

For My Child

A Study of the Impact of French-Language Family Literacy Programs on Francophone Families in Linguistic Minority Settings in Ontario

Cohort 1 | 2004 – 2005

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For My Child

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INTRODUCTION

Many studies confirm that young children acquire their reading and learning habits at a very early age and that, in the case of children from Francophone backgrounds, the linguistic and cultural experiences they have before they ever set foot in school will strongly influence their ability to learn and to live full lives using their mother tongue. Hence the responsibility for passing the language on to the next generation falls on families first of all, and families represent one of the critical elements for ensuring that the Francophone community will survive and flourish. But Francophones who live in linguistic minority settings have limited access to French-language resources and activities. Opportunities to offer their children intellectual stimulation in their mother tongue are thus scarcer for the Francophone minority than for the Anglophone majority.

To better equip Francophone parents to act as their children's first teachers and to support them in this role, a number of French-language literacy centres have provided family literacy programs in several Francophone communities in Ontario. These programs target Francophone families in minority settings. Running a few hours per week for a number of weeks, these programs offer Francophone families the chance to share ideas, to learn, and to pursue recreational activities entirely in French. Though there have been a number of studies on family literacy, our review of the literature uncovered few studies that examined the impact of such programs on families. Some studies did evaluate such impacts, but only on Anglophone families. The present study will therefore be of special interest for all Francophone communities in Canada.

Purpose and Timeline of this Study

The study discussed in this report is entitled *A Study of the Impact of French-Language Family Literacy Programs on Francophone Families in Linguistic Minority Settings in Ontario*. This study is being conducted by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Citizenship and Minorities (CIRCEM) at the University of Ottawa, for the Coalition francophone pour l'alphabétisation et la formation de base en Ontario (Francophone coalition for literacy and basic skills in Ontario). Its purpose is to measure the impacts of family literacy programs on Francophone parents and children in Ontario.

In this study, we plan to assess the changes observed in literacy habits and in use of French among parents and children who have been involved in one of the French-language literacy programs offered by seven French-language literacy centres that are members of the Coalition. We also plan to analyze the various models adopted by these programs, identify the challenges that they must meet and the factors for their success, and document their best practices.

This study has been funded by the National Literacy Secretariat and comes directly under the framework of The Action Plan for Official Languages that the federal government launched in 2003 to ensure the survival of Canada's linguistic duality and to provide better supports for Francophones living in minority settings. Citing data indicating that "one out of every four Francophone parents experiences difficulties in reading"¹, the federal Department of Human Resources and Skills Development has made a commitment to "expand access to family literacy services for minority Francophone households"².

This study will be conducted over five years. Over this period, CIRCEM plans to assess five cohorts of Francophone families who participate in the family literacy programs offered at the seven French-language literacy centres that are partnering with CIRCEM in this study. Each cohort of families will participate in a series of eight to ten workshops. The present report deals with the first cohort only. These families participated in the pilot experiment that was conducted primarily in the winter of 2005. The last cohort will be assessed in winter 2007, and the final research report will be issued in 2008.



Research Team

The Coalition francophone pour l'alphabétisation et la formation de base en Ontario commissioned this study and is its sponsor. To evaluate the family literacy programs that are the subject of this study, the Coalition has retained the services of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Citizenship and Minorities (CIRCEM). CIRCEM's Research Director, Dr. Anne Gilbert, and its Director, Dr. Joseph Yvon Thériault, are co-managers of the academic team working on this project, while CIRCEM's Research Co-ordinator, Sophie LeTouzé, is responsible for collecting and analyzing the data and writing the research reports.

This team has also secured the assistance of two resource persons: Dr. Diana Masny of the



Faculty of Education and Dr. André Thibault of the Department of Sociology at the University of Ottawa, whose job has been to help develop and validate the measuring tools to be used in this study.

The Coalition has also formed a steering committee to oversee this study. This committee's members are: Suzanne Benoit, Executive Director of the Coalition francophone pour l'alphabétisation et la formation de base en Ontario; Marc Bissonnette, Executive Director of the La Route du Savoir literacy centre; Lucie Brunet, a consultant at Brunet Sherwood Consultants, who is acting as Project Co-ordinator; Margo Fauchon, Director of Development at the Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français (FCAF); Yvon Laberge, a consultant at Excel Learning Concepts; and Sophie LeTouzé, Research Co-ordinator at CIRCÉM.

Partners

Seven French-language literacy centres in Ontario were chosen as key partners in this study, because of their experience with family literacy programs. We wish to thank the directors of these centres for their interest in and support for this project. They are: Marc Bissonnette (La Route du Savoir), Diane Corriveau (Alpha Huronie), Denyse De Bernardi (Le Centre d'alphabétisation ALEC du Nipissing), Louise Lalonde (Moi j'apprends), Lyne Martineau (Le Centre d'apprentissage et de formation d'Ottawa (CAFO)), Normand Savoie (ABC Communautaire), and Anna Veltri (Le Collège du Savoir).

Definition of Family Literacy

The many different definitions of alphabétisation familiale (family literacy) reflect the many different kinds of French-language family literacy programs that were implemented in the 1990s. For the purposes of this study, we define "family literacy" as follows:

an approach that supports the parents or other significant adults in children's lives in their role as these children's first teachers, thus helping to develop these children's cultural, academic, and community literacy.³

By developing these forms of literacy themselves through family literacy programs, Francophone adults in minority language communities achieve a better understanding of their own lives. They also become more aware of the importance of taking the steps needed to improve living conditions for themselves and their children. They become better prepared to play their rightful roles as their children's first teachers. They improve not only their ability to express themselves orally in French, but also their reading, writing, and computational abilities. Lastly, they become better able to contribute more actively to the development of their communities.⁴

The above definition recognizes the various facets of daily life and the various levels of literacy among Francophones in minority settings. The process of family literacy can thus lead to many forms of literacy. It is up to the literacy centres to decide which forms of literacy they wish to emphasize in their work with families, on the basis of these families' identified needs.

Family literacy is based on four main principles:

1. parents, children, and extended family members engage in literacy learning⁵ at home and in their communities;
2. literacy learning begins at birth, and the forms that it takes depend on children's experiences in the settings in which they live;
3. parents are their children's first and most important teachers;
4. not all parents have the same skills for helping their children.

In general, family literacy programs:

- promote reading and writing as important family activities;
- improve parents' abilities to help their children learn;
- provide learning experiences that are appropriate to children's level of development;
- encourage parents to participate in positive ways;
- give parents opportunities to pursue their own educational objectives;
- provide opportunities for schools, communities, community agencies, and government to work together.

Methodology of this Study

To measure the impact of the seven literacy centres' family literacy programs on the families who participated in them, we gathered data in semi-directed interviews with the participating parents, their literacy trainers, and the directors of these centres.⁶ We used four questionnaires to structure these interviews. These interviews enabled us to define the conditions for the success of such programs, the challenges that they must meet, and the distinctive aspects of each of the programs studied.



