

# TRAINING AND PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS OF STUDENTS' FAMILIES IN LEARNING ENHANCEMENT

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## **Abstract**

Family Literacy is an intergenerational approach that improves the literacy, language, and life skills of both parents and children. Government and nongovernmental agencies in the U.S. and other countries have developed programs that support and expand family literacy activities. This talk defines family literacy, describes its philosophy and program model, discusses the research that supports it, and proposes ways that parents and others can help children develop strong literacy skills and that family literacy programs can help parents to help their children succeed.

## **JOHN COMINGS**



[http://www.gse.harvard.edu/faculty\\_research/profiles/profile.shtml?vperson\\_id=256](http://www.gse.harvard.edu/faculty_research/profiles/profile.shtml?vperson_id=256)

National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL):

<http://ncsall.net/?id=463>

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# Family Literacy

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# Definition

- Family literacy is an intergenerational approach that improves the literacy, language, and life skills of both parents and children.

# Philosophy

- Parents are the first and most important teachers in their child's life.
- All families have strengths.
- Families can recover from crisis and adversity.
- Families can address their own needs.

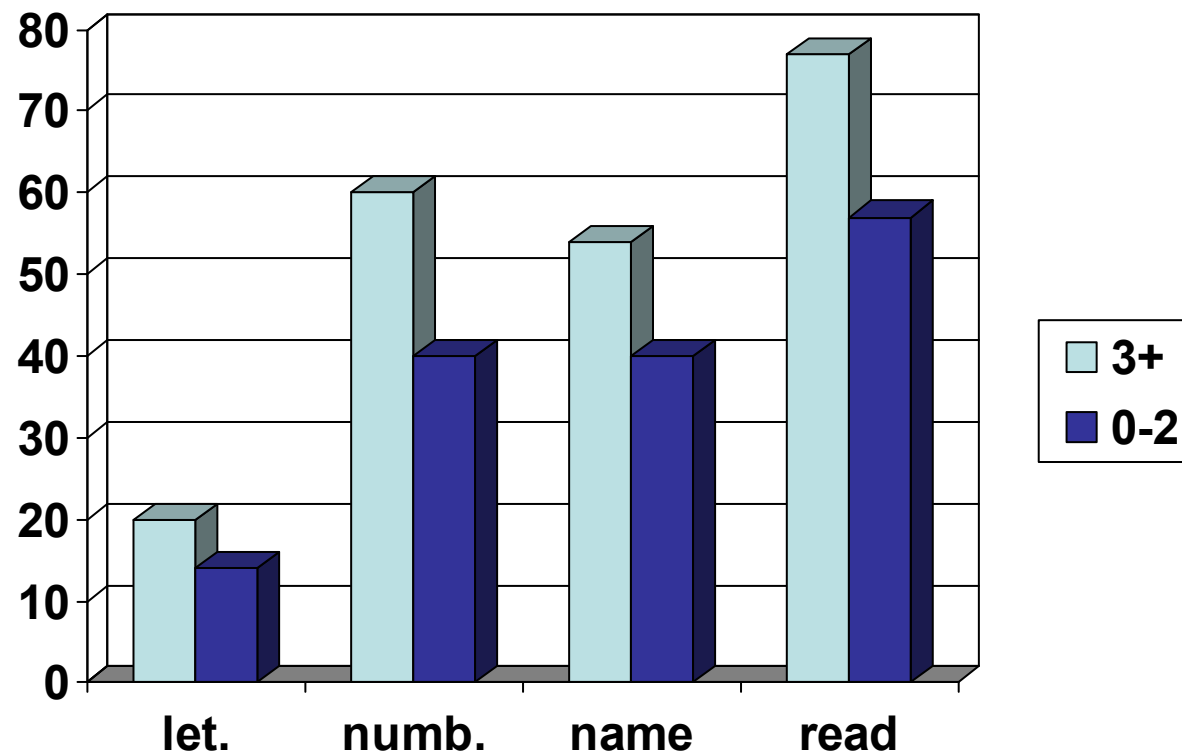
# Program Model

- Parents learning literacy
- Children learning literacy
- Parents and children learning and reading together
- Parents helping children prepare for school and be successful in school

