Wake (U.S. Census Bureau. State and County Quickfacts, 2009).
Education First NC Report Cards for 2007-2008 indicated similar average classroom sizes for the four school districts ranging from 18 to 24 students per elementary classroom. Although the classroom sizes may be similar, the ABC End of Grade Test scores for reading in third grade are strikingly different. The state reported 54.5% of its students tested at or above grade level. The percentages for Orange, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, Durham, and Wake were 57.0%, 77.0%, 40.8%, and 62.7% respectively. The scores for fourth and fifth grades were comparable to those reported for third grade.

North Carolina has set the following target goal: schools will meet adequate yearly progress. Currently North Carolina schools have met 57 of the 82 performance targets. Durham met 75.7% or 56 of 74 of its target goals while the other three districts achieved over 90 percent of their target goals. It should also be noted that North Carolina public schools did not meet its graduation target of regular diplomas obtained in four years or less. The four-year cohort graduation rate is 70.3% (Education First NC School Report Card, 2008).

North Carolina and Triangle Area Literacy Rates

Every other year, The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) measures the reading comprehension skills of our nation’s students. Scores are grouped into three reading levels (basic, proficient, and advanced). The score for the lowest level (basic) for fourth graders was 208. A score of 238 is needed to be classified at the next level, proficient (Reading. the Nation's Report Card, 2005). North Carolina 2002 reading achievement scores for fourth and eighth graders were slightly better than the national average. Five years later both the national and state reading achievement levels
for grade 4 and grade 8 had declined. By 2007, scores in North Carolina had fallen below the national average for both grades (see Figure 1). It should be noted, however,

![North Carolina Reading Achievement](image)

that North Carolina schools improved their reading scores for the 2008-2009 school year. The overall reading average in 2007 was 55.6 and in 2008 it was 67.6. This improvement in North Carolina’s reading scores was also reflected in the Triangle Area schools as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

As Table 2 shows for the 2008-2009 school year the school district in the North Carolina Triangle area with the highest reading achievement scores was the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools. The Orange County and Wake County schools, along with Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, exceeded the North Carolina state averages across all grade levels. In contrast, Durham County had the lowest scores in the Triangle Area, significantly below the state averages across all grades.

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<td>65.7</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>65.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC State</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. 2007-2008 End of Year Reading Scores for Public Schools in the Triangle Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
<th>Grade 6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapel Hill-Carrboro</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>73.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC State</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>67.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. 2008-2009 End of Year Reading Scores for Public Schools in the Triangle Area

---

2 Data compiled from 2008-2009 Education First NC School Report Cards.
3 Data compiled from 2008-2009 Education First NC School Report Cards.
**Questionnaire Results**

What caused the dramatic improvement in the State’s and Triangle Area’s reading scores? Is this a result of school interventions and/or the efforts of community non-profit literacy organizations? Family literacy programs are one of the many ways school districts address reading deficiencies. This study sought to determine what kinds of services were available.

Unfortunately the response to the survey I distributed was too low to tabulate meaningful results. Therefore, I can only speculate about the possible reasons for the increase in scores. One reason for higher scores might be that students with low test scores in the first round of testing were allowed to retake the test after several weeks of special tutoring in 2008-2009. Unlike in pervious years, the schools were informed that test retake scores would be included in the final scores for the school district if they were done before a certain date (M. Moe, personal communication, January 15, 2010). Another reason for the higher scores could be due to school and community literacy interventions. Feedback on the survey would have suggested if interventions had any positive impact on testing scores.

I can only speculate on the reasons for the low participation rate in the survey. The Triangle Area has several universities that have graduate programs in education and information and library science. This area tends to be bombarded with university students’ requests for information. Unfortunately, the school funding for this year was cut and jobs were eliminated. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some literacy specialist jobs in Wake and Durham Counties were terminated. Some of the literacy specialists were assigned to other teaching jobs. Teachers are overworked and do not have the
time to answer surveys. Perhaps the biggest deterrent was my providing The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998’s definition of family literacy programs. This definition was stated in the letter of consent (Appendix B). I included this definition so that respondents would have a benchmark to answer question 3. Therefore, schools offering a one-time event such as “family literacy night,” would check the box indicating that “no programs are offered”. This would have concluded their involvement with the survey. One teacher emailed me to say she was afraid that the programs her school offered did not meet the federal definition for family literacy programs. There are probably schools that are using federal and/or state funds for family literacy that do not meet the federal requirements for this program. Responding to my survey may have provided documentation of this fact.