We administered one questionnaire to the participating parents both before and after they completed their programs, to gather basic data on their personal characteristics, attitudes, habits, and behaviours. When these parents first signed up for the programs, we asked them a battery of 18 questions to determine how often they engaged in literacy-related activities (both on their own and with their children) and in what language or languages they did so. At the last workshop of each program, we asked these parents these same questions again. By asking the same questions at the start and end of the programs, we were able to measure whether, once these parents had completed them, they engaged in literacy-related activities more often, less often, or just as often as before, and whether they did so in French more often, less often, or just as often as before. We also asked these parents a different series of open questions that let them express themselves freely, give their impressions of the programs in which they had participated, and talk about the changes that had occurred in their families as a result of their participation in these programs.

We also administered semi-directed interviews to the literacy trainers. The purpose of these interviews was to get a basic picture of who the trainers were, along with information on the participating families and the trainers' reactions to how the program had gone, what had worked well, and what should be changed the next time the program was delivered. The trainers also filled out a general information form on each participating family at the start of the program and a progress sheet at the end of each workshop. These two tools enabled the trainers to get a better sense of the week-to-week changes in these families, as well as to track their attendance.

We also met with the directors of the literacy centres to gather information about their reasons for choosing the particular program models that they did, the ways that they went about setting their programs up, their strategies for recruiting families to participate in them, and the support that they received from various quarters in the community. We also discussed with these managers the winning conditions for such programs and the challenges that they present.



At the start of this project, the Coalition gave the family literacy trainers and the directors of the partner centres two kinds of training to help them design their programs. One dealt with the fundamentals of French-language family literacy. The other was modelled on a particular French-language family literacy program developed in Calgary and entitled *Grandir avec mon enfant* (Growing with my child). The Coalition also met with the centre directors to outline the study that was going to be conducted in conjunction with their programs and the tools that would be used for this purpose. In addition, the Coalition

produced a study participants' guide, *Guide de participation à la recherche*, as a reference tool for the centres. To better understand the context in which each of the seven centres that would be delivering these programs was operating, and to better interpret the results that these programs achieved, the Coalition also developed profiles of the social and demographic characteristics and vitality of the Francophone communities in each of the seven centres' service areas.

How this Report is Organized

This report summarizes the results of our analysis of the impact of the French-language family literacy programs delivered at the seven literacy centres that are partnering in this study. This report is divided into four parts.

Part 1 provides an overview of the communities served by these centres, the family literacy programs that they provided, and the families who participated in them.

Part 2 analyzes the data gathered on literacy habits and use of French among the parents and children involved in these programs, both before and after participating in them.

Part 3 reviews the evaluations made of these programs by the parents, the literacy trainers, and the literacy centre directors concerned.

Lastly, **Part 4** presents our findings from this research and offers some recommendations on improving the programs to be delivered to the subsequent cohorts of families in this study.



Part 1. FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS PROVIDED AND FAMILIES INVOLVED

1.1 Participating Literacy Centres and the Franco- Ontarian Communities They Serve

The French-language literacy centres that belong to the Coalition receive funding from the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to provide services to adults. Seven of these centres had also been offering one or more family literacy programs in French for the past several years. These centres were therefore selected to participate in this study (**Table 1**).

For the purposes of this study, we developed socio-demographic profiles of the seven Francophone communities served by these centres. In the process, we also identified certain characteristics of the areas that they serve. As **Table 2** shows, four of these seven centres serve metropolitan areas, while the three others serve non-metropolitan areas.⁷

Only one of these seven centres serves an area where Francophones are in the majority: the *Moi j'apprends* centre, in Russell County, a part of eastern Ontario where Francophones account for 62.5% of the total population.⁸ Two other centres serve areas where Francophones represent a sizeable minority: the Centre d'alphabétisation ALEC du Nipissing, in the District of

Nipissing, with a 27% Francophone population,⁹ and the CAFO, serving the City of Ottawa, with a 16.3% Francophone population.¹⁰ The four other centres serve areas where Francophones represent a very small minority: ABC Communautaire (3.9%¹¹), La Route du Savoir (3.4%¹²), Alpha Huronie (3%¹³), and Le Collège du savoir (1.7%¹⁴).



Table 1. Literacy centres that participated in this study and geographic areas that they serve

Centre	Area
ABC Communautaire	Regional Municipality of Niagara
Alpha Huronie	Simcoe County
Le Centre d'alphabétisation ALEC du Nipissing	District of Nipissing
Le Centre d'apprentissage et de formation d'Ottawa (CAFO)	City of Ottawa
Le Collège du Savoir	Regional Municipality of Peel, Regional Municipality of Halton, and Dufferin County
Moi j'apprends	Russell County
La Route du Savoir	Kingston Region

Table 2. Proportion of Francophones in areas served by the participating literacy centres

	Metropolitan Areas	Non-Metropolitan Area
10 % or less	Le Collège du Savoir La Route du Savoir ABC Communautaire	Alpha Huronie
10-20 %	Le Centre d'apprentissage et de formation d'Ottawa (CAFO)	
20-30 %		Le Centre d'alphabétisation ALEC du Nipissing
30-40 %		
40-50 %		
Over 50 %		Moi j'apprends

1.2 Program Models Adopted by Participating Literacy Centres

A wide range of models are available for French-language family literacy programs,¹⁵ and any centre that plans to deliver such a program must select a model that suits its target clientele. Some programs target parents of preschool-age children, while others target parents of school-age children. In some programs, both parents and children participate directly, while in others, only the parents participate directly, and the children participate indirectly.¹⁶

Table 3 shows the program models adopted by the seven literacy centres that participated in the present study.

Several of the centres in this study based their family literacy programs on proven successful models that define clear objectives and even provide trainer’s manuals. The names of these models are: *Des livres dans mon baluchon* (books in my bundle), *Grandir avec mon enfant* (growing with my child), and *Lire et écrire à la maison* (reading and writing at home). Another centre decided to develop its own

program, *J’ai du plaisir à grandir avec mon enfant* (I have fun growing with my child), which drew on elements of both *Des livres dans mon baluchon* and *Grandir avec mon enfant*. Lastly, the Alpha Huronie centre gave its program director free rein to create her own program, entitled *Je m’éveille avec mon enfant* (I awaken with my child). All of these models have one feature in common: they consist of eight to ten workshops.

Six of the seven centres aimed their programs at parents of preschool-age children, while the seventh opted to target parents of children in Grade 1. As the director of this last centre explained: “Our parents need strategies for passing information on to their children. They have forgotten how a learning process works, so we show them how.”¹⁷ Three of the centres decided not to have the children participate in the programs directly and to reach them through their parents instead. Some of the reasons that these centres cited for this decision were as follows:

- the children are too young;
- we don’t have the facilities to accommodate them;
- we wanted to give parents the chance to learn together, without their children around;

- the model that we chose did not include any direct intervention with the children.