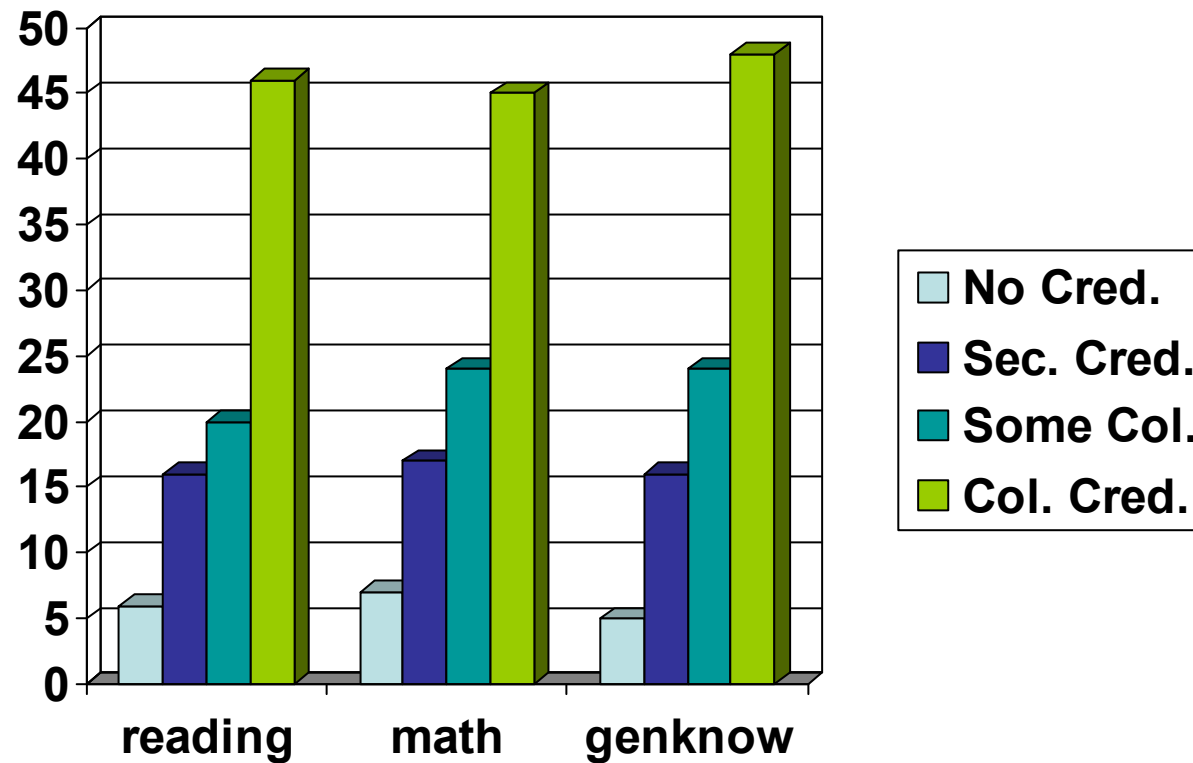
# Why Support Family Literacy

- Correlations
- Mechanisms

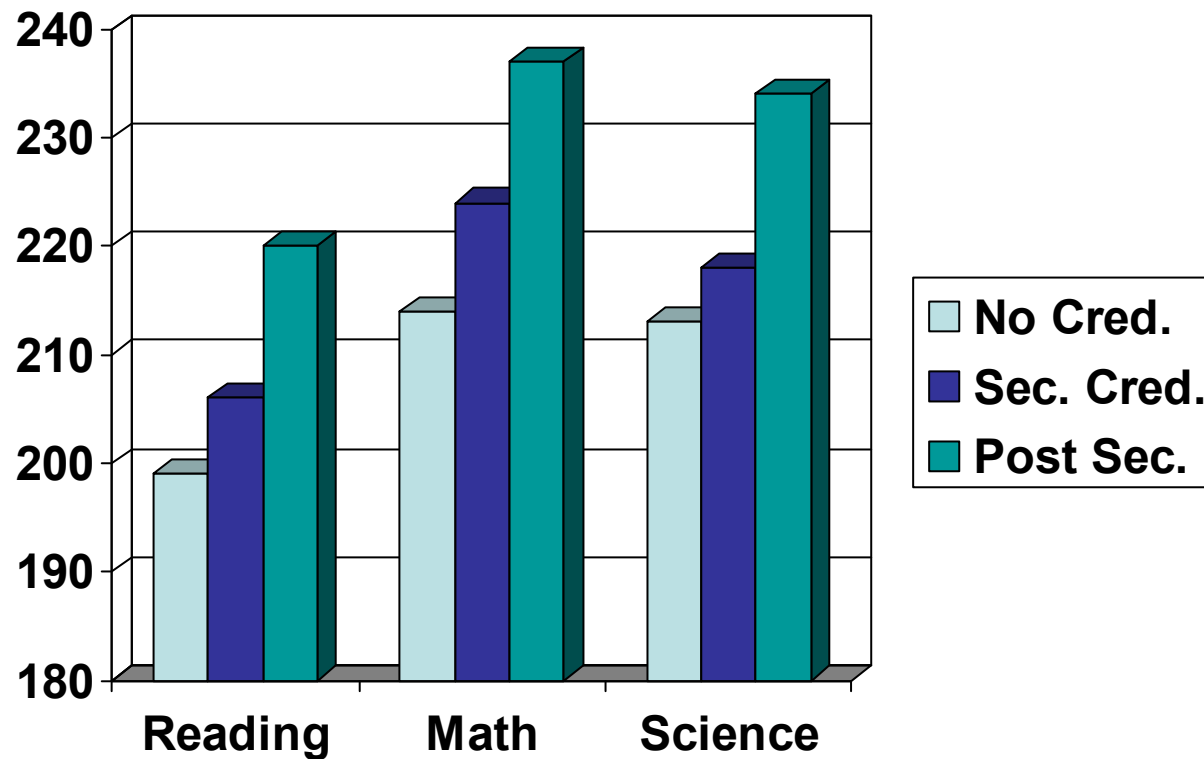
# Percent of Children with Emerging Literacy Skills by Frequency of Parents Reading to Child



