

**FAMILY LITERACY INITIATIVE
2017 PARENT/CAREGIVER FEEDBACK SURVEY
RESULTS**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A survey was conducted with 113 of 119 parent/caregivers using a ten-question structured interview schedule to obtain feedback regarding implementation of the Family Literacy Initiative at the end of two years of implementation. Seven of the ten questions included a three-point rating scale, and all provided for open-ended responses. Results indicated a high degree of support for the program and appreciation for the services provided by the home visitors and administrators. Survey participants were able to cite many ways in which the staff showed them how to teach and communicate with their child, and how their child had learned from participating in the program. A majority of interviewees indicated the activities were at least a little challenging for them and half, especially those with six or fewer years of formal schooling, indicated the FLI materials were either a little or very difficult to read. Almost everyone who had attended group meetings said they were very helpful. All respondents indicated they would recommend the program to others and many cited ways the program had contributed to their child's skills, their own skills, and to the development of a stronger relationship with their child and others. When asked about ways the program could better help them prepare their child for school, the most frequent responses were related to helping them increase their own literacy skills and continuing to provide educational support to their child when he/she enters school.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to give parent and caregiver participants in the Family Literacy Initiative Program (FLI) an opportunity to provide formal feedback regarding the program to program administrators and staff and to provide documentation of that feedback to the Friends of Liberia's Education Working Group (EWG). The Initiative is an early childhood program in which home visitors provide curriculum materials and strategies to parents in three communities in or near Monrovia to help them prepare their children for school. It is a cooperative effort between The Friends of Liberia, The WE-CARE Foundation, and HIPPY International. The program is administered by WE-CARE, a non-profit organization in Monrovia, Liberia and uses HIPPY instructional materials. In addition, HIPPY consultants provide staff training. The program completed its second year of implementation in fall 2017.

PROCEDURES

The evaluator, in consultation with two other EWG members who have program evaluation and research experience, developed the survey instrument and then shared it with WE-CARE administrators. (See APPENDIX A) He also prepared interviewer guidelines. (See APPENDIX B). WE-CARE administrators recruited three individuals who had previously administered the end-of-year assessment to program children.

The interviews were conducted at the children's homes in October 2017 over a three-day period. Parents were notified beforehand of the visits and were asked to be near their homes on that day. The program coordinator, assistant coordinator, or other FLI staff member accompanied each interviewer to the homes. WE-CARE staff scanned the interview documents and sent them to the evaluator via email for analysis.

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

A total of 113 of 119 parent/caregivers (95%) were interviewed in the three communities: Caldwell, Duazon, and West Point.¹ As shown in Table 1, about two-thirds (68.1%) of the 113 interviews were with mothers. The remaining were with fathers, grandmothers, aunts or siblings. Note, quotes in the text are followed by the relationship to the child: mother (M), father (F), grandmother (G), aunt (A), sister (S), or brother (B), and years of formal schooling. While all interviewees indicated that English was the main language spoken in the home, about 80% said at least one other language was also spoken.

Table 1. Relationship of survey respondent to child

Community	Mother	Father	Grandmother	Aunt	Sibling
Caldwell (39)	26	1	7	4	1
Duazon (34)	21	5	1	1	6
West Point (40)	30	2	2	1	5
TOTAL N (113)	77	8	10	6	12
TOTAL %	68.1	7.1	8.9	5.3	10.6

¹ The remaining parent/caregivers were not available for the interviews.

FINDINGS

General Finding: Overall, results of the survey indicate a high degree of parent/caregiver satisfaction with the Family Literacy Initiative. They found it to be very beneficial for themselves and for their children, and would recommend it to others in their community. Many parents indicated a desire to strengthen their literacy skills and/or to obtain further education.

Finding 1. The large majority of parents/caregivers indicated the program had been “very helpful” in showing them how to teach their child.

Of 112 respondents, 105 (94%) indicated that the FLI Program has been “very helpful” in showing how to teach their child and the remaining 7 (6%) indicated the program had been “somewhat helpful.”² Examples of specific ways they were helped are shown below.