Overview of program models and their objectives

Des livres dans mon baluchon

Des livres dans mon baluchon is a program model developed by the La Route du Savoir centre in Kingston, for Franco-Ontarians living in minority settings. This model is designed to develop the linguistic, cognitive, and affective abilities of parents and their children. It has many objectives. Here are a few of them.

Parent-focused objectives

- provide parents with information and cultural activities to increase their personal knowledge;
- strengthen parents’ feeling of belonging to their language community;
- help parents to value their culture of origin and, as their children’s first teachers, to pass it on to their children;
- inform parents about the community resources available to them locally, regionally, and provincially.

Table 3. Program models adopted by the participating literacy centres

	Name of Model	Age of Children Targeted	Form of Participation
ABC Communautaire	<i>Des livres dans mon baluchon</i>	Preschool age	Direct: parents & children
Alpha Huronie	<i>Je m’éveille avec mon enfant</i>	Preschool age	Direct : parents Indirect : children
Le Centre d’alphabétisation ALEC du Nipissing	<i>J’ai du plaisir à grandir avec mon enfant</i>	Preschool age	Direct: parents & children
Le Centre d’apprentissage et de formation d’Ottawa (CAFO)	<i>Grandir avec mon enfant</i>	Preschool age	Direct : parents Indirect : children
Le Collège du Savoir	<i>Grandir avec mon enfant</i>	Preschool age	Direct: parents & children
Moi j’apprends	St-Pascal : <i>Lire et écrire à la maison</i>	School age	Direct: parents & children
	Limoges : <i>Lire et écrire à la maison</i>	School age	Direct: parents & children
	Casselman : <i>Grandir avec mon enfant</i>	Preschool age	Direct : parents Indirect : children
La Route du Savoir	<i>Des livres dans mon baluchon</i>	Preschool age	Direct: parents & children



Child-focused objectives

- provide children with a structured environment that facilitates their socialization in French and prepares them for school;
- open children up to the world around them through words, play, and interaction;
- get children interested in all kinds of books and get them into the habit of reading every day;
- help children to develop literacy more quickly at an early age.¹⁸

Grandir avec mon enfant

The Grandir avec mon enfant model works directly with parents of preschool-age and school-age children and is a French-language adaptation of a model called Literacy and Parenting Skills. It is aimed at Francophones (especially those living in minority settings) who want to improve their parenting skills and their French reading and writing skills and to support their children's learning process. A Franco-Albertan organization called Éduk is in charge of the implementation of this model and the provision of training for people who wish to offer it.

This model consists of 10 modules that deal with a variety of subjects, including self-esteem, active listening, and positive discipline. It is designed to encourage parents:

- to love and value themselves;
- to become more aware of their role as parents;
- to take a positive attitude toward learning and to understand that people continue to learn throughout their lives;
- to be proud of their French language and culture;
- to do more reading and writing.¹⁹

Lire et écrire à la maison

Few family literacy models are designed for parents of children in their first years of school, yet "it is precisely at this stage of children's school paths that teachers seek the most support from parents as partners in helping their children to learn written language".²⁰ Studies have shown that children's success in Grade 1 is decisive for the rest of their school paths and for the retention in French-language schools of those children who are entitled to attend them. Nearly half of all children who repeat Grade 1 do not complete secondary school.²¹ An analysis reveals that in minority language settings, the transition from Grade 1 to Grade 2 is one of the three times when French-language schools lose the most students.²² A recent study on perceptions of literacy among learners in New Brunswick confirms that "adults with limited reading and writing skills received relatively little stimulation to become more literate".²³

Lire et écrire à la maison is a program model that was developed in Quebec to address these various problems. This model encourages learning to read and write. It targets parents who have children in Grade 1 and who want to acquire practical, effective tools for supporting their children's learning efforts. The objectives of this model are as follows:

- to involve parents, many of whom have limited literacy skills themselves, in developing the habits necessary for learning to read, write, and do arithmetic, and to encourage them so that these abilities become part of daily family life;
- to motivate parents to take simple steps to provide their children with high-quality support.

In this program, parents are taught educational activities and games

that will help their children to develop strategies for learning to read and write—strategies that they can then take with them into the classroom, because they address the same objectives.²⁴

Je m'éveille avec mon enfant

The best way for parents to pass their own enjoyment of reading on to their children is through the small gestures that they make and the simple steps that they take in everyday life. Parents serve as role models for their children, who imitate their behaviours and activities. For this reason, any literacy-related activities that parents engage in will encourage the development of reading and writing skills in their children.

This is the premise on which the literacy trainer at the Alpha Huronie French-language literacy centre developed a program called Je m'éveille avec mon enfant (I awaken with my child). This program targets parents of children aged 0 to 6. It draws on various books about awakening children's written language skills (for example, *Conscience phonologique*, *L'apprenti lecteur* and *Une phrase à la fois*) as well as on three of the program models adopted by other centres in this study (*Grandir avec mon enfant*, *Des livres dans mon baluchon*, and *Lire et écrire à la maison*).

The Je m'éveille avec mon enfant program works directly with parents but only indirectly with their children, who do not attend the workshops. This program was developed to suit the Francophone clientele in the Alpha Huronie centre's service area, Simcoe County: parents who are educated but have trouble in speaking, reading, and writing French, and whose children are attending French-language schools. These parents' limited knowledge



of French makes it difficult for them to support their children's formal learning efforts. According to the literacy trainer who developed this program, *Je m'éveille avec mon enfant* enriches parents' own French vocabulary while teaching them the steps that their children must follow to learn to read and write French and providing these parents with tools that they can use at home, such as books and games in French. This program's main objective



is to teach parents how to interact with their children so as to give them a love of learning, and its primary focus is on helping children learn how to read.

1.3 Recruitment and Participation of Families

As **Table 4** shows, the seven literacy centres recruited families for their programs mainly in French-language schools and daycares, as well as among clients who were already visiting these centres. The ABC Communautaire centre primarily recruited families among the clients of its partner agency, the Francophone Community Health Centre for the Hamilton and the Niagara Regions, which has a service point in Welland.

One interesting detail: these programs were advertised to the communities on bulletin boards, in local newspapers, and at libraries, but these advertisements accounted for less than 10% of the families ultimately recruited. Also, because several of these centres had never previously offered the program that they were going to deliver under this study, word-of-mouth did not have much impact on recruitment either.

Table 5 shows, for each literacy centre, the total number of parents who participated in the family literacy program, the total number of children who were involved (directly or indirectly), and the total number of families involved. The figures are substantial: 62 parents, 93 children, and 52 families.

