

# Family Literacy

## An Annotated Bibliography



U.S. Department of Education  
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# **Family Literacy An Annotated Bibliography**

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The Carolina Family Literacy Studies  
The School of Education  
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University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
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The Even Start Family Literacy Program

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## **Preface**

Family literacy programs are rapidly growing in the United States. Among the reasons for this growth are the expansion of knowledge about how children learn. We know that extensive learning takes place in the preschool years. Through social interactions in a literacy-rich environment, children acquire knowledge about the conventions and purposes of print and the uses of language in culturally organized activities. Beliefs about the intergenerational transfer of literacy as well as concerns about children's readiness have also contributed to the development of family literacy programs. Other factors influencing the development of family literacy programs include concerns about children's difficulties and failure later in school; the need to involve parents and families more directly in programs for young children; concerns with the reading and literacy skills of many parents with low education levels; and evidence supporting the relationship between parental education levels and children's school success. Intergenerational literacy programs are seen as addressing many of these concerns.

As interest in promoting both emergent literacy and family literacy have expanded over the past decade, a variety of definitions and beliefs about the meaning of literacy, emergent literacy, and family literacy have become evident. Traditionally, literacy has been defined as one's ability to read and write. Emergent literacy is defined as ways children learn about reading and writing before receiving formal instruction. Definitions of family literacy include the multiple ways families communicate and convey information as well as programs to enhance the literacy knowledge and skills of family members. Different interpretations of these three areas, literacy, emergent literacy, and family literacy, have led to debates concerning the role of literacy programs and the methods used to enhance the literacy skills of families.

It is our purpose to advance the work of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers by providing a document summarizing writings and research on family literacy and on topics directly relevant to family literacy programs. Our audience includes those who wish to learn more about family literacy, including the theory, policy, and research upon which it is based. Program staff, researchers, community leaders, policymakers, and both private and public funding agencies should find this resource helpful. Our goal has been to cover the family literacy literature in-depth, while providing a selection of related articles with implications for family literacy.

## **Procedures**

This annotated bibliography has two main parts. Part A covers topics directly related to family literacy programs in the areas of conceptual issues (definitions, models, and overviews of family literacy), studies related to family literacy programs and practices, program descriptions, program development, assessment, evaluation procedures, and curriculum and instruction.

Part B includes topics that have implications for family literacy, drawing articles and reports from many disciplines. These related topics included emergent literacy, parent-child interactions, adult literacy, cultural and contextual issues, home and school issues, literacy assessment, and intergenerational programs. In the appendix, we also describe other annotated bibliographies and provide a list of resources for individuals interested in learning more about family literacy in particular and literacy in general.

All of the publications reviewed in this report are readily available to the public. To identify the literature, we reviewed several social science databases, including ERIC, Psychological Abstracts, Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) FirstSearch, and other bibliographies. In addition, we requested key references from leaders in the area of family literacy. The bibliography sources range from published studies to reports from the government, foundations, and research organizations. This report was not restricted to published books and journal articles because important writings on family literacy appear in other types of publications.

## **Acknowledgments**

This annotated bibliography has been prepared as part of the Carolina Family Literacy Studies research project. It has received funding from the National Center for Early Development and Learning at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center and the School of Education at the University of North Carolina. The National Center is funded by the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education in the Office of Educational Research and Improvement at the U.S. Department of Education. The Carolina Family Literacy Studies is a longitudinal research project designed to examine the processes and outcomes of comprehensive family literacy programs in North Carolina.

We appreciate the advice of the authors involved with the U.S. Department of Education project of synthesizing research on intergenerational family literacy. Topics included in this report include: adult education, early childhood education, program evaluation, parenting education, family and cultural issues, emergent literacy, coordination and service integration, and English as a second language. Authors participating in this project include: Judy Alamprese, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Dionne R. Dobbins, Alison Sidle Fuligni, Vivian L. Gadsden, Suzannah Herrmann, Wendy K.K. Lam, Chris Lonigan, Barbara Pan, Douglas R. Powell, Anne Ricciuti, Robert St. Pierre, John Strucker, Catherine Snow, and Gordon Whitehurst.

We also thank other individuals who made recommendations to the content of this publication. These persons include Susan Byerly, former Director of North Carolina Even Start Family Literacy Programs; Cheryl Knight, Appalachian State University; Jean Carter, North Carolina Center for Family Literacy; and Randy Whitfield, North Carolina



Community College System. We also received suggestions from Naomi Karp, Director of the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education; and Joanne Roberts, a senior investigator with the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center and investigator on the Carolina Family Literacy Studies.

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## **Part A: Family Literacy**

### **Section 1: Conceptual Issues in Family Literacy**

**Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit. (1993). Family literacy. Viewpoints: A Series of Occasional Papers on Basic Education, 15. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 362 766).**

This issue is dedicated to the topic of family literacy and draws on research and practice from both the United Kingdom and the United States. The following articles are included in this issue: (1) *Family Literacy as a Intergenerational Approach to Education* by Sharon Darling; (2) *Intergenerational Literacy Intervention: Possibilities and Problems* by Peter Hannon; (3) *Workforce Education, Family Literacy and Economic Development* by Thomas Sticht; (4) *Parent Involvement in Parent Literacy: An Anti-poverty Perspective* by Ray Phillips; (5) *Techniques in Family Literacy* by Keith Topping; and (6) *A Typology of Family and Intergenerational Literacy Programmes: Implications for Evaluation* by Ruth Nickse.

**Auerbach, E. R. (1989). Toward a sociocontextual approach to family literacy. Harvard Educational Review, 59, 165–181.**

Based on her study of family literacy, which included the examination of current models of family literacy programs, ethnographic literature, and interactions with immigrant and refugee students, Auerbach proposes a broadening of the definition for family literacy, and a reevaluation of the family literacy model. Instead of a family literacy model that attempts to transmit school practices to the home, Auerbach supports a sociocontextual approach that incorporates family, culture, and community. The author discusses this new model of family literacy and provides examples and suggestions for its implementation.

**Benjamin, L. A., & Lord, J. (Eds.). (1996). Family literacy: Directions in research and implications for practice. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education-Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's Even Start Program.**

This document is a compilation of papers presented at a national symposium that focused on family literacy. This compilation represents an important step in the development of a family literacy research agenda. Papers include the following: *Integrated Services, Cross-Agency Collaboration, and Family Literacy* (Alamprese); *English Immigrant Language Learners: Cultural Accommodation and Family Literacy* (Duran); *Designing and Conducting Family Literacy Programs That Account for Racial, Ethnic, Religious, and Other Cultural Differences* (Gadsden); *Family Literacy Programs: Creating a Fit with Families of Children with Disabilities* (Harry); *Longitudinal Study of Family Literacy Program Outcomes* (Hayes); *Family Literacy: Parent and Child Interactions* (Mikulecky); *Teaching Parenting and Basic Skills to Parents: What We Know*

(Powell); *Intergenerational Transfer of Literacy* (Snow and Tabors); *Informing Approaches to Serving Families in Family Literacy Programs: Lessons from Other Family Intervention Programs* (St. Pierre and Layzer); and *Meeting the Needs of Families in Family Literacy Programs* (Strickland).

**Brizius, J. & Foster, S. (1993). Generation to generation: Realizing the promise of family literacy. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.**

This book provides a good overview of the family literacy movement. It explains the need for family literacy programs, provides a comprehensive definition of family literacy, and traces the history of such programs. Guidelines and suggestions on how to anticipate and deal with the issues of family literacy are offered to policymakers and practitioners. Finally, key issues about the future of the family literacy movement are addressed. The book is divided into the following eight chapters: (1) *Family Literacy: The Need and the Promise*; (2) *Defining Family Literacy*; (3) *The History of Family Literacy*; (4) *The Research: How Do We Know If Family Literacy Works?*; (5) *Building a Community Family Literacy Program*; (6) *Developing a State Family Literacy Initiative*; (7) *Challenges for the Family Literacy Movement*; and (8) *The Future of Family Literacy*.

**Brooks-Gunn, J., Berlin, L. J., & Fuligni, A. S. (2000). Early childhood intervention programs: What about the family? In J.P. Shonkoff, & S.J. Meisels (Eds.), Handbook of early childhood intervention (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.**

The authors note that discussion pertaining to parent and family roles in early childhood initiatives appear to be missing or distorted. To address this omission, the authors depict ways in which families are critical to early childhood program access and how the programs influence parents' well being. This chapter also highlights how child outcomes are mediated through program effects on parents. It also shows how parent involvement is contingent on the relationships among parents, staff, and children. The authors review four types of programs: parent-focused home-based programs, parent-focused combination center- and home-based programs, intergenerational family literacy programs, and parent-focused literacy programs. These programs are discussed in relation to parent and family outcomes. The authors also examine the role of parents as catalysts of change in early intervention programs. The final two sections focus on policy, implications for practice, and recommendations for programs and their evaluations.

