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Early Learning Opportunities Act:

Impact on Early Childhood Educators and Preschool Children

Kathleen Armstrong, Ph.D., NCSP
Dale Cusumano, Ph.D., NCSP
Rachel Cohen, M.A.
Melissa Todd, Ed.S., NCSP



Prepared by

Louis de la Parte
Florida Mental Health Institute
University of South Florida
13301 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33612-3807

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*Kathleen Armstrong, Ph.D., NCSP
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13301 Bruce B. Downs Boulevard
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Introduction

Overview

The Early Learning Opportunities Act (ELO) project implemented in Pinellas County, Florida was a unique, comprehensive approach to improving literacy, reading readiness and social-emotional functioning of children from birth to five years of age. Pinellas County, Florida is a densely populated, urban peninsula on the central western coast. At 928,537 residents, it has the fourth largest population in the state (US Census, 2004).

The ELO project provided opportunities for caregivers and teachers from publicly funded and private children's programs to increase their level of professional education, earn college credit, gain early literacy teaching skills, receive tools and materials for their classrooms, and promote healthy social-emotional development in the children they served. Through increased literacy activities in their classroom or daycare site and family-oriented literacy activities and materials, it was believed that children and their families would benefit from the project by improving their literacy and learning readiness for kindergarten. Parent educators with expertise in early childhood mental health also supported families and provided training to enhance young children's school-related behavioral competencies.

Teacher educator opportunities were embodied within a college course whose framework and structure was based on the *HeadsUp! Reading* (HUR) curriculum (National Head Start Association – NHSA). HUR focuses on training early childhood educators in research-based strategies for early literacy instruction. Notably, HUR's attention is directed toward teachers; nevertheless, its overall goal is to accelerate early literacy development in the students of the teachers targeted by its curriculum. As a supplement to the HUR instruction, numerous resources were provided to the ELO teachers, such as books for classroom libraries, props for dramatic play and story telling, and magnetic alphabet letters with display boards.

Another feature of the ELO Pinellas County, Florida project was the provision of Literacy Coaches (LCs) who visited teachers in their childcare settings. In short, the LC facilitated and guided the application of HUR strategies into teachers' classrooms. Addition of this coaching component was based on research documenting that when coaching was provided to teachers, they not only practiced these skills more frequently but they implemented the strategies more effectively (Showers, 1982a; Showers, 1982b). During coaching sessions, LCs engaged in a cycle of observing the teacher, providing feedback, modeling instructional strategies, and setting goals for the teacher for subsequent coaching sessions. The framework for this coaching model was adopted from the Early Literacy and Learning Model (ELLM) that was designed to assist preschool and early elementary school teachers in their integration of research based literacy instruction into their classrooms (Fountain, 2002). Approximately half of the teachers participating in the HUR class received this coaching component concurrently with their participation in the HUR course. The remaining teachers received support from the LCs after completion of the course.

In conclusion, ELO project goals included: creating a community of early literacy lifelong learners in the early childhood profession; implementing research-based early literacy training for early childhood education professionals; implementing a coaching model to provide a framework of professional development; increasing literacy and pre-literacy skills for children in childcare settings; developing and/or enhancing the richness of classroom/childcare home literacy environments; improving the social/emotional readiness of targeted children for classroom learning; and supporting parents as first teachers, both of literacy skills as well as healthy social-emotional development.

Project partners provided in-kind resources with project activities provided as a collaborative effort coordinated by project staff. Specifically, the project provided early literacy training and coaching to teachers, childcare providers, directors and community members, and it reached children and family members with targeted literacy activities. In addition, home-based and community-based services were available to targeted families to enhance the young child's social-emotional readiness for school. The ELO project impacted 22,687 citizens of Pinellas County with targeted and general early literacy services by establishing a framework of training, coaching, and mutual learning for participants, and organizational with commitments to continue to support the ELO project community well beyond the initial grant period.

Program Evaluation Questions

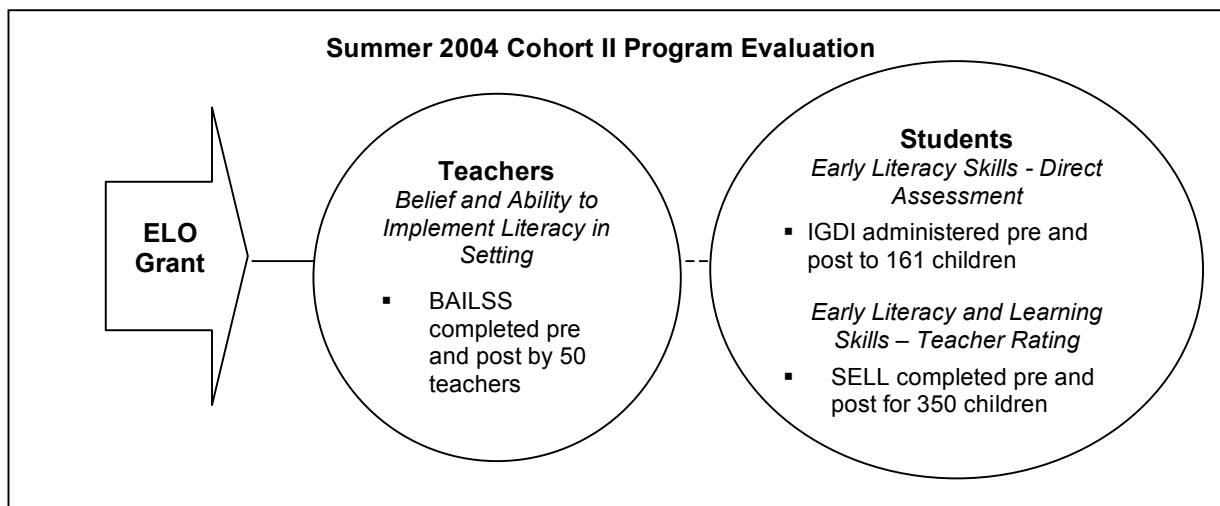
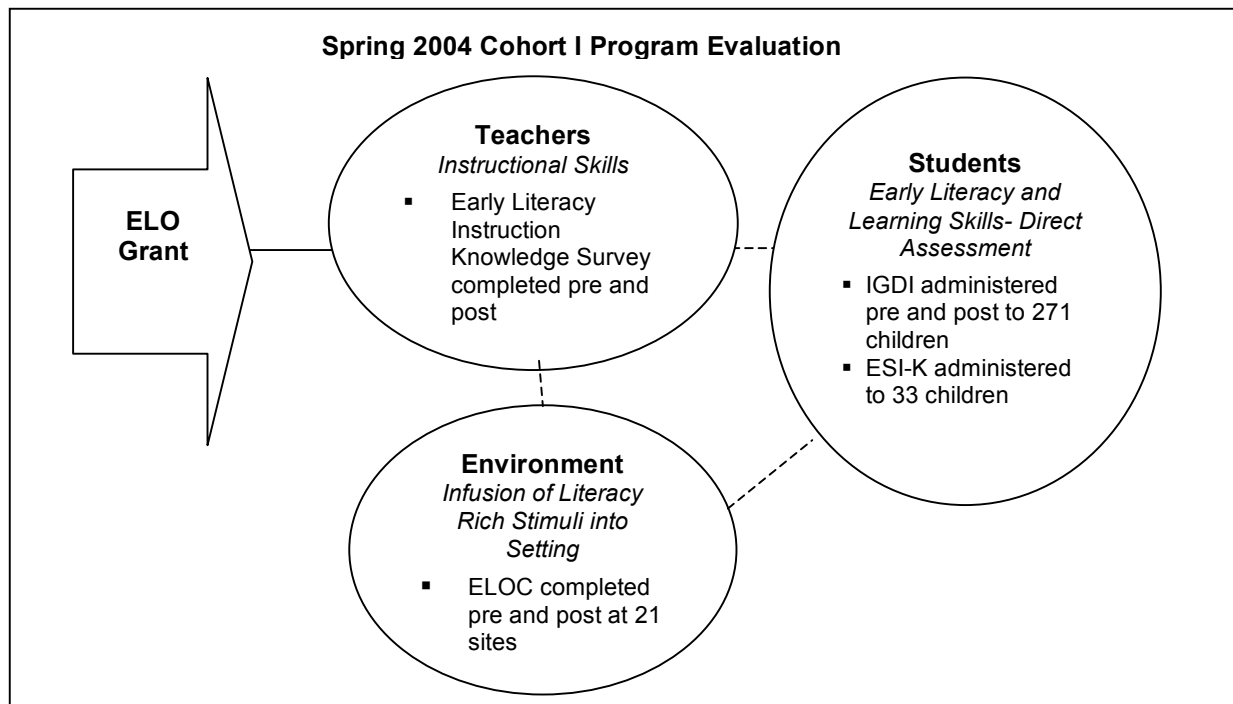
Nine broad questions served as the framework for evaluating the impact that implementation of the ELO grant had on participating teachers, students, and the community of Pinellas County. These questions are contained in Table 1. A brief overview of the results as well as page references for the outcomes discussed in greater details also are included in this table.

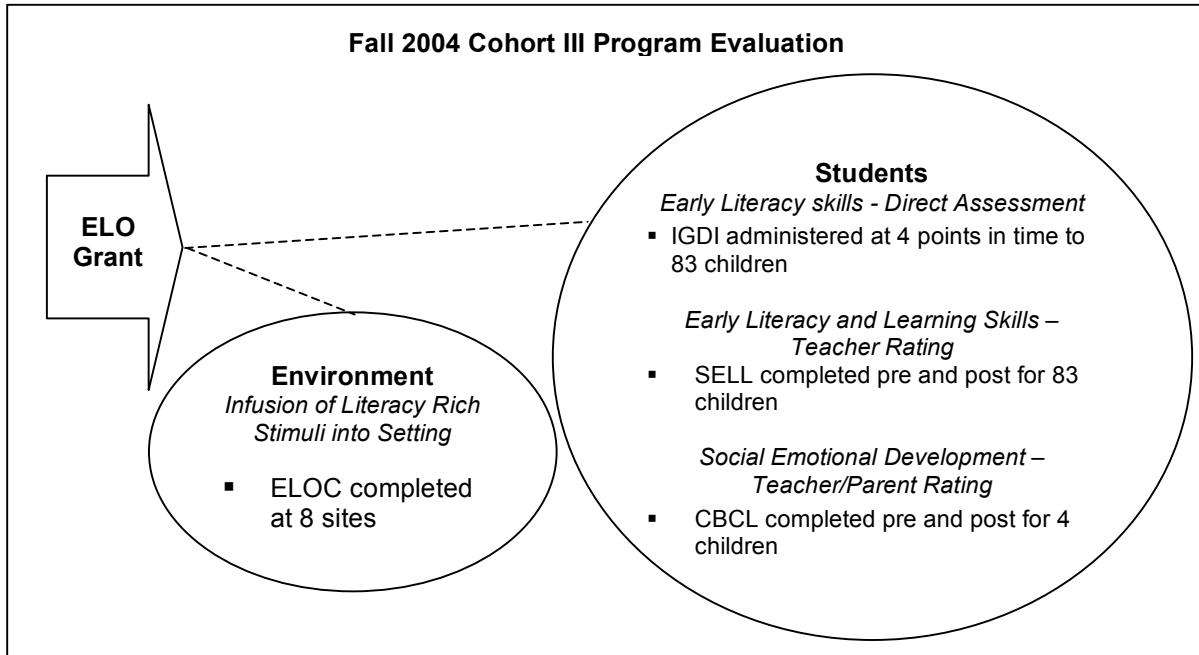
Table 1
Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Questions	Results Page Reference
1. Are LCP activities and objectives implemented in a timely fashion?	Page 24
2. Does the home visiting model enhance child and family outcomes?	Page 27
3. Does the classroom-teaching component increase knowledge and skills of child care providers?	Page 28
4. Does mentoring and coaching of child care providers improve their competence and confidence?	Page 31
5. Do participating children show improvement in skill acquisition?	Page 34
6. Do participating children demonstrate readiness for kindergarten?	Page 40
7. What are the factors associated with efficient implementation of this model in the community?	Page 42
8. Are families and providers satisfied with this model?	Page 44
9. What is the cost of implementing this model?	Page 47

Program Evaluation Design

In an effort to capture many levels of impact that implementation of the ELO grant had on the early childhood centers, participating teachers, and children, several means of data collection were undertaken across the evaluation period. First, three cohorts of teachers and students were assessed: teachers and their students who participated in the spring 2004 session of the HUR training, teachers and their students who participated in the summer 2004 session of HUR training, and a subset of children whose teachers participated in the summer 2004 session who received caregiver permission to participate in follow-up data collection that spanned the fall months of 2004. The following visuals depict how data collection differed across these three cohorts.





Method

Participants

Cohort I – Spring 2004

Teachers. Twenty-one out of the fifty teachers who participated in the 2004 Spring Cohort of the *HeadsUp! Reading* (HUR) course served as participants in the program evaluation component. Allocation of resources (e.g., Literacy Coaches, Program Evaluators) determined the number of classrooms, teachers, and students from whom data collection could be completed. Eleven teachers formed the concurrent coaching group (CC) and 10 teacher/participants were assigned to the delayed coaching group (DC) where coaching was offered following completion of the course. Table 2 contains descriptive information about the teachers in the sample. Notable from these data is that teacher/participants in the DC group reported more years of experience teaching in early childhood education settings ($M = 13.62$) than did teachers in the CC group ($M = 8.24$). Furthermore, only 33-37% of teachers in the CC and DC conditions, respectively, reported education beyond the secondary level.