**Community Assessment Results**

Based on my analysis, there appear to be many literacy resources in the Triangle Area including Motheread Inc., the Augustine Project, the North Carolina Community College Literacy Resource Centers, and the Literacy Councils of Wake County, Durham County, Orange County, and Chatham County. A few of these organizations such as the Augustine Project, America Reads UNC-Chapel Hill, and Literacy Council of Wake County offer literacy tutoring for children (see Table 3). The others offer after school programs with some recreation and homework help. None of the after school programs meet the definition for family literacy programs specified by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
In the next section of this paper, I describe the three programs in the Triangle area that provide tutoring elementary school children in literacy skills. These programs were selected because they meet the definitional requirements for family literacy programs. The program’s missions, accomplishments, evaluation tools, and curriculum are discussed. Educational requirements of tutors are also presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School District</th>
<th>Program/Organization Name</th>
<th>Family Literacy Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapel Hill-Carrboro</td>
<td>Augustine Project</td>
<td>Tutoring program for low income students. Uses the Orton-Gillingham approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapel Hill-Carrboro</td>
<td>America Reads (UNC). The Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE)</td>
<td>Prepares college students to work as literacy tutors for children in pre-k through fifth grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>Augustine Project</td>
<td>Tutoring program for low income students. Uses the Orton-Gillingham approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Augustine Project</td>
<td>Tutoring program for low income students. Uses the Orton-Gillingham approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>America Reads (UNC). The Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE)</td>
<td>Prepares college students to work as literacy tutors for children in pre-k through fifth grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake</td>
<td>Literacy Council of Wake County. Juvenile Literacy Center</td>
<td>Works with youth (ages 6 to 17) to improve their reading, writing and math skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Family literacy non-profit organizations in the Triangle Area
Augustine Project Overview

In 1994 the Augustine Project (Project) was created to serve the literacy needs of low-income children in Durham, Chatham, and Orange counties. Although the Project does not collaborate with Wake County schools, several tutors are involved with these students. The mission of the Augustine Project is to provide tutoring to support students K-12 from low income households to achieve literacy growth. As of 2009, the Chapel Hill Augustine Project has trained 549 tutors. Last year the Project serviced 75 schools in the Triangle area reaching more than 400 disadvantaged students (Augustine Project News, Winter 2009).

Prospective tutors must complete 60 hours of classroom training. The two-week course includes a practicum where trainees assess students’ literacy abilities and teach five lesson plans he/she has designed under the supervision of an experienced tutor. Each trainee observes Augustine Project tutors and other trainees teaching children. The following topics are featured in the training: history and principles of the Orton-Gillingham approach; the scope and sequence of Orton-Gillingham teaching via the Wilson Reading System Program; characteristics of dyslexia and other learning/emotional disabilities; screening instruments and procedures; cursive handwriting; sight words; phonics games and activities; and advocacy.

The Augustine Project uses a structured approach to tutoring that consists of two components: 1) the Orton-Gillingham approach using materials from the 2) Wilson reading system. The Orton-Gillingham approach is “a systematic, multisensory, phonetic teaching methodology that is proven to work with learning disabled children and others with reading difficulties” (www.augustineproject.org). The essential
elements of Orton-Gillingham are multisensory, alphabetic-phonetic, synthetic-analytic, structured, sequential, repetitive, cognitive (teach how to apply concepts), diagnostic, and prescriptive.

Wilson materials stress sounds of letters, phonology, and morphology. Controlled readers are used to reinforce sounds and concepts learned. The materials are designed to build a logical, systemic and cumulative sequence. Visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile approaches are encouraged. The materials also utilize constant repetition to support mastery of current and past skills. There are twelve books of progressive steps.