**Gadsden, V. L. (1994). Understanding family literacy: Conceptual issues. Teachers College Record, 96, 58–86.**

This article examines the current research in the field of family literacy. The first of the articles' four sections identifies major sources of influence on current literacy research, such as cross-cultural and social issues, intergenerational literacy, and parent-child literacy, as well as the influence of practice. The second section, about the nature of families and family support, describes five assumptions as the foundation of a conceptual framework. Gadsden then discusses the recent policy impetus for family support efforts and explains how it serves to link literacy to family support. She argues that before this

link can be successful, literacy research and practice must catch up in the areas of family functioning and development. She concludes by stressing that family literacy learning be conceptualized broadly and as an ongoing activity that varies alongside changing life needs.

**Gadsden, V.L. (2000). Intergenerational literacy within families. In M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), Handbook of reading research, Volume III (pp. 871–887). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.**

This chapter focuses on the conceptual and theoretical issues of intergenerational literacy in families. The first section discusses the issues associated with a more expansive and critical framework to study intergenerational literacy. For example, Gadsden suggests that a need exists to identify different features of learning, literacy, families, human development, and intergenerationality in order to fully understand how families acquire, use and value literacy. The second section considers the theoretical context in which this framework is emerging. Four areas of research are suggested to contribute to this context: parent-child book reading, family literacy and parent-child interactions around print, intergenerational learning, and the family life course. The chapter ends with a discussion on the use and importance of having an expanded framework on intergenerational literacy.

**Kerka, S. (1991). Family and intergenerational literacy (ERIC Digest No. 111). Columbus, OH: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 334 467).**

This article provides a brief overview of family literacy through a discussion of current program designs, definitions of literacy, the need for research on program effectiveness, perspectives of and issues related to literacy, and suggestions for program development. Kerka highlights and gives examples of four types of family/intergenerational literacy programs. Drawing on research from related fields, Kerka suggests that literacy should be taught comprehensively, with the involvement of the whole family, and within a community context. The author discusses issues in family literacy such as the “deficit” perspective which emphasizes transmitting literacy skills from the school to the family versus the perspective of building on the strength of parents’ knowledge and experience. Finally, Kerka makes five recommendations for program development: these include using a broad definition of literacy and being sensitive to cultural differences.

**Kerka, S. (1992). Family literacy programs and practices: Practice application brief. Columbus, OH: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 347 328).**

This Practice Application Brief serves as an overview of some of the basic components of family literacy programs. The brief begins by discussing the philosophy that underlies family and intergenerational literacy programs and perspectives from which the programs are modeled. The author espouses programs based on an empowerment model (drawing on family strength) rather than those based on the “deficit” model. The author classifies effective family/intergenerational literacy programs into four categories

based upon Nickse's model. The four models (adult direct-children direct, adult indirect-children indirect, adult direct-children indirect, and adult indirect-children direct) are discussed with a description and example provided for each type. Also included in this brief are strategies for effective program implementation. Topics discussed with regard to implementing and maintaining an effective program are audience, recruitment and retention, subject matter, and recognition.

**Morrow, L. M. (Ed.). (1995). Family literacy: Connections in schools and communities. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University.**

This book presents 20 essays relevant to the field of family literacy. The first section is an examination of the many definitions and perspectives of family literacy. The second section describes family literacy programs run by schools and other organizations. Several of the essays in this section provide ideas for schools, community agencies, and families. In the final section, the reader is introduced to several examples of family literacy research. Implications for practitioners are provided. The authors include Lesley Mandel Morrow, Patricia Edwards, Elsa Roberts Auerbach, Jeanne R. Paratore, and Vivian L. Gadsden.

**Morrow, L. M., & Paratore, J. (1993). Family literacy: Perspective and practices. *Reading Teacher*, 47, 194-200.**

In this article, the authors discuss current views, practices, and applications in family literacy. Because literacy activities at school and at home are sometimes seen as incongruent with one another, the authors suggest that the term family literacy be viewed in the broadest sense. The authors categorize family literacy initiatives into three areas (home-school partnership programs, intergenerational literacy programs, and research examining literacy use in families) and provide a description of each. Community collaboration and partnerships are noted as integral to the future of family literacy. Examples of collaboration in federal and state level family literacy programs are described. The need for evaluation of family literacy initiatives is stressed and methods of disseminating information regarding family literacy are presented.

**Nickse, R. S. (1990). Family and intergenerational literacy programs: An update of "the noises of literacy." Columbus, OH: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education, The Ohio State University Center on Education and Training for Employment. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 327 736).**

This report serves as a comprehensive overview of family and intergenerational literacy programs for a wide audience, including policymakers, legislators, program administrators and staff, and individuals interested in family literacy education. The first section of this report provides background information such as definitions, purposes, federal legislation, and sponsorships that have produced literacy initiatives, program expectations, and reasons and motivations for validating program development. The second section of the report discusses research from related fields of study that justify family and intergenerational literacy program growth. In the third section, the author describes family and intergenerational literacy programs in the following five sectors: (1) adult basic education; (2) libraries; (3) family English literacy; (4) preschool and

elementary education; and (5) corporations and businesses. A table is included in the report that depicts strengths and challenges for each sector. A typology for classifying family and intergenerational literacy programs based upon the intervention type and target is presented. The result is four models of programs (direct adults-direct children, indirect adults-indirect children, direct adults-indirect children, and indirect adults-direct children) for which the author provides examples and discusses advantages and disadvantages for each.

**Nickse, R. S. (1990). Family literacy programs: Ideas for action. Adult Learning, 1, 9–13, 28–29.**

In this article, Nickse addresses factors that perpetuate illiteracy. She then discusses benefits of family literacy programs, including improved attitudes, behavior, and reading skills for parent and child. Although there has been some empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of programs, there needs to be more research in the field. For example, she found no evidence of changes in achievement for participants in family literacy programs. Nickse describes four basic models for delivering family literacy services and provides examples of each type of program. Suggestions for designing programs that address local needs, as well as ways to secure funding for programs are discussed. Nickse also addresses issues related to program design effectiveness (e.g., collaboration and parent participation) and administration and management of programs (e.g., staff, funding, and sites). The author then covers some matters associated with teaching (e.g., collaborative approaches and multiculturalism). The article concludes with tips for program evaluation (e.g., techniques and information dissemination).

**Padak, N. & Rasinski, T. (Eds.). (1995). Family Literacy. The Reading Teacher, 48(7).**

This issue is dedicated to the topic of family literacy. An introduction is followed by seven articles regarding various aspects of family literacy. The topics addressed in the articles include the importance of the family in literacy development; the Parents as Partners Reading Program; school outreach programs; the varying use of print in families; creating cultural connections between parents and their children; project FLAME and family literacy programs for Latino families; and the use of family portfolios to evaluate family literacy programs.

**Paratore, J. & Harrison, C. (1995). A themed issue on family literacy. Journal of Reading, 38, 516–517.**

This themed issue is a collection of articles that present broad and diverse views of family literacy. The authors challenge educators to reexamine the deficit hypothesis, which they believe derives from a lack of congruence between home and school literacy experiences and a lack of understanding about the practice of literacy in linguistically and culturally diverse families. The authors' goal is for readers to reformulate their ideas about family literacy programs and practices in order to promote home/school partnerships.

**Ponzetti, J. J., & Bodine, W. J. (1993). Family literacy and parent education. Adult Basic Education, 3(2), 106–114.**

This article presents a conceptual model of family literacy programs with descriptions of program components and discusses the importance of parent education in family literacy programs. Ponzetti and Bodine define family literacy programs as having two unique features that make them different from other services provided for parents and children. First, family literacy programs focus on the family as a unit, and second, these programs provide joint literacy activities to families (adults and children together) that are applicable to their daily lives. The component model presented proposes that family literacy programs have three key ingredients: Adult Basic Education, Early Childhood Education, and Parenting Education. The authors provide a description of each component. Last, the authors elaborate on the importance of parenting education in family literacy programs.

**Purcell-Gates, V. (1993). Issues for family literacy research: Voices from the trenches. Language Arts, 70, 670–677.**

This article explores issues researchers of family literacy must address to achieve valid study results. These issues include better understanding the relationship among poverty, families with low literacy levels, and emergent literacy; finding effective methods for understanding the ways in which families contribute to future school success; attempting to gain more congruence between the results of studies and the perceptions and experiences of the families and communities being studied; and refraining from inferring causal relationships from correlations. Purcell-Gates illustrates these issues with an example of an ongoing family literacy study.