Table 2
Demographic Information for Teacher/Participants by Condition in Spring Cohort I

	Number of <i>Teachers Students</i>		Experience (in Years) <i>M (SD)</i>	Highest Level of Education			
				<i>High School</i>	<i>Some College</i>	<i>AA</i>	<i>4 Yr Degree</i>
CC	11	165	7.75 (4.77)	8	2	0	1
DC	10	106	13.10 (8.23)	6	0	0	4

Participating teachers were employed in one of three types of early childhood settings. Specifically, 71% of the teachers were employed in private early childhood settings, 24% were employed in Head Start programs, and one taught in a faith-based early childhood center that also offered a Christian-based curriculum.

Children. Six hundred and twenty-three children who were enrolled in a participating teacher's class were solicited for participation. Specifically, these 623 children reflected students who were between the ages of three to five years, identified English as their primary language, and did not present with any diagnosed cognitive delays or sensory deficits (e.g., hearing or visual disabilities). Students who did not meet these criteria were not given consent forms. Two hundred and seventy-one children returned signed consents indicating parent consent for participation in the program evaluation. All 271 children were students of the twenty-one teachers who were participating in the ELO project in either the concurrent or delayed coaching conditions. Demographic data describing the children who participated at Time 1 are provided in Table 3. Overall, a 14% attrition rate was noted across the total sample. Notably, this 14% attrition rate is comparable to the mobility rate often reported in early childhood education centers where average student turnover rates of 12-18% are found (Coordinated Child Care of Pinellas County).

Table 3
Descriptive Information for Student Sample in Spring Cohort I at Time 1

	Number of Students			White	Race Distribution			
	Male	Female	All		AA	Hisp	Asian	Other
CC	75	90	165	94	39	10	4	18
DC	54	52	106	79	11	8	3	5
All	129	142	271	173	50	18	7	23

Note. AA = African American, Hisp = Hispanic.

Cohort II – Summer 2004

Teachers. The participants in the summer cohort originally included 49 teachers. Two teachers dropped the course for a final sample of 47 teachers. There were concurrent and delayed coaching groups in the summer cohort. All teachers in the summer cohort were female except one. Participants reported an average of 8.53 years of experience working as preschool teachers. All teachers reported obtaining a high school diploma with 65% of the teachers also indicating some level of secondary educational experiences. See Table 4 for a description of the experience and education of participants in the concurrent and delayed coaching group. Participating teachers were employed at a variety of types of early childhood centers. Specifically, teachers were employed at family home day care sites (43%), privately run sites (41%), centers that espoused a religious affiliation (10%), and Head Start sites (6%).

Children. Two-hundred and ninety-two children had parent consent for participation in the program evaluation. All 292 children were students of the 47 teachers or center directors who participated in the entire ELO grant in either the concurrent or delayed coaching conditions. Demographic data describing the participating children at Time 1 are provided in Table 5. Overall, an 8% attrition rate (excluding the children in the teachers' classrooms who dropped out) was noted across the total sample for children who withdrew from the child care program. More specifically, 10% ($n = 22$) were noted among student/participants in the coaching condition and 1.3% ($n = 1$) among students in the delayed coaching condition. This 8% attrition rate is below the mobility rate often reported in early childhood education centers where average student turnover rates of 12-18% are found (Coordinated Child Care of Pinellas County).

Table 4
Demographic Information for Teacher/Participants by Condition For Summer Cohort

	Number of		Experience		Highest Level of Education			
	Teachers	Students	(in Years)	(in Years)	High School	Some College	AA	4 Yr Degree +
			M	(SD)				
CC	33	217	8.59	7.29	14	10	2	7
DC	16	75	8.40	7.24	3	7	1	5

Table 5
Descriptive Information for Student Sample in Summer Cohort II at Time 1

	Number of Students			White	Race Distribution			
	Male	Female	All		AA	Hisp	Asian	Other
CC	124	92	217	96	85	19	1	16
DC	40	35	75	43	18	9	0	5
All	165	127	292	139	103	28	1	21

Note. AA = African American, Hisp = Hispanic.

Cohort III – Fall 2004

Teachers. Eight teachers who had participated in the Summer Cohort II also agreed to partake in follow-up data collection that extended into the fall of 2004. Of these teachers, seven reported some college experience with experience teaching in an early childhood setting ranging from 7 months to 20 years. Half of the teachers taught in a faith-based setting. The remaining teachers were employed at private child care centers. Additional literacy materials were provided to teachers in exchange for their participation in this extended cycle of data collection.

Children. Eighty-three children participated in the Fall Cohort III. An even distribution across gender was attained. Seventy-one percent of this sample was identified as White. The majority of the sample fell within the 48 to 59 months age bracket with an additional 11 children between the ages of 36 to 47 months. Six children were between the ages of 60 to 72 months.

Behavior Cohort

The behavioral component of the ELO project included in-home parent training that was based on the Non-Compliant Child curriculum (McMahon & Forehand, 2003). This facet of the ELO project was provided by Early Childhood Consultants employed by Directions for Mental Health. A screening instrument, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire – Social Emotional (ASQ:SE; Squires, Bricker, & Twombly, 2002), was utilized to identify those children for whom provision of these services might be beneficial. Across the spring and summer cohorts, over sixty children, or 13 percent, were identified as exhibiting elevated levels of social-emotional needs according to obtained scores on the ASQ:SE. Of this subsample, contact was successful in initiating behavioral services with eight children and their families. Please consult Figure 1 for a diagram of this selection process as well as moderating factors and variables that impeded full participation. Table 6 contains descriptive information for this subsample of children as well as their status in the program.

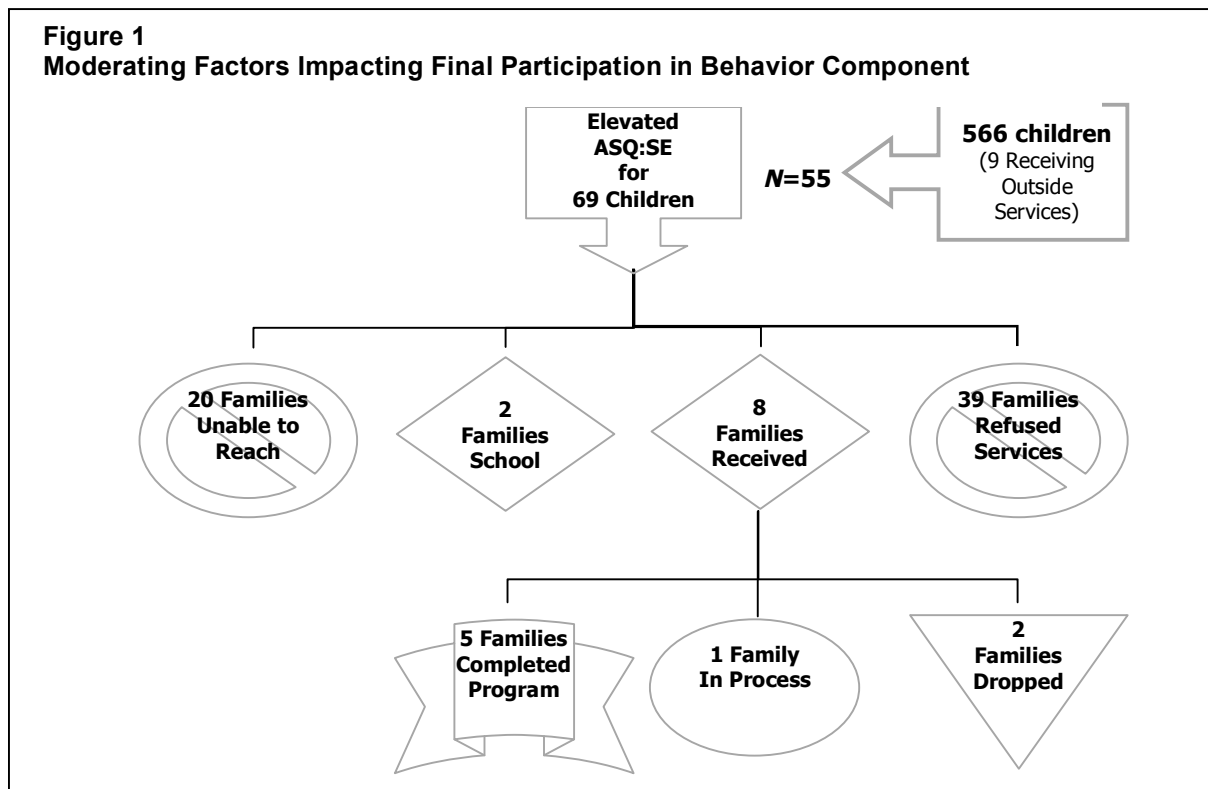


Table 6
Description of Students Participating in the Behavioral Component

Gender	Age (in mos.)	Duration of Participation	# of Sessions	Status of Participation
M	24	8/04 to 10/04	6	Completed Program
M	47	1/05 to present	In process	Currently in Program
M	58	5/04 to 8/04	10	Completed Program
M	31	6/04 to 8/04	10	Completed Program
F	40	8/04 to 9/04	5	Completed Program
M	45	6/04 to 9/04	11	Completed Program
M	40	8/04 to 10/04	2	Failure to Show
F	36	8/04 to 10/04	4	Discontinued due to parent schedule

Measures and Data Collection

Teachers

Knowledge Survey. One avenue for evaluating the impact that participation in the ELO project had on early childhood educators was to examine their levels of knowledge both before and after completion of the HUR course. To accomplish this task, a pre and posttest Early Literacy Instruction Knowledge survey was administered to all teachers. Specifically, this survey was comprised of nine multiple choice and six true and false items that asked respondents to define literacy terms as well as research-based applications of these strategies into early childhood settings. The knowledge survey was administered at the first and last HUR classes to all participating teachers. All items were weighted equally; thus, a total of 19 points were possible.

Beliefs About Implementing Literacy Skill Scale (BAILSS). The BAILSS was developed to assess teachers' attitudes towards the importance, competence, and use of literacy skills in their classrooms and family child care centers. The BAILSS is an 84-item self-rating scale for participants in the HUR course. Each item includes a literacy skill as the stem and a three point Likert scale rating for importance, competence, and use of each skill. See Appendix A for a copy of the instrument. The literacy skills were taken directly from the HUR curriculum's weekly suggestions for implementing the lessons. The ratings for importance or feelings toward skill (affect), competence or feelings about ability to use skill (cognition), and use of skill (behavior) were derived from Katz's (1960) three components of attitude (i.e. affect, cognition, and behavior) as attitude or behavioral intent can predict actual behavior.

The BAILSS was administered to the summer cohort of teachers prior to the first lesson and after the last lesson of the HUR course. The pre- scores were compared to the post-scores and the coaching group's scores were compared to the no coaching group's scores. To score the BAILSS, each rating of "yes" or "often" was worth two points; "somewhat" or "sometimes" was worth one point; and "no" or "not yet" was worth zero points. A composite score for each respondent was derived as well as a subscale score for importance, competence, and use. Cronbach's alpha was conducted on time one data to determine the internal consistency of each scale. The Cronbach's alpha for the composite scale was .948, for Importance was .805, for Competence was .944, and for Use was .909. These reliability indices are based on the deletion of two items from the Importance (i.e. 9a, 18a) and two items from the Use scale (i.e.

2c, 3c) that were found to have a variance of zero. For consistency in comparing the subscale scores, the scores from the deleted items were included in the composite and subscale scores; however, it is recommended that these items are revised or eliminated for future use of the instrument.

Early Literacy Observation Checklist. The Early Literacy Observation Checklist (ELOC) was used to assess literacy-related environmental factors as well as teacher-student interaction variables related to literacy (Justice, 2002). The ELOC is comprised of four subscales including, (1) Storybook Reading, (2) Classroom Library, (3) Writing Center, and (4) Overall Print Environment and requires varying methods of responding (ex., open-ended, yes/no, and multi-choice). To cater to the purposes of the grant, modifications to the ELOC were made. These modifications included reformatting, the addition of two items (i.e., “Are printed materials displayed prominently in the early learning environment?” & “Are posters and signs displayed at eye level?”), and the extension of the rating choices for two existing items. Changes were based on feedback provided by literacy coaches and instructors facilitating the HUR curriculum.

In terms of scoring, each item was given a weight along a 0 to 1 range in .25 increments depending on the response format. Scores obtained included the four aforementioned sections in addition to an Overall Literacy Environment Score, which is the sum of all sections. Higher scores reflect a more literacy-rich childcare environment. For the purposes of the grant, only ELOC Total scores were used to assess the extent to which childcare providers incorporated the knowledge and skills gained from the HUR curriculum and coaching sessions into their classroom environment. Inter-rater reliability between observers was obtained at a level of .85 or above prior to the utilization of the instrument. To date, there have been no attempts to obtain psychometric properties, as Justice’s (2002) original intent of the measure was to provide a “functional snapshot” of the environment.

Focus groups. Qualitative measures, such as anecdotal data, focus groups, or interviews, can provide evidence of a change or positive impact from a program that is not detected by quantitative measures. This section will describe the use of focus groups to evaluate the HUR program. Krueger (1988, p.18) described a focus group as a:

...carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment. It is conducted with approximately seven to ten people by a skilled interviewer. The discussion is relaxed, comfortable, and often enjoyable for participants as they share their ideas and perceptions. Group members influence each other by responding to ideas and comments in the discussion.

For the evaluation of the HUR program, 6 groups comprised of 10 to 12 teachers were convened to answer questions about the impact of the program on themselves, their students, and the families of the

Table 7
Focus Group Questions

1. Describe how the class has affected you as a teacher. What have you learned?
2. What would you have changed about the HUR course?
3. What was the impact of the HUR course on you as a teacher?
4. What was the impact on your children? parents of your children?
5. In what ways was your coach helpful? What was a typical coaching session like?"
6. What would you have changed about coaching?

students. The questions were all neutral and open-ended. The questions are listed in Table 7.