Table 4. How families were recruited for the family literacy programs

	Number	%
By someone who had already participated in the program	–	–
By a friend	5	11.6
Through an advertisement	4	9.3
At the school or daycare that their child attends	17	39.5
Other (literacy centre, health centre, etc.)	17	39.5
Total	43	100.0

Table 5. Number of parents, children, and families involved in the family literacy programs²⁵

	Number of parents participating	Number of children involved	Number of families
ABC Communautaire	15	23	12
Alpha Huronie	3	7	3
Le Centre d'alphabétisation ALEC du Nipissing	3	6	3
Le Centre d'apprentissage et de formation d'Ottawa (CAFO)	8	18	8
Le Collège du Savoir	7	9	6
Moi j'apprends			
St-Pascal	11	8	6
Limoges	7	8	6
Casselman	5	8	5
La Route du Savoir	3	6	3
Total	62	93	52



The participation rate for these programs and this study proved excellent: over 80% of the families who signed up for these programs not only completed them but also agreed to answer the questionnaires and to be interviewed for this study (**Table 6**). No families who participated in the programs refused to participate in the study, but to ensure that the data would be meaningful, we excluded any families who had missed three or more of the workshops in their programs.

1.4 Parents' Reasons for Participating: "For My Child"

"I want my children to achieve real success at school and in their lives." (A parent)

To understand parents' reasons for participating in these literacy programs and to determine which reasons they considered most important, we asked them to assign an importance rating to a number of specific reasons for their participation.

As **Table 7** shows, the parents rated as very important any reasons related to learning things that would help their children to achieve greater success, or stimulate their development, or improve their prospects for a good life.

Since the parents decided to attend the program workshops for their children first and foremost, it is

not surprising that they attributed less importance to reasons that involved learning on their own part—for example, to improve their own French reading and writing skills, to learn how to use a library, or to improve their own self-confidence.

Parents were also allowed to write in any reasons for attending these programs that they considered very important but that did not appear in the list we had asked them to rate. These "write-in" reasons included: "To give my children a good education," "To improve the quality of family activities", "To learn methods of affecting my child's behaviour," and "To communicate better with my children."

Table 6. Number of families participating in the programs and in this study

	Total of families	Families Participating in Study	
		Number	%
ABC Communautaire	12	8	66.6
Alpha Huronie	3	3	100.0
Le Centre d'alphabetisation ALEC du Nipissing	3	2	66.6
Le Centre d'apprentissage et de formation d'Ottawa (CAFO)	8	6	75.0
Le Collège du Savoir	6	5	83.3
Moi j'apprends			
St-Pascal	6	6	100.0
Limoges	6	6	100.0
Casselman	5	4	80.0
La Route du Savoir	3	3	100.0
Total	52	43	82.6

Table 7. Parents' main reasons for participating in the family literacy programs

	Not important	Important	Very important
To give my children better prospects for the future		1.9	98.1
To help my children's development		1.9	98.1
To learn how to give my children a love of learning		9.6	90.4
To learn how to get my children interested in reading	3.8	9.6	86.5
To learn how to help my children do their homework	9.6	3.8	86.5
To improve my own reading and writing skills	7.7	11.5	75.0
To learn how to read stories to my children	3.8	23.1	73.1
To improve my self-confidence	9.6	26.9	63.5
To learn how to use the library	17.3	21.2	61.5
Total number of families: 52			



1.5 Characteristics of Participating Families

A total of 62 parents—52 women and 10 men—registered for the family literacy programs (**Table 8**). Thus there were five times more mothers than fathers.

We also collected data on various characteristics of the parents who participated in this study.²⁶ As regards age, the highest percentage of parents were in age range 31 to 35, but there were also a few grandparents who participated with their granddaughters or grandsons (**Table 9**). As regards educational attainment, 32.5% of the parents had not completed secondary school, 11.6% had their secondary school diploma, 34.8% had

attended college, and slightly over 20% had attended university (**Table 10**). (Note that several of the parents who had less than a Grade 9 education were immigrants who had arrived in Canada only recently.)

As regards these parents' labour market activity, 39.5% of them were in the labour market, and most of them worked in the fields of administration, information systems, mechanics, services, and transportation. Slightly more than one-third of the parents (14 women and 1 man) were at home with their children, while 25.6% were in school (mostly to obtain their Ontario High School Equivalency Certificate).

Given that the families' use of language is central to this study,

we also gathered data on the parents' mother tongue. **Table 11** shows that French was the mother tongue of the vast majority of the parents who completed the questionnaire (62.7%) as well as of their partners (60.7%). We were thus dealing with a large number of endogamous couples. Hence we were not surprised to learn that French was the language spoken most often at home by the majority of the participating families (55.8%). The proportion of parents for whom French was the language that they spoke most often with their children was even higher: 26 out of 43 or 60.4%.

English was the primary language for 7 of the families, and 5 parents admitted that they spoke to their children in English often. Eight

Table 8. Distribution of participating parents by centre and gender

	Women	Men	Total
ABC Communautaire	12	3	15
Alpha Huronie	3		3
Le Centre d'alphabétisation ALEC du Nipissing	3		3
Le Centre d'apprentissage et de formation d'Ottawa (CAFO)	8		8
Le Collège du Savoir	7		7
Moi j'apprends			
St-Pascal	6	5	11
Limoges	6	1	7
Casselman	5		5
La Route du Savoir	2	1	3
Total	52	10	62

Table 9. Distribution of participating parents by age

	Number	%
Less than 20	1	2.3
20-25	8	18.6
26-30	6	13.9
31-35	17	39.5
36-40	6	13.9
Over 40	5	11.6
Total	43	100.0

Table 10. Distribution of participating parents by educational attainment

	Number	%
Less than Grade 9	5	11.6
Grade 9 to 12 (no diploma)	9	20.9
Secondary school diploma	5	11.6
College studies	15	34.8
University studies	9	20.9
Total	43	100.0



of the parents' mother tongue was neither French nor English, which suggests that French was their second or even their third language.

Table 11 shows that 15 parents provided no response for "partners' mother tongue"; thus, about one-third of the families were headed by single parents (all women) who were raising their children on their own.

To find out more about the parents' written and oral language skills, we asked the literacy trainers to assess them on the basis of the questionnaire that the parents

had completed at the start of the program and the trainers' own observations and expertise.

Table 12 shows the results of these assessments. According to the literacy trainers, more than 65% of the parents had French reading and writing skills that were good or adequate, while 25% had limited French reading and writing skills, and almost 10% experienced a great deal of difficulty in reading and writing French. The vast majority of the parents had a good level of spoken French and spoke mainly in French at the workshops, while three of the parents had so much difficulty in expressing themselves in French

that their interviews had to be conducted in English.