**Purcell-Gates, V. (2000). Family literacy. In M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), Handbook of reading research, Volume III (pp. 853–870). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.**

This chapter divides into three parts. The first part reviews the research that provides the foundation on which family literacy is based. These areas include the family as a foundation for learning, language and literacy development; emergent literacy; written, vocabulary/language, print, phonological awareness and letter-sound knowledge; as well as motivation. The second part discusses two different approaches to family literacy. Descriptive approaches to family literacy focus on how families use literacy. Pedagogical approaches focus on the kinds of family literacy programs. Family literacy programs range from teaching or training families specific literacy practices to beliefs that approaches need to incorporate mutual respect and collaboration with families. The third part reviews the effectiveness of family literacy programs on the impact of children's skills, achievement, and attitudes; the impact on parents' academic skills, literate behaviors, and confidence/self-esteem; and the impact on parent/child literacy interactions. The chapter ends with conclusions based on the family literacy research and with suggestions for future research in family literacy.

**Richardson, M. V., Sacks, K., & Ayers, M. N. (1995). Intergenerational literacy leads to empowerment of families and schools. Reading Improvement, 32, 85–91.**

In this article, the authors discuss the importance of families and schools working together to improve the literacy skills of both children and adults. Definitions of family literacy and intergenerational literacy are examined. The authors propose broadening these definitions to include shared experiences among family members in which something new is learned. The importance of and suggestions for including the family in the planning and implementation of literacy programs is noted. The authors describe strategies for promoting literacy in the home and strengthening the family-school connection. The authors view collaboration between families and schools as a tool for empowering both and as a way to satisfy the National Goals 2000.

**Taylor, D. (Ed.). (1997). Many families, many literacies: An international declaration of principles. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.**

In an effort to counter what is described as the prevailing deficit-based view of family literacy, a group of 50 participants from around the world gathered at the International Forum on Family Literacy to set up principles for redefining family literacy. The intent was to have a broad spectrum of professionals address issues related to the family literacy movement, especially issues related to ethical and human rights concerns. This book, a result of that conference, identifies a set of principles for family literacy and presents a compilation of articles on family literacy by researchers, teachers and parent learners. Challenging the reader to question practices based on a deficit view of family literacy, the articles cover the many different types of families served in family literacy programs, the general principles of language and literacy, ethics in research and program development, and principles for assessment, funding agencies and policymakers.

**Tett, L., & St. Clair, R., (1997). Family literacy in the educational marketplace: A cultural perspective. International Journal of Lifelong Education, 16(2), 109–120.**

The authors discuss two recent developments, the spread of family-centered approaches to literacy education and the view of the family as a consumer of education. They argue that the view of families as consumers of education has led to a school-centered dominance of family literacy programs. They highlight a number of problems they see as associated with the implementation of family literacy programs that espouse school-centered approaches to literacy. By contrast, they advocate programs that are responsive to the family's culture and that support home-based literacy uses. They also argue against a deficit-based view thought to be guiding current beliefs in the field of family literacy.

**Tracey, D. H. (1995). Family literacy: Overview and synthesis of an ERIC search. In K. Hinchman, D.J. Leu, & C. Kinzer (Eds.), Perspectives on literacy: Research and practice, forty-fourth yearbook of the National Reading Conference (pp. 280–288). Chicago: National Reading Conference. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 379 611).**



To pull together and facilitate further knowledge within the field of family literacy, as well as to better define family literacy, Tracey conducted a comprehensive review of the literature. Using the descriptor “family literacy” on two indexes within the ERIC system (Resources in Education (RIE) and Current Indexes to Journals in Education (CIJE)), 409 references and abstracts were located and reviewed. For the final reporting of the literature, 135 documents were sorted into 3 main categories—research emphasis (19 percent), program descriptions (35 percent), and position papers (38 percent)—and then analyzed. Several strengths, weaknesses, and needs in the literature emerged as a result of the review. The primary weaknesses noted were a lack of clear and agreed-upon definitions in the field; a disproportionately small percentage of documents created from a research perspective; a too narrow focus on topics that would fit more appropriately into areas outside of family literacy; and a lack of research on program efficacy. Primary strengths included the fact that the attrition rate for participants in family literacy programs is considerably smaller than in adult literacy programs, and that documented research consistently supports the finding that participants of family literacy programs are benefited by increased positive literacy interactions in the home between parent and child as a correlate of participation.

**Weinstein-Shr, G. (1992). Family and intergenerational literacy in multilingual families. ERIC Q&A. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 378 848).**

In this document, the author addresses five questions related to family and intergenerational literacy programs and the multilingual families enrolled in these programs. Weinstein-Shr first addresses the subtle difference between family and intergenerational literacy programs by explaining that the first term focuses primarily on the parent and child while the second term more broadly includes other adults. She identifies the goals of these programs to be promoting parental involvement; improving of skills, attitudes, values, and behaviors associated with reading; increasing the social significance of literacy; and addressing the unique problems of relocated families. The author suggests that programs build on family strengths, emphasize collaboration, and acknowledge both the native culture of the participants as well as the new culture. In addition, she suggests continuing ethnographic research because the functions and uses of language and literacy in specific communities is becoming increasingly important.

## **Section 2: Family Literacy Program Studies**

**Baker, A. J. L., Piotrkowski, C. S., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1998). The effects of the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) on children's performance at the end of the program and one year later. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 13, 571–588.**

The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a 2-year, home based early childhood education and parent involvement program for parents with limited formal education. The key program features are bimonthly home visits and bimonthly group meetings during which parents use HIPPY story books and educational activities with their preschool children. This report presents findings on the effectiveness of HIPPY programs for children in the early school years. A two cohort experimental design with a randomized control group was implemented. Children were assessed at baseline, at the end of the program and 1 year later on cognitive skills, adaptation to the classroom, and standardized achievement. HIPPY Children from Cohort 1 performed significantly better than comparison group children on all measures of school performance both at the end of the program and one year later. However, no effects were found for Cohort 2. No significant differences between groups or cohorts account for this lack of replication. The authors also report on a concurrent evaluation that was conducted in a different state. Although the design differed and the study was quasi-experimental, the same pattern was found—significant effects were found for cohort 1 but not cohort 2. The authors interpret these findings as mixed support for HIPPY.

**Brooks, G., Gorman, T., Harman, J., Hutchinson, D., & Wilkin, A. (1996). Family literacy works. London, England: The Basic Skills Agency.**

This book reports on the evaluation of The Basic Skills Agency's Family Literacy Demonstration Programs by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). The first part of the book describes the family literacy initiative in general and the various programs and their evaluations. The latter half is devoted to answering the following questions: (1) How effective were the Family Literacy Demonstration Programmes?; (2) Why were they effective?; and (3) What lessons and recommendations can be drawn from this information?

**Connors, L. J. (1993). Project Self-Help: A family focus on literacy (Rep. No. 13). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 380 230).**

This document describes Project Self-Help, a school-based family literacy program serving parents and grandparents and their preschool and elementary-aged children. During the year, adult literacy classes and child classes met 2 times a week. During the summer, families had the opportunity to participate in a summer reading program that included educational field trips. The author describes the program in detail and provides information regarding the gains of both adults and children while enrolled in the program. Three case studies are included to highlight the different outcomes of adults depending upon their individual situations. The last part of the document includes a section about the

lessons the program coordinator was able to learn from the implementation of Project Self-Help and is useful for individuals implementing school-based or other types of family literacy programs. Issues related to implementing family literacy programs and discussion of further research needed are also presented in this article.

**Darling, S., & Hayes, A. E. (1989). The William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust Family Literacy Project. Final Report 1988–1989. Louisville, KY: National Center for Family Literacy.**

This document reports on the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project carried out in seven sites in Kentucky and North Carolina in 1988–89. The goal of the project was to improve the educational outcomes of children and their parents labeled “at risk” by combining efforts to provide quality early-childhood education with efforts to improve the literacy and parenting skills of undereducated parents. The children participated in a preschool program while their parents received education and vocational training. The project also included Parent and Child Together (PACT), when parents and children worked and played together, and group Parent Time (PT), where parents met to discuss personally significant topics and problems. Research revealed seven types of parents with unique characteristics related to program participation, motivation, capability, needs, and the likelihood of accomplishment. In two groups, the majority of parents did not expend sufficient time or effort to make progress in their own or their children’s lives. In the other groups almost all of the parents and their children made significant gains. The report lists recommendations for adoption of the model.

**Debruin-Parecki, A., Paris, S. G., & Siedenburg, J. (1997). Family literacy: Examining practice and issues of effectiveness. Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 40, 596–605.**

The authors of the article work on the assertions that the field of family literacy struggles to define goals and practices and that single descriptions of family literacy are not possible because individual programs must tailor goals and services to the target population. To address these issues, the purpose of this study was to examine the broad range of family literacy programs throughout Michigan. Of 700 literacy programs contacted, only 50 programs fit criteria selected by the authors as family literacy programs, and 11 programs were selected for further in-depth analysis. Information on program processes was collected through classroom observations, interviews, and surveys. This article elaborates on two case studies to describe how family literacy program processes are implemented under different circumstances. This article ends with four factors important for the design of an effective family literacy program: access to participation, curriculum with meaning in participant’s lives, collaborating staff and administration with varied backgrounds, and stable funding.

**Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1994). Sociocultural change through literacy: Toward the empowerment of families. In B.M. Ferdman, R.M. Weber, & A.G. Ramirez (Eds.), Literacy across languages and cultures. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.**

Asserting that literacy is more than a collection of discrete cognitive skills, this study investigates the sociocultural process surrounding parent-child bookreading. Three

questions guided this study: (1) how does parental use of literature with their children influence the parent's perception of self-efficacy regarding literacy tasks? (2) how are household relations affected as a result of parent-child literacy activity? and (3) how did the literacy project create new social networks for parents? During monthly training sessions lasting 8 weeks, parents learned four types of questioning strategies to be used when reading to their children. Parents then engaged in these activities in their homes. Information was collected in five videotaped sessions. The author concludes that the book reading experience was much more than reading text and recalling previous experiences related to the text. These parent-child reading sessions transformed the home through sharing values and opinions about family, identity, emotional support and freedom.

**Elish-Piper, L. (1997). Literacy and their lives: Four low-income families enrolled in a summer family literacy program. Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 40, 256–268.**

This article describes a qualitative study of 13 low-income families who participated in a summer family literacy program. In her examination of families, the author was guided by the sociocontextual perspective that calls for looking at strengths and intact literacy patterns in families, (see Taylor, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; and Heath, 1983). Multiple data collection methods were used to obtain information through parent interviews, dialogue journals done by parents, field notes taken by the researcher and literacy artifacts. This article highlights four family profiles thought to represent the range of situations within the families. The four profiles include families in which (a) literacy was used to handle personal issues and challenges, (b) literacy activities emerged as the source of competition between parent and child, (c) revaluation of literacy activities took place, and (d) literacy activities were used to show nurture and support for one another. The author concludes that the families in the study all used literacy for meaningful purposes and these purposes differed based on the social-contextual factors within each family at that point in time. She further concludes that the activities around literacy used by families were not necessarily the school-types of literacy that dominate family literacy curriculum.

**Gamse, B. C., Conger, D., Elson, D. & McCarthy, M. (1997). Follow-up study of families in the Even Start In-depth Study. Final report. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, Inc.**

This report discusses the findings of a study designed to follow-up the children of families studied in the original In-Depth Study (IDS) done in the first National Even Start Evaluation. In the IDS, families from five sites were randomly assigned to either Even Start programs or a comparison group. For the follow-up study, data was collected on 128 of the 179 children (72 percent) included in the random assignment group of the IDS. The majority of the children in the follow-up study were in the first or second grade. Data was collected from school records and included attendance rates, grades and achievement tests. In addition, information was obtained from school staff on school-level policies. The authors report that the school environments attended by both the intervention and comparison groups were relatively homogenous. There were no significant differences between the Even Start and comparison group for level of participation in special

programs. There was great variation in the type of achievement tests given as well as the purpose of administering the test. However, when children were given the same test, no significant differences were found. No grade differences were found between the two groups when controlling for a number of child and family variables. While the average rate of participation did not differ for children in Even Start and the comparison group, the average tardy rate was significantly less for the Even Start children. The authors conclude by explaining that these findings are not surprising, because programs demonstrating significant effects used a wider variety of measures and had a longer duration between completion of the program and follow-up studies. They suggest that with a longer interval and more comprehensive measures, "meaningful differences" may emerge.

**Handel, R. D. (1999). Building family literacy in an urban community. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.**

This book reports on the Partnership for Family Reading, an intergenerational literacy program developed by the author and implemented through a collaboration between Montclair State University and the Newark, NJ school system. Handel first discusses the "multiple meaning of family literacy" and provides descriptions of a variety of family literacy programs before discussing the development and implementation of the Partnership for Family Reading. Based on interviews conducted by the author, narratives are provided to give the reader insight into the women who participated in the program. Individual chapters focus on the teachers of the family literacy program as well as home-school connections. Further, Handel discusses issues such as gender, class, race, and new welfare regulations in relation to family literacy and family literacy programs.

**Levin, M., Gamse, B., Swartz, J., Tao, F., & Tarr, H. (1997). National evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program: Report on Migrant Even Start Projects. Bethesda, MD: Abt Associates and Fu Associates. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 411 118).**

This report evaluates three Even Start Migrant Education Programs: the Arizona Migrant Even Start Project, the Pennsylvania Migrant Even Start Project, and the Wisconsin Migrant Even Start Project. Discussion of each project includes: program structure and administration, characteristics of the communities served, family recruitment, content and delivery of services, staff characteristics, service component coordination, participation and follow-up strategies, evaluation of Even Start Information System, and conclusions. The challenges faced by programs are as follows: hiring qualified staff, adapting service delivery to families' schedules, interagency collaboration, continuity of services between home base and receiving site, providing support services, dealing with isolation in the community, and obtaining Spanish language curriculum. Recommendations from this report include: increase collaboration across Even Start sites, encourage communication between migrant Head Start and Even Start programs, provide more technical assistance, and provide opportunities for Migrant Even Start projects to share experiences with other Even Start Projects.

**Levin, M., Moss, M., Swartz, J., Khan, S., & Tarr, H. (1997). National evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program: Report on Even Start Projects for Indian tribes and tribal organizations. Bethesda, MD: Abt Associates and Fu Associates. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 415 084).**

This report presents an evaluation of three tribal Even Start projects: The Cherokee Nation Even Start Project, Makah Even Start Project, and Pascua Yaqui Even Start Project. The Cherokee Nation Even Start Project was based on home-based services and the Makah Pascua Even Start Projects implemented a combination of home-based and center-based services. The report covers the following: community characteristics (economics, education, health), family recruitment, staff characteristics, content and delivery of services, coordination of service components, participant and follow-up strategies, project impacts, and features important to success and challenges faced.

**Morrow, L. M., & Young, J. (1997). A family literacy program connecting school and home: Effects on attitude, motivation, and literacy achievement. Journal of Educational Psychology, 89, 736–742.**

This study investigated the effects of connecting home and school literacy by involving parents in developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive literacy activities with their children. Fifty-four children in first, second or third grades were randomly assigned to either a combined home and school based or school-based intervention. The school based program included classroom literacy centers, teacher modeled literacy activities, and WRAP (Writing and Reading Appreciation for Students) time. The home based program provided additional parent-child literacy activities similar to the school based activities. Differences between pre- and post-test achievement and motivation data favored children in the combined school and home based program.

**Neuman, S. B., Hagedorn, T., Celano, D., & Daly, P. (1995). Toward a collaborative approach to parent involvement in early education: A study of teenage mothers in an African-American community. American Educational Research Journal, 32, 801–827.**

This qualitative study explored beliefs about children's literacy and learning held by 19 African-American teenage mothers participating in a family literacy program. Even within this relatively similar group, parents held a variety of beliefs on their role and their child's role in learning and literacy. Further, parents varied on general beliefs about learning and literacy and schooling. Although parents varied in their perspectives, the authors also noted that mothers held shared goals demonstrated through four quotations: (1) "You gotta teach them something;" (2) "I want my child to be safe;" (3) "A good teacher is keeping that respect;" and (4) "What I'm doing, I'm doing for her." The authors stress that practitioners and researchers need to be careful not to view ethnic or cultural groups as homogenous in their beliefs. Through developing collaborative relationships between parents and staff that acknowledge the importance of parent beliefs, partnerships can be established to promote children's success in school.

**Philliber, W. W., Spillman, R. E., & King, R. (1996). Consequences of family literacy for adults and children: Some preliminary findings. Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 39, 558–565.**

This study describes the Toyota Families for Learning Program which employs the Kenan Model developed by the National Center for Family Literacy. This family literacy program is compared to both adult-focused education programs and child-focused education programs to determine whether family literacy programs are more effective than those programs that focus on just one generation. Although these results are preliminary, in all the outcomes measured for both adults and children, more gains were made in the family literacy program. The author also offers insight into why this difference may exist.

**Ponzetti, J. J., & Dulin, W. (1997). Parent education in Washington State Even Start Family Literacy Programs. Early Childhood Education Journal, 25(1), 23–29.**

The authors argue that parent education is the most critical component of family literacy yet it is the most elusive in the literature. The purpose of this study was to understand and document parent education practices in Even Start Family Literacy Programs. In 1991–92, the 24 Even Start Programs in Washington state were asked to complete a survey on the educational preparation of instructors, the content of parenting education classes, as well as the methods used by parent education teachers. The findings are based on responses from 16 sites. The programs focused on parents and their unique needs, provided services in a variety of settings for easy access, and educated parents about their influences in the practices of family literacy. The authors discuss the importance of state mandates to guide parenting education efforts. They conclude by noting that quality parenting education efforts need not be to the detriment children's education programs. The programs that responded appeared to be able to provide parent education without neglecting the education of children.