The focus groups were recorded and transcribed for precision of quotes and themes. During the focus groups, a volunteer from the group recorded the comments summarized by the facilitator. Once the groups were transcribed, a team of evaluators reviewed the notes for themes.

Follow-Up Coaching Survey. An informal survey was provided to all participants following their last coaching session. The participants mailed the completed survey to the supervisor of the coaches. The survey was developed by the coaches and asked the participants to respond to questions about their experience with the HUR! Course and coaching. Responses related to coaching will be used in the evaluation report.

Children

Screening for Early Literacy Learning. A review of measures to assess children's early literacy development reveals a significant void particularly when attention is directed to teacher ratings of student's skill development. Consequently, the Program Evaluation Team developed a screening instrument that would gather information on emerging literacy skills in children between the ages of six months to five years of age. This measure, the Screening for Early Literacy Learning (SELL), is a teacher rating scale that taps four key domains of literacy development: Communication Skills, Reading, Recognizing Letters, and Responses to Letter Sounds. Items comprising the SELL were generated from a review of research on developmental milestones, language, and literacy skill acquisition (e.g., Berk, 2003; Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Clay, 1991; McCathren, Warren, & Yoder, 1996; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). The end product contained ten observable behaviors presented along a continuum reflecting the typical progression of skills for each area ranging from the lowest (e.g., never looks at books) to the highest-level skills of development (e.g., child reads isolated words) (see Appendix B). Completion of the SELL involves the teacher circling the item and corresponding number that best describes a targeted child.

Subscale scores and total scores are obtained. Specifically, scores for each domain reflected the highest skill or number circled by the teacher. Total scores were obtained by summing each of the four domain scores. Psychometric properties of the SELL indicate that it holds promise as a reliable measure of skill acquisition for children between the ages of six months to one year. That is, internal consistency was moderate with an $r = .65$ (Cronbach's Alpha) obtained. Further exploration also documented strong concurrent validity when the relationship between scores obtained on the Communication Skills domain and the Communication subscale on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire were examined (Pearson Product Moment Correlation = .65).

Individual Growth and Development Indicators. The preschool form of the Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDI) was developed by McConnell and McEvoy at the University of Minnesota. Their efforts were driven by the goal of developing a General Outcome Measure (GOM) that assessed early literacy skills such as expressive language and phonemic awareness in children between the ages of three to five years (McConnell, Priest, Davis, & McEvoy, 2002; Priest et al, 2001). Psychometrics properties of these instruments describe the IGDI as a valid and reliable index of children's literacy growth and development (Priest, Davis,

McConnell, & Shinn, 1999; Missall and McConnell, 2004) Three subtests are included in the preschool IGD1: Picture Naming, Alliteration, and Rhyming.

Picture Naming. The Picture Naming subtest assesses expressive language skills while it asks children to identify common objects (e.g., house, dog, fish) depicted in pictures presented to them (McConnell et al, 2002). Four sample items are presented first with feedback provided. Following presentation of the sample items, the examiner tells the child that he or she will show him or her more pictures. An additional prompt reminds the child to name the pictures as fast as he or she can. The examiner begins timing as he or she displays the first card. If a child does not respond within three seconds of being shown a card, the examiner asks the child, "What do we call this?" If the child does not answer, then the card is placed into a pile along with incorrectly named cards, and the next card is shown. After the one-minute time limit has elapsed, the correctly identified cards are counted. This number becomes the Picture Naming score.

Alliteration. The Alliteration subtest taps early phonemic awareness by engaging children in tasks that ask them to identify pictures of objects that start with the same sound. For example, a child would either verbally or through pointing indicate that dice and dog begin with the same sound. Six sample cards are presented with decreasing levels of support and feedback provided by the examiner. When the examiner has finished presenting the sample cards, children who were not able to correctly answer two or more cards do not continue with the subtest. In contrast, children who correctly answer at least two out of the four sample cards correctly continue this task during which time, the examiner starts the timer, identifies the images on the card, and asks which picture below starts with the same sound as the picture on the top of the card. For example, "Here is a dog, rock, desk, and skate. Which picture [pointing to the bottom row] starts with the same sound as dog?" If a child does not respond in three seconds, the next card is shown. Cards eliciting accurate responses are placed in a one pile. Cards eliciting inaccurate or non-answers are placed in a separate pile. Two minutes are allowed for the Alliteration subtest with a child's score on the this subtest reflecting the number of correctly identified alliteration pairs during the two minute span.

Rhyming. The last subtest, Rhyming, also measures early phonemic awareness skills. Specifically, it asks children to identify objects whose names rhyme. For example, a child could point to or verbalize that a star and car sound the same. The Rhyming subtest follows a similar presentation format as the Alliteration subtest. That is, six sample cards are presented and failure on more than two of the last four samples results in discontinuation of the subtest. In contrast to the Alliteration subtest, however, the Rhyming task asks children to point to one of three images on the bottom row of a card that sounds the same as or rhymes with the image depicted on the top of the card. During the subtest, the examiner identifies all images that appear on the card and then follows this naming process with a reminder of the task requirements, i.e., "This is a hat, boat, fan, and cat. Point to the picture that sounds the same as hat?" Timing of this subtest begins with the presentation of the first card and continues until two minutes have elapsed. Cards eliciting correct responses in the two minute period are placed into one pile while cards receiving incorrect responses are placed into a second pile. A child's score on the Rhyming subtest represents the number of correctly identified pairs of objects during the two minutes span (or the number of cards in the correct pile).

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills. Literacy skills for those students who were identified as entering kindergarten in the fall of 2004 also were measured by the Letter Naming Fluency subtest of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ Sixth Edition (DIBELS). The DIBELS is a standardized and individually administered assessment tool designed to tap the development of early literacy and reading fluency skills (Good & Kaminski, 2002). Data from this subtest taps the development of skills in phonemic awareness (Good, Gruba, & Kaminski, 2002).

Specifically, during the Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) subtest, students are given one minute to name as many letters as they can from a probe displaying randomly placed upper and lower case letters of the alphabet. Timing of this subtest begins immediately after the examiner introduces the activity, i.e., “Here are some letters. I want you to name as many letter as you can. When I say begin, start here and go across the page...Ready? Begin.” Hesitations of more than five seconds are followed by the examiner identifying that letter and then pointing to the next letter and asking, “What letter?” The total number of correctly identified letters during the one-minute timed interval becomes the child’s LNF score.

Early Screening Inventory. Measures of a child’s developmental level were assessed using the Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-K) (Meisels et al., 1993). The ESI-K is an individually administered and norm-referenced screening tool that purports to assess children’s acquisition of skills that fall within three areas of development: Visual-Motor/Adaptive, Language and Cognition, and Gross Motor skills. Within the Visual-Motor/Adaptive domain, a child was asked to engage in a drawing task, build a four-dimensional model with blocks, and play a visual memory game that requires eye-hand coordination and short-term memory. Tasks in the Language and Cognition portion of the ESI-K gather data about a child’s language comprehension, verbal expression, ability to reason and count, and ability to remember auditory information. Finally, the Gross Motor subsection asks children to perform physical acts such as hopping on his or her foot, balancing, and skipping. Administration time for the ESI-K ranges from 15 to 20 minutes. Meissels et al., (2003) have reported strong psychometric properties for the ESI-K that include assertions that it correctly identified 93% of children who subsequently were found to have a significant delay or disabling condition.

Obtained scores on the ESI-K can be classified into one of three categories: OK, Rescreen, or Refer. Numerical scores also can be obtained. For the purpose of this study, only the numerical scores will be used as a source of data to answer the research questions. Table 8 provides details regarding the numerical and categorical descriptions of the scoring.

Table 8
ESI-K Scoring and Categorical Definitions

	Age (in years)			Description
	4.6 to 4.11	5.0 to 5.5	5.6 to 5.11	
OK	≥ 14	≥ 18	≥ 20	Child is developing normally.
Rescreen	10-13	14-17	16-20	Rescreen in 8-10 weeks.
Refer	≤ 9	≤ 13	≤ 15	Refer for evaluation.

Ages & Stages Questionnaire: Social- Emotional. The Ages & Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE - Squires, Bricker, & Twombly, 2002) was completed for all students in participating teachers’ classes to identify those children for whom challenging behaviors were

noted. If elevated scores emerged, communication with a child's parent about possible participation in the in-home parent training social-emotional component was initiated.

The ASQ:SE is a series of questionnaires that gather information about a child's social and emotional competencies. Eight forms of this questionnaire are available and targeted toward children in three and six month intervals for children between the ages of 6 to 60 months. Self-regulation, compliance, communication, adaptive skills, autonomy, and affect are addressed within the ASQ:SE. Items are presented in a standard format and followed by responses that indicate that the child displays the behavior "most of the time," "sometimes," or "never or rarely." Low scores are indicative of the absence of skills; thus, those children whose scores were lower than expected were targeted for follow-up inquiry regarding potential participation in the behavioral component of the ELO project.

Child Behavior Checklist. The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach & Edelbrock, 1986) served as the outcome measure following participation in the behavioral component of the ELO project. In short, the CBCL is a parent completed behavior rating scale that records children's competencies and behavioral/emotional needs. Items on this measure are scored so that higher scores reflect the presence of more frequent or intense behavior concerns.

Parents who participated with their children in the behavior component of the ELO project completed the CBCL at two points in time: prior to initiation of the in-home training program and at the completion of the course. Due to the short duration between completions of the rating scales – a six month test-retest recommendation is suggested – only raw scores were calculated. Despite this modification, higher scores represent more notable concerns. Within child differences or changes in raw scores over time were of concern rather than comparisons between different children and their families.

RESULTS

Question 1 Are LCP Activities and Objectives Implemented in a Timely Fashion?

To answer this evaluation question, Table 9 describes the intended and actual dates for all grant activities. It is important to note that the grant was extended from February, 2005 until July, 2005, and several activities continued through that date. The activities were divided into preparation activities, HUR class activities, coaching activities, and evaluation activities. All of the preparation activities were completed on time except for the director's workshop; however, the steering committee decided to reschedule this event to a later date. The HUR Class activities were all completed on time. A few of the coaching/literacy activities were delayed initially. For example, the literacy coach training occurred several months following the original date. The planning for literacy gatherings was held late; however, the literacy gatherings began on time. For the coaching activities, the initial coaching sessions were delayed by one month. This was due to the initial challenges of scheduling coaching sessions with the child care providers. The parent education session were significantly delayed by approximately one year. Finally, the literacy showcase event was held on time. The evaluation activities were initially delayed because the contracts for the evaluation team did not begin until January, 2004. As the first month was spent planning the evaluation procedures and training the data collectors, the pre-test for the spring cohort was delayed by one to two months. However, the pre- and post-test measures were administered on time for the summer and fall cohorts. This final report was completed by the new extended last day of the grant.

**Table 9
Timetable of LCP Activities**

Indicates month that activity was scheduled to be completed Indicates when activity was completed

Preparation/Grant Activities																					
	2003			2004												2005					Notes
	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	
Recruit and hire project coordinator, project assistant, coaches, and parent educators	✓																				
Begin confirming speakers/presenters and space for events	✓																				
Finalize literacy materials selection for training participants and families; establish ordering timeline	✓	✓																			
Finalize project documents (participant training contract, application form, etc.)	✓	✓																			
Marketing of project to child care/education community	✓	✓	✓																		
Directors workshop													✓							10/16/04	
HUR Class Activities																					
	2003			2004												2005				Notes	
	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A		
Complete participant enrollment for January Cohort I			✓																		
St Pete College classes-Satellite Heads Up! Reading training sessions-Cohort I				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓													
Complete participant enrollment for Cohort II								✓													
St Pete College classes-HUR Cohort II (Summer)								✓	✓	✓	✓										
Coaching and Literacy Activities																					
	2003			2004												2005					Notes
	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	
Literacy coach consultants presents training session to coaches and parent educators					✓															2/13/04	
Coaches and parent educators plan and begin holding literacy gatherings						✓															
Literacy gatherings							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Coaching sessions					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Parent Education (social/emotional component)																✓	✓	✓	✓		
Literacy events with families						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Literacy showcase event												✓									

Table 9 (Continued)
Timetable of LCP Activities

Indicates month that activity was scheduled to be completed

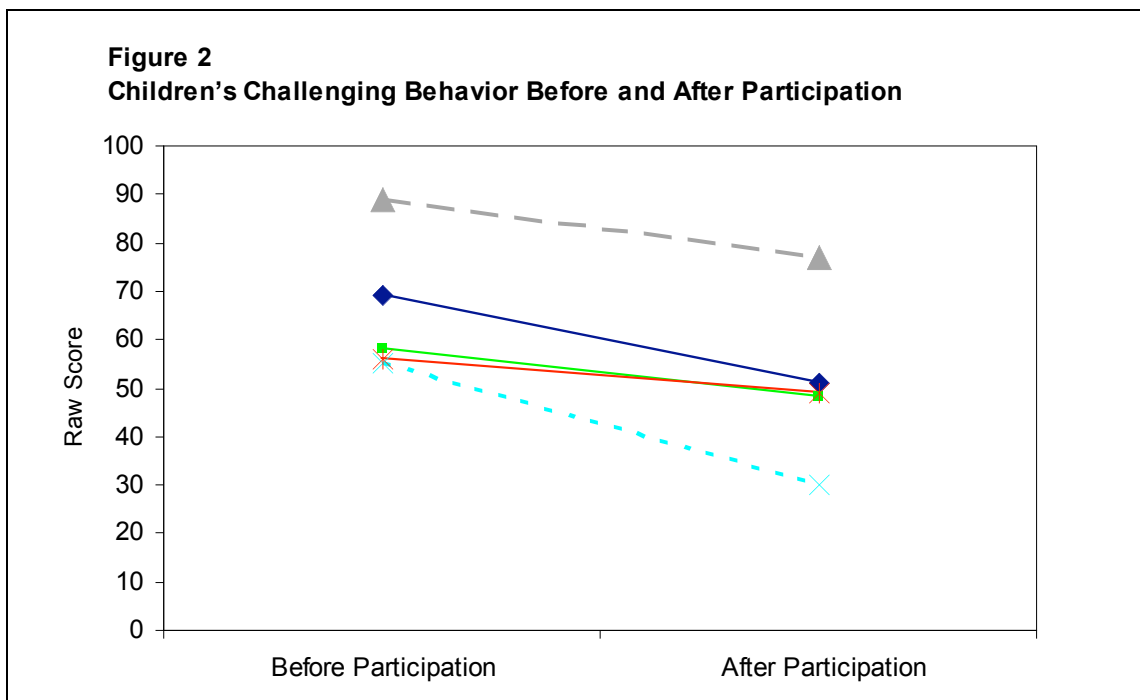
Indicates when activity was completed

Evaluation Activities	2003			2004												2005					Notes
	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	
Create evaluation database. Refine survey instruments and validate survey forms to be translated into scannable instruments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>													
Train coaches to administer pre-test evaluation instruments (ELOC only)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>																	
Evaluation pretests: classroom literacy environment, family literacy (including sample visits with families), acquire latest kindergarten readiness developmental testing score. Cohort 1				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>															
Train coaches and conduct post test evaluation instruments. Cohort I; pretests Cohort II								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>												
Conduct post-tests: Classroom Literacy Environment; kindergarten readiness scores, Family literacy, sample family visits-Cohort II											<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Compile and analyze data; prepare final evaluation report																		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Report finished 7/30/05

**Question
2**

Does the Home Visiting Model Enhance Child and Family Outcomes?