There are five essential components of a reading instruction. These are: 1) phonemic awareness; 2) phonics; 3) vocabulary, which includes word parts such as roots, prefixes and suffixes and context clues; 4) fluency; and 5) comprehension. Six strategies for improving text comprehension skills are monitoring, using graphic organizers, answering questions, generating questions, recognizing story structure, and summarizing. Previewing the text, visualizing, and predicting are also helpful in improving reading comprehension. A traditional Augustine project lesson plan is divided into ten steps. These steps are to be followed as closely as possible whenever working with a student to provide a sense of consistency.

- Step #1: Visual quick draw using sound cards. During this activity students are asked to look at the letter on the card and tell the name of the letter and the sound it makes. As they say the sound, they trace the letter with their finger on a variety of surfaces both smooth and rough. Articulation is monitored. Visual cues for vowels such as “itch” for short
“i”. The tutor and student rubs his/her arm. Another visual cue is rubbing the “edge” of the table for the short “e” sound.

- Steps #2 and #7 requires the use of the magnet board as a means for the students to demonstrate their spelling skills. In step 2, the tutor uses magnetic letter tiles to teach tapping and smearing of words. Tapping the sounds represented by each letter as the word is articulated and smearing the blended sounds are stressed. Phoneme substitutions are also done in this activity. For example the tutor will say “our new sound is ___. Let’s make some words using this new sound.”

- Steps #3 and #4 involve the reading of a word written on an index card and/or words on a word list. Sometimes the reading of words is timed to check for reading fluency. Students are encouraged to use blending of sounds.

- Step #5 entails sentence reading. Sentences with controlled vocabulary are found in the Wilson Student Readers. Silent reading is encouraged first before reading aloud. If needed, students are instructed to use their finger to track words.

- Step #6: auditory quick drills. The tutor provides the sound and the student repeats the sound and points to the letter(s) that makes that sound. Echoing and pointing bring verbal and kinesthetic learning modalities together.

- Step #7. The student first repeats the word and then uses the magnetic letters to spell it. After the student forms the word with the magnet tiles,
he/she spells aloud from memory with the word covered. This step is also used to build vocabulary with making of similar sounding words such as cat, bat, fat, sat, etc. Kinesthetic/tactile, visual, auditory, and verbal methods are used in this step.

- Step #8 has the student taking dictation from the tutor. This helps to increase the student’s listening comprehension of the “spoken word.” Listening, echoing, re-reading aloud activities are done in this step.

- In Step #9: Controlled readers are used to assist in student reading. These books only present words with concepts already covered. For example, step 2.1 deals with word endings ang, ing, ong, ung, ank, ink, onk, unk. Students are asked to read the following passage from Tim and Ed:

```
Tim and Ed had a ball and net. Ed got the net up on the shed. Tim sunk the ball in the net. Then Ed got the ball and he did a dunk shot. While Tim got the ball, Ed did yank it from him. Ed then hit a long shot to win!
```

The readers are used in this step of the lesson plan to check the student’s ability to read and comprehend new material that has been presented in the lesson. Comprehension follow-ups are done after the text is read.

- Step #10 reviews concepts learned that day and if necessary, from previous lessons.

There are opportunities to play educational games at the end of each lesson to review important concepts presented during the lesson. The children enjoy the games. It is a fun activity in a non-pressured environment while demonstrating the understanding of
The Augustine Project administers both pre and post-tests to determine the effectiveness of the tutoring instruction. After 7.5 months of tutoring during the 2008-2009 school year, the Spring 2009 scores for 350 students involved in the project showed the following results:

- An average improvement of 46 percent in phonological awareness;
- word attack improved by 1.2 grade levels;
- spelling increased by 33 percent; reading fluency scores rose an average of 1.5 grade levels; and
- reading comprehension scores went up 2.1 grade levels (Holy Family Episcopal Church, summer 2009)

America Reads at UNC

The America Reads Challenge national campaign started in 1997. That year the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) began training college students as literacy tutors for children in pre-K through fifth grades. The mission of America Reads is to:

Increase the reading levels of local children from pre-k to fifth grade, Increase university students' involvement in the community, and Strengthen the partnership between the university and the community (unc.edu/~pgwood/mission, 2010).