It helped to empower me to teach children. (M-12)

I never had any teaching experience, but the program has taught me how to teach. (M-10)

I have learned how to teach my daughter through the teaching given by the home visitor. (M-10)

The program has made me to learn new things and it has improved my reading and writing skills. (M-10)

This program has taught me the strategy and method of teaching. (M-9)

Home visitor helped me to understand the reading materials. Brought books and teach me how to read the books. (M-4)

It really helped me to read pictures and understand a lot of things. (M-0)

It helped me to spell my name and my child's name and it also helped me to be close to my child. (M-0)

Got exposed to new things I did not know before. I learned to spell my son's name and role play activities to him. (M-0)

To pronounce and spell my name, work with books, relate to my child. (M-2)

Help teach her how to picture read and count; teach her manners like speaking to people, saying thank you and excuse me. (M-9)

Teach me how to relate to my son. It also help me to work with books. (M-6)

² For most questions, a rating was not recorded for one or more individuals.

Finding 2. The large majority of parents/caregivers indicated the program had been “very helpful” in helping them talk to their child.

Of 111 respondents, 109 (98%) indicated the program had been “very helpful” in helping them talk with their child and the remaining 2 (2%) indicated it had been “somewhat helpful.” Some specific reasons given for their ratings are shown below.

He knows the colors of things that I send him to bring. (M-10)

My child knows different things and can talk about them. (M-9)

Points to a shape and call the name of the shape, show me some colors and name her body parts. (M-6)

He can now follow directions. He also knows the name of things in the house. (M-9)

The child is able to learn many things, name and identify them around their environment. (M-4)

I can ask them (two children) to name things around the neighborhood, like the tree leaves’ shapes and colors. (M-6)

Because we interact with one another, he can tell me some of the things learned during the time, like colors, shapes. (M-6)

She can follow instructions. Do as I say. (G-10)

Child is able to identify the letter of the alphabet on signboards and other things around and knows the name of some of the books. (A-12)

At home, I sent him for shapes such as squares and triangle. He can then bring them to me. (F-12)

She understands the one to one correspondence when I send her to buy one or two items. (G-0)

Sometimes I ask her to go and bring a green or red T-shirt and she will go and bring it. (S-7)

Finding 3. When parents/caregivers were asked to indicate if their child had learned more from being in the program, almost all (95%) answered “very much.”

Of 111 respondents, 105 (95%) said their child had learned “very much” from being in the program. Of the remaining six, five said “somewhat,” and one indicated “not very much.” The one person who said “not very much” said she was not able to be active in teaching her child because of her own health problems. Examples of explanations for ratings are below.

Very much

The Program has helped him learn how to sing, write, draw and read more of his HIPPY books of year II.

My child can read some books, identify colors, shapes, and do other activities. (M-4)

Learn how to talk, how to play with things, how to spell her name and write her name. (M-6)

He has learned the sound of letters of the alphabet, and he is able to write his name and call the titles of the books. (M-10)

My child can say everything about the books, role plays like animal movements. (M-10)

My child can now sit with me and ask me questions. We are now closer in relationship. (M-7)

He has learned the various hygiene tips, can spell his name, identify letters and count. He can also identify shapes. (M-0)

He knows how to cover his mouth when he coughs. (M-9)

He now knows how to brush his teeth when he wakes up in the morning. (M-0)

At first when he played, he would just take his food and eat. Now he knows how to wash his hands before eating after the toilet. (S-12)

Somewhat

Not all the things my child was taught she was able to learn. For example, she cannot spell her name yet. (M-3)

My child did not understand most of the lessons taught. (M-5)

He has learned how to spell his name and tell some of the stories. ((M-1)

She never knew how to count, now she counts, talks to everyone she meets, retells story from the picture and spells her name. (M-0)

She is now spelling her name, counting numbers and objects. She is in school, the program will help her come across things in school that she was taught already. (G-5)

Finding 4. When asked about the the difficulty level of doing program activities with their child, about one-third indicated it was “easy,” nearly two-thirds indicated it was a “little difficult,” and a few said it was “very difficult.” A fairly similar frequency of responses was given regardless of education level.

Table 2 shows the reported difficulty of doing the program activities, broken down by years of formal education.