Outcomes for children and their families who participated in the parent training component (i.e., Non-Compliant Child parent training curriculum) were examined. Parent ratings of their child’s behavior using the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) were explored for answers to this question. Given the short time that elapsed between initiation and completion of this parent training component (less than the six month test-retest reliability recommendation), only raw scores were inspected for changes over time. In short, higher scores indicate deviations from typical behavior. Consequently, decreased raw scores after participation indicate positive changes in parent’s ratings of their child’s social-emotional status. As can be seen in Figure 2, positive changes were noted in all participating children following completion of the parent training behavior component.



Question 3 Does the Classroom-Teaching Component Increase Knowledge and Skills of Child Care Providers?

Data from two sources were examined to answer this question. First, a survey of teachers' knowledge of research based teaching strategies for early literacy instruction was analyzed. Next, classroom environment and teacher-student interactions were examined. Outcomes from these two avenues of evaluation are presented.

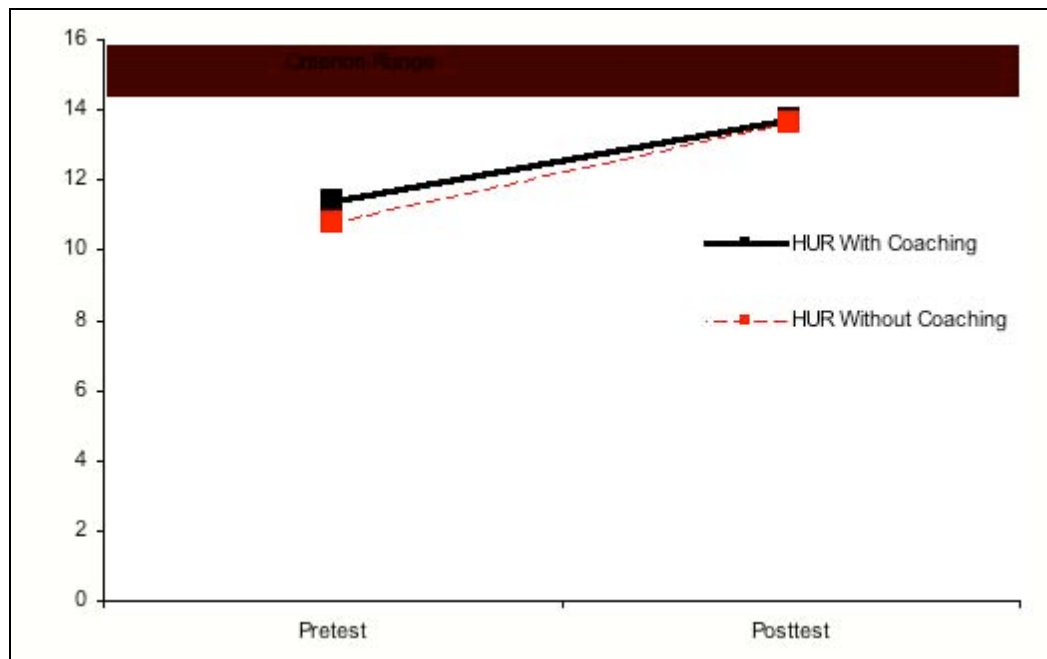
Teacher Skills

A pre and posttest survey of teacher's knowledge about early literacy skill acquisition and instructional strategies were evaluated against a mastery criterion. Mastery of the targeted course content would be reflected by an accuracy rate of 80% on the post test administration of the Early Literacy Instruction Knowledge survey (15 out of 19 possible points). Data from the Spring Cohort I of ELO participants were examined. Inspection of the pre and posttest scores indicated none of the teachers obtained this level of mastery learning on the pretest while 50% of the teachers demonstrated this level of knowledge on the posttest (see Table 10). A repeated measures Analysis of Variance was conducted to explore this difference. Results provided documentation that teachers' posttest scores ($M = 13.67$) were higher than pretest scores ($M = 11.33$), Wilks' Lambda, $F(1, 17) = 26.87, p < .0001$. Figure 3 offers a visual of the relationship between pre and posttest scores over time.

Table 10 Mean Scores for Teachers' Literacy Knowledge Pre and Posttest Survey

	N	Pretest	Posttest
HUR With Coaching	8	11.36	13.70
HUR Without Coaching	10	10.78	13.63
All Spring Cohort Teachers	18	11.33	13.67

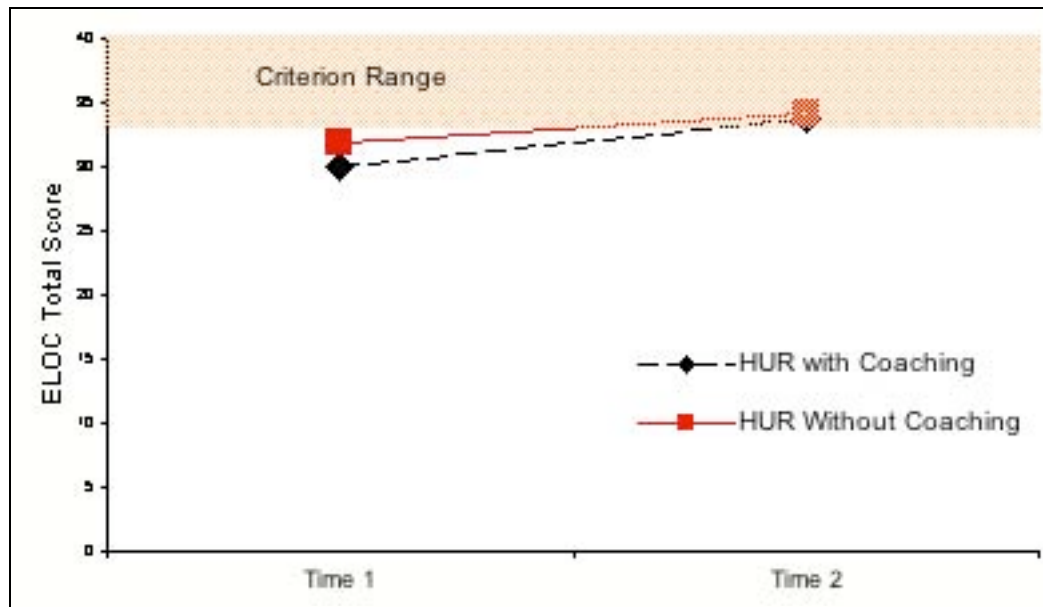
Figure 3 Changes in Teachers' Skills as Measured by Early Literacy Knowledge Survey Meeting 80% Criterion



Environmental changes and skill implementation

Changes in teachers’ skills and classroom environment were examined both before and after participation in the ELO grant. In short, Total scores on the Early Literacy Observation Checklist (ELOC) were compared to a criterion upon which 80% of possible literacy related characteristics on the ELOC were present in the classrooms. Thus, ELOC Total scores of 33 or higher (out of a possible 41 points) served as indicators of successful transfer of skills and strategies. Data from the spring cohort of ELO participants were examined. Comparison of ELOC Total Time 1 scores to this criterion were as follows: HUR with Coaching = 30.02 and HUR without Coaching = 31.80. Inspection of these outcomes indicates that no mean ELOC Total Time 1 scores met the criterion; however, at Time 2, mean scores from both ELO conditions fell within this range (HUR with Coaching = 33.77, HUR without Coaching = 34.20). Percentages of classrooms that met the criterion at Time 1 and 2 across conditions are presented in Table 11. Figure 4 also visually depicts these scores over time.

Figure 4. Changes in Teachers’ Skills as Measured by ELOC Scores Meeting 80% Criterion



**Table 11
Percentage of Classrooms Meeting ELOC Total Score Criterion Across Time By Conditions**

	N	Percentages Meeting Criterion	
		Time 1	Time 2
HUR With Coaching	12	33%	73%
HUR Without Coaching	10	40%	70%

Question
4

Does Mentoring and Coaching of Child Care Providers Improve Their Competence and Confidence?

To answer this question, scores from the Beliefs About Implementing Literacy Skills Scale (BAILSS), responses to the focus group questions, and anecdotal reports from a follow-up coaching survey will be provided.

Beliefs About Implementing Literacy Skills Scale

The BAILSS was administered to the summer cohort before the first HUR class and after the last HUR class to examine changes in teachers' beliefs about the importance of implementing literacy based strategies into their instructional practices. To determine if there was a change in ratings from the pre- test to the post- test for the whole group, and to determine if there was a difference over time between the group who received coaching during the class (concurrent) and group who did not receive coaching during the class (delayed), a Repeated Measures Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted. A MANCOVA was selected to control for the varying number of coaching sessions and coaching hours that the participants in the coaching group received. These two variables were used as covariates. Total scores on the pre- and post- BAILSS served as the dependent measure. See Table 12 for mean scores for both groups and for the total group.

Table 12
Means and SD for the Total and Subscales of the BAILSS at Time One and Two

<i>Subscale</i>	<i>Treatment Group</i>	Time 1		Time 2	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Importance	Coaching	52.3	(4.4)	55.5	(1.4)
	No Coaching	53.5	(2.9)	54.2	(4.1)
	All	52.7	(4.0)	55.0	(2.6)
Competence	Coaching	45.7	(10.1)	54.7	(1.8)
	No Coaching	45.5	(12.1)	53.4	(4.2)
	All	45.7	(10.7)	54.3	(2.9)
Use	Coaching	33.6	(12.3)	48.5	(6.7)
	No Coaching	32.5	(10.0)	45.7	(6.6)
	All	33.2	(11.5)	47.6	(6.7)
Total Score	Coaching	131.6	(22.9)	158.7	(7.8)
	No Coaching	131.5	(19.6)	153.4	(12.7)
	Both	131.6	(21.7)	156.9	(9.9)

Note. $N = 45$ for All; $N = 30$ for Coaching group; $N = 15$ for No Coaching group.

Prior to conducting the analysis, a Mauchly's Test for Sphericity confirmed that the assumptions required to conduct the analysis had been met. The results of the MANCOVA indicated that there was an overall main effect for time (Wilks Lambda, $F(1, 41) = 10.089$, $p = .003$). Follow-up univariate tests were conducted on the total and subscale scores. The Total scale and Use subscale were both significant. The importance and competence subscale were both approaching significance. See Table 13 for results.

The overall main effect for treatment (coaching and no coaching) was not significant (Wilks Lambda, $F(1, 41) = 1.418$, $p = .252$). The main effect for treatment when controlling for the number of coaching sessions was not significant (Wilks Lambda, $F(1, 41) = .0381$, $p = .990$) nor was the treatment when controlling for the number of coaching hours ($F(1,41) = .915$, $p = .443$). However, the mean scores on the post-test did indicate a slight advantage for the coaching group.

Table 13
Univariate Follow-Up Tests for the BAILSS

	df	F	p-value
Importance	1	3.44	.071
Competence	1	3.29	.077
Use	1	13.80	.001*
Total	1	10.089	.003*

Note. The Greenhouse-Geiser estimate was used. * Indicates significance.

Overall, the data revealed a significant difference between the reported beliefs at time one and time two. Neither group demonstrated a greater change in their beliefs than the other group, even when controlling for the number of hours or sessions. The most change occurred in the Use subscale, indicating that teachers report the largest change in their actual practice in the classroom. While the data did not reveal a greater difference for the coaching group, it did demonstrate a change in practice over time in all the teachers.

Focus groups

The teachers were asked to describe their coaching experience during the focus groups. In general, the teachers who received coaching enjoyed the extra help, encouragement, and felt more accountable from coaching. Only one or two teachers felt that the coach was judgmental and those without a coach felt that they wanted one. Examples of the positive impact related to coaching include:

“She [coach] brought back the fun. If they look like they are playing, you know they are learning.”

“How can I help you? How can I help you? The key words.”

“...It made me feel really important...that we are doing such an important job that we have coaches.”