In the past, UNC worked with four school districts (Chapel Hill-Carrboro, Orange, Durham, and Chatham), and one community center. Currently students work in Carrboro Elementary, Ephesus Elementary, New Hope Elementary, Rashkis
Elementary, Mary Scroggs Elementary, and Hargraves Community Center. Tutors provide 40-minute sessions twice a week for 23 weeks.

The program hires five to seven graduate students to work as on-site supervisors/mentors for the approximately forty undergraduate student tutors (America Reads UNC, 2010). During the month of September, there are four required training sessions for new tutors along with weekly team meetings in the fall and every other week in the spring. Some of the training can be done on-line. Tutoring manuals are also available on-line. There is continuous on-going training and support for the tutors. This past year tutors received 27 hours of training. Students are trained to work with pre-K students, K through third grade, fourth and fifth graders, and English as a second language.

Programs for K through third grade have four ten-minute sections. Tutors begin with re-reading a familiar book to the child. Next is word study which includes word banks, sound and concept sorts, picture sorts, diagraphs, phonics, and word families. This is followed by a writing activity. Finally, there is guided reading component. A slightly more difficult book is chosen and the tutor encourages the student to use various reading strategies. Some of these strategies include picture prompts, reread, context prompts, comparing, and structural prompts (America Reads UNC. Tutor Handbook, 2010, chapter 4).

Story structure and sequencing are emphasized in tutoring fourth and fifth graders. The 40 minute sessions have three components: word study, writing, and reading. The ten minute word study offers a variety of activities. Student writings are reviewed to find overused words. A list of alternative words is then compiled to be
used in future writings. For new words, students are reminded to ask the following questions: 1) Do I know other words that look-like and sound-like this word? and 2) Are these look-alike or sound-alike words related to each other? Prefixes, suffixes, roots, and spelling changes are stressed in the “nifty thrifty fifty” activity. The word activity is followed by 15 minutes of writing and then 15 minutes of reading (America Reads UNC, Tutor Handbook, 2010, chapter 5).

There are several evaluation tools used by America Reads: the LEARNS Literacy Assessment Profile, Reading Recovery levels or Accelerated Reader levels, Bader Reading and Language Assessment Inventory, and parent/guardian evaluations (America reads/ARC). Reading Recovery levels were used for children reading below the second grade level and Accelerate Reader levels were used for those reading at second to fifth grade levels. Approximately 5046 hours of individual tutoring was provided in the 2008-2009 school year. This represented 128 children in the fall, 104 in the spring and 16 for the entire year. Prior to the tutoring sessions, students were given a pre-test to determine their reading level. At the completion of the semester and/or year a reading level post-test was done. Table 4 shows the effect the tutoring had on student reading levels (America Reads Annual Report, 2009, p.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of students</th>
<th>Increased level</th>
<th>Same level</th>
<th>Decreased level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Progress in reading levels for America Reads at UNC
Teachers reported the following results:

1) 50% of the students improved in reading;
2) 30% of the students improved in writing;
3) 80% of the students exhibited a positive change toward reading;
4) 55% of students exhibited a positive change toward writing;
5) 50% of the students used new reading strategies learned from their tutor; and
6) 30% of the students in the program used new writing strategies

Juvenile Literacy Center of the Literacy Council of Wake Council

The Juvenile Literacy Center (JLC) of the Literacy Council of Wake Council offers children ages 6-17 a second chance to develop appropriate literacy skills. Youth who attend this program are referred by the Juvenile Court. This organization’s goal is to get them on track towards successful lives. Mentoring is also readily available to help the youth stay on the “right path” (Juvenile Literacy Center, 2008).

The JLC currently offers three classes. These are: Wilson Method Learning, Pre-GED and GED. Currently there are no elementary school students using the Wilson Method; however, this research-based reading and writing program teaches decoding and encoding beginning with phoneme segmentation. Lessons are presented in a systematic and cumulative way. Like the Augustine Project lesson plan, the Wilson lesson plan outline has ten steps and is very structured. Steps 1 through 8 are the same in both systems. Step #9 in the Wilson System requires the student to silently read a passage with controlled vocabulary, tells the tutor about it in their own words, and then rereads the passage out loud while Step #10 has the tutor read a passage with uncontrolled vocabulary to the student to emphasize listening comprehension. In the Augustine Project these two steps are combined in Step #9. In this step, the Augustine Project provides two options instead of one. One option is to have students read to
themselves and then read out loud. Another option is having the tutor read to the
student to improve listening comprehension. Step #10 is a recap of the new material in
the lesson.

