

# **Assessment of Reading and Public Library Awareness** Kristin M. Disori, MD, MPH and Shelby Jacob, MD University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Children's Medical Center, Dallas, TX

### Background

Pediatricians play a key role in the promotion of the physical health and safety of children and serve as advocates for their cognitive development as well. One way in which Pediatricians contribute to such development is through the encouragement of early literacy. Great success has been found in the Reach Out and Read Program in which the modeling of dialogic reading and the gifting of books during well child visits encourages parents to read aloud to their children. Research has shown that this intervention increases the receptive and expressive language capacities of children thereby providing needed skills for school success (1).

Although a focus has been placed on the promotion of early literacy, only 48% of children in the United States are read to on a daily basis. There continue to be disparities between socioeconomic groups as well as racial and ethnic groups (2). Data specific for Texas shows an even bleaker picture; only 42% of children between 0-5 years of age are read to daily, placing Texas 49<sup>th</sup> in the state rankings. The National Survey of Early Childhood Health, a telephonic survey completed in 2000, examined factors associated with reading to young children. Among the factors found to be significantly associated with reading was number of books in the home. Not surprisingly, those homes with fewer resources were statistically less likely to read to their children. (3) In resource limited households books may not be a feasible purchase and accessibility to stores offering children's books may be problematic.

In the United States we have the luxury of having a well-developed relatively accessible library system. Libraries not only offer a great variety of reading materials, but also events and programs including summer reading programs, ESL and computer classes, tax help and story time for the youngest of readers. While the average Reach Out and Read participant will acquire 10 books during their time in the program, a library card can afford them the opportunity to explore hundreds if not thousands of additional titles.

# Objectives

- Create a library handout that can be incorporated into well child visit anticipatory guidance
- To increase awareness among continuity clinic families of local library offerings
- To increase library membership amongst continuity clinic families
- Increase reading frequency in the homes of continuity clinic families

# Materials & Methods

A handout was created for use during the anticipatory guidance portion of the well child check. The handout outlined the importance of reading to children and highlighted public libraries as a source of books and other services. Both English and Spanish language documents were available for distribution.

READING AND YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY
Vhy is it important to read to your child and how can libraries help?
here are many benefits of reading with your child. It helps your child with speech and language evelopment and also prepares him or her for school. Plus reading is fun. It's an activity that can bring ou and your child closer together.
books are a great tool to talk about shapes and colors. You can get our child involved, by asking them to talk about their favorite part of the story or asking other questions about the characters. Set aside time each night to read. It's a great pre-bedtime activity.
lot everyone has books at home and that's okay. Public libraries are great place to find books to read with your kids. Librarians can help o pick out books that are appropriate for your child's reading level. Ind best of all, the library is free.
What services are offered by local libraries?
ocal libraries offer more than just books. Each branch has its own
ervices, but some common ones include story time, homework
elp, teen centers and resources for jobseekers. The Dallas Public Library system also has a Bookmobile, /hich is a library on wheels. For information about the Bookmobile's schedule and stop locations, visit
ttp://dallaslibrary2.org/services/bookmobile.php. You can have access to all of these great services by
etting a library card.
low do I get a library card?
's easy!! The only requirement is that you live in Dallas. Bring a government issued photo ID (does not
ave to be US issued, can be from Mexico, etc) and proof of your address (a lease or utility bill). Also, if
our child attends public school in Dallas, they are eligible for a library card. Call 214-670-1400 or visit
ttp://dallaslibrary2.org for more information.