Table 11. Language characteristics of participating parents

	Mother Tongue		Partner's Mother Tongue		Language Spoken Most Often at Home		Language Spoken Most Often with Children	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
French	27	62.7	17	60.7	24	55.8	26	60.4
English	7	16.2	8	28.6	7	16.2	5	11.6
Both	1	2.3	1	3.5	7	16.2	8	18.6
Other	8	18.6	2	7.2	5	11.6	4	9.3
N/A			15 ²⁷	-				
Total	43	100.0	43	100.0	43	100.0	43	100.0

Table 12. Literacy trainers' assessments of French reading, writing, and speaking skills of participating parents

	Number	%
French reading and writing skills		
Good	13	30.2
Adequate	15	34.9
Limited	11	25.6
Great difficulty	4	9.3
Total	43	100.0
Level and use of spoken French		
Very good; they always speak French with me and among themselves.	26	60.5
Good; they almost always speak French with me and among themselves.	6	14.0
Fairly good; they speak to me in French, but sometimes speak English among themselves.	6	14.0
Not very good; they have difficulty in expressing themselves in French.	2	4.7
Very limited; they cannot manage in French.	3	7.0
Total	43	100.0



Part 2. CHANGES IN THE FAMILIES AFTER THE PROGRAMS

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact that participating in the French-language family literacy programs had on 43 Francophone families living in minority settings in Ontario. To determine how often the parents in these families engaged in literacy-related activities (both on their own and with their children), and in what language or languages they did so, we asked them a set of 18 questions when they first signed up for these programs, then asked them the same questions again after they had completed these programs. We thus hoped to determine whether these parents had altered their habits with regard to literacy activities and their use of French. We also interviewed the parents, to get their own accounts of the changes that had occurred in themselves and their children.

2.1 Literacy-Related Activities and Use of French and English

Both parents and children can engage in many activities that promote language development in children and awaken their interest in the written word. **Table 13** shows that many of the parents were already pursuing such literacy-related activities frequently even before they participated in the family literacy programs. But the parents' responses to the same questions after they had completed these programs showed that a higher percentage of them now pursued such activities, as well as a higher percentage did so in French.

As regards the proportion of parents who engaged in these activities, this table shows that after the parents had completed the programs:

- the percentage who watched films, videotapes, or DVDs rose to 51.1% from 39.6%;
- the percentage who read newspapers, magazines, or comic strips rose to 60.4% from 44.2%;

- the percentage who wrote short messages or grocery lists rose to 74.4% from 67.5%.

Use of French had also increased by the end of the programs:

- 30.3% of parents watched television in French after completing the programs, compared with 23.3% before completing the programs;
- 25.6% watched films, videotapes, or DVDs in French after completing the programs, compared with 20.9% before;
- 51.2% read books in French after completing the programs, compared with 34.9% before.



Table 13. Percentages of parents who engaged in literacy-related activities, and languages in which they did so, before and after participating in the family literacy programs

	Before the Programs (%)				After the Programs (%)			
	Often ²⁸	In French ²⁹	In French and English	English ³⁰	Often	In French	In French and English	English
Watching television	67.5	23.3	34.9	41.9	62.8	30.3	34.9	34.9
Listening to the radio	51.2	11.6	16.3	48.8	51.2	16.3	11.6	51.2
Watching films, videotapes, or DVDs	39.6	20.9	14	34.9	51.1	25.6	16.3	39.6
Looking at or reading newspapers, magazines, or comic strips	44.2	25.6	18.6	34.9	60.4	25.6	18.6	37.3
Writing short messages or grocery lists	67.5	41.9	20.9	30.3	74.4	39.6	9.3	32.6
Looking at or reading books	67.4	34.9	27.9	16.3	69.8	51.2	9.3	25.6
Reading instructions/recipes	25.6	18.6	4.7	25.6	27.9	23.2	11.6	11.7
Number of parents: 43								



Table 14 shows that by the time the programs were completed, there were also substantial increases in the percentages of parents who engaged in literacy-related activities often with their children, as well as in the percentages who did so in French.

This table shows the following increases in the percentages of parents who engaged in literacy-related activities with their children, from the start of the program to the end:

- sports activities: increase to 62.8% from 32.6%;
- craft projects: to 67.5% from 51.1%;
- talking with their children about the things that interested them: to 93% from 83.7%;
- helping their children with their homework: to 79.1% from 62.8%.

The use of French also increased very substantially in all categories:

- 69.8% of parents read with their children in French after completing the programs, compared with 58.1% before completing them;
- 67.5% talked with their children about the things that interested

them in French after completing the programs, compared with 55.9% before completing them;

- 72.1% spoke French while helping their children with their homework after completing the programs, compared with 58.2% before completing them.

2.2 Impact of Programs on Learning

"I have more ideas for things to do with my son." (A parent)

"I learned a lot of things that I didn't know before. Little details that are very important for raising your kids right." (A parent)

"We saw how the children became more self-assured and self-confident from the first week to the last, how they improved in terms of reading and especially in terms of listening and concentrating." (A trainer)

The interviews that we conducted with the parents at the end of their programs showed that these programs had had a major impact on learning by both the parents and their children.

Regardless of which program they had participated in, all of the parents said that they had learned strategies that they had applied in their daily lives:

- They had changed their ways of interacting with their children.
- They felt better equipped and more confident in their role as parents.
- They were more aware that children are always learning.
- They had a better grasp of the steps that children must go through to learn to read.
- They had learned how to choose books suited to their children's learning level.
- They had learned how to stimulate their children through literacy-related activities.
- They had a better understanding of how to communicate effectively with their children.
- They now took the time to read a bit every day with their children and even on their own, as evidenced by the following comment from one parent: "The workshops gave me a taste for reading. When you become a parent, you don't have any time left for yourself. Now I try to make some time for myself, just to read."

Table 14. Percentages of parents who engaged in literacy-related activities with their children, and languages in which they did so, before and after participating in the family literacy programs

	Before the Programs (%)				After the Programs (%)			
	Often	In French	In French and English	English	Often	In French	In French and English	English
Watching television with my child	72.1	23.3	34.9	39.5	76.8	30.2	34.9	32.6
Reading or looking at books with my child	90.7	58.1	27.9	11.6	95.3	69.8	20.9	7.0
Practicing a sport with my child	32.6	30.2	9.3	9.3	62.8	48.8	16.3	13.9
Doing craft projects with my child	51.1	44.2	16.3	9.4	67.5	51.2	16.3	11.6
Talking with my child about the things that interest him or her	83.7	55.9	14.0	18.6	93.0	67.5	14.0	11.6
Helping my child to do his or her homework	62.8	58.2	11.6	2.3	79.1	72.1	7.0	2.3
Number of parents: 43								