Table 2. Difficulty level of doing activities with children

Years of Formal Education	N	Difficulty Level of Program Activities		
		Easy N/%	A Little Difficult N/%	Very Difficult N/%
None	18	7 (39%)	8 (44%)	3 (17%)
1-3 years	10	0	10 (100%)	0
4-6 years	19	7 (37%)	11 (58%)	1 (5%)
7+ years	64	22 (34%)	41 (64%)	1 (2%)
Total	111	36 (32%)	70 (63%)	5 (5%)

As shown in the table, about two-thirds of the respondents said that doing the program activities were either “a little difficult” (63%) or “very difficult (5%) while one third (33%) said they were easy. The following are some of their explanations for ratings.

Easy

Because we followed what the home visitor taught. (F-7)

When my home visitor teach me I do the same with my son. (M-5)

Because I learned to do the activities with the home visitor, therefore, doing it with my child was easier. (M-10)

Since I cannot read, my home visitor brings the activities down to my level to enable me to role play with my child. (M-0)

My son always encourages me to teach him whenever I am tired. (M-10)

My son enjoys the activities and always willing to do the FLI activities. (M-10)

Most of what we were doing was play we do in our home. (M-6)

A little difficult

From the beginning for both my son and I, because everything was new and I had no idea, but with the help of my home teacher I am now getting along. (M-0)

Because for some of the books it takes more time to understand it before teaching them. (M-12)

From the beginning of the program, doing the activities was a little difficult because I didn't really understand the program. (M-10)

I was tired at time to help her. Reading was difficult, but I asked others to help. (M-0)

Because at the start, the books were easy, but to the end some words were difficult to pronounce. (M-11)

Some of the activities were a little difficult for me because I couldn't understand what to do and when to do it. (S-4)

Understanding the activities was a bit hard because I could not read. (M-0)

Because I am a business woman, but my home visitor talked to me on the importance of my child learning process. (M-0)

I didn't know how to read so it was a little difficult. (M-3)

Because most of the activities carried out were new to us. (M-7)

I didn't know some of the things. I had to ask for help. (M-7)

I didn't know all so it had to be taught. (M-0)

Relating to her at first, especially when she wanted to play with her friends. Sometimes she will refuse to say a word. As we went along, the activities got more interesting and she was happy. (G-5)

He always run away from studying at first. I would talk to him and play with him with doing the activities together. (S-5)

Very difficult

Because he had never been to school, but during the program, he was able to understand the lessons. (M-10)

Because I couldn't understand some of the activities and to get my child's attention. (M-4)

From the start, the activities were very difficult to role play the activities and get my child to sit was very hard. (M-0)

Finding 5. Overall, about one-half of respondents (51%) indicated reading the FLI materials was “easy,” while the remaining 49 percent indicated it was either a “little difficult” (39%) or “very difficult” (9%). Reported reading difficulty of materials was generally related to obtained education level.

Question 5 asked interviewees to indicate how difficult it was to read the FLI materials. The frequency of their responses is shown in Table 3, below.

Table 3. Difficulty level of reading FLI materials.

Years of Formal Education	N	Difficulty Level of Reading FLI Materials *		
		Easy	A Little Difficult	Very Difficult
None	18	3 (17%)	10 (56%)	5 (28%)
1-3	9	1 (11%)	5 (56%)	3 (33%)
4-6	20	7 (35%)	11 (55%)	2 (10%)
7-12	63	45 (71%)	18 (29%)	0
Total	110	56 (51%)	44 (40%)	10 (9%)

Percents might not sum to 100 because of rounding.

As shown, about half of the respondents indicated the materials were “easy” and half indicated they were either “a little difficult” or “very difficult.” As might be expected, education level was generally related to reported difficulty in reading the materials. For example, among those with at least seven years of schooling, 71% indicated the material was “easy” to read. On the other hand, of 27 respondents who had 0-3 years of formal schooling, 23 indicated the materials were either “a little difficult” or “very difficult.” Respondents sometimes indicated the home visitors had helped them understand the materials.