# Percent of Five Year Olds in Highest Quartile of Reading, Math, and General Knowledge by Mother's Education

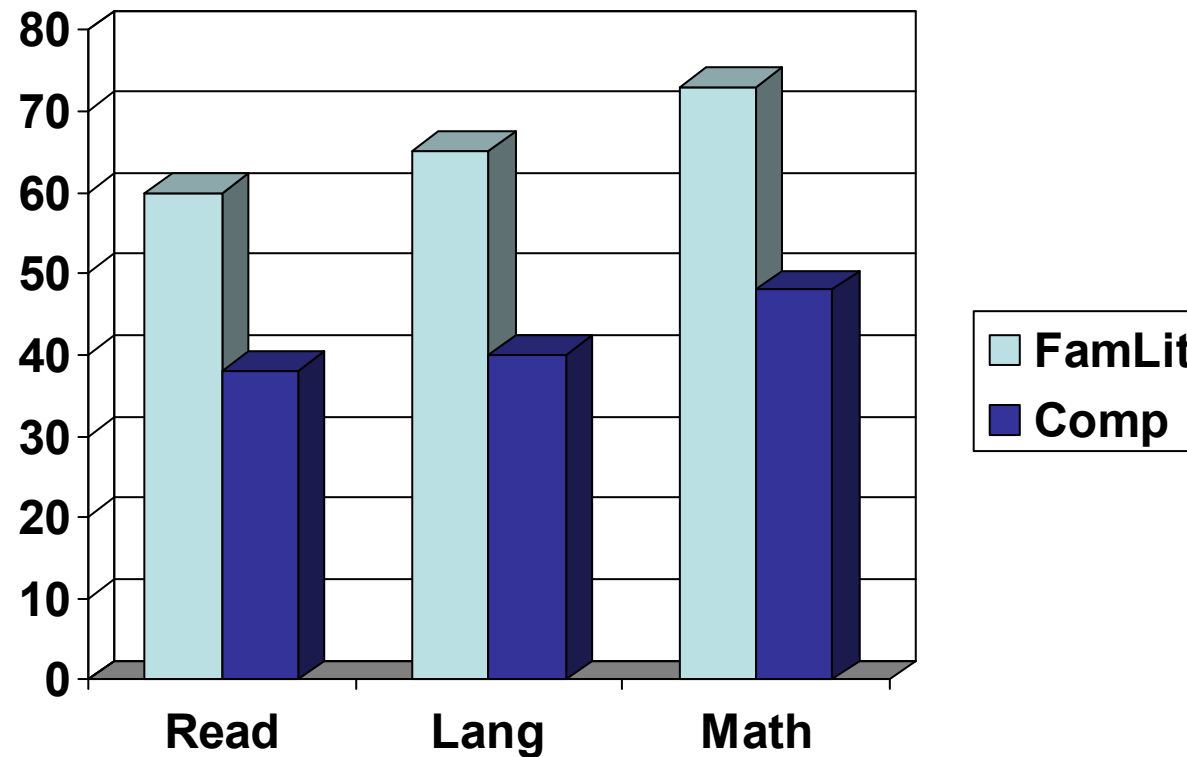


# Nine Year Olds' NAEP Scores by Parent Education



# Performance Level of Average or Above Average on Standardized Tests

1,112 Family Literacy and 478 Comparison Children



# Mechanisms

- Language Development
  - Amount (3,000,000 vs 11,000,000 words)
  - Type (sanctioning vs praise)
  - Complexity (informal vs academic)
- Vocabulary Development
- Culture of Literacy

# How to Help Children

- More conversation
- More questions and explanations
- Less sanctioning
- Building vocabulary and general knowledge
- Establishing a culture of literacy
- Reading to and with children

# How to Help Parents

- Build parents' literacy skills
- Build parents' knowledge of how children learn literacy
- Build parents knowledge of how to help their children prepare for and succeed at school
- Provide practice in parent involvement activities
- Build support in families and communities
- Involve teachers and school administrators