Tutors must be at least 18 years old and have good reading skills and patience.
They must also complete a 12-hour training course. Tutors meet twice a week for at
least 60-90 minutes (Tutors. Become a Tutor, 2008).

Comparison of the Programs

Both the Augustine Project and America Reads began in the 1990s. Although
they deal with children, the Augustine Project has a wider age group (K though 12th
grade) than the America Reads (pre-K though 5th grade). There is also a difference in
the coverage of the population. In the Triangle Area, Augustine tutored students in four
school districts representing 75 school and 400 students last year. America Reads UNC
involved two school districts, which accounts for five schools and one community
center for a total of 216 students.

There are some similarities and also some differences in curriculum. A tutor for
America Reads has more flexibility in deviating from the lesson plan than the
Augustine tutor. It also appears that Augustine offers a more balanced approach in
teaching literacy skills. This is evidenced by the lesson plans and tools used to evaluate
the student’s progress. Although student’s literacy skills improved in both programs,
five to eight months is too short a time to truly measure a program’s success. A
longitudinal study is needed to make any conclusions of program success.

Even though the Augustine Project and the Juvenile Literacy Center of the
Literacy Council of Wake Council use the same materials developed by Barbara
Wilson, I question the quality of tutoring using these materials with only twelve hours of training. Augustine tutors spend two weeks learning the Wilson method. Like my fellow tutors, I was overwhelmed with the vast amount of material to be learned.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

The National Center for Family Literacy estimates that over 34 million people struggle with basic literacy skills. This trend is also seen in North Carolina. According to the 2007-2008 ABC End of Grade Test scores for reading, a little over fifty percent (54.4%) of the third grade students tested at or above grade level. The percentages for the Triangle Area students in third grade were: 57.0% for Orange County, 77.0% for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, 40.8% for Durham County, and 62.7% for Wake County. These scores improved in the next school year (2008-2009) by five to fourteen percentage points. However, there is still work to be done. The goal should be reading at the proficient level and not reading at a basic level.

The federal government’s Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Workforce Investment Act, 1998), and the Reading Excellence Act (Title VIII Reading Excellence Act, 1998) were enacted to fund and provide program guidance to address the literacy problems of educationally underachieving adults and their children. To determine the involvement of the Triangle Area elementary public schools in family literacy programs, literacy specialists at the area schools were surveyed. Due to a low response rate there is not enough data from this survey to make any sound conclusions and recommendations.

The second part of my study was an analysis of community family literacy programs in the Triangle Area that served elementary school-aged children. There are
two active programs serving the needs of my target group. They are the Augustine Project and The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s America Reads Program. The Augustine Project is the best program I have found that helps students struggling with literacy. This is evidenced by test results during the 2008-2009 school year for 350 students involved in the project showing an average improvement of 46 percent in phonological awareness, word attack improved by 1.2 grade levels, spelling increased by 33 percent; reading fluency scores rose an average of 1.5 grade levels, and reading comprehension scores went up 2.1 grade levels (Holy Family Episcopal Church, summer 2009).

The Augustine Project uses a structured approach in tutoring that consists of two components: 1) the Orton-Gillingham approach using materials from the 2) Wilson reading system. The Orton-Gillingham approach is “a systematic…methodology that is proven to work with learning disabled children and others with reading difficulties” (www.augustineproject.org). The Orton-Gillingham elements are multisensory, alphabetic-phonetic, synthetic-analytic, structured, sequential, repetitive, cognitive (teach how to apply concepts), diagnostic, and prescriptive. Sounds of letters, phonology, and morphology are emphasized in the Wilson reading system. Wilson uses controlled readers to reinforce sounds and concepts learned.