A sample of statements grouped by reported difficulty level is provided below:

Easy

Because I understand everything in materials given. (M-6)

The reading materials were easy because I could read and understand the books and role play the activities. (M-10)

Because my home visitor really teaches me to my level so I can relate it to my child the way I understand the materials. (A-2)

A little difficult

Some of the words are difficult. I cannot pronounce and understand them. (M-6)

There are some big words that I can't pronounce and someone has to show me. (M-9)

Coming across new words and pronouncing them was a problem for me. (M-12)

At first it was hard, but when the home visitor taught me it made things easy for me. (M-9)

Because I left school a long time ago. (M-7)

Because I can't read, I ask my older daughter to help me. (M-0)

Because I have not gone far in school; however through this program I have learned how to read. (M-5)

Everything is reading. Only the picture reading was a bit easy. (M-1)

The teacher always had to teach me to teach my son. (M-5)

Because I cannot read and write. Understanding the materials was not easy at first, but with the help and patience of the home visitor I am getting along. (M-0)

Because I have not gone far in school. Therefore, I am unable to read very well, so I only role play as the home visitor taught me. (M-4)

The print in the pamphlets is small. My eyes are not too good to see them. I always ask someone to read to me. (G-7)

Because year II books were many to read. For the role play we did it as my home visitor taught me. (M-0)

Very difficult

I cannot read so I had to ask someone to read for me or when the home visitor came they read. (M-0)

I can't read, so I had to bring someone to help me. (M-0)

I am not able to read, so as a result, the reading of the FLI materials was difficult. (M-0)

Reading the FLI materials was very difficult because I cannot read and write. I can only role play the activities after the home visitor teaches me. (M-0)

Finding 6. When asked to indicate how helpful the group meetings are, 104 of 112 respondents (93%) indicated they were “very helpful.” Of the remaining eight, four said they were “a little helpful.” Of these four, one said they were a “little helpful” because he had to miss most of the meetings. Two said “not very helpful,” because they had either not attended or had attended only one meeting and two did not give a rating because they had not attended any meetings.

As stated above, almost all respondents indicated that the group meetings were “very helpful.” Examples of responses are shown below.

Because at the meeting we as parents learn the different or new teaching strategies from one another of teaching effectively and it helps to take away shame and fright from the parents. (M-12)

The meeting helps encourage me to teach my child. Helps us interact with other parents, helps me read, sing, and role play with other parents. (M-10)

It is good to learn together. We can teach one another. (G-7)

Because we parents shared our experience with each other while coordinators lead the section and review us on our past songs and activities. (A-10)

Helped me learn more of what I was taught by my home teacher. The meetings helped me interact with other parents. (M-3)

At the meetings we're shown what to do. We learn from one another. (F-12)

During the group meetings, the coordinator shows us new methods of how to work very closely with our children. (M-10)

Because I learn the activities at the group meeting and learn the various colors and shapes. (M-3)

Because I learn new things at these meetings; somethings I never knew. (M-7)

During the meeting I learned new ways to teach my children and care for my children. (G-3)

The group meeting helped me to learn from other parents. (G-0)

It helps families to know one another. The lessons are explained better. (M-0)

I learned the songs and how to be patient to teach my child. (M-0)

Finding 7. When asked if they would “recommend,” “possibly recommend,” or “not recommend” the program to a friend or relative, all respondents indicated that they would recommend it.

As stated above, everyone indicated they would recommend the program to a friend or relative. When asked to explain their answer, some addressed the benefits for their children; many pointed to benefits for both them and their children. The following are typical responses.

I told people that children that are not in school can really benefit from this program. It is free of charge. (M-1)

That the program help educate our child and prepare them for school tomorrow. (F-7)

Because it helped my child learn new things, so I want to see my friends or other families' children do the same. (A-10)

The program is good. It helped me and my child learn many things and also helped us build our relationship. (M-9)

How helpful this program is to our children and ourselves. It helps us know how to read and do other activities. (M-11)

This program can teach you and your child. M-9)

This program helps you and your child to learn a lot of things. (M-10)

I told them the program is good for us who are not able to send our children to school yet. (M-9)

The meetings help me learn how to play and work with my sister. (S-4)

I tell people that the family literacy program helps you to know what you don't know. (M-7)

It is very helpful to you and your child by teaching your child and learning how to teach. (M-10)

The program is good and helps you respect your child and bring you closer to your child. (M 12)

Finding 8. In response to being asked if there were any other ways the program has helped them or their child, the most frequent responses were in regard to their child's reading and social skills, their own development of literacy skills and self confidence, and the strengthening of the relationship between them and their child.