While teachers seemed to benefit from the coach, many teachers described the impact of the course in general on their confidence and competence in the classroom. The teachers felt there was a positive impact on their classroom and described many of the changes on themselves and their children. These quotes capture the unique impacts that could not have been captured in a survey or test. They described many of the positive impacts on their teaching:

“I am a lot more confident with what I am doing.”

“I have a different level of understanding of why I am doing what I am doing.”

“I didn’t know how to get her [children] from here to there and this class has taught me how to do it.”

“[In the past] . . . I would see some of my kids write their name and I would want to tell them, no do it this way. I learned to leave them alone, that’s the way it’s supposed to go and they’ll just pick up on it.”

Follow-Up Coaching Survey

Following the last coaching session that each participant received, they were asked to complete an informal survey developed by the coaches. The survey specifically asked two questions related to the coaching experience, “Has coaching been effective for you?” and

“Would it be helpful for coaching to continue?” . Responses were reviewed. In general, the responses were positive and the majority of the participants found coaching to be effective. The responses to the second question were mixed. Some participants indicated that it would be helpful to continue having the coach visit or having contact with the coach. Others felt that while coaching was helpful, 20 coaching sessions were more than sufficient. A sample of responses was included to demonstrate the impact that coaching has had on the participants’ classrooms and competence:

“Coaching has been effective in ways to make me aware of the importance of speaking with the children and commenting on everything they do. Children then recognize that talking and listening are important.”

“I truly learned a lot and I am using it too.”

“My coach always had a surprise for the children and also supplied us with some wonderful materials.”

“I loved having a coach!”

“The coach can see things that you can’t see and are very willing to help in any way they can.”

“The most important thing my coach did was bolster my self confidence with her always positive comments.”

“It has been great to have feedback. . . no one has ever come into my home before to point out the things I do wrong or the things I do right.”

“Coaching reinforced the things I learned in Heads Up! Reading.”

“She helps me to point out how much a child has grown/learned as I don’t often see the progress because I’m here all the time.”

“It is clear from these comments that coaching was beneficial. While the quantitative results from the BAILSS were less indicative of the impact that coaching had on the participants, these qualitative results indicate a strong impact on the participants. This demonstrates the challenge of truly capturing a program’s impact in quantitative data alone.”

Question 5 Do Participating Children Show Improvement in Skill Acquisition?

Early literacy skill acquisition of the students of the participating teachers was examined with two different indices. First, pre and post data from the Individual Growth and Development Indicators were analyzed from the Spring I and Summer II cohorts. Next, pre and post teacher ratings of student literacy skill development (i.e., Screening for Early Literacy and Learning) that were collected for the Summer Cohort II were examined. Literacy skill development as measured by these tools will be discussed next.

To examine these changes, analyses to determine the Effect Size for each classroom were conducted. In short, an Effect Size quantifies the effectiveness of a treatment or intervention. In these analyses, Effect Size quantified the difference between mean classroom pre and post test scores [(class mean post test score – class mean pre test score)/standard deviation]. According to Cohen (1969, p. 23), Effect Sizes can be classified into small (.20), medium or “large enough to be visible to the naked eye” (.50), and large (.80).

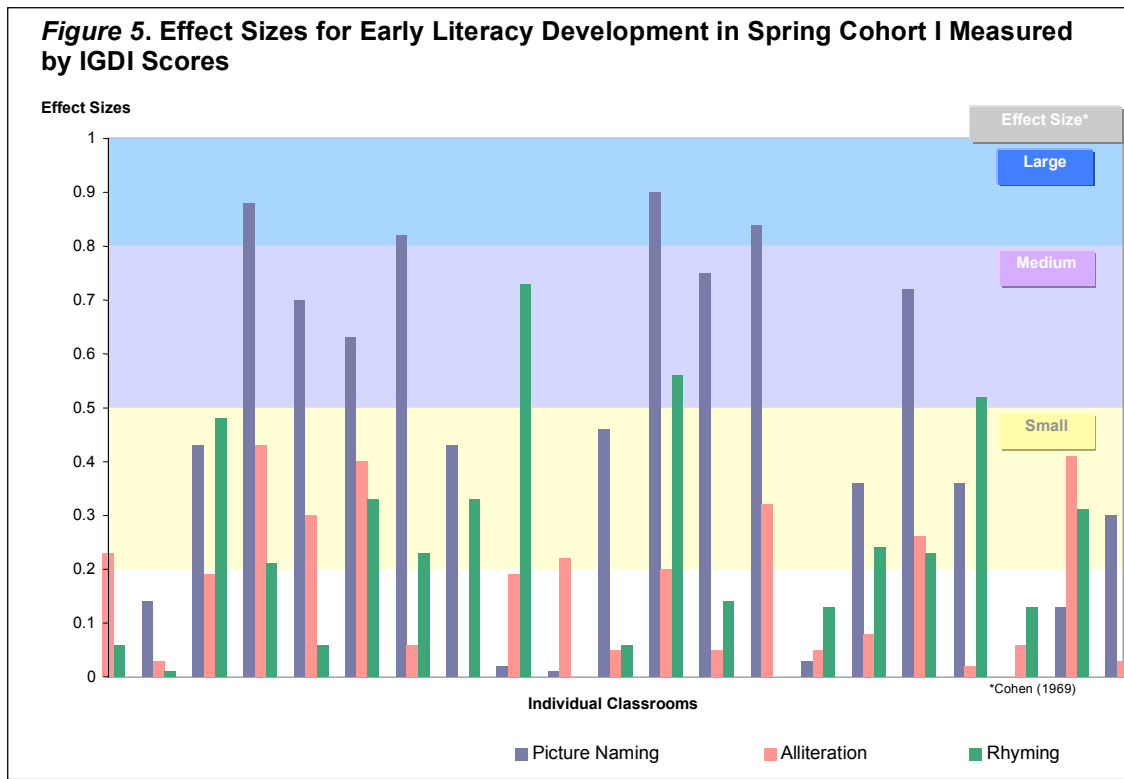
Cohen (1969) also recommends that effectiveness of an intervention be interpreted in relation to other strategies that seek to produce the same effect. A brief overview of research reveals a void in efforts that sought examined approaches similar to the ELO project. However, comparisons are available for strategies implemented in primary grades such as peer tutoring (Effect Size = .40; Cohen, Kulik & Kulik, 1982), computer assisted instruction (Effect Size = .24; Fletcher-Flinn & Gravatt, 1995), and reducing class size from 23 elementary aged students to 15 students (Effect Size = .30 for reading and .30 for math; Finn & Achilles, 1990). With this in mind, Tables 14 and 15 contain the ranges and median obtained Effect Sizes for the IGDI and SELL data. Figures 5, 6, and 7 also are included to depict the interpretation of these Effect Sizes according to Cohen’s (1969) classifications. Finally, further differentiation is made between skill development in students whose teachers received coaching while participating in the HUR class and those who were in the delayed cycle of coaching and thus did not receive coaching during the time when data were collected.

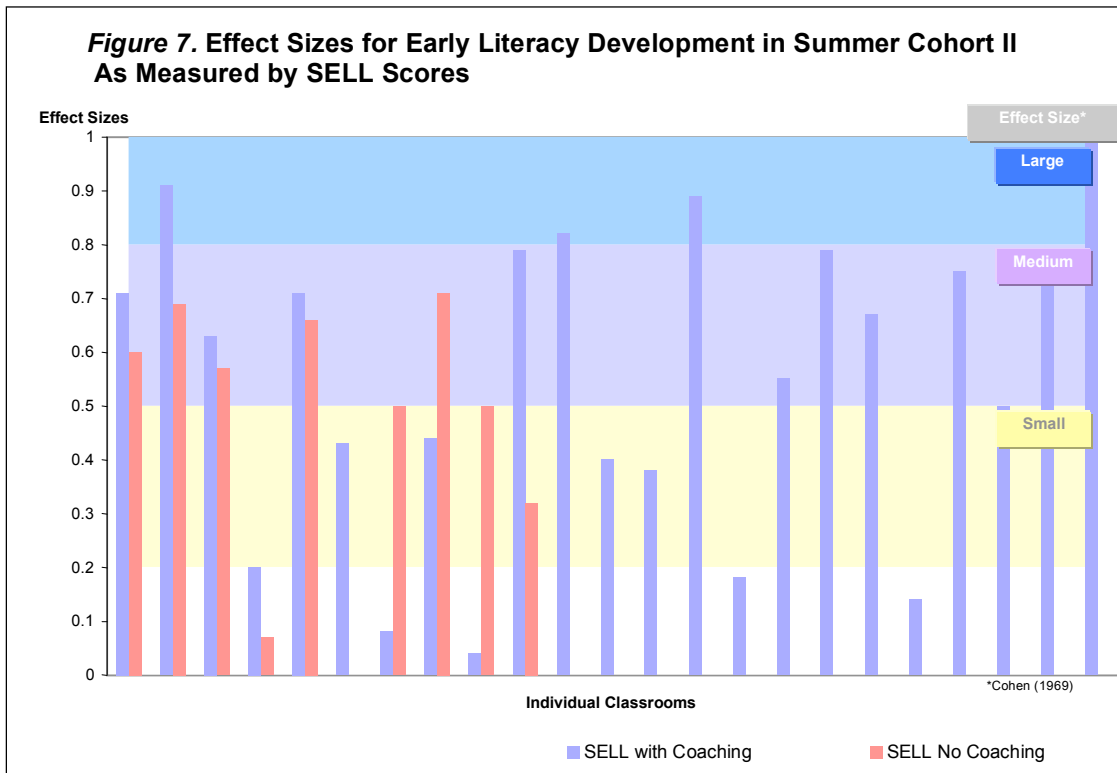
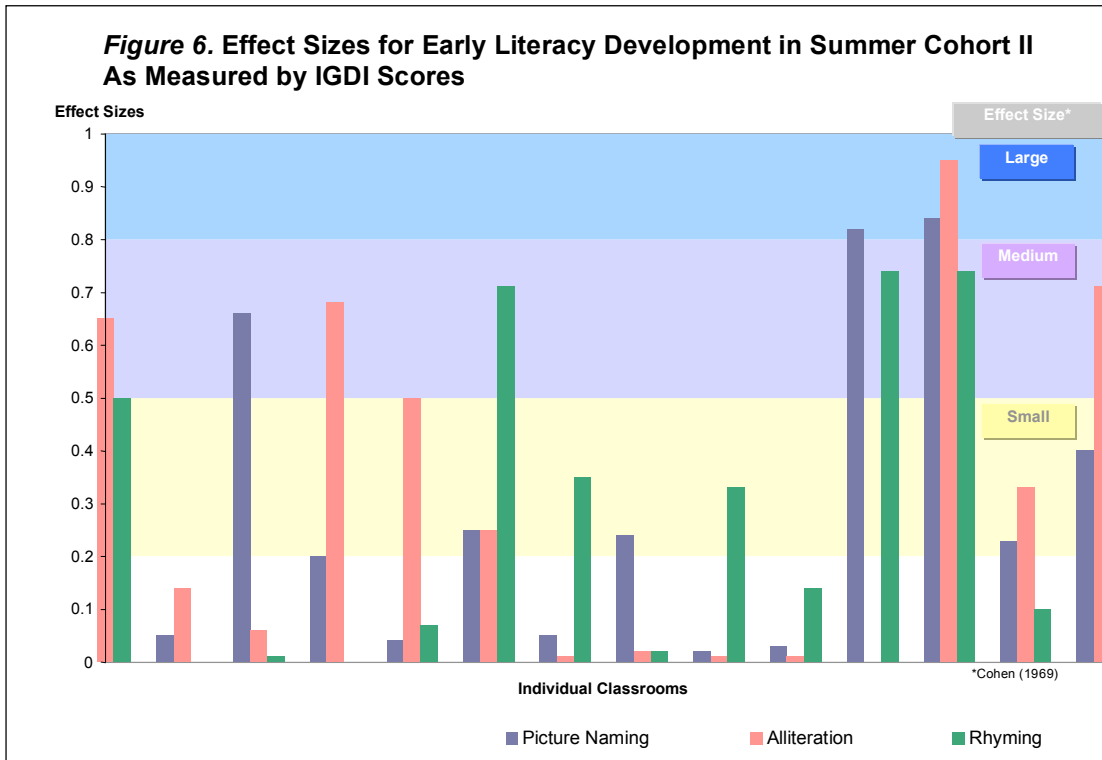
Table 14
Effect Sizes for Spring Cohort I

	Number of Classrooms	Effect Size			
		Mean	Median	Mode	Range
<i>All</i>					
Picture Naming	21	.45	.43	.46	.00 to .90
Alliteration	21	.44	.36	.36	.00 to .90
Rhyming	21	.23	.21	.06	.00 to .73
<i>With Coaching</i>					
Picture Naming	11	.45	.46	.46	.01 to .88
Alliteration	11	.19	.19	.19	.00 to .43
Rhyming	11	.23	.21	.06	.00 to .73
<i>No Coaching</i>					
Picture Naming	10	.44	.36	.36	.00 to .90
Alliteration	10	.15	.07	.05	.02 to .41
Rhyming	10	.23	.19	.13	.00 to .56

Table 15
Effect Sizes for Summer Cohort II

	Number of Classrooms	Effect Size			
		Mean	Median	Mode	Range
All					
Picture Naming	14	.28	.22	.02	.02 to .84
Alliteration	13	.33	.25	.01	.01 to .95
Rhyming	14	.30	.24	.00	.00 to .74
SELL	33	.53	.57	.71	.00 to .99
With Coaching					
Picture Naming	11	.22	.05	.02	.02 to .82
Alliteration	10	.23	.10	.01	.68 to .01
Rhyming	11	.26	.14	.00	.74 to .00
SELL	23	.56	.63	.71	.04 to .99
No Coaching					
Picture Naming	3	.49	.40	n/a	.02 to .82
Alliteration	3	.66	.71	n/a	.01 to .68
Rhyming	3	.46	.54	n/a	.00 to .74
SELL	10	.46	.54	.50	.00 to .71





Notable from these tables and figures, it appears that students whose teachers participated in the ELO grant demonstrated growth over time. When examining these outcome measures more closely, it also appears that coaching was tied to the greatest changes over time in skills assessed with the IGD I measures.