**Popp, R. J. (1991). Past and present educational experiences of parents who enrolled in Kenan Trust Family Literacy Programs. Louisville, KY: National Center for Family Literacy.**

This document examines the education, both past and present, of 34 parents who had dropped out of high school and were enrolled in 5 Kenan Trust Family Literacy programs in Kentucky and North Carolina. More than half of the respondents had been previously enrolled in adult education courses from which they had dropped out before completing the high school equivalency certificate. The study was conducted to determine the reasons participants had dropped out of high school and why they had subsequently enrolled in adult education programs. Results indicated that the main underlying cause of school dropout was a process of disengagement from schooling that the respondents began to experience as early as the transition from elementary to middle school. This alienation also played a large role in the dropout of participants from adult education programs, in which they had enrolled primarily to get their GED. The author of this document states that a chief reason participants remained in family literacy programs was that these programs addressed their sense of alienation, enabling them to identify with schooling.

**Puchner, L. D. (1997). Family literacy in cultural contexts: Lessons from two case studies. (Technical Report TR97-01). Philadelphia, PA: National Center on Adult Literacy. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 412 376).**

Three sets of assumptions usually generalize across numerous models of family literacy programs in the U.S. First, these programs assume that literacy flows in a unidirectional path from parent (usually mother) to child. Second, programs assume certain literacy interactions occur in the home. For example, children develop strong literacy skills in the home because parents provide children with opportunities to engage in school-like activities. Third, these programs assume that becoming literate affects families positively. However, Puchner argues that the ability to become literate in a language can significantly impact, change, and may even breakdown existing community and family structures. In two case studies—one of Southeast Asian immigrants in the U.S. and another of four villages of southern Mali—the author provides empirical evidence to question the appropriateness of these assumptions. Puchner concludes with recommendations for flexible approaches to family literacy, the understanding of positive and negative effects of literacy programs on communities, and the need to integrate and implement evaluation into family literacy program components.

**Riedinger, S. (1997). Even Start: Facilitating transitions to kindergarten. Washington, DC: US Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service, Office of the Undersecretary.**

The purpose of this report was to document and describe effective kindergarten strategies used by Even Start projects, as well as to develop recommendations for the U.S. Department of Education, other federal agencies, and early childhood and parenting education programs who have an interest in the transition to kindergarten. Data was analyzed through the Even Start Information System. Qualitative data was also collected and analyzed through visits to five Even Start projects with transition programs perceived as being high quality. The transition services described were specifically designed to support families as children moved to kindergarten and included such approaches as kindergarten orientation, educating parents about transition services, and meeting with school staff about children's strengths and needs. Approaches considered successful across the Even Start projects include emphasizing family strengths, developing and maintaining long-term relationships with families, empowering families to identify their needs, and being flexible in providing services. Difficulties of transition projects are also discussed, as well as recommendations.

**Rodriguez-Brown, F. V., & Mulhern, M. M. (1993). Fostering critical literacy through family literacy: A study of families in a Mexican-immigrant community. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 17, 1-16.**

This article presented a study on Project FLAME (Family Literacy Aprendiendo, Mejorando, Educando [Learning, Improving, Educating]), a family literacy program aiming to increase the literacy skills of 3- to 5-year-old children by working with their Mexican-immigrant parents. This program offered four components. *Literacy modeling* helped parents become literacy models for their children. The *literacy opportunity*



component showed parents how to increase the availability of literacy materials for their children and the *literacy interaction component* assisted parents in learning how to engage their children in literacy activities. Last, the *home school relationships* component encouraged parent involvement with the school. Through case studies, interviews, and anecdotal evidence, the authors demonstrated that Project FLAME assisted parents in helping with their children's literacy skills. The authors argue that through helping parents develop their functional literacy skills (literacy skills to meet individual needs for functioning in society), critical literacy is fostered so that families can become empowered to make changes in their lives and their community.

**St. Pierre, R., Ricciuti, A., & Creps, C. (2000). Synthesis of state and local Even Start evaluations. Washington, DC: US Department of Education.**

Commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education, the objective of this synthesis was to report on the presence and nature of Even Start Family Literacy Program state and local evaluations that exist. Specifically, this study reviews state and local evaluation through describing the types of evaluations conducted, summarizing the findings of these evaluations, and developing recommendations for improving state and local evaluation practices. Information for the evaluations was requested during the 1996–97 school year. Because the process of obtaining evaluation reports proved to be difficult, this study had a sample of convenience which examined closely 24 “high quality” evaluations. This report found a diversity of local evaluation methods, an indication that projects used evaluation funds for primary concerns to the local project. The authors also discussed the inherent conflict of multilevel (i.e., local, state, and national) evaluation that Even Start faces. Further, the authors discuss the influences of the evaluation's design (i.e., age of project, amount of funds). This report concludes with a list of recommendations for local and state evaluations.

**St. Pierre, R., & Swartz, J.P. (1995). The Even Start Family Literacy Program. In I.E. Sigel (Series Ed.) & S. Smith (Vol. Ed.), Advances in applied developmental psychology: Vol. 9. Two generation programs for families in poverty: A new intervention strategy (pp. 37–66). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.**

This article provides a well-detailed overview of the Even Start program and the Even Start National Evaluation conducted by Abt Associates. After describing the history of the development of family literacy programs, the authors define core components as well as describe a comprehensive model placing Even Start in the context of population, community, and service characteristics. A description of the National Even Start Evaluation is also provided. Some highlighted areas from the Evaluation include: characteristics of Even Start participants, descriptions of core services (early childhood education, adult education, and parent and child time together), home-based services, support services and special events, service integration, program participation, recruitment strategies, retention strategies, and participation rates.

**St. Pierre, R., Swartz, J., Gamse B., Murray, S., Deck, D., & Nickel, P. (1995). National evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program: Final report. Bethesda, MD: Abt Associates, Inc.**

The Even Start Family Literacy Program was authorized in response to the conceptualization of "family literacy" that united two previously separate areas of adult education and early childhood education. This report presents a 4-year national evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program (1989–92) and provides detailed information about the first four cohorts studied in the project. The 13 chapters discuss the following: (1) background information on the program; (2) program design and the components of evaluation; (3) characteristics of families and project activities; (4) the population served by Even Start; (5) characteristics of Even Start projects and staff; (6) the depth of Even Start services; (7) their approach to the assessment of effects; (8) effects on children served by Even Start; (9) effects on parent literacy; (10) effects on parenting skills; (11) effects on the family as a whole; (12) the cost of Even Start; and (13) a summary and conclusions. The conclusions drawn in this report address only the short-term effects of the Even Start project on families. The authors recommend a longitudinal study to examine the long-term impact of the program.

**Tao, F., Gamse, B., & Tarr, H. (1998). National Evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program, 1994–1997 Final Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Planning and Evaluation Service.**

This final report for the second national Even Start evaluation covers the program years 1993–97. During this time period, the number of projects participating increased from 439 to 605. At least 90 percent of projects submitted data on participant characteristics, services, implementation, costs and participant outcomes for analysis in the Universe Study for each year of the study. For the most part, the programmatic trends reported in the first evaluation remained constant. In addition, 57 Even Start projects were selected to submit more comprehensive data on child cognition, adult educational progress, and parenting education. Following new families for up to 3 years beginning in 1993, participant outcomes were determined based on pretest-posttest differences and growth curve analysis. Children continuing to participate in Even Start made greater gains than expected on the basis of development alone. The educational gains for adults in Even Start were modest and comparable to those seen in the first evaluation and other adult education programs. Positive gains were seen in scores in parenting education for parents with children between birth and 3 years of age and parents with children ages 3 through 6.

**Tao, F., Swartz, J., St. Pierre, R., & Tarr, H. (1997). National evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program: 1995 interim report. Washington, DC: US Department of Education Planning and Evaluation Service.**

This report discusses the second national 4-year (1993–97) evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program at the completion of its second year (1994–95). Data from a sample of 57 out of 513 programs across the U.S. operating during 1994–95 were used for the evaluation. The report addresses several key issues in its 10 chapters, beginning with an introduction to the Even Start Program and description of both the previous and current evaluation. A comprehensive description of the Even Start families is included as well as ways in which these families are served by the program and participant use of services. One chapter addresses whether or not those families in greatest need were served by and

### **Section 3: Family Literacy Practices**

**Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1990). Literacy for empowerment: The role of parents in children's education. London: Falmer Press.**

This ethnographic study describes a Mexican Spanish-speaking community in the United States and is intended for both researchers and school personnel. The main research questions address how parents assist their children in the education process, and how parents socialize each other in dealing with the school. As part of the study, the author followed 20 families with children participating in second- and third-grade. To understand how parents helped their children, the ethnography focused on the literacy practices in the classroom and the home. The author also focused on parent involvement and attended school events such as parent meetings, parent training workshops, and informal interactions between families and school personnel. The book concludes by discussing theoretical, practical and policy implications

**Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1996). Protean literacy: Extending the discourse on empowerment. London: Falmer Press.**

This book focuses on a discussion of empowerment related to the author's earlier ethnography (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990). Emphasis is placed on the researcher's role of facilitator and advocate in helping families participate in the school community. Using critical ethnographic techniques, Delgado-Gaitan helped parents to establish COPLA (Comite de Padres Latinos), an organization to empower parents by representing their interests with the school system. Because of the concern with reading underachievement of Spanish-speaking children, one activity initiated by COPLA was the Family Literacy Project. This project intended to have children read at home with their parents and have the family report to the teacher in order to monitor literacy performance. Delgado-Gaitan argues that families were not empowered in their children's education with the Family Literacy Project. She suggests that claiming "cultural space and political voice and utopian visions" through activities like those conducted by COPLA are not enough to counter inequalities embedded in political and economic structures, although these activities offer potential for transformation.