The amount of training that the Augustine Project provides far surpasses the America Reads Program. In addition, the structure of an Augustine Project lesson plan is far more detailed than that of America Reads. In a typical America Reads Program, there are three sections: word study, reading; and writing. The comparable Augustine Project lesson plan has ten steps that cover everything from individual sounds to
reading stories, increasing fluency and comprehension, spelling, and writing assignments. The America Reads Program only looks at one measure of assessment to evaluate student progress – the accelerated reader-level, or reading recovery level if the student is below second grade. Assessment in the Augustine Project is done by using several research-based methods to evaluate student gains in literacy skills such as word attack, spelling, comprehension, and fluency. In addition, the Augustine Project services youth in grades K-12 in comparison to America Reads that focuses on pre K through 5. During the 2008-2009 school year, the Augustine Project served 400 youth from 74 schools in four school districts within the Triangle Area. America Reads served 216 students during the same time period.

I truly believe that there need to be more programs like the Augustine Project. The Augustine Project has been so successful that there are several people from other states who have taken the Augustine Training and used it to implement services in their home state of South Carolina and Texas. There are additional chapters of the Augustine Project in Fayetteville, Hickory, and Charlotte, North Carolina. We need more of this.

It is imperative that we help children develop better literacy skills. To do this we need to identify the needs and resources available in the public schools. My survey attempted to do this. I recommend that the survey be conducted by the county or state educational departments using a form similar to the one in this research. I suggest that the definition for family literacy not be divulged to respondents but instead it should be used as a measure for determining if the school’s program meets the federal definition for family literacy programs.
Bibliography


Appendix A: NC Triangle Public Elementary School Family Literacy Survey

Q1 Name of School:

_____________________________

Q2 Name of school district:

{ } Durham County
{ } Orange County
{ } Wake County
{ } Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools

Q3 What type(s) of literacy services does your school offer? (check all that apply)

{ } no programs offered. Thank you for your input. This completes the survey.
{ } basic literacy
{ } adult basic education
{ } English as a Second Language
{ } family literacy (adult + child)
{ } other, please specify ____________________________

If “no programs offered” is selected, then skip to the end of the survey

Q4 How many years has your school offered family literacy programs?

{ } school just started this program
{ } one year
{ } two years
{ } three years
{ } four years
{ } five years
{ } six years
{ } seven years
{ } eight years
{ } nine years
{ } ten + years
Q5  Number of families involved in family literacy programs in 2008-2009 school year? Please provide your best estimate.

______________________________

Q6  Number of participants in the following grades? Please provide your best estimate.

{___} kindergarten________________
{___} first grade_________________
{___} second grade_______________
{___} third grade_______________
{___} fourth grade_____________
{___} fifth grade______________

Q7  Are there eligibility criteria for your literacy services?

{___} yes
{___} no

Q8  If you answered "yes" to question 7, check all that apply.

{___} residency
{___} age
{___} income
{___} other, please specify

Q9  How many times do you offer family literacy programs per year?

{___} once
{___} twice
{___} three times
{___} more than three times

Q10 When are these programs held? (Check all that apply)

{___} daytime
{___} evening
{___} Monday -- Friday
{___} Saturday
{___} Sunday
{___} individually determined
{___} other, please specify________________________
Q11  How many hours of training do you provide per family literacy program?  
One hour thirty minutes would count as 2 hours. Less than 1.5 hours is considered 1 hour. Do not include preparation time, just training time.

- [ ] one hour  
- [ ] two hours  
- [ ] three hours  
- [ ] four hours  
- [ ] five hours  
- [ ] six hours  
- [ ] seven hours  
- [ ] eight hours  
- [ ] nine hours  
- [ ] ten hours  
- [ ] more than ten hours

Q12  Which of the following family literacy models does your program employ?

