

How can we encourage families to engage with shared reading interventions?

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Background

- Many preschools, nurseries and health visitor clinics run training and intervention programmes that are designed to help parents boost their children's development.
- These programmes can have a positive influence on a range of child and family outcomes, from improving children's language development to changing caregivers' parenting behaviours.
- However research shows that many families, particularly disadvantaged families, never engage with these programmes, or engage only sporadically.
- This is problematic because participation is central to the effectiveness of such programmes.



Do work shared reading interventions work?

Study	Interventions	Group	Effect size (d)
Bus et al. (1995)	Language, reading, and literacy	Low and high income	0.59
Manz et al. (2010)	Vocabulary	Low income	0.14
Manz et al. (2010)	Vocabulary	Middle income	0.39
Mol et al. (2008)	Dialogic Reading	At risk	0.13
Mol et al. (2008)	Dialogic Reading	Not at risk	0.53

- Shared reading interventions work less effectively for children from low income families and children who are at risk for language and literacy impairments.

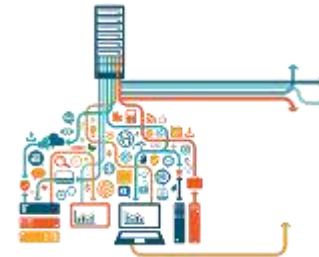
Why might parents not engage with interventions?

- Parents might not be aware they exist.
- Importance of informal networks e.g. friends and family (Winkworth et al., 2010).

- Parents may be wary about participating.
- Importance of intervention ‘perception’ (Vanobbergen et al., 2009).

- The location may discourage parents from participating.
- Visiting ‘third spaces’, where many interventions and services take place, requires confidence (Coe et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2014).

- Parents don’t have time.
- The stresses and strains of every day life.



- The Reader's *Shared Reading* programme emphasises the enjoyment of reading.
- The programme is based on small groups led by trained project workers, coming together weekly to read aloud.
- Empirical research conducted by Billington and colleagues:
 - Prison populations.
 - Health settings (depression, chronic pain, dementia).
- Extended to young families in areas of deprivation in Liverpool.



What happened in the different reading groups?

- The Reader's *Shared Reading* programme
 - Nursery setting.
 - Weeks 1-5: 'Magical Storytimes' which consisted of interactive shared book reading, nursery rhymes and craft activities.
 - Weeks 6-8: 'Magical Storytimes' and 'Stories for You and Yours', in which caregivers were informed how to read interactively with their child and caregivers also read aloud with other caregivers.
- 'Story Time' groups:
 - Library setting.
 - Interactive shared reading, nursery rhymes, songs and crafts suitable for children under the age of 5.



Procedure

- Pre-registration
 - Clinicaltrials.gov: NCT02659579
- Nursery recruitment:
 - 12 pre-school nurseries approached.
 - 10 confirmed.
- Control group recruitment:
 - Meetings with Liverpool City Council libraries.
- Family recruitment:
 - Engagement with caregivers.
 - 'Taster' sessions.
- Random allocation:
 - Intervention and control (swap-over).
- Language tests and questionnaire data:
 - Baseline.
 - 4 weeks post intervention.
- Delivery of intervention (1 x a week for 8 weeks):
 - Intervention and control.