**Heath, S. B. (1983). Ways with words. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.**

This book reports on an ethnographic study of the language of children in communities in North Carolina. The two communities, "Roadville," a white working class community of textile mill workers, and "Trackton," a black working class community of older farmers and younger textile mill workers, are only a few miles apart. Heath also investigates a third group of individuals and calls them townspeople. Townspeople are middle class individuals who live in "Trackton" and "Roadville." There are deep cultural differences among the groups of people in the communities. Heath describes how these cultural differences affect language and literacy patterns (or "ways with words"). This book serves as an excellent background for people working with children from different cultures.

**Purcell-Gates, V. (1995). Other people's words: The cycle of low literacy. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.**

The author presents a case-study of a family dealing with the consequences of low literacy. A young urban Appalachian mother concerned with her inability to read to her second grade child joins a university-based literacy center designed for children. Purcell-Gates follows this family for a 2-year period as mother and son learn to read and write together. She describes the progress the pair makes toward literacy and their eventual success in the context of social, cultural, and cognitive factors, all of which must be taken into account when understanding the learning process of individuals.

**Taylor, D. (1983). Family literacy: Young children learning to read and write. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.**

In this book, Taylor follows over 3 years six middle-class families that each have a successful reader. This ethnographic work provides insight into the ways in which children successfully learn to read and write through their participation in the everyday experiences of family life. The last chapter of the book explains the importance of using ethnographic methodology in the study of child literacy outcomes.

**Taylor, D., & Dorsey-Gaines, C. (1988). Growing up literate: Learning from inner-city families. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.**

In Taylor's second book, she and Dorsey-Gaines follow four inner-city African-American families. In this qualitative study, the reader learns that children from these families can be successful readers, even in the face of overwhelming poverty and unfortunate circumstances. Like the middle-class families Taylor studied previously, these families provided literacy experiences for their children in their everyday lives. However, they are distinguished from the middle-class families in that they often used literacy activities as a means to an end (e.g., applications for food stamps, AFDC, WIC, and student financial aid forms). The authors of the book recommend their work for educators, researchers, and policymakers.

**Voss, M. M. (1996). Hidden literacies: Children learning at home and at school. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.**

Voss reports on a year spent systematically observing and talking with a group of children in their home and school settings. In the role of participant-observer, she used field notes and audiotape recordings to collect samples of children's writing and reading. In the process, she shares with the children's parents and teachers her observations and consequently gains information not typically available to other educators. Using this information, she discusses a number of basic questions related to children's literacy. Throughout her study, she shows that although words are important, there are other forms of literacy (e.g., cultural and media literacy) and these need to be taken into account in teaching children. One of the most important topics she addresses is how schools and parents can work together for the sake of their children's learning.

## Section 4: Program Descriptions

**The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. (1989). First teachers. Washington, DC: Author.**

This book contains a brief introduction which discusses the problem of illiteracy in the United States, the intergenerational transmission of literacy, the beliefs underlying family literacy programs, and how family literacy programs address illiteracy. The book consists of “snapshots” of the following 10 family literacy programs: (1) *Parent and Child Education (PACE) Program*; (2) *The Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project*; (3) *SER Family Learning Centers (FLCs)*; (4) *Parent Readers Program*; (5) *MOTHERREAD*; (6) *Mother’s Reading Program*; (7) *Arkansas Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)*; (8) *Parents as Partners in Reading*; (9) *Parent Leadership Training Project*; and (10) *Avance Family Support and Education Program*. For each program, information is provided regarding how and why the program was developed, the setting, funding, and components of the program, evidence for the success of the program, and advice for policymakers and practitioners. A summary chart which details the goals, population, outreach efforts, funding, support services, materials, special features, and outcomes is also presented. A list of program contacts and other sources for information on literacy conclude the book. This book is helpful to individuals interested in learning about the different types of family literacy programs and efforts, as well as how to contact programs or centers for more information.

**Crowther, J., & Tett, L. (1997). Literacies not literacy. *Adults Learning*, 8(8), 207–209.**

Advocating a sociocontextual approach (see Auerbach, 1989), this article features a family literacy program entitled “Connect.” The Connect program has an emphasis on individuals and their unique literacies. Curriculum is included into the everyday lives of students. Staff is committed to a particular vision that integrates work purpose and understanding with practice. A feature of this program is a pedagogical approach to knowledge. Knowledge in classrooms is constructed along the premises of we know/they know, we don’t know/they know, we know/they don’t know, and we don’t know/they don’t know. Connect works to start with the premise of we know/they know whereas other programs that take a more school-model approach implement a curriculum from a we know/they don’t know approach. The authors suggest that this model provides an open-ended and creative environment sensitive to the context and the culture that families bring with them to the program.

**Daisey, P. (1991). Intergenerational literacy programs: Rationale, description, and effectiveness. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 20, 11–17.**

Educators have acknowledged that a continuing focus on the mechanics of reading will not alleviate the literacy problem. As a result, the focus of attention has shifted to the family and the critical role it plays in the acquisition of reading skills. This article discusses the rationale behind the growing number of intergenerational literacy programs and how they target adult strengths to facilitate the literacy of an entire family. The three

intergenerational projects evaluated were the Family Literacy Center at Boston University, the Parent Readers Program at the City University of New York, and the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project. In addition, Daisey describes the Even Start legislation that provides funding for the continuing evaluation of family literacy programs.

**Darling, S. (1992). Family literacy: Parents and children learning together. Principal, 72, 10–12.**

Darling states that a mother's literacy is the best predictor of a child's academic success. In addition, parents who are undereducated or intimidated by schools often do not become involved in their child's learning. Darling states that the most effective literacy programs are intensive and include the whole family. The author discusses the Kenan Family Literacy Model and how its goal of breaking the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy is addressed by the program's components. The literacy programs based on the Kenan Model include the following four components: adult basic skills instruction; early childhood education; parent time; and PACT (parent and child together). Preliminary results indicate that this model is effective for both the children and the adults. Darling reports that parents are more likely to continue with family literacy programs than with other adult education programs.

**McIvor, M. C. (Ed.). (1990). Family literacy in action: A survey of successful programs. Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press.**

This book intends to cover a variety of family literacy programs that value the adult role in shaping a child's literacy development. The author highlights eight innovative intergenerational and/or family literacy programs: *Marion County Library Family Literacy Program; Beginning with Books; Parent Readers Program; Motherread; Project WILL; The Kenan Family Literacy Project; Mothers' Reading Program; and Take Up Reading Now*. Included is a list of the funding sources, participants, and outcomes for each program.

**Monsour, M., & Talan, C. (1993). Library-based family literacy projects. Chicago, IL: American Library Association.**

The connection between the public library and family literacy programs is becoming increasingly stronger as a result of the Bell Atlantic/ALA Family Literacy Project and the Families for Literacy program initiatives. This publication serves as a directory of library-based family literacy programs, and reports on their development as a legitimate approach to the problem of low literacy. It describes twelve outstanding library-based family literacy programs and identifies certain program components that can be replicated in libraries everywhere to facilitate program expansion.

**Morrow, L. M., Tracey, D. H., & Maxwell, C. M. (Eds.). (1995). A survey of family literacy in the United States. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.**

This book, intended for use by teachers, parents, and policymakers, describes the historical development of the field of family literacy, as well as a current picture of family literacy in the United States. It offers detailed information about specific programs in the field in its more than 100 sources concerning family literacy. In addition to an *Overview*

section, there are several other sections providing informative entries: *Parent Involvement Programs*; *Intergenerational Programs*; *Research on Naturally Occurring Literacy in Families*; *Agencies and Associations Dealing with Family Literacy*; and *Further References About Family Literacy*.