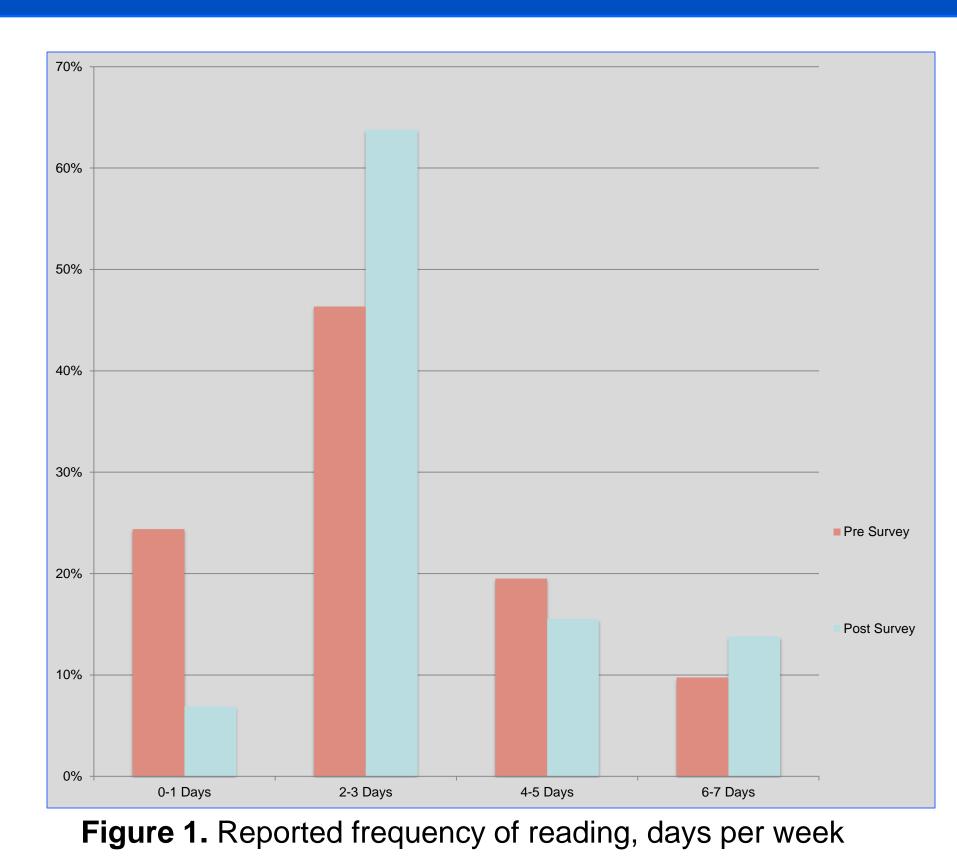
Library(	Phone(	Address(	Bus(Route(	Library(Hours(						
				Mon\$	Tues\$	Wed\$	Thurs\$	Fri\$	Sat\$	Suns
Central Library	214-670-1400	1515 Young St.		!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!
Arcadia Park	214-670-6446	1302 N Justin St.	376	€ļ	•!	<b>●</b> !	•!	•!	•!	!
Audelia Road	214-670-1350	10045 Audelia Rd.	374	!	•!	●!	•!	•!	•!	!
Bachman Lake	214-670-6376	9480 Webb Chapel Rd.	51, 428	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
North Park Center	214-671-1381	8687 North Central Expwy.	702	•!	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!
Dallas West	214-670-6445	2332 Singleton Blvd.	52W, 59, 453	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Forest Green	214-670-1335	9015 Forest Ln.	486, 488	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Fretz Park	214-670-6421	6990 Belt Line Rd.	400	!	•!	●!	•!	•!	•!	!
Grauwyler Park	214-671-1447	2146 Gilford St.	29, 525, 544	!	•!	●!	•!	•!	•!	!
Hampton-Illinois	214-670-7646	2951 S. Hampton Rd.	445, 453	•!	•!	●!	•!	•!	•!	!
Highland Hills	214-670-0987	3624 Simpson Stuart Rd.	155, 553, 554	ļ	•!	●!	•!	•!	<b>•</b> !	!
Kleberg Rylie	214-670-8470	1301 Edd Rd.	842 Flex	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	<b>•</b> !	ļ
Lakewood	214-670-1376	1376 6121 Worth Rd.	19, 76	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Lochwood	214-670-8403	11221 Lochwood Blvd.	60, 467	!	•!	●!	•!	•!	•!	!
Martin Luther King	214-670-0344	2922 MLK Blvd.	11, 12, 26, 409, 595, Green Line	ļ	•!	●!	•!	•!	●!	ļ
Mountain Creek	214-670-6704	6102 Mountain Creek Blvd.		!	•!	●!	•!	•!	•!	!
North Oak Cliff	214-670-7555	302 W. Tenth St.	1,11,21,444, 522, 542	!	•!	●!	•!	•!	<b>●</b> !	!
Oak Lawn	214-670-1359	4100 Cedar Springs Rd.	21,31,39, 51,409	!	•!	●!	•!	•!	<b>•</b> !	!
Park Forest	214-670-6333	3421 Forest Ln.	486,532	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Lancaster Kiest	214-670-1952	2008 E. Kiest Blvd.	541	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Pleasant Grove	214-670-0965	7310 Lake June Rd.	592	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Polk Wisdom	214-670-1947	7151 Library Ln.	161	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Prairie Creek	214-670-0410	9609 Lake June Rd.	592,593,597	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Preston Royal	214-670-7128	5626 Royal Ln.	36	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Renner Frankford	214-670-6100	6400 Frankford Rd.	350	!	•!	●!	•!	•!	•!	!
Skillman Southwestern	214-670-6078	5707 Skillman Rd.	428,502	!	•!	●!	•!	•!	<b>•</b> !	!
Skyline	214-670-0938	6006 Everglade Rd.	111	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
Timberglen	214-671-1365	18505 Midway Rd.	534	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!
White Rock Hills	214-670-8443	9150 Ferguson Rd.	164,475	!	•!	•!	•!	•!	•!	!

In the three week period prior to the roll-out of the library handout, a survey was conducted of continuity clinic families presenting for the 4 month to 2 year well child checks. These anonymous surveys assessed frequency of reading in the home, library card ownership, public library usage and basic demographic information. A follow-up survey was conducted two months after the roll-out of the library handout which assessed similar information.