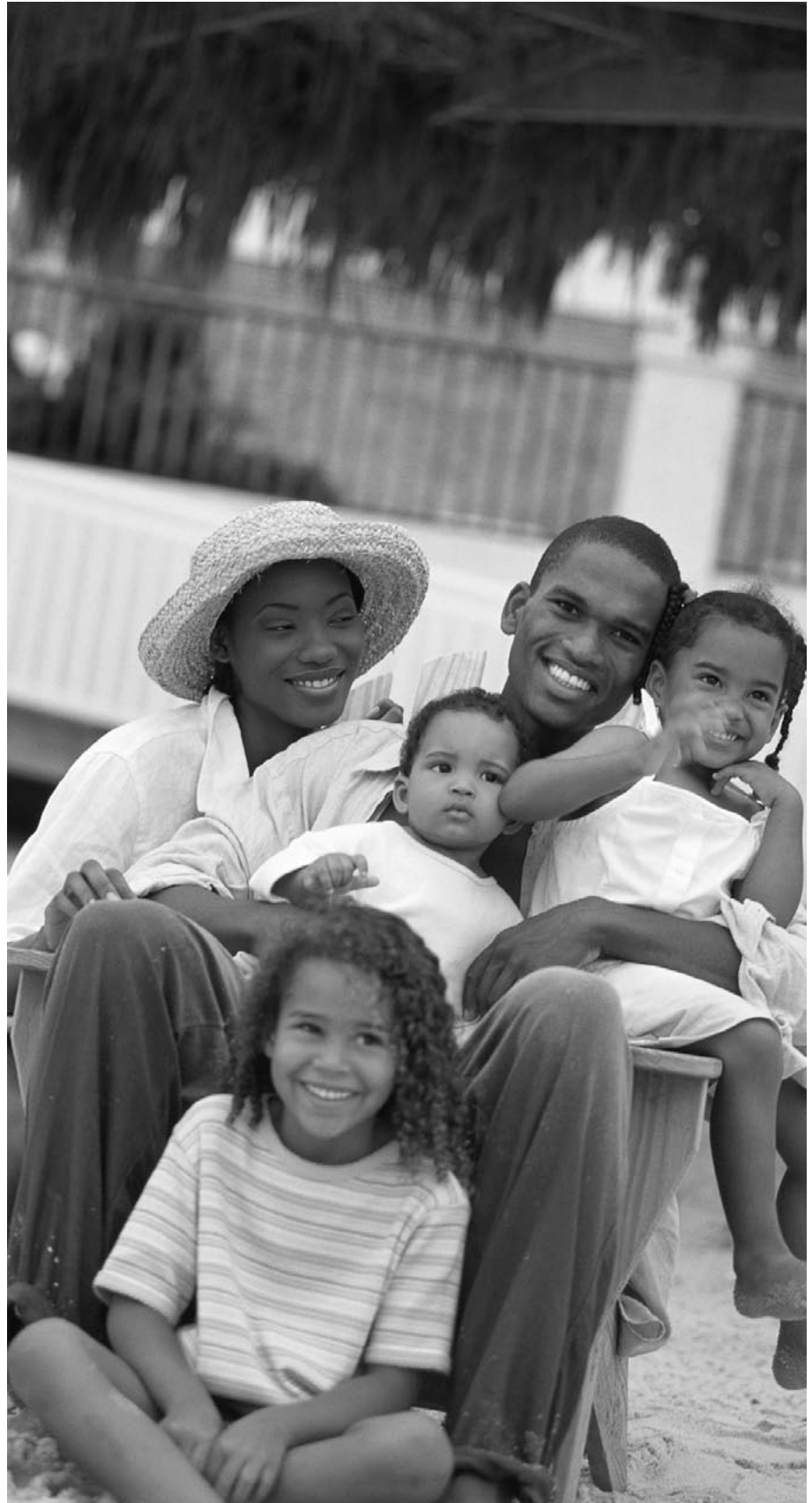
As regards their use of French, the parents interviewed said that now:

- They make a greater effort to speak correct French and to avoid anglicisms (“I pay more attention to my French now, because I know that my daughter is listening to me and imitating me.”).
- They have a better knowledge of the language, which makes them more confident in their skills.
- They have a better understanding of the importance of using French at home and doing more activities in French.

One parent said that he now tries “to watch more French programs on television”.

Not all of the things that the parents learned involved the use of the French language. Some parents also said that they had learned a lot about Francophone culture: “I didn’t know any Francophone singers, even though I’m Francophone!”

Our research strongly indicates that these changes in attitudes and behaviours were not limited to the parents but also occurred in their children, and especially the children who had participated in program workshops directly. Both their parents and the literacy trainers observed these changes. The youngest children now had more confidence in themselves, had developed their motor skills, and had learned nursery rhymes, songs, and games. “The youngest child in the workshop, who is two years old, talks a lot more than before. He has more self-confidence, and he’s less shy and more sociable with the other children.” In the older children, the main changes were improved behaviour (“My sons don’t quarrel so much.”) and improved reading skills (“My daughter is better at sounding out the syllables and can figure out a lot more words.”)



Part 3. EVALUATIONS OF PROGRAMS

To evaluate the family literacy programs delivered by the seven Ontario French-language literacy centres that participated in this study, we questioned all of the adults involved - the parents, the literacy trainers, and the directors of the centres. All of these people were able to express themselves freely on all aspects of the various programs.

3.1 Evaluations by Parents

"My daughter was always very eager to get to the workshops on Mondays. They became one of her favourite activities." (A parent)

"I liked learning how to help my child with his reading, and the best ways to encourage him." (A parent)

"The program showed me that there are many ways to interact with children and that I was already doing a lot of things well." (A parent)

The individual interviews with the parents after they had completed their family literacy programs showed that their evaluation of these programs was highly positive. Regardless of which program parents were involved in, the vast majority of them said that they were delighted with the activities, the various things they learned, and the resources that were made available to them.

The parents especially appreciated those programs in which the children were involved. Many parents said that they had signed up for these programs so that their children could have stimulating

experiences with other children, in French. According to these parents, the things that their children learned in these programs made them well prepared to learn once they started school. The parents of children who were already attending school added that their children had benefited greatly from the programs and that what their children had learned in these programs had helped them a great deal in school: "The teacher has told me that my daughter is better at reading and does a better job of forming her sentences."; "My child got a very good mark in reading. His teacher tells me that his reading is more fluent now."

Including the children in the workshops along with their parents also had an effect on the parents' attendance. When the children participate, it encourages their parents to attend regularly, as the following comment from one mother illustrates: "My daughter was so enthusiastic about the program that it motivated me to go to the workshop even when I was tired or when there was a snowstorm."

Some of the literacy centres offered literacy kits that the parents could take home from the workshop each week, and these proved to be a big success. They contained games, books, and ideas for craft projects, so that the parents could pursue literacy-related activities with their children in French at home. These kits were greatly appreciated by low-income families and by families living in areas where Francophones are a very small minority and French-language materials are scarce.

The aspect of the programs that the parents enjoyed the most was the opportunity to exchange ideas with other parents: "Thanks to the

workshops, I realize now that I am not alone, and I like getting together with other parents to discuss our problems and concerns."; "I like talking about what each of the mothers is doing. It gives me some ideas and reassures me to see that I am not the only mother who has discipline problems with her child." As these statements show, the parents liked meeting and discussing their problems with other parents who were often in the same situation. These discussion sessions broke down the feelings of isolation that some parents experience.