**Nickse, R., Speicher, A. M., & Buchek, P. C. (1988). An intergenerational adult literacy project: A family intervention/prevention model. Journal of Reading, 31, 634–642.**

This article discusses the effectiveness of the Collaborations for Literacy program, an intergenerational adult basic education and literacy program at Boston University. Two important research questions are examined: (1) Does the intergenerational approach have a positive impact on beginning adult readers; and (2) What are the benefits to the children of parents enrolled in an intergenerational program? In addition to its basic teaching curriculum, various other intervention techniques were used in the study, including weekly consultation for tutors and learners, literacy “socials” for parents and their children, and inservice training for tutors on literacy-related topics and techniques. Preliminary data on adult participants suggest that vocabulary and comprehension reading gains were made as a function of the number of hours spent in tutoring. No results were available yet for children. Based on the preliminary analyses, the authors report ten important suggestions to keep in mind in the development of a successful intergenerational literacy program.

**Nuckolls, M. (1991). Expanding students’ potential through family literacy. Educational Leadership, 49, 45–46.**

This article describes Parents and Literacy (PAL) family literacy program in Tucson, Arizona. PAL began with parent classes and has evolved into a home visitation model. The author discusses three findings from this project that have implications for those who are interested in implementing a family literacy program within a conventional educational system: all staff members must feel ownership over the program; recruitment and retention of parents must be central; and evaluation of the program cannot be measured merely quantitatively.

**Quintero, E., & Huerta-Macias, A. (1990). All in the family: Bilingualism and biliteracy. The Reading Teacher, 44, 306–312.**

This article discusses several aspects of the Family Initiative for English Literacy (FIEL) project employed by the El Paso Community College Literacy Center. It includes the rationale for the model on which the project is based, a description and assessment of the project’s goals, the content of the curriculum, and implications for classrooms with language minority students. A detailed account of one family’s progress within the program is also provided.

**Quintero, E., & Velarde, M. C. (1990). Intergenerational literacy: A developmental, bilingual approach. Young Children, 45, 10–15.**

Quintero and Velarde describe the development and implementation of El Paso Community College’s model Intergenerational Literacy Project. The project uses a developmental approach to teach Spanish-speaking parents and their children together to

improve their literacy skills in both Spanish and English. In addition to a general overall description of the project, the article discusses important assumptions regarding literacy development upon which the program is based as well as key curriculum components. A brief explanation of the program's effect on parents and children concludes the article.

**Richards, R. T. (1998). When family literacy begins on the job. Educational Leadership, 55(8), 78–80.**

This article offers a description of a family literacy program at Winthrop University in South Carolina. This program intends to help employees improve their on-the-job literacy skills through activities involving their families and homes. Three approaches characterize this program: using children's literature, work-related literature, and personal literature. Participants receive job training activities at work and then as part of the instruction, relate these activities to their homes and their families. For example, by learning and responding to literacy strategies used when reading children's literature, the program intends for the participants to use these strategies when reading for personal pleasure or work.

**Segel, E., & Friedberg, J. B. (1991). "Is today liberry day?": Community support for family literacy. Language Arts, 68, 654–657.**

This article discusses *Beginning with Books*, a literacy agency affiliated with the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. The authors describe three family literacy programs implemented by *Beginning with Books* to promote children's and adults' literacy: (1) the *Gift Book Program*, which draws on existing community services to help distribute picturebook gift packets to families with young children; (2) *READ TOGETHER*, a program that provides child care and one-on-one storybook reading sessions for children while their parents partake in literacy tutoring; and (3) *Read-Aloud Parent Clubs* for Head Start parents in which parent-child storybook reading is discussed and modeled and books are given out at each meeting for parents to read to their children at home. The authors believe that all three program can easily be replicated and provide sources to obtain additional information on *Beginning with Books*.

**Weinstein-Shr, G., & Quintero, E. (Eds.). (1995). Immigrant learners and their families: Literacy to connect the generations. Language in Education: Theory and Practice, 84. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 379 964).**

This document is a collection of essays intended for the reader who wishes to learn about programs and curricula for adult immigrants and their children. The first section's theme is collaboration. An overview of projects implemented in California for language minority families is presented. Two chapters focus on the collaborative process experienced during the implementation of two literacy programs. The second section, *Curriculum: Drawing on Learner Strengths*, is comprised of four chapters that each discuss the ways in which specific programs develop curricula to build on participants strengths. Projects discussed in this section include one based on research and participants' needs, one which promoted writing and reading as a form of "social action," one which linked the curriculum to the participants' outside world, and one which had success in using story-telling with a reading program for mothers. In the last section, the following



issues are identified: (1) the need to learn more about the participants and their existing literacy practices; (2) the need to develop innovative ways to measure and evaluate change and success within literacy programs; and (3) the need to generalize to the other contexts in which immigrant families learn.

**Winter, M., & Rouse, J. (1990). Fostering intergenerational literacy: The Missouri Parents as Teachers Program. The Reading Teacher, 43(6), 382–386.**

There is growing agreement among educators that interventions targeting child literacy must more broadly recognize the entire family as the client, and must respect the culture and value system of that family. The Missouri Parents as Teachers program (PAT) employs this family-centered approach and has become the model for early childhood family education in Missouri. This paper describes the services the program offers, their curriculum, how PAT promotes literacy, and the variety of parent-child activities. Implications for local school districts are discussed. A general evaluation of the project is also included.

## **Section 5: Program Development, Assessment, and Evaluation Procedures**

**Holt, D.D. (1994). Assessing success in family literacy projects: Alternative approaches to assessment and evaluation. McHenry, IL: Delta Systems.**

This handbook serves as a resource for staff members interested in evaluating family literacy projects as it presents alternative approaches to assessing and evaluating family literacy projects. Alternative approaches are defined as those that are flexible, represent the curriculum, are relevant to learners, and indicative of the abilities and knowledge acquired. Chapter two offers a model for integrating program planning, implementation and evaluation activities. Chapter three presents the use of initial assessments at intake of a family literacy project. Chapter four demonstrates the use of alternative assessment and evaluation for documenting learners' progress. Chapter five presents four alternative approaches to assessment and evaluation, and discusses the processes involved with collecting data, analyzing data, using data, and reporting data and findings. Chapter six provides a description of the process used to design this handbook.

**Johnson, R. L., Willeke, M. J., & Steiner, D. J. (1998). Stakeholder collaboration in the design and implementation of a family literacy portfolio assessment. American Journal of Evaluation, 19(3), 339–353.**

Despite the strong advocacy for stakeholder input in collaborative, participatory, and empowerment forms of evaluation, little is documented in the literature describing the involvement of stakeholders in the decisionmaking processes that occur in evaluation. This case study examines the implementation of portfolio assessment in an Even Start Family Literacy Program in Nebraska. Unique to this evaluation is the strong degree of collaboration between staff and evaluator. Staff and evaluators collaborated by (1) identifying what was to be assessed, (2) the decision of the use of the portfolio as a means of assessment, (3) designing the portfolio assessment, and (4) reviewing the portfolios. Participants in the family literacy program also assisted staff by selecting and collecting items to go into the portfolio. This article ends by offering several lessons learned from this collaborative evaluation experience.

**Le Tendre, M. J. (1997). Strengthening the ties between Title I and family literacy. Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk, 2, 3–5.**

The author of this article provides suggestions on how Title I can support initiatives such as family literacy to enhance parent involvement. Because Even Start limits family involvement to families with children between the ages of 0 to 8, Title I funds can target family literacy initiatives for families with children older than 8 years. Schools can also use Title I monies to implement family literacy models or supplement existing programs. For example, Title I funds can be used for preschool services.

**National Center for Family Literacy. (1996). Outcomes and measures in family literacy programs. Louisville, KY: Author.**

This publication serves as a resource guide for the evaluation of family literacy

programs. Developed by the National Center for Family Literacy, this manual focuses on evaluating those goals that are the embodiment of family literacy programs. To assist with planning program evaluation, the manual is divided into six sections. The first section is entitled "Important Terms and Concepts" and defines literacy, as well as family literacy, in order to identify the outcomes of family literacy programs. The second section, "Assessment Issues," describes the purpose and types of assessments. To aid in the selection of measures, the manual provides lists of advantages and disadvantages associated with different types of assessment. Section 3, "Participant Outcomes and Measures," provides a list of short- and long-term participant outcomes for each of the four components in a comprehensive family literacy program. Sections 4 through 6 provide lists of published instruments accompanied by summaries for measures pertaining to adult learner outcomes, parent and parent-child outcomes, and preschool child outcomes, respectively.

**National Center for Family Literacy (1997). The family literacy answer book. Louisville, KY: Author.**

The objective of this book is to address many of the questions that are often asked about implementing family literacy programs, developing curriculum, and meeting the needs of families. Another intention of this guide is to provide resources for effective family literacy programs such as lesson plans and a bibliography. This guide is divided into 10 chapters covering the following topics: collaboration, curriculum development, adult education, early childhood education, infants/toddlers, parent and child together time, parent groups, home visits, and component integration. The guide includes over 70 lesson plans involving adult education, early childhood education, parent and child together time, and parent groups.