A second question also targets the differences between classrooms where Effect Sizes indicate the greatest and least impact. Greatest impact was found within classrooms where teachers reported more years of experience than in settings in which teachers reported fewer years of teaching experience. Educational attainments of these teachers varied with one teacher reporting a high school diploma and a second teacher indicating that she had college experience. All these settings were identified as private child care centers.

Despite the findings, research has indicated that SES plays a significant role in the development of early reading skills (e.g., Byrk & Raudenbush, 1992; National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). As such additional focus was dedicated toward examining the role it played in implementation of the ELO grant. A visual depiction of this relationship can be found in the following figures (see Figures 8 and 9). In short these graphs reflect differences in IGD I scores when the SES of the early childhood site was considered. First, three sites were selected: one identified as a site located in a high SES location, one identified as a site located in a low SES location, and one in identified in the middle of that range. All three sites also had children of similar ages (average age of 50 months). Warranting attention, notable growth emerged in the randomly selected site that was identified as a low SES location particularly when this site was compared to a site identified as being located in a high SES location. Research based changes in the early literacy supportive environmental conditions as measured by the ELOC were evident in both high and low SES settings. Little change was noted in the site located in the median SES setting.

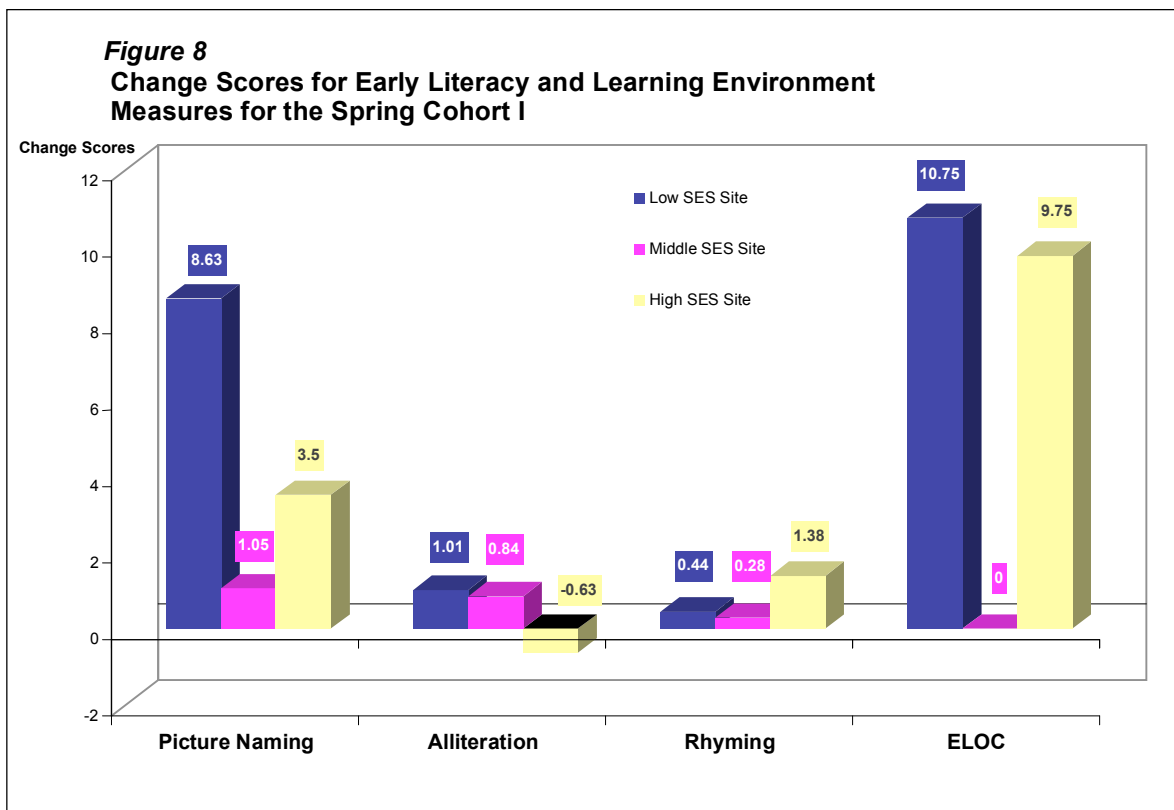
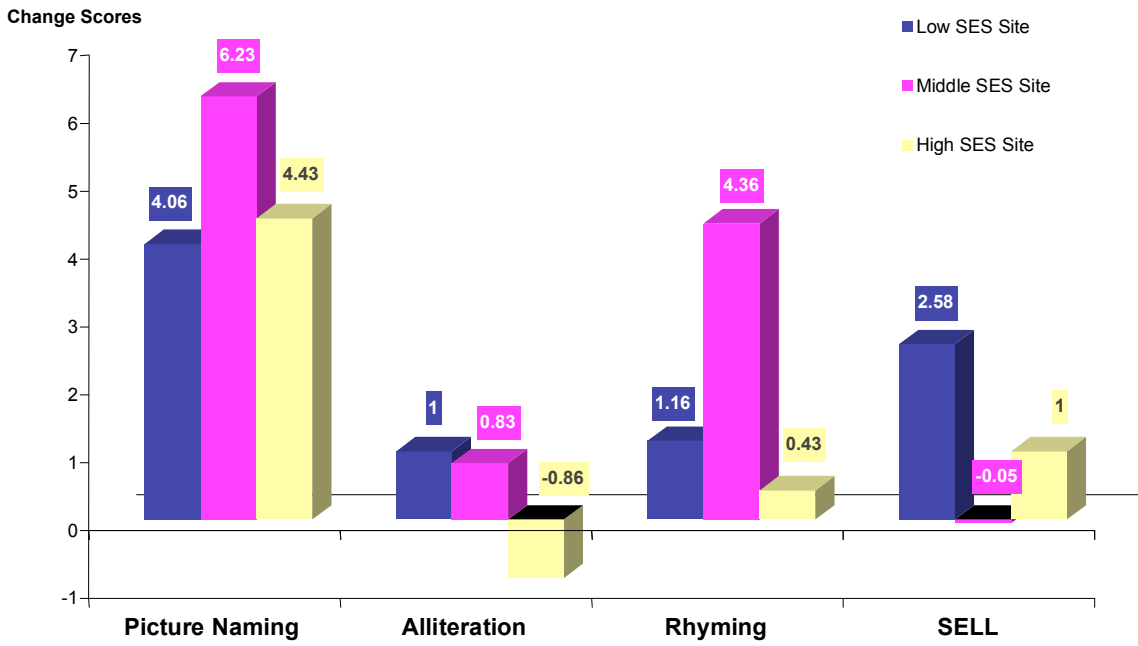
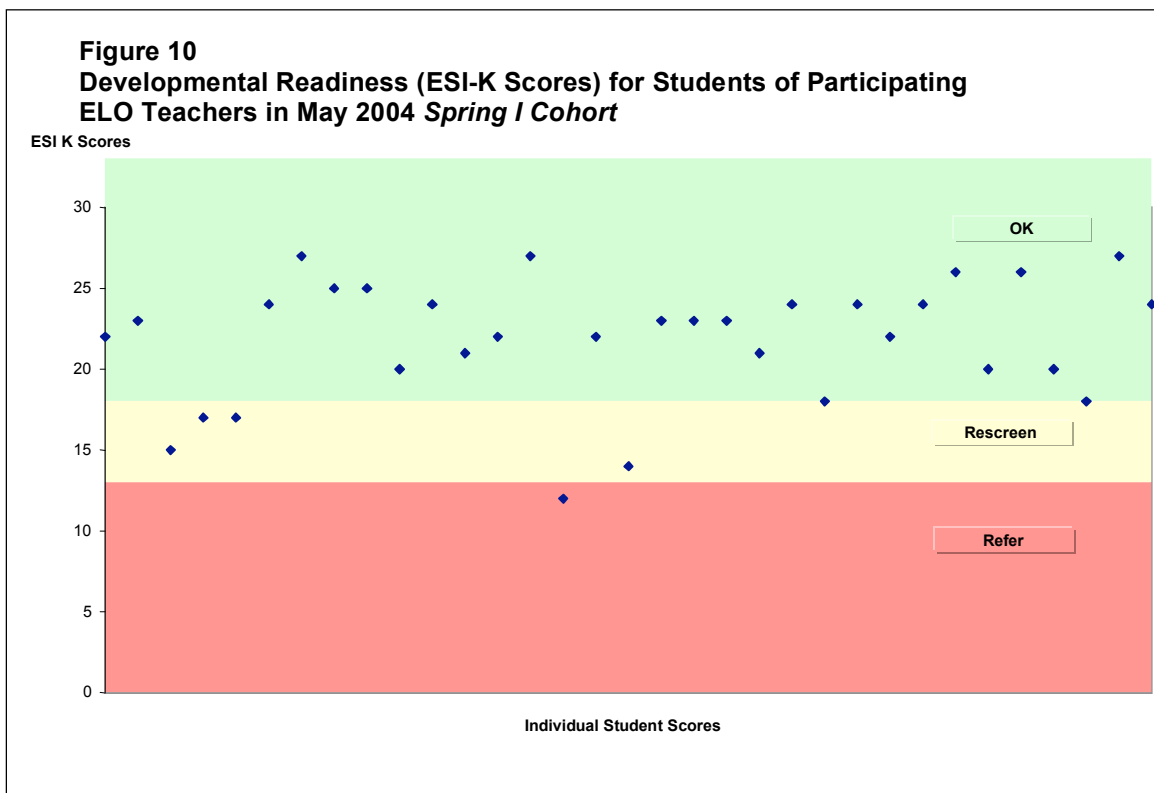


Figure 9
Change Scores for Early Literacy and Learning Measures for the Summer Cohort II



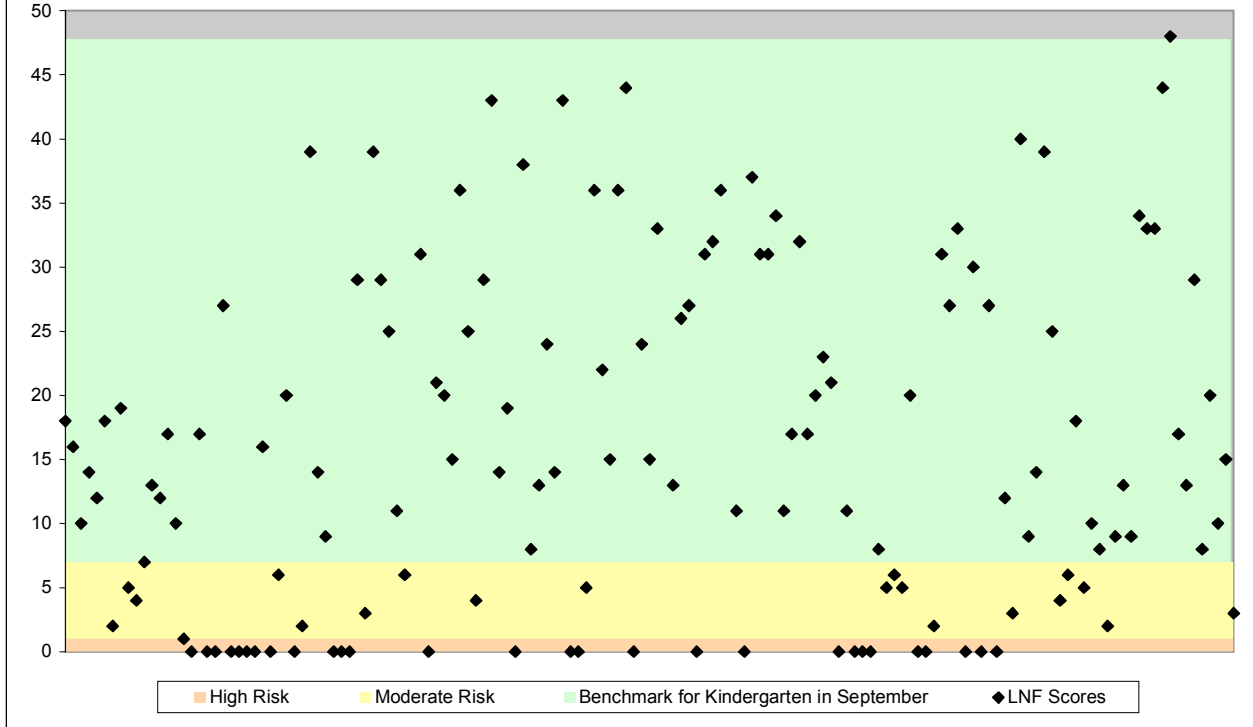
Question 6 Do Participating Children Demonstrate Readiness for Kindergarten?

Readiness for Kindergarten was examined in a subset of children who would be eligible by age to enter Kindergarten in the fall of 2004 (i.e., birthdates prior to September 1, 1999). From this population, evaluators administered the Early Screening Inventory – Kindergarten (ESI-K) readiness screening instrument to 33 children. Their performance on this tool was used to answer this question. Next, scores obtained on the ESI-K were plotted on a graph that aligned these scores with ESI-K outcome recommendations (see Figure 10). Of note, 85% of the children fell in the expected range with only one child's performance on the ESI-K indicating a need for follow-up evaluation to identify if developmental delays were present.