Many of the parents added that they would have liked it if the programs had lasted longer, so that they could have gotten the maximum benefit from the learning experiences and resources that these programs provided and from these special opportunities to spend time doing something important in French. It is therefore no surprise that many parents said that they would happily sign up for another family literacy program in the future.

3.2 Evaluations by Literacy Trainers and Literacy Centre Directors

"Judging from the comments that I've received from the parents, I think that they are satisfied with their experience, and I am too!" (A literacy trainer)

Like the parents, the literacy trainers and literacy centre directors reported that they were satisfied with this experience in family literacy, the first for many of them. The comments that they had received from the parents were highly positive: "The mothers told me that this program was tailored to them and really dealt with their concerns."



All of the literacy trainers and literacy centre directors without exception observed major changes both in the parents and in the children who participated in their programs. These literacy workers said that the parents really benefited from the programs; at the end, they were better equipped to play their role as their children's first teachers and were more confident about their ability to do so. The literacy workers also observed a marked improvement in the French-language skills of many of the parents, especially those who had participated in structured programs with clearly defined objectives: "The mothers express themselves in French more and have more confidence in their ability to speak the language."

Many of the literacy trainers and directors also saw this pilot project as a learning experience for themselves. They said it gave them a better sense of what works and what doesn't work in family literacy programs. Two things that disappointed them somewhat: the limited number of Francophone families who participated in the programs, and spotty attendance among those who did. All of the centres acknowledged having experienced problems in recruiting Francophone families for their programs, because of lack of interest among these families, lack of support from the Francophone community (and particularly from the local schools, in some cases), and problems in finding days and times that suited everyone. The poor attendance by the families that did sign up for the programs was attributable to various causes, including the parents' busy schedules, illness, problems in getting childcare, and simple lack of interest.

In minority-language settings, recruiting Francophone families to participate in family literacy programs is almost always a considerable challenge, but the challenge of recruiting qualified Francophones to lead these workshops was almost insurmountable for some of the centres. Some centres had to use people who were actually trained to work with children such as schoolteachers or early childhood educators, rather than adult-education specialists.

The centres whose workshops for this first cohort of families included the parents but not the children told us that they are going to try to find a way to include children in their programs for the next cohort, to solve the childcare problem. In addition to reducing absenteeism, having the children attend along with their parents should increase the programs' impact on literacy in both generations.

As regards partnerships, those centres that offered their programs jointly with other agencies had to deal with certain problems. For example, one centre reported that it had lost control over several aspects of its program, because each partner's tasks and responsibilities had not been clearly defined.

That said, all is certainly not lost, as the director of one centre explained: "I am a bit disappointed at how few families participated, but we learned a lot of things that will be useful for next time." This pilot experiment with the first cohort of families helped to identify certain challenges that will have to be met for the next series of workshops; it also confirmed what the winning conditions are for such workshops and let us measure the positive impact of family literacy.



Part 4. FINDINGS FOR COHORT 1

The following sections present our major findings from this pilot experiment with the first cohort of families, including the factors for success and the winning conditions that need to be established for the next cohorts.

4.1 Undeniable Benefits of Programs

This first phase of our study on the impact of French-language family literacy programs on Francophone families in linguistic minority settings in Ontario showed that these programs produced major changes in these families in two respects: their learning and their use of French, and the parents' parenting skills. More specifically, the parents who participated in these programs:

- now understand the importance of spending time with their children every day;
- have become aware that any activity can be a learning activity;
- make an effort to speak correct French;
- have a better knowledge of the French language and more confidence in their ability to communicate in French;
- better understand the importance of using French;
- engage in more activities with their children, and do so in French more often;
- say they are better equipped to play their role as parents;
- have more ideas for activities that they can do with their children;

- apply the strategies that they learned in the programs;
- try to be good models for their children.

Also worth noting is that these programs reached various kinds of families who in many cases would otherwise have had difficulty in accessing any family literacy. These programs were designed to build on the strengths of parents who have their children's success at heart. Here are some examples of the kinds of families whom these programs reached:

- immigrant families for whom these programs facilitated integration into Canadian society;
- families in rural areas, who generally have access to fewer resources than families in urban areas;
- single-parent families, in which one parent faces the major challenge of raising children alone;
- families in which the parents themselves have limited reading skills and therefore find it challenging to give their children a love of reading and to equip them to succeed in school;
- extended families, in which there are grandparents who contribute to intergenerational literacy.

4.2 Importance of Choosing a Suitable Program Model

The success of any family literacy program depends on many factors, of course, but this study highlighted the importance of the program model chosen. In this study, those centres that chose a structured model with clearly defined objectives and a proven instructor's manual achieved better results. This does not mean that existing models cannot be modified to meet the needs of

particular groups of clients. For example, one of the centres in this study took *Grandir avec mon enfant*—a model designed for Francophones, and particularly those living in minority settings—and adapted it for a multicultural group of clients who had arrived in Canada recently, had limited literacy skills, and did not fully master the French language. The centre overcame these challenges by placing a heavy emphasis on oral communication, by replacing local references with international references, and by being open to the cultural differences among all the participating parents.

In addition, in selecting a program model, a centre should strive for a certain degree of consistency between the model's objectives and the public that the program is going to serve. For example, the program *Des livres dans mon baluchon* emphasizes raising awareness of French linguistic-minority issues and the importance of French, so it is ideally suited to Francophone families living in communities with Anglophone majorities. The program *Grandir avec mon enfant*, on the other hand, focuses more on enhancing self-esteem, parenting skills, and reading and writing skills, so it is highly suitable for families for whom these are important goals.

Regardless of what model a family literacy program adopts, it will have far more impact on parents, and especially on children, if the entire family participates. As one of the workshop leaders stated: "We are all learners...we can always find ways to improve ourselves." Also, as mentioned earlier, there are far fewer problems with parents' attendance if the children can attend as well. Those centres that offered



programs in which the children also attended experienced fewer problems with absenteeism. We therefore recommend that a child-participation component be incorporated into the programs of those centres that do not already include one.

4.3 Strategies for Recruiting the Desired Clientele

This study showed that it is essential to develop more active recruitment strategies suited to the target clientele. If a program targets preschool-age children, for example, recruitment should be done primarily through French-language daycares, community health centres, early childhood centres, family services centres, and municipal libraries. To reach school-age children, recruitment strategies should include negotiations with school boards and agreements with administrators and teachers at the schools whose students may participate in the programs, because our research shows that partnerships also represent a key success factor for recruitment.

The more visibility that French-language literacy centres achieve in Francophone communities, and the more that Francophones recognize the important contribution that these centres make, the more that recruitment problems will become ancient history. However, this study showed that it is best to avoid broad-based advertising (on bulletin boards, in local newspapers, etc.), because it can be expensive and does not produce the desired results. Fewer than 10% of the parents who participated in the programs analyzed in this study were recruited through advertisements. It appears that better recruitment results are achieved through personal contact at the literacy centres themselves or at schools and daycare centres.

