



United Way  
of Metropolitan Nashville

## Using Data to Improve Project Outcomes

April 2007

### A little background information about Read to Succeed early learning centers



1. United Way funds 9 full-day full-year early learning centers located in low income neighborhoods: not part of the school district

- About 50% of teachers hold a college degree

**Before ERF:**

- Different curricula & assessments
- Professional development for teachers not well-coordinated
- Limited exposure to reading research
- Varying degrees of collaboration with the school district

## A little more background information



2. Over 500 3- and 4-year-olds served annually w/ ERF funds and another 400 with local foundation funds
3. 27 classrooms/75 teachers and asst. teachers
4. Over 90% of children qualify for free and reduced lunch; 2 sites serve children with special needs; and 2 sites serve children learning English
5. Literacy coach at each center, responsible for:
  - 2-3 classrooms
  - Assessment
  - Family literacy
  - Kindergarten transition (lead)

## The last bit of background information



### 6. Administration Team

Project director: administrative and budget issues, plans and facilitates directors meetings, and administrative team meetings

Project manager: LC point of contact for questions; monitors LC performance; plans and facilitates literacy coaches forum

Literacy coach mentor: regular site visits with literacy coaches; plans (with the reading specialist) professional development for literacy coaches; plans and facilitates teacher advisory council meetings

Reading specialist: plans and facilitates teacher training; reviews professional development plans of literacy coaches

Evaluators: data cleaning, database maintenance, project-wide and center-specific data analysis and data presentations

## So we actually have to do what we said we'd do?

Year 1 Implementation



Assessment	New, much more rigorous developmental assessment: the HELP® for Preschoolers; fall and spring screening with PPVT, PALS PreK; progress monitoring with Get It, Got It, Go!; used ELLCO to monitor classroom environment/teacher practice; set up on-line database for LCs
Curriculum	4-yr-old classrooms: Doors to Discovery 3-yr-old classrooms: Read, Play, and Learn!
Environment	Classroom libraries (10 books/child); listening center and writing center materials; lending libraries (5 books/child)
Professional Development	Monthly training for all teachers; weekly training for literacy coaches
Families	Family book loan program; family literacy workshops

## 1 down, 2 to go...Hmm, that wasn't so bad

Year 1 results



Performance Measures for Children	Year 1 Fall	Year 1 Spring	Year 2 Target
% 4s w/ PPVT vocabulary scores > = 85.0	50%	71%	80%
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK UC letters > = 16	54%	60%	80%
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK beginning sounds > = 5	48%	72%	75%
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK rhyme awareness > = 5	47%	70%	80%
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK nursery rhymes > = 6	37%	44%	75%
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK print awareness > = 7	43%	71%	80%
Performance Measures for Classrooms	Year 1 Fall	Year 1 Spring	Year 2 Target
% Classrooms with ELLCO Books Subtotal > = 15.0	20%	70%	80%
% Classrooms with ELLCO Writing Subtotal > = 15.0	20%	60%	75%
% Classrooms with ELLCO Language, Literacy & Curriculum Average Scores > = 3.51	14%	60%	75%

## Well, Duh!



### Year 1 Lessons Learned

Assessment	Children were tested too much; literacy coaches spent too much time testing
Curriculum	Doors to Discovery builds background knowledge for 4s, but not enough structure for teachers to address ERF focus areas  Read, Play, and Learn! provides little structure and was challenging to implement; some books were not age-appropriate for 3s
Environment	Classroom books need to be related to themes; classrooms need curriculum supplies; listening centers break down frequently
Professional Development	Teachers need in-classroom coaching to create teacher support for ERF focus areas
Families	Centers and teachers need to be more committed to family literacy

## Okay, this is getting a little easier.



### Year 2 Implementation

Assessment	Substituted teacher-administered HELP® literacy strands for LC-administered Get It, Got It, Go!; LCs continued administering PALS-PreK; evaluators picked up PPVT
Curriculum	Substituted DLM Early Childhood Express because it had more teacher resources: oral language cards, resource guides, themes with skills introduced in sequence
Environment	Gave teachers theme-related books at training sessions; more non-fiction books; nursery rhyme charts
Professional Development	Required LCs to be in each classroom at least 1x per week; training focused on ERF focus areas
Families	Required LCs to work with teachers and directors to develop family literacy plans

## 2 down, 1 to go...this is actually working



what matters.™

### Year 2 Results

<b>Performance Measures for Children</b>	<b>Year 2 Fall</b>	<b>Year 2 Spring</b>	<b>Year 2 Target</b>
% 4s w/ PPVT vocabulary scores = > 85.0	<b>63%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>80%*</b>
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK UC letters > = 16	36%	73%	80%
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK beginning sounds > = 5	<b>30%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>75%*</b>
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK rhyme awareness > = 5	45%	65%	80%
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK nursery rhymes > = 6	<b>28%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>75%*</b>
% 4s w/ PALS-PreK print awareness > = 7	37%	69%	80%
<b>Performance Measures for Classrooms</b>	<b>Year 2 Fall</b>	<b>Year 2 Spring</b>	<b>Year 2 Target</b>
% Classrooms with ELLCO Books Subtotal > = 15.0	<b>64%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>80%*</b>
% Classrooms with ELLCO Writing Subtotal > = 15.0	64%	73%	75%
% Classrooms with ELLCO Language, Literacy & Curriculum Average Scores > = 3.51	<b>64%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>75%*</b>