The Letter Naming Fluency subtest of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) also was administered to 149 students from the Spring Cohort I identified as age appropriate for entry into Kindergarten in the fall of 2004. Figure 11 contains the results of this effort as well as the expected benchmarks for skill attainment at their entry into Kindergarten approximately three months later. Inspection of this visual reveals that the majority of students already are displaying skills that are aligned with expectations that will be assessed upon their entry into Kindergarten three months later.

Figure 11
May 2004 Scores on DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency Subtest with September 2004
Benchmarks for Skill Attainment in Kindergarten



**Question
7**

What Are the Factors Associated With Efficient Implementation Of This Model in the Community?

Implementation of the grant includes the HUR! Course, the coaching component, and the social/emotional component. As the HUR course was conducted through an official course at the St. Petersburg College, the program was efficiently implemented by the university standards. The other two main components will be discussed in this section. For coaching, a summary of the time spent implementing the coaching facet of the grant will be discussed. Next, an analysis of whether the content of the coaching sessions aligned with the Early Literacy and Learning Model (ELLM) of early educator coaching will be provided. Finally, the social/emotional component included home visiting and parent education sessions. For the home visiting component, please refer to Table 6 for a review of the services provided. The Parent Education facet will be discussed in this section; a review of dates, topics, and number of participants in the Parent Education workshops will be presented.

Summary of Coaching Activities

To determine the factors required to implement the coaching component, the coaches' services were categorized by direct and indirect service. Direct service included classroom visits for the literacy coaching sessions (LC). These sessions were face-to-face sessions with the teacher for about one hour. While participating in the HUR course, ELO teachers in the coaching condition received an average of 7 and 4.5 LC sessions, respectively for the spring and summer cohorts. The difference in the numbers is because the summer session was considerably shorter (10 weeks compared to 15 weeks).

Indirect service includes any preparation activities related to coaching, such as laminating reading materials, writing notes from the visit, driving to the visit, and researching ideas for teachers. As it would have been too time consuming to record every indirect service activity, the coaches estimated that they spent 12 hours/week on these activities. As they participated in the grant for 69 weeks, the total was 828 hours per coach for the duration of the grant. A summary of the total number of sessions and total numbers of hours spent in direct and indirect service during and after the HUR! Course is presented in Table 16.

**Table 16
Summary of Coaching Activities for Three Coaches**

Total Hours Coaching: Direct Service	Total Hours Coaching: Indirect Service	Total Hours Coaching Indirect and Direct	Total Number Coaching Sessions (LC)
1,637 hrs +	2,484 hrs =	4,121 hrs	1,644 sessions

As a total of 4,121 hours were spent providing coaching service, and there were a total of 128 teachers who received coaching, the average number of hours per teacher was 32 and average sessions was 12.8.

Review of Literacy Coaches' Session Notes

In order to document alignment with the ELLM coaching model (Fountain, 2002), which provides a framework for coaching that cycles through observation, feedback, modeling, and goal setting, a review of notes completed by LCs and signed by their respective teachers

receiving the coaching was conducted. Notes from nine of the twelve sites where coaching was provided were included in this review.

Three files for each of the three LCs were randomly selected by the researcher for review. In general, inspection of these files offered support for close alignment with the Early Literacy Learning Model (ELLM) of coaching. Specifically, across these sites an average of 7 coaching sessions had occurred for approximately 50 minutes in duration. Ninety seven percent of these session notes contained reference to observing the teacher, providing feedback, and then setting goals for future sessions. The missing component from the 3% of notes that did not depict full implementation of this cycle lacked reference to the LC modeling the skill under discussion. Accountability for the anecdotal references in these session notes is documented by signatures of the LC and teachers indicating that the session notes reflect an accurate representation of what occurred during the LC session.

Review of the Parent Education Component

To describe other components of efficient facilitation of the grant, the Parent Education workshops provided by Directions for Mental Health were documented. The date, location, title of the workshop, and number of parents in attendance are described in Table 17. There were 54 workshops presented on 11 different topics. In total, 767 parents or caregivers attended the workshops.

Table 17
Dates, topics, and number of participants in Parent Education Workshops

Date	Topic	#
12/06/04	Social and emotional development	142
12/14/04	Rituals and routines	9
01/19/05	Positive parenting	16
01/25/05	Social and emotional development	150
02/02/05	Age appropriate expectations	4
02/15/05	Rituals and routines	8
02/16/05	Positive parenting	8
02/21/05	Building an emotional vocabulary	6
02/22/05	Sibling rivalry	3
02/23/05	Rituals and routines	3
02/23/05	Positive parenting	7
03/1/05	Positive parenting	8
03/04/05	Age appropriate expectations	13
03/14/05	Positive parenting	10
03/16/05	Social and emotional development	13
03/21/05	Anger management for children	20
03/22/05	Social and emotional development	13
03/22/05	Positive discipline	2
03/23/05	Positive parenting	1
03/24/05	Positive parenting	2
03/28/05	Building self-esteem in children	2

Table continued on next page.

Table 17 (Continued)
Dates, topics, and number of participants in Parent Education Workshop

Date	Topic	#
03/28/05	Positive parenting	2
03/29/05	Positive parenting	1
03/29/05	Positive parenting	6
03/30/05	Helping children manage stress	2
03/30/05	Positive parenting	4
04/01/05	Age appropriate expectations	7
04/04/05	Positive parenting	26
04/04/05	Positive parenting	1
04/05/05	Positive parenting	7
04/06/05	Positive parenting	5
04/11/05	Age appropriate expectations	8
04/11/05	Sibling rivalry	25
04/11/05	Emotional literacy	35
04/12/05	Rituals and routines	5
04/13/05	Rituals and routines	5
04/14/05	Positive parenting	16
04/14/05	Positive parenting	2
04/19/05	Age appropriate expectations	9
04/19/05	Positive parenting	9
04/26/05	Positive parenting	15
04/27/05	Age appropriate expectations	8
04/27/05	Positive parenting	2
04/27/05	Positive parenting	25
05/09/05	Sibling rivalry	36
05/10/05	Positive parenting	5
05/11/05	Age appropriate summer activities	3
05/18/05	Age appropriate expectations	7
05/19/05	Making family our priority	18
05/25/05	Positive parenting	4
05/26/05	Age appropriate expectations	2
07/19/05	Social and emotional development	27
Total		767

Question 8 **Are Families and Providers Satisfied With This Model?**

To answer this question, two sources were examined: feedback from teachers that was collected during focus groups and qualitative data reflecting parents' perceptions of their children's progress toward targeted behavior goals during the parent-training component.

Teacher feedback

Table 18 displays the positive themes related to the course and coaching component and themes that the child care providers would have changed about the course. The positive themes provide information that the course should preserve for the future, while the changes provide valuable suggestions for improving the HUR Course.

Table 18
Focus Group Themes

Implementation		
<i>Component</i>	<i>Positive Themes</i>	<i>Areas for Change</i>
HUR! Course Topics	Focus on assessment so teachers can measure what children are doing	More individualized for their settings (e.g. family child care, infants)
HUR! Course Materials	Handouts with ideas on ways to implement material	Some books were difficult
HUR! Live Feed/Videos	Classroom vignettes and demonstrations	Less repetition of concepts and shorter lecture segments
Classroom Discussions	Getting ideas from other teachers	More problem solving and sharing focused on implementation of ideas in the classroom
Coaching	Resources from coaches	Some felt they were being judged
	Suggestions were helpful	Group who did not receive coaching felt neglected
	Liked when coach asked how she can help	
	Provided encouragement and accountability	
Impact		
Teacher	Expanded literacy to other areas of classroom besides book area	
	Teaching is more fun	
	Increased expectations of children	
	More confidence	
Student	More knowledge of developmentally appropriate literacy levels	
	Younger children are doing what older children are doing	
	Children are more interested in reading and writing	

To make this information more meaningful, teachers also described the impact of the course on their students during the focus groups. These quotes summarize the most important and crucial impact of the program.

“[Describing what she liked] The excitement of books, literacy, their writing skills, name recognition, actually being able to formulate a lot of letters. Having those writing materials at all the centers. The kids really adapt to that and [are] really excited...”

“When they have free choice time, normally they just go to the housekeeping. [Now] they actually go to the books. They enjoy reading books now. They pick it up and ask you questions about the books.”

“I didn’t realize that even at a two year old level they could still grasp what three and four year olds would grasp and they picked up on it. In a week or two period, they were actually able to say and do things that three and four year olds were doing, and I was amazed. . . .”

“I have one year olds whose language has just taken off since I started this [course]. They are counting to five, reciting their ABC’s . . . they are picking up what I am doing with my older children . . . and they are getting it.”

Parent feedback following participation in behavior component

From another perspective, child and family outcomes following participation in the home visiting model were examined by their progress toward meeting their individualized targeted goals. Table 19 contains the goals for each of the eight children and their families along with the outcomes that were described collectively by the families and their respective Early Childhood Consultants. In general, attainment of the targeted goals was obtained; however, in many cases additional goals and behaviors of concern were identified for future intervention.

**Table 19
Targeted Goals and Outcomes for the Home Visiting Model**

Goal	Outcome
Increase compliance. Decrease physical aggression, demanding attention, whining and yelling and work on bedtime schedule/routines.	Parents reported an increase in compliance and decrease in yelling.
Increase compliance. Decrease temper tantrums, demanding attention, yelling, smart talk, ignoring, and whining.	Mother believed that medications combined with behavior modification and counseling worked well in improving behavior. She wanted to continue behavioral strategies and work on fine motor skill development.
Decrease head banging, temper tantrums, demanding attention, physical attacks towards others, ignoring, and whining. Increase compliance and bathroom skills.	Mother demonstrated consistency with strategies such as praising and noticing desired behaviors. Mom noted that strategies helped with all four children
Decrease whining/crying, smart talk, and demanding attention. Increase compliance and adherence to bedtime routines.	Parents stated that they are enjoying their child more.
Increase social cooperation and compliance with mealtime routines. Decrease tantrums and aggression.	Parents report major improvements with behavior. No hitting and sleeping in own bed. Parents were enthusiastic and demonstrated consistent use of new strategies.
Decrease whining and ignoring. Increase compliance and improve social skills.	Unsuccessful completion.
Decrease whining, destructive behaviors, smart talk, ignoring, temper tantrums. Increase compliance and adherence to bedtime routine.	Although still described as fidgety and unable to attend, teacher noted that the child was more social with adults and peers.

Question 9 What is the Cost of Implementing This Model?

A cost analysis of the funds used to implement the literacy training and coaching model employed in the ELO grant was conducted. Overall, \$634,294.00 was distributed across four agencies [i.e., Pinellas County Schools Readiness Coalition (PCSRC), Inc., Coordinated Child Care of Pinellas County (CCC), Directions for Mental Health, and Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute at the University of South Florida (FMHI)]. Table 20 provides the total funds allocated to each agency. Funds were allocated for staff salaries, public awareness, travel, materials, assessment measures, tuition, printing/duplication, fringe benefits, and overhead costs. Please consult the subsequent figures 12-15 for a visual representation of the use of these funds for each agency.

Table 20
Cost Analysis of Budget for ELOA Grant

	Directions	FMHI	PCSRC	CCC
Salaries	167,164	45,490	7,539	24,354
Travel	4,765	6,520	1,545	1,000
Fringe	36,044	1,720	1,786	
Supplies	112,349	1,800		21,574
Communications		250	16,000	300
Community Awareness	3,547			
Training	3,690			
Indirect Costs	12,036			
Stipends	17,550			
Printing		1,900		
Indirect Costs		1,820		
Equipment		3,000		
Rent				1,200
Total	357,145	62,500	26,870	48,428

Note. The total for CCC represents the budget from 2/01/05-5/31/05. The initial budget was contracted from Directions for Mental Health.