## Results

#### **TABLE I. Demographics of Survey Participants** Pre Survey Totals Post Survey Totals Category Percentage Number Percentage Number Race/Ethnicity 1.7% 2.4% Asian 27.6% 31.7% 26 16 Black 1.7% White 1.2% 48.3% Hispanic 32 39.0% 28 Multiple Races 11.0% 8.6% Other 1.2% Income < \$15,000 US 30.5% 19.0% 25 27.6% \$ 15,001 - \$25,000 US 18.3% 15 16 \$ 25,001 - \$35,000 US 20.7% 11.0% 12 \$ 35,001 - \$45,000 US 13.8% 7.3% \$45,001 - \$55,000 US 3.7% -> \$ 55,001 US 1.2% Ω -Primary Language English 57.3% 46.6% 27 36.2% Spanish 21 17 20.7% Both English and Spanish 5.2% 4.9% Other 2.4% Ω -**Education Attainment** 55.2% High School Diploma or GED 58.5% 48 32 12.1% 8.5% Associate Degree 5.2% Bachelor Degree 7.3% Master and/or Advanced Degree 1.7% 1.2%

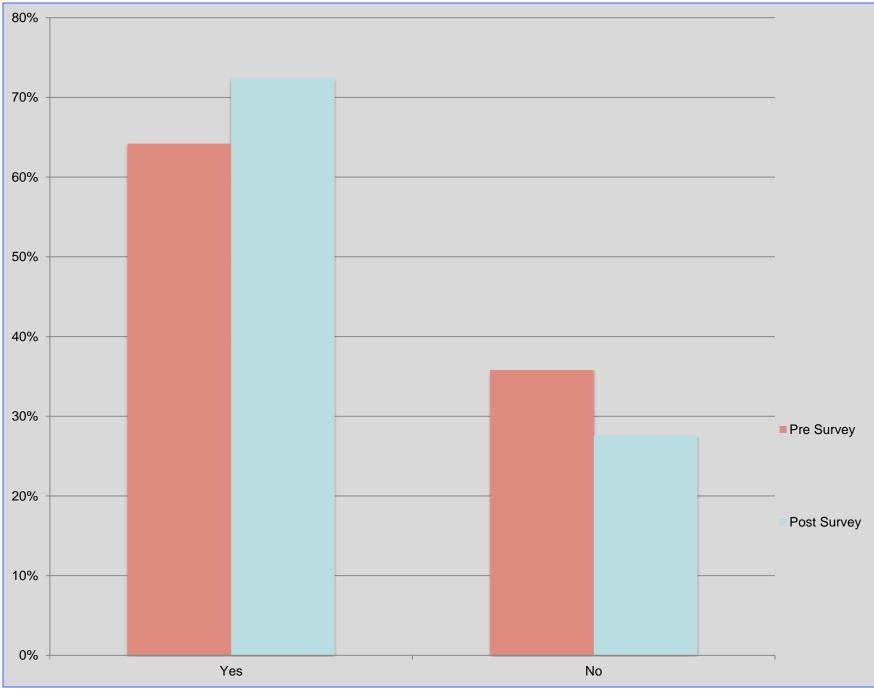
Notes: 82 Participants completed the Pre Survey and 58 participants completed the Post Survey.





Pre Survey Post Survey

Figure 2. Provider discussed public libraries



A handout discussing the importance of reading and the use of public libraries was created for distribution during routine Pediatric well child checks. Pre and post surveys revealed that parents were able to correctly identify some but not all of the resources available to them at local libraries. Approximately 50% of households surveyed owned 15 or more books, whereas 10% owned just zero to four books.

Library card ownership and library attendance both increased during the study period. It is unlikely however that the increase in the latter can be attributed to distribution of the handout alone. Despite the increase in library card ownership, visits to the library remained stagnant. One in four families surveyed in the postintervention period had not visited their local library in the prior six months, suggesting that barriers remain. We did not explore possible barriers in this study.

Families routinely receive anticipatory guidance regarding the importance of reading. Just eleven percent of parents could not recall having discussed reading with their child's provider. Following roll-out of the library handout, parents were more likely to indicate that their Pediatrician had discussed local libraries during the anticipatory guidance portion of the well child visit.

One limitation of the study was the that the handout was specific to the Dallas Public Library system. The RPP clinic serves families from Dallas as well as other jurisdictions. It is possible that neighboring communities may have different accessibility and offerings from Dallas.

1. Mendelsohn, A et al. The impact of clinic-based literacy intervention on language development in inner-city preschool children. Pediatrics 2001; 107(1):130-134.

Figure 3. Library card ownership



## Conclusions

#### References

2. Russ, S. et al. Reading Across the Nation: A Chartbook (2007): Reach Out and Read National Center, Boston, MA. Available at: http://www.readingfoundation.org/images/pdfs/ror\_chartbook\_20 <u>07.pdf</u>. Accessed July 17, 2013.

3. Kuo, A. et al. Parent Report of Reading to Young Children. Pediatrics 2004; 113: 1944-1951.