Participants provided a variety of responses regarding other ways the program has helped them or their child. A representative sample of responses divided into child's skills, parent/caregiver's skills, and relationship with child and others is provided below.

Child's skills

Yes, helped him take books on his own, do pictures reading and teach me to be his first teacher. (M-10)

The program helped my son to read books and work with books. (M-6)

My child is now very active because at first she was very shy. We can communicate better now. (M-11)

It has helped [—] to be more sociable. (G-10)

Yes! My child always cried during study time, but when we go on she always come to me to remind me on our study. (M-0)

Parent/caregiver skills

I know many things I did not know before. (M-0)

The program has helped me in learning to spell and write my name. (M-1)

The education it has given me and it helped to build up my vocabulary. (F-7)

It helps me to improve my reading skill because I have been out of school for more than six years. (M-8)

Yes! Because of this program we can now try to read, we have books in our home and speak out for myself. (M-2)

Yes, I learned the names of the books, its author, title and illustrator. These are things I never knew before. (S-4)

Through the program I have learned many words that I did not know. I can even teach my child now. (M-1)

Yes, I learned to spell her name, identify shapes and colors, and keeps me busy with books. (M-6)

Because I have not been in school for long time. I am so happy that I can learn so much. (M-9)

It made me to be able to read and equip me to continue my education. (M-7)

Yes, the program has helped me to understand my brother and to communicate with him closely. He is more close to me now. (B-11)

This program has helped to empower me. I am employed as a home visitor. (M-12)

The program has made me to love education. My child has learned so much. (M-0)

Yes, the program took away shyness from me and my son. He's now able to relate to others. (M-12)

Relationship with child and others

Yes, the program has helped us by building relationship and trust, interacting with each other, and my child is able to express herself. (M-5)

Yes, my brother and I are close now, more than before. (S-11)

It brought my son closer to me and he is able to listen to me. (M-3)

[—] can tell me anything that happens to him. Now he stays home and talks with me. (M-10)

The program has helped us to become close to each other and make us to play with our son. (M-1)

This program has helped me and my granddaughter to be close. She relates better to me now than before. (G-0)

It has helped me and my child to interact better. (M-0)

The relationship between us has gotten better. He can talk with me more now. (F-12)

The program has helped me in improving my reading and teaching skills and also helped me to spend more time with my children. (M-11)

Yes! The program engaged both my child and me with different working activities and because of this my child and I are close. (M-9)

Yes! Helped me to speak out and interact with friends. (M-6)

Finding 9. In response to being asked if there were ways the program could better help them get their child ready for school, the most frequent response was to help them (parent/caretakers) increase their literacy skills and/or education level. The second most frequent response was a request for reading materials and support when their child enters school.³

The most frequent set of responses (36) was related to helping parents/caregivers increase their literacy skills or helping them increase their formal education. A few examples include:

I want to go to adult literacy school at night. (M-9)

Yes, help us with a school for parents (adult literacy). (M-9)

Please continue the program, continue teaching parents and help with adult literacy school. (M-3)

Yes, by giving us more training and teaching time and materials. (M-11)

I want to go back to school. (M-9)

The second most frequent set of responses (22) was related to requests for more reading materials for their child, and for support when they enter school. Examples of statements include:

Help me with more reading books for my child. (M-10)

Support my child to reach the level I did not reach, provide her with books and other school materials. (M-0)

I want the program to support my son by doing everything possible for my son to enroll in school, give him books, pencils, and other school materials. (M-0)

Yes! School fee, books, pencil, reading books, and uniform for both my children. (M-4S)

Followup with reading materials that are in line with the Ministry of Education Curriculum. (G-HS)

Yes! Help him with more reading materials and follow up on his progress. (G-6S)

³ Forty-three responses were not useable because one of the interviewers misinterpreted the question.

Finding 10. In response to being asked if there was anything else they wanted to say about the program the large majority of parent/caregivers expressed thanks for the program.