**National Center for Family Literacy. (1997). Funding a family literacy program. Louisville, KY: Author.**

*Funding a family literacy program* is a 12-page guide offering a step-by-step process to secure funding. These steps include (1) developing a mission statement, (2) identifying the funding sources available to you, (3) presenting your case, (4) asking for support, (5) managing your funding, and (6) asking your funding agency for more support. This guide offers a beginning framework valuable to a family literacy program starting to think about funding.

**Popp, R. J. (1992). Family portfolios: Documenting the change in parent-child relationships. Louisville, KY: National Center for Family Literacy. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 342 819).**

This guide proposes a method for family literacy programs to document the evaluation of parent-child relationships. The National Center for Family Literacy advocates the use of portfolios because this method enables parent-child relationships to be examined within a context that encompasses not only the change but how and why the change occurred. The purpose of this guide is to introduce and describe portfolio assessment, explain how to begin this type of assessment, and suggest how it can be implemented in

family literacy programs. The author also includes a description of the three problems the National Center of Family Literacy has encountered in implementing portfolio assessment and suggestions for solving these problems. In addition, methods for analyzing and summarizing portfolios are discussed. Included in this guide is a reference list of articles discussing portfolio assessment as well as programs using portfolio assessment.

**Quezada, S., & Nickse, R. (1992). Community collaborations for family literacy handbook. Boston, MA: Massachusetts State Board of Library Commissioners.**

This handbook is the result of a 16-month project in which six Massachusetts communities worked on the development and implementation of a collaborative plan for family literacy. The goal of the project was to enable the public libraries in the participating communities to serve at-risk families through the development of a family literacy program. The handbook is divided into three major sections. The first provides general background on the history of family literacy and the family literacy initiative, as well as a discussion on the importance of collaboration and steps to consider when designing a collaborative project. Part two takes a more in-depth look at the collaboration process and makes specific suggestions on ways to best facilitate progress. Part three helps the reader through the step-by-step process of writing a successful literacy proposal. Appendixes include an analysis of the Massachusetts Community Collaborations for Family Literacy Project Model (the motivation behind this handbook). Also included is an extensive annotated family literacy resource guide for parents, teachers, and family literacy and community collaboration program development.

**Ryan, K. E. (1991). An evaluation framework for family literacy programs. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 331 029).**

This article presents a definition of family literacy programs, a conceptual framework by which components and goals of family literacy programs can be identified, and an evaluation model for family literacy programs. The evaluation outlined by the author includes a five-step approach: (1) *needs assessment*; (2) *accountability*; (3) *process evaluation*; (4) *progress toward objective*; and (5) *program impact*. The article applies this evaluation process to a family literacy program. Ryan argues for constructing a portfolio for assessments, which can include work samples selected by an instructor, samples selected by the participant, and universally required samples that can be compared against a normative sample. The author recommends using this portfolio instead of relying solely on standardized test results.

**Thompson, L. W. (1988). Even Start: Factors to consider in planning an intergenerational literacy program. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 321 227).**

This document reviews literature pertaining to adult, preschool, and family literacy programs. In her discussion of adult literacy programs, Thompson identifies specific programs, as well as what makes these programs effective. With respect to preschool

literacy programs, she highlights the importance of the family in a child's literacy development. She identifies two types of intergenerational family literacy programs in addition to several important factors to take into consideration when planning an Even Start program. Appendix A presents this information in an outline form.

**Wolter, D. L. (1995). *Becoming family literacy advocates in early childhood education*. Early Education Journal, 23(2), 89–91.**

This article discusses the important role that early childhood educators can play in promoting family literacy. Ways are addressed for early childhood educators to be sensitive and supportive of family literacy. Wolter emphasizes the need to (1) "Recognize that family literacy is highly individualized;" (2) "Provide nonjudgmental and confidential support;" and (3) "Use strengths as resources for literacy enrichment in the classroom."

## **Section 6: Curriculum and Instruction**

**Auerbach, E. (1990). Making meaning, making change: A guide to participatory curriculum development for adult ESL and family literacy. University of Massachusetts, Boston: Bilingual/ESL Graduate Studies. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 321 593).**

This document, describing the University of Massachusetts Family Literacy Project, is intended to provide guidance for those interested in developing adult English as a Second Language (ESL) and family literacy programs for immigrants and refugees. It serves primarily as a curriculum guide, stressing important project components, the reasoning behind them, and suggestions for how others can incorporate these processes into their own program. The author, however, encourages program developers to carefully consider the specific concerns and issues of each group of participants to ensure effectiveness. Provided throughout the article is documentation of the learning process for teachers, students, and staff.

**Hannon, P., Nuthbrown, C., & Fawcett, E. (1997). Taking parent learning seriously. Adults learning, 9(3), 19–21.**

Although the combination of adult education and early childhood education can often support each other, difficulties can exist because the aims and the traditions of each component also differ. The purpose of this article is to focus on how early childhood educators can think about parent learning. Early childhood educators need to recognize that (1) differences exist between adult and child learning; (2) parents are experts of their own children; (3) parents have views on school literacy; (4) parents have views about their role in their children's learning; and (5) bilingual parents may have different learning needs. This article concludes with suggestions for practice.

**National Center for Family Literacy. (1995). Family literacy: Parent/child interaction time (participant's manual). Louisville, KY: Author.**

This manual, focusing on parent/child interaction time, serves as a part of the training for family literacy programs. It discusses the importance of parent/child interaction, outlines the definition and structure of parent/child interaction time, and promotes ways in which this interaction time can be successfully transferred to the home. Included in the manual is a typical example of parent/child interaction time, in addition to a listing of what is and is not considered to be parent/child interaction time. The importance of parents learning to facilitate their child's learning is discussed by means of listing characteristics of emergent literacy and describing the role of parents and play in a child's learning process. The manual includes a list of common problems and solutions for implementing parent/child interaction time and a list of suggested questions to be examined during the planning of a program to foster parent/child interaction.

**National Center for Family Literacy. (1995). Family literacy: Parent groups (participant's manual). Louisville, KY: Author.**

This manual serves as a guide for programs intending to develop and implement parent groups. Included are sections discussing the purposes of parent groups, the

definition and examples of parent groups, issues targeted by parent groups, and the role and responsibilities of a staff member involved with a parent group. The manual provides a sample session plan, a parent survey, and a sequencing of topics for parent groups. Group dynamics and facilitating skills are addressed by underlining the importance of communication, involvement, and respect among group members. Methods used to empower families are also discussed. In addition, strategies for facilitating personal growth for parents (e.g., self-esteem and problem solving) and questions that should be examined while developing a parent group are included.

**National Center for Family Literacy. (1995). Family literacy: Putting the pieces together (participant's manual). Louisville, KY: Author.**

This manual serves as a training guide for instructors of family literacy programs. The guide focuses on component integration, teambuilding, and collaboration, which together foster effective family literacy programs. The component integration section of the manual defines the term, provides examples, lists what individual program components have to offer in integration, discusses ways to address curriculum integration, offers a list of guidelines for implementing component integration, and demonstrates sample planning worksheets for component integration. The teamwork section of the manual describes what teamwork is, who are considered members of the team in family literacy programs, attributes of effective teams and team members, and a description of the Four Stage Model of Team Development. The manual also offers examples of ways to help build teamwork. The collaboration section discusses the importance and process of collaborating. The manual provides a checklist of strengths and barriers to successful collaboration and a sample collaboration chart which tracks the benefits of collaborative relationships between a program and the various agencies with which it interacts.

**Padak, N., & Cook, D. (1990). Family literacy programs training manual. Columbus, OH: Ohio State Dept. of Education, Division of Adult Basic Education.**

This manual is comprised of nine 1-hour training sessions for adult participants in family literacy programs. The authors note that the sessions can be combined or used individually. This feature allows a trainer greater flexibility in customizing the program to the needs of the participants. The training sessions focus on the following topics: (1) the process of literacy learning; (2) emerging literacy; (3) environments for literacy learning; (4) children's literature; (5) promoting reading fluency; (6) environmental print; (7) promoting writing growth; (8) language-experience activities; and (9) reading-reasoning activities. For each section, the authors provide goals, procedures for implementation, and a reference list for further learning on the session's topic. Also included are worksheets for activities that promote active participation among group members. Two sessions include handouts with suggestions for language activities that parents can engage in with their children. The training session on children's literature provides a handout with questions, answers, and recommendations for reading with children. A listing of appropriate books for designated grades (1-4) is included. There are two reference lists, one focusing on parents and reading, and the other on intergenerational literacy.

## **Part B: Conceptual Issues, Programs, and Research Related to Family Literacy**

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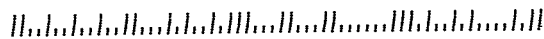
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