Figure 12
Cost Analysis of Budget Spent for Directions for Mental Health

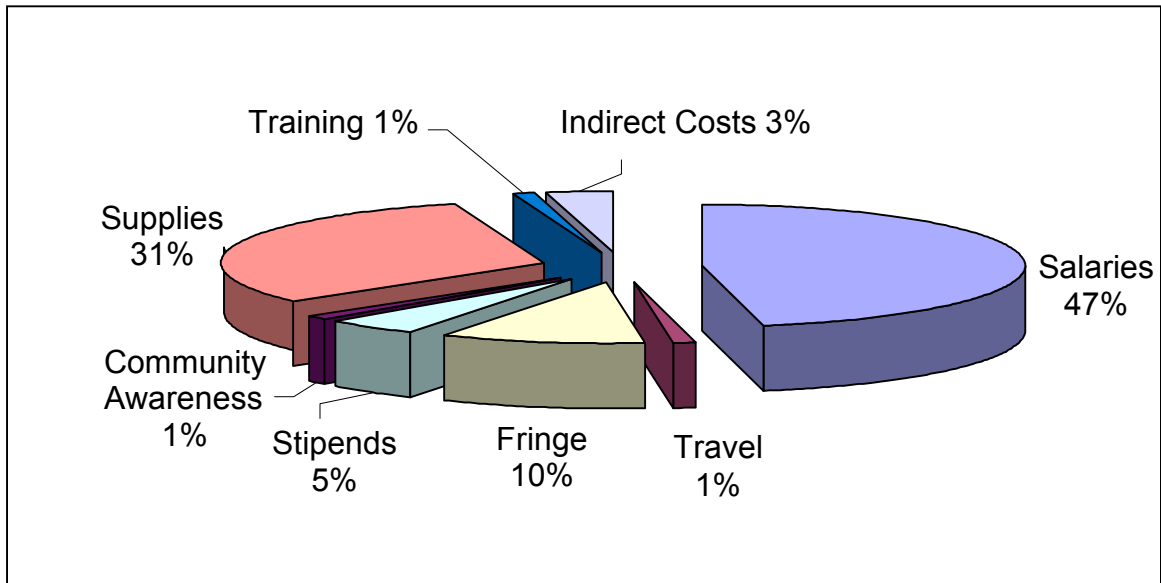


Figure 13
Cost Analysis of Budget Spent for CCC

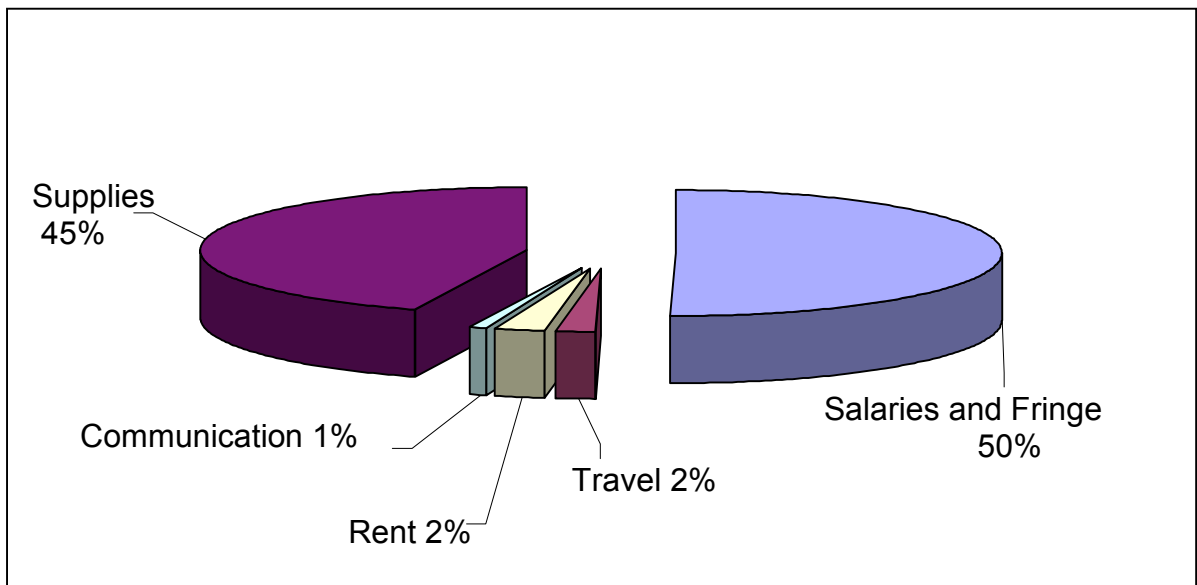


Figure 14
Cost Analysis of Budget Spent for PCSRC

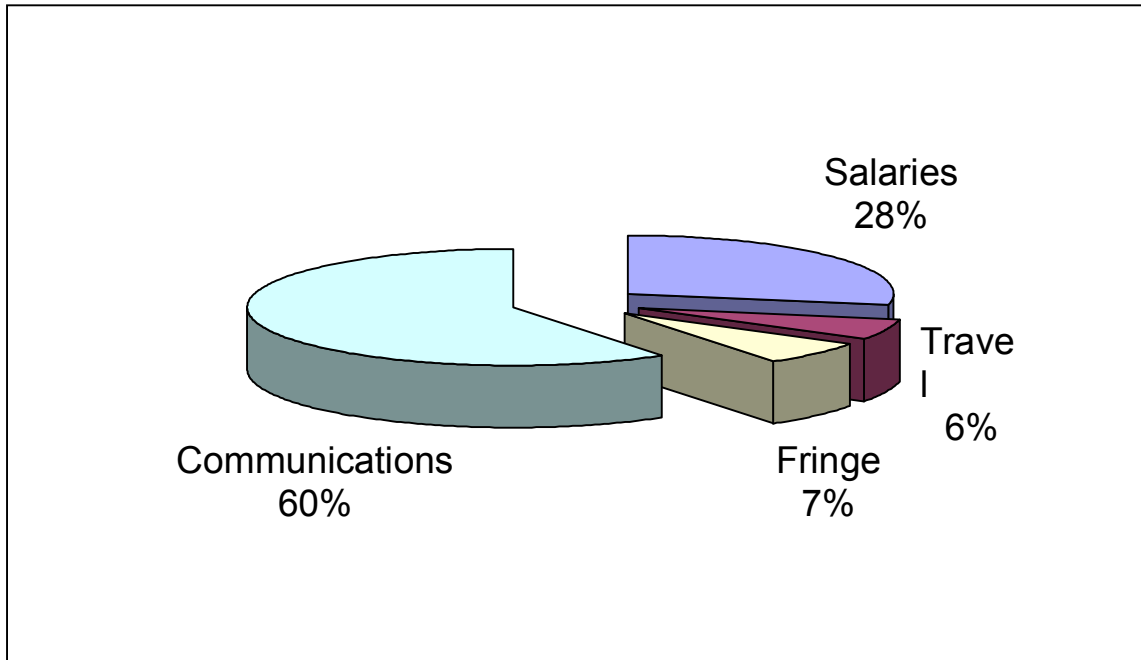
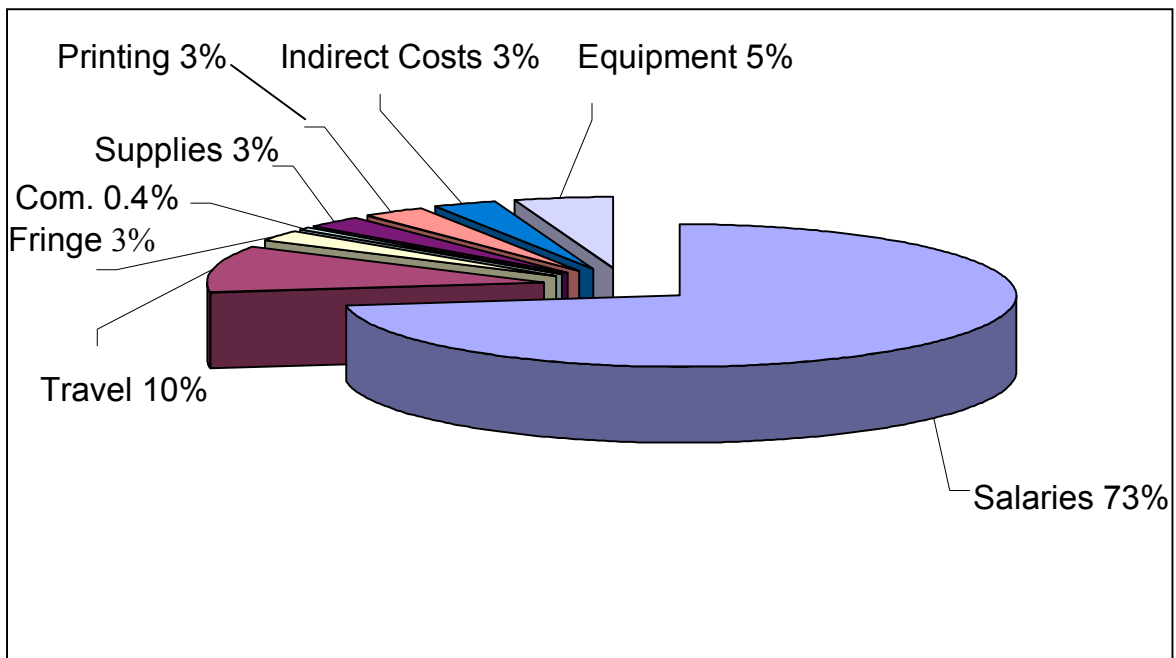


Figure 15
Cost Analysis Of Budget Spent For FMHI



Reflections

The ELO project implemented in Pinellas County, Florida, reflected a focused and persistent effort on the part of many individuals from numerous agencies to support the skill development of childcare providers to work effectively with young children in childcare settings. In a relatively short period of time, these partners were able to develop, deliver, research, and evaluate training for this skill development. This was a complex effort that required the collaboration of many stakeholders over a period of time, but was one that was worth the effort.

This was certainly a first step toward developing a community training system for childcare providers that reflects research on the early literacy and social/emotional competencies needed for young children to become successful students. Specifically, this effort addressed these competencies by offering college coursework and instructional materials to the individuals providing their day-to-day care. These training activities were reinforced by a coaching component, which facilitated transfer of training from the college classroom to the workplace setting. Finally, an optional parent support component was offered in an effort to involve families and provide additional, individualized support.

This project not only educated childcare providers on the current research on promoting literacy skills and healthy social/emotional development in young children, the project used the current research to promote learning in childcare providers during the training. Thus, the coaching component was included to assure that participants had opportunities to observe, practice, and receive feedback on the new skills in their daily work places. This commitment to effective training methods helped to improve both the attitude and ability of childcare providers towards applying these evidence-based instructional methods in their classrooms or home daycares.

The ELO project in itself is just a beginning because effective training is not a series of one time events; it is a lifelong process. ELO has created an opportunity for community members to continue the development of these training efforts as they appear to be promising practices, even if not yet entirely supported by empirical findings. The challenge remains, in that there is much to do to ensure continued training efforts to present childcare providers with opportunities to gain knowledge, skills, and competencies in these very critical areas. As revealed in this evaluation, training efforts such as this one can secure opportunities for children and their families to gain knowledge, skills, and competencies as well.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Beliefs About Implementing Literacy Skills Scale (BAILSS)

Belief About Implementing Literacy Skills Scale (BAILSS)			
Read each item from the Heads Up! Reading curriculum. Rate each item by:			
a.) how important you think it is			
b.) how comfortable you feel using the skill			
c.) whether or not you use the skill in your classroom			

1. Read familiar stories to children.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

2. Put writing materials (small tablets, pencils, markers, paper, clipboards, dry erase boards, small chalk) in an area or activity that is does traditionally include writing (e.g. playing house, kitchen, doll house).			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

3. Observe what children do with the writing materials (tablets, pencils, markers, paper, clipboards, dry erase boards, chalk) in different areas or during activities.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

4. Talk with families about children’s interests and background after observing children.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

5. Reflect upon new teaching strategies that you tried, and determine if they were effective.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

6. Consider how your curriculum builds on student’s home culture and language.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

7. From observing a child’s book handling and reading attempts, determine which early literacy skills the child demonstrates and which comes next.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

Appendix A (Continued): BAILSS

8. From observing a child’s book handling and reading attempts, determine the appropriate learning goals for this child.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

9. Explain the importance of learning outcomes(i.e. showing children’s’ progress) to colleagues and/or parents.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

10. Wait patiently for five seconds for a child to respond when you speak (wait time).			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

11. Engage children in extended conversations about what interests them (e.g., books, stories, hobbies).			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

12. Engage children in conversation about something that is out of their sight. (Note: this strategy requires children to use decontextualized speech.)			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

13. Have conversations with children about books that have been read.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

14. Find a way to model the use of writing in dramatic play (i.e., include a clipboard in the kitchen)			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

15. Encourage and arrange for children to “act out” a story from a familiar book.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

Appendix A (Continued): BAILSS

16. Take the role of a stage manager in your student(s) play.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

17. Use the information that you gained during observations (of students reading) to structure the way you read your next books aloud.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

18. Use small group and individual reading to teach concepts of print or book handling.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

19. Use different strategies to encourage parents to read at home.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

20. Observe students writing and encourage them to “read” what they have written.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

21. Have children write their own books.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

22. Have children read the books that they made to others.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

23. Use alphabet books to teach letters of the alphabet			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

24. Demonstrate different forms of writing, such as in creating shopping lists, writing letters to relatives, or taking restaurant orders.			
a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

Appendix A (Continued): BAILSS

25. Try innovative ways to motivate children to write names (e.g., writing letters in shaving cream, using play doh to form letters).

a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

26. Use children's' names to teach letters of the alphabet.

a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

27. Encourage children to discover names that begin with the same sound as their own name.

a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

28. Encourage children to think of words that rhyme, such as with names of characters in books, etc..

a. I think this is important	No	Somewhat	Yes
b. I feel I am able (have the skills) to do this	No	Somewhat	Yes
c. I do this	Not yet	Sometimes	Often

Appendix B: Screening for Early Literacy Learning (SELL)

Screening for Early Literacy Learning (SELL)
Ages 6 months to 5 years

Child's Name: _____ Home Language: _____
Date of Birth: _____ Date Form Completed: _____

Please place a check mark under *each* statement that applies to this child.

Example:

Likes ice cream	Takes a daily nap	Has a sibling	Enjoys outside play	Watches T.V. at home
✓			✓	✓

Communication Skills

No communication	Child vocalizes in play	Child uses jargon speech and/or single words	Child has vocabulary of 20 or more words	Child is combining 2-3 words	Child is able to ask questions	Child can carry on a conversation with peers and adults	Child is able to answer "wh" questions (who, what, where, why)	Child can tell a story in sequence	Child is able to predict what will happen next in the story

Reading

Never looks at books	Child mouths books like a toy	Child turns pages of book	Child holds book upright	Child looks at pictures in a book	Child points to pictures as adult reads	Child names pictures in book	Child pretends to read some words	Child notices when adult leaves out words in story	Child reads isolated words

Recognizing letters

No letter recognition	Recognizes common logo, like McDonald's	Recognizes own name	Recognizes others' names	Recognizes up to 10 letters	Recognizes up to 20 letters	Recognizes all letters of alphabet	Reads 1-3 words	Reads 4-8 words	Reads words with expression

Responses to letter sounds

No responses to songs or rhymes	Child vocalizing while adult sings or rhymes	Child says some words in rhyme/song	Child recites rhyme/song independently	Child can provide or identify rhyming words	Child recognizes some beginning letter sounds (Mm for M)	Child recognizes all beginning letter sounds	Child can sound out letters in words	Child can blend sounds	Child able to sound out a new word

Louis de la Parte
Florida Mental Health Institute
University of South Florida
13301 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33612-3807