## What do you mean we aren't perfect?



what matters.™

### Year 2 Lessons Learned

Assessment	Teachers are not linking HELP® literacy skills to the DLM curriculum
Curriculum	DLM weekly lesson plans need to be adjusted for 3s; weekly themes challenge teachers; sequenced skills work well; alphabet lesson plans are not sufficient
Environment	Supplemental activities for younger children provided to 3s classrooms
Professional Development	Teachers of younger children need supplemental materials and training; teachers continue to need support for stimulating oral language; LCs need practice using data to guide coaching
Families	Families are more likely to check out center books if incentives are offered

## One more year to get it perfect



### Year 3 Implementation

Assessment	Required LCs to review children's HELP® literacy strands; created opportunities for LCs to use on-line database and assessments to guide teacher coaching
Curriculum	DLM Early Childhood Express
Environment	Restocked classroom libraries with theme-related books
Professional Development	Required LCs to be in each classroom at least 1x per week; training focused on areas of weakness
Families	Required LCs to work with teachers and directors to develop family literacy plans and kindergarten transition plans

## So how did we make it work?



- 1. Lots of meetings**
- 2. Talking about lots of data**
- 3. With lots of additional input from lots of people**
- 4. And using lots of process to keep us sane.**

## So how did we make it work?



### ...lots of meetings

#### What makes the meetings work?

- Quarterly meeting schedules are distributed
- Reminders and agendas are sent out in advance of meetings
- Meeting minutes are sent out within a week of the meeting
- Different project staff are responsible for creating agendas and facilitating meetings with different groups

#### Every agenda includes:

1. Evaluation updates
2. Implementation updates and issues (this can include professional development, staffing, classroom implementation, etc.)
3. Share lessons learned
4. Brainstorm improvements, next steps, and make assignments

## So how did we make it work?



### ...talking about lots of data

- Data accessible within 2 weeks of testing via online database
- Data drives agendas and discussions
- Project-wide data analyses reported within 6 weeks of testing
- Center-specific data sent out to LCs prior to meetings
- Project-wide data discussions led by evaluator
- Discussions about how LCs can use data to inform teacher coaching led by LC mentor
- Data assignments given to LCs with opportunity to report back at the next meeting
- Data questions about individual children's scores assigned to reading specialist
- Discussions with teachers about using data to inform classroom instruction led by LCs

## So how did we make it work?



### ...with lots of additional input from lots of people

Literacy coaches meet at least twice monthly for a 3 hour meeting. In addition to the standing agenda items, this is also when we do additional professional development for LCs.

Center directors meet every 6-8 weeks.

Each center chose a three- and a four-year-old teacher representative to sit on the Teacher's Advisory Council (TAC). This group serves as the litmus test for how teachers are feeling about various aspects of the project.

Administration Team meets as often as needed and sometimes that's not enough. It can range from weekly meetings during busy times or every 4-6 weeks during the early summer.

## So how did we make it work?



### ...using lots of intentional process

**Objective:** What do you notice about these data?

**Reflective:** What is exciting? What worries you?

**Interpretive:** What can we do maintain our successes? What can we do to address our challenges?

**Decisional:** What changes should we make to our project to be successful?

<b>% Children Achieving Spring Benchmarks</b>	<b>Y1</b>	<b>Y2</b>	<b>Y3 Target</b>
Oral Language	71%	89%	90%
Alphabet > = 16 letters	60%	73%	90%
Beginning Sounds	72%	77%	90%
Rhymes	70%	65%	90%
Nursery Rhymes	44%	78%	90%
Print	71%	69%	90%
<b>% Classrooms Achieving Benchmarks</b>	<b>Y1</b>	<b>Y2</b>	<b>Y3 Target</b>
Books Subtotal	70%	91%	90%*
Writing Subtotal	60%	73%	90%
Language, Literacy, & Curriculum Subtotal	60%	91%	90%*

## So what was that we just did?



### The ORID

Institute of Cultural Affairs  
<http://www.ica-international.org/books.htm>

Nelson, Jo. *The Art of Focused Conversation for Schools: Over 100 Ways to Guide Clear Thinking and Promote Learning.*

Training to use the ORID technique:  
Management Solutions Group  
<http://www.msgforsolutions.com/>  
(615) 320-0039  
[mary@msgforsolutions.com](mailto:mary@msgforsolutions.com)

## Can you go back 3 slides? I didn't quite follow what you were saying.



Q&A

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**Thank you**