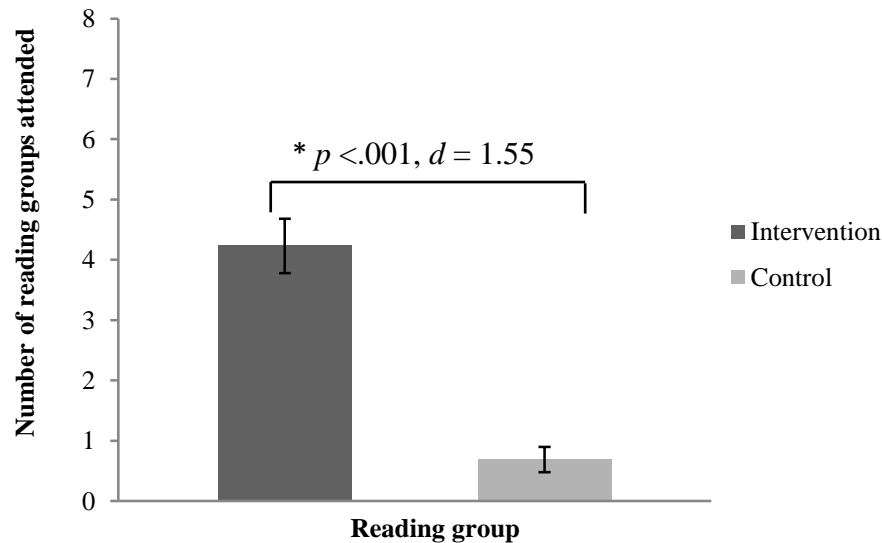


Barriers and solutions

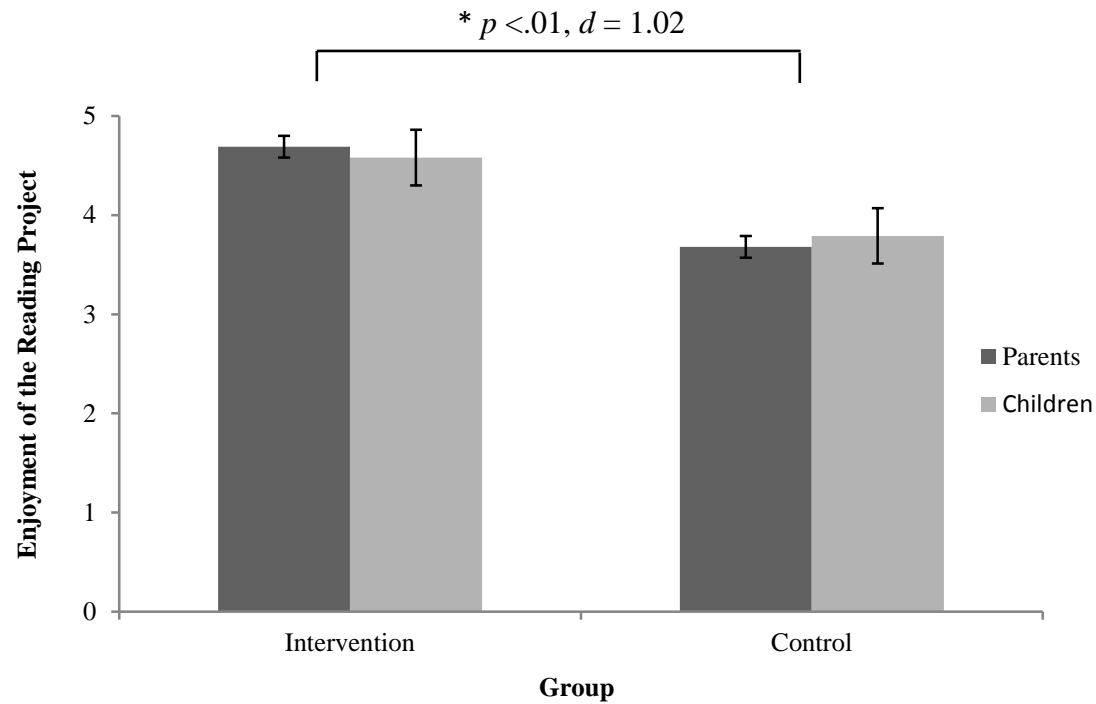
Barrier	Solution	Barrier targeted
Parents are uninformed about the intervention	Build relationships with families and schools through 'engagement' and 'taster' events.	Knowledge barriers
Families may not be confident in participating in the project	Use familiar spaces and engage families through a 'taster' session.	Setting barriers
Families may not want to engage in 'school related' activities	Present the interventions as a 'reading for pleasure' initiative.	Institutional barriers
Families may feel judged or targeted	Associate with third sectors and promote 'reading for pleasure' through 'taster' sessions	Perceptual barriers
The timing and location of the reading groups may be inconvenient.	Schedule the reading groups in convenient, familiar and local locations and at a convenient time of day.	Practical barriers

Attendance

- We examined whether caregiver attendance differed across the two reading groups.
- Families who took part in The Reader's *Shared Reading* programme attended 53% of the reading groups and families in the Bookstart 'Story Time' group attended 9% of the reading groups.



Families experience of taking part in the project





Semi-structured interviews (intervention)

Impact on caregivers

“When I’m reading books with her now I’ll ask questions...which I wouldn’t have done before, I would’ve just read the book”

“I wasn’t really a book reader”

“The poems she gave us were quite good...she read it to us and then we were all relating to it”

Impact on children

“We went to see his speech therapist the day before yesterday and she said she can see a huge difference in his speech since she seen him”

“It’s made him more enthusiastic into picking different books”

“At first he wouldn’t really speak...but by the end he was on the floor in front of the teacher, hand up at every question”

Enjoyment

“It was really fun, I’d do it again in a heartbeat”

“Every morning on a Tuesday he’d say is it reading group today?”

“She was dead good the way she got the kids involved in the book”



What conclusions can we draw?

- Evaluating just how effective these solutions were, is difficult.
- The content of the reading groups, and their associated convenient, familiar setting/locations encouraged engagement.
- The Reader's *Shared Reading* groups were:
 - Rated more favourably.
 - Attended more often.
- The Reader's model is successful in engaging *disadvantaged* families to attend weekly reading groups (50% of the time).
- It is important here to emphasise the role of the group facilitator: engagement and taster sessions were key.
- The findings from our semi-structured interviews demonstrate how instrumental the group facilitator's role was when thinking about the positive impact the reading groups had on the caregivers and children.



How can we encourage families to engage with interventions?

- Engage families informally, with knowledgeable, friendly and enthusiastic staff.
- Use varied, fun, shared interventions which encourage positive parent-child relationships.
- Think about how the intervention is perceived by families.
- Use accessible, familiar, local, and convenient locations.
- Be realistic and accept that not all barriers can be pre-empted.



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Any questions?



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