Many respondents expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the program as the quotations below indicate:

Big thanks to the Family Literacy Family for such a wonderful program. (S-5)

Thanks for helping us. Because of this program I can now write and spell my name. (M-4)

Let the program continue to help us. Thanks very much for everything. (M-3)

Thank you for the program because I can read and write a little. (M-3)

Thanks for helping my daughter learn how to read and work with books. (M-6)

I appreciate the program so much for educating me to educate my child. (M-10)

Thanks to FLI and WE-CARE for this great help. (M-9)

SUMMARY

This survey was conducted to obtain feedback from parents/caregivers regarding implementation of the Family Literacy Initiative at the end of two years of implementation. Almost all parents provided answers to each of the 10-questions in the Interview schedule.

Responses to the survey indicated a high degree of support for the program and appreciation for the services provided by the home visitors and program administrators. Survey participants were able to cite many ways in which the staff showed them how to teach and communicate with their child and how their child had learned from participating in the program. A majority of participants indicated the activities were at least a little challenging for them and half, especially those with six or fewer years of formal schooling, indicated the FLI materials were either a little or very difficult to read. Almost everyone who had attended the group meetings indicated they were very helpful in terms of gaining information to use with their child while learning with other parent/caregivers. All respondents indicated they would recommend the program to others and many cited ways the program had contributed to their children's skills, their own skills, and to the development of a stronger relationship with their child and others.

When asked about ways the program could better help them prepare their children for school, the most frequent responses were related to helping them increase their own literacy skills and continuing to provide educational support to their children when they enter school.

P/C Name _____

2. Has the program helped you to talk with your child, for example, to point to something in the market, and ask your child to name it?

____ a. Very helpful ____ b. Somewhat helpful ____ c. Not very helpful

Please give specific examples: _____

3. Has your child learned more from being in the program?

____ a. Very much ____ b. Somewhat ____ c. Not very much

Please give specific examples: _____

4. Would you say that doing the program activities with your child was:

____ a. Easy ____ b. A little difficult ____ c. Very difficult

Please explain: _____

5. Would you say that reading the FLI materials was:

____ a. Easy ____ b. A little difficult ____ c. Very difficult

Please explain: _____

6. Would you say that the Family Literacy group meetings are:

___ a. Very helpful ___ b. A little helpful ___ c. Not very helpful

Please explain: _____

7. In terms of recommending the program to a friend or relative, would you:

___ a. Recommend ___ b. Possibly recommend ___ c. Not recommend

Please explain: _____

8. Are there any other ways the program has helped you or your child?

9. Are there ways the program could better help you get your child get ready for school?

10. Is there anything else you want to say about the program?

Thank you for taking time to help in the FLI survey!

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEWER GUIDELINES
FLI 2017 PARENT/CAREGIVER'S FEEDBACK SURVEY

Thank you for serving as an interviewer for the FLI Parent/Caregiver Feedback Survey. The major purpose of the survey is to obtain information from parents/primary caregivers that will be helpful in future program planning. The following are guidelines to ensure that the information is both valid and reliable.

- 1. It is important that parents (interviewees) feel comfortable with the interview and know that their answers will be kept confidential and will not affect their future participation in the program. They should also know that the information is being collected to better serve them and their children.**

- 2. It is important that the information on page 1 regarding the parent/caregiver and child is accurate.**

a. The child's name should be the same as in WE-CARE records and on the Bracken test record forms.

b. The interviewee (the person you are interviewing) should be the same person with whom a home visitor had weekly sessions.

c. Under "Highest Educational Level Completed," put the actual number of years of school completed.

d. If the interviewee attended a post secondary school, note the type of post secondary education such as trade school or job training program, two-year college, four-year college/university.

e. While home visitors communicate with parents in English, the primary language spoken in the home might not be English. Also, even if English is the primary language spoken in the home, it would be helpful to know other languages spoken by family members.

- 3. You will ask interviewees 10 questions regarding their experience with the Family Literacy Initiative program. Seven of the ten questions ask the interviewee to give a rating on a three-point scale. For example, for question 1, interviewees should choose "Very helpful," "Somewhat helpful," or "Not very helpful." After they have selected a response, you should ask them why they chose that response. Their explanations are as important as their ratings. Please include those on the form.**

a. Questions 1 and 2 give examples to help explain the question. However, for other questions, you should not provide suggested answers.

b. To the extent possible, you should record the interviewees' responses **exactly** as they say it. If the response is too extended to record, then summarize their statement as accurately as possible.

c. Please ensure that you have written responses legibly.

Thanks.