- [ ] Parents' Roles Interacting with Teacher Support  
- [ ] Mother Read / Father Read  
- [ ] Even Start  
- [ ] Parenting for a Literate Community  
- [ ] The Intergenerational Literacy Project (ILP)  
- [ ] Prime Time  
- [ ] Life Support  
- [ ] CLASP (Connecting Libraries and Schools Project)  
- [ ] EASE (Early Access to Success in Education)  
- [ ] other, please specify_______________________  
- [ ] none

Q13  What instructional method(s) do you use? (Check all that apply)

- [ ] one-on-one tutoring  
- [ ] small group classes. Class size 2-5 families.  
- [ ] medium group class. Class size of 6-12 families.  
- [ ] large group instruction. Over 13 families.  
- [ ] computer-assisted instruction  
- [ ] other, please describe______________________

Q14  Which of the following activities are included in your family literacy programs?  
(Check all that apply)

- [ ] story telling techniques  
- [ ] decoding skills  
- [ ] phonics  
- [ ] reading comprehension strategies
pre-reading activities such as activating background information, prediction, picture walk through

- parent-child reading together
- sequencing of story
- writing
- other, please specify_____________________

Q15  Do you adapt the family literacy programs to meet the special needs and populations of your community?

- yes
- no

Q16  If you answered yes to question number 15, please specify what changes you make and why these changes are necessary?

______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

Q17  What method(s) do you use to evaluate the progress of individuals in your program? (Check all that apply)

- none
- completion of workbooks
- number of books read
- test
- reports by tutors/teachers
- achievement of individually determined objectives
- attendance
- retention rate of participation
- other, please specify_____________________

Q18  Who do you collaborate with on family literacy programs? (Check all that apply)

- no one
- classroom teachers
- school social workers
- ESL teachers
- school media specialist
- public library
- other, please specify_____________________

Q19  Who leads the family literacy programs?

- classroom teacher
Q20  What community resources do you use for these literacy programs? Check all responses that apply.

- public libraries
- churches
- businesses
- volunteers
- city transportation
- childcare
- social workers
- colleges/universities
- other, please specify________________________

Q21  Which of the following resources do you use in your literacy program(s)? (Check all that apply)

- published training guides/materials
- volunteer training
- bilingual tutors
- educational materials
- volunteers
- staff training
- transportation
- childcare
- evaluation/testing devices
- other, please specify

Q22  Do you offer follow-up services for those completing the program?

- yes
- no

Q23  If you answered yes to question 22, please describe your follow-up procedures?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Q24  Please rate (assign a letter grade) the effectiveness of the family literacy program in your school.

{___} A  
{___} B  
{___} C  
{___} D

Q25  Based on the grade you gave above; how would you modify your program to improve it using resources available?

________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________
Appendix B: Survey Cover Letter

Dear Literacy Teacher/IRT,

My name is Vickie Shore. I am currently a graduate student in UNC Chapel Hill’s School of Information and Library Science, school library media coordinators specialty area. For my master’s paper I am collecting data on family literacy programs offered by the elementary schools in your school district.

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 defines family literacy programs as "services that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family, and that integrate all of the following activities: (1) interactive literacy activities between parents and their children; (2) training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children; (3) parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and (4) an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences."

The following survey will ask you questions about the family literacy programs at your school. Details about this study are discussed below. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a literacy teacher, reading teacher, or IRT in the Durham County Public School System, the Wake County Public School System, or the Orange County Public School System. If you decide to take the survey, you will be one of approximately 125 people in this research study. I am asking you to generously take 15-20 minutes of your time to take this online survey. To join the study is voluntary. You may refuse to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason, without penalty. Additionally, your participation is confidential. Your employer will not know whether or not you have participated. No identifying information will be collected in order to protect your anonymity. No individual can be or will be identified. All data obtained in this study will be reported as group data. The name of your school district will be disguised. The only persons who will have access to the data are me and my faculty advisor.

There are neither anticipated risks should you participate, nor anticipated benefits from being involved in the study. However, there may be educational or professional benefits from this study. The information you provide will help identify current practices in family literacy programs in Central North Carolina. There is no cost to you or financial
benefit for your participation.

If you have any questions, please contact me or my faculty advisor. All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to IRB_subjects@unc.edu. Please reference IRB study #.

To take the survey, please click on the following link:

http://uncodum.qualtrics.com/SE?SID=SV_6lrCNv4SW7lEkf2&SVID=Prod

By clicking on the link, you are indicating your consent to participate in this research study.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Victoria J. Shore
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University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
vshore@email.unc.edu

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