4.4 Importance of Using Qualified Literacy Trainers

Sometimes a centre has to recruit not only the clients who will participate in its family literacy program but also a qualified person to lead it. Obviously, it is not always easy or even possible to find that rare commodity, a person with the training, experience, and personal qualities needed for this job. But we wish to stress the importance of choosing people who are qualified specifically in providing literacy for families, and not just for adults. Ideally, all trainers delivering French-language family literacy programs to Francophone families in minority settings should have completed a basic program on this subject as well as the training specific to the program that they are going to teach.

4.5 Targeting Programs at Francophone Families

To ensure that the family literacy workshops take place in French and benefit Francophone families, it is essential to adopt criteria for selecting the parents who will participate. In this study, it had initially been agreed that the centres would accept all parents who applied, so long as they had enough basic knowledge of French to be able to communicate and follow the workshop activities without causing the rest of the group to suffer. In many communities, the opportunities to socialize and learn in French are very limited. Family literacy workshops presented in French thus provide very special opportunities to interact and learn in a French-speaking environment. Hence the following question needs to be addressed with regard to parents who have Francophone backgrounds but have lost their French: who should take responsibility for providing support to such families who need to

“refrancise” themselves so that they can participate in programs in French and help their children to learn successfully if they attend French-language schools?

4.6 Need for a Structured Schedule

All of the centres that participated in this project faced scheduling challenges. Should the workshops be given during the week, or on weekends; in the morning, or the evening? It is not always possible to set a schedule that suits all of the families, but it is essential to make the effort to consult the parents on this matter. The following comment from one of the centre directors sums up the situation: “It was impossible to satisfy everyone, so I finally had to make a decision and choose the schedule that suited the largest number of people.”

Once a time and day has been set, insofar as possible, it should not be altered, because any changes will have a significant impact on attendance. The same is true for the number of weeks of workshops to be offered. Openness and flexibility are highly desirable qualities associated with community activities, but it is indispensable to put a structure in place as regards the time and day and the number of weeks that the workshops are offered.

4.7 Providing Family Literacy Take-Home Kits

Some literacy- programs have found that giving participants literacy kits to take home with them can be a winning strategy. Because some families who participate in such programs have limited financial



means, and because French-language educational resources can be so scarce in minority settings in any case, the families really appreciate these kits. They contain books, games, ideas for craft projects, and other resources for families. They help to build a better bridge between the workshops and the home, and they encourage parents to do activities with their children. As one of the trainers put it: "If a parent goes home with her hands empty, it would be like there was no follow-up to the program." Hence, the programs examined in this study that do not already provide such kits might be well advised to develop them.

4.8 Involving Other Francophone Community Agencies

It is an excellent idea for centres that want to offer French-language family literacy programs to partner with other Francophone community agencies in their areas. Partnerships can help to raise the literacy centres' profiles while facilitating sharing of resources such as meeting rooms and expertise. Partnerships can also help to create a support network for Francophone families. It is worthwhile, however, to prepare clear, written agreements specifying the roles and responsibilities of each of the partners. Such agreements can prevent duplication of effort and loss of control over decision-making, both of which can negatively affect program quality.

Many of the centres involved in this study also obtained free services and gifts from various agencies in their communities. Making effective use of the local media is yet another winning strategy.

4.9 Next Steps in This Study

This report deals with the first cohort of families who participated in the first set of family literacy programs provided by the seven literacy centres that are participating in this study. In total, five cohorts of families will be participating in these programs over a period of five years. The ongoing purpose of this study will be to evaluate the changes observed in literacy habits and use of French among the parents and children who participate in these programs. Our preliminary evaluation of the second cohort shows increased participation by Francophone families. Our next interim report will deal with the second and third cohorts and will be published in 2006. We will evaluate the fifth and final cohort in winter 2007, and we will publish our final report in 2008.



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END NOTES

- ¹ Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français, 2005a, on-line: http://fcaf.net/cote_alphafamiliale/alpha_fam_index.htm
- ² Government of Canada (2003). *Action Plan for Official Languages*, p. 45.
- ³ Adapted from the definition given by D. Masny, 2000.
- ⁴ Y. Laberge and S. Roy, 2004.
- ⁵ The concept of literacy learning encompasses all activities that lead to learning to read and write, including those that take place outside of school and that do not involve traditional approaches to literacy (translated from FCAF, 2005b).
- ⁶ It is important to note, however, that the late arrival of the funding from the National Literacy Secretariat affected delivery of these family literacy programs and that we were therefore able to evaluate only one cohort, instead of two, in fiscal year 2004-2005.
- ⁷ A census agglomeration is regarded as a census metropolitan area if it has a total population of at least 100 000 and an urban core with a population of at least 50 000 (Statistics Canada, 2003).
- ⁸ S. LeTouzé, *Les Francophones du comté de Russell (Ontario)* 2004, p. 4.
- ⁹ F. Bertrand, *Les Francophones du district du Nipissing (Ontario)*, 2004f, p. 3.
- ¹⁰ F. Bertrand, *Les Francophones de la ville d'Ottawa (Ontario)*, 2004b, p. 3.
- ¹¹ F. Bertrand, *Les Francophones de la municipalité régionale de Niagara (Ontario)*, 2004a, p. 3.
- ¹² F. Bertrand, *Les Francophones du comté de Frontenac (Ontario)*, 2004d, p. 3.
- ¹³ F. Bertrand, *Les Francophones du comté de Simcoe (Ontario)*, 2004e, p. 3.
- ¹⁴ F. Bertrand, *Les Francophones des municipalités régionales de Peel, Halton et du comté de Dufferin (Ontario)*, 2004c, p. 3.
- ¹⁵ See in particular R.-M. Duguay, 2004.
- ¹⁶ For more on this subject, see L. Brunet, 2003, pp. 14-15.
- ¹⁷ S. LeTouzé, 2005, p. 7.
- ¹⁸ *La Route du Savoir*, 2005, p. 8.
- ¹⁹ R.-M. Duguay, 2004, p. 50.
- ²⁰ M. Drolet, 2003, pp. 33-34.
- ²¹ L. Saint-Laurent and J. Giasson, 2000.
- ²² In this regard, see A. Martel, 2001.
- ²³ M.-A. Dionne *et al.*, 2004, p. 148.
- ²⁴ L. Saint-Laurent *et al.*, 2001.
- ²⁵ The number of children involved refers to the total number of children in the families and includes children who attended workshops as well as children who were reached indirectly but did not attend any workshops.
- ²⁶ One parent per family completed the questionnaire.
- ²⁷ Fifteen parents indicated that they did not have partners, so we calculated the percentages for partner's mother tongue out of 28 rather than out of 43.
- ²⁸ The figures in the "Often" column include the responses "often" and "very often".
- ²⁹ The figures in the "French" column include the responses "mainly in French" and "only in French".
- ³⁰ The figures in the "English" column include the responses "mainly in English" and "only in English".

