General information

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Supporting Early Literacy at NSW Public Libraries

You are invited to complete a survey for library staff involved in making decisions about the introduction, funding, design and implementation of programs aimed at supporting early literacy, including staff who design and present early literacy sessions for children (e.g. baby rhyme time, story time, craft).

This survey is the first stage of a study supported through a research partnership between the State Library of New South Wales and the Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University.
The study aims to support public libraries in NSW:
(1) to be recognised for the early literacy services many of them already offer;
(2) to evaluate existing early literacy programs in public libraries across the state; and
(3) to design and implement effective early literacy programs.

The study is being conducted by Dr Emilia Djonov and A/Prof. Jane Torr at the Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University. Please direct any questions you may have about this study to Emilia on emilia.djonov@mq.edu.au or (02) 9850 9823.

We would like to invite you to complete the survey if:
 • you are currently or have recently been involved in making decisions about introducing, funding, designing or implementing any library programs aimed at supporting early literacy (for example, reading, song & dance or craft sessions for babies, toddlers and preschool children; outreach information sessions for parents or childcare centre staff; distribution of book packs to families)
AND/OR
 • you are currently or have recently been involved in preparing and presenting early literacy sessions for babies, toddlers and preschoolers (e.g. baby rhyme, story time, craft) at your library.

Data collected through this survey will remain confidential. Data will be accessed only by the research team conducting this study, and respondents' real names will not be disclosed in any research presentations, disseminated reports or publications.

The survey should take 20 to 30 minutes to complete. If you are unable to finish the survey in one sitting, you may return to complete it over the next 5 days. Click on the survey link to return to the survey, but

you must do this on the computer you used to start the survey. To review or revise your responses, please use the 'Back' button at the bottom of each page of the survey. (Do not use your web browser's back button.)

At the end of the survey, please indicate whether you are interested in participating in Stage 2 of the project.

Please note that completion of the survey indicates your consent for data collected through the survey to be included in this research project and resulting publications.

A copy of any publication or conference paper that reports findings from the study can be made available to you upon request.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

When you have read and understood the requirements of this survey and are happy to proceed, please click on the 'NEXT' button.

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Section 1. General information

In this section, we would like to know some general information about you, your qualifications, and your current role at your library, particularly in relation to early literacy programs.

1. What is your gender?

○ Male

○ Female

2. Do you speak or understand any language/s other than English?

○ Yes

○ No
[If No, you will be taken to Q6.]

3. Do you use any language/s other than English in your workplace?

○ Yes

○ No
[If No, you will be taken to Q6.]

4. Which language/s other than English do you use in your workplace?

[   ]

5. For what purposes do you use language/s other than English in your workplace?

[   ]

6. Which region or zone of NSW does your library service belong to?

○ Sydney Metropolitan - Central South East Region

○ Sydney Metropolitan - North Region

○ Sydney Metropolitan - West South West Region

○ Country zone - Central East Zone

○ Country zone - Central West Zone

○ Country zone - North East Zone

○ Country zone - South East Zone

○ Country zone - South West Zone

○ I don't know

7. How long have you worked at this library?

○ < 1 year

○ 1 - 2 years

○ 2 - 5 years

○ 5 - 10 years

○ > 10 years

8. What is your position at this Library?

○ Library manager/director

○ Team leader

○ Children librarian

○ Branch librarian

○ Library officer/assistant

○ Other. Please specify

[   ]

9. How long have you been in this position?

○ < 1 year

○ 1 - 2 years

○ 2 - 5 years

○ 5 - 10 years

○ > 10 years

10. What is your current workload in this position?

○ Full time

○ Part time. Please specify the number of hours that you work per week.

[   ]

11. What percentage of your workload is allocated to early literacy programs?

This could include being involved in preparing funding applications, introducing, designing and implementing programs aimed at supporting early literacy (e.g. distributing book packs to families; outreach information sessions for childcare educators), including preparing and present early literacy sessions for babies, toddlers and preschoolers (e.g. baby rhyme, story time, craft).

[   ]

12. How many hours per week do you spend on average on early literacy programs?

[   ]

13. How long have you been involved in early literacy programs?

○ < 1 year

○ 1 - 2 years

○ 2 - 5 years

○ 5 - 10 years

○ > 10 years

14. How long have you been working in public libraries?

○ < 1 year

○ 1 - 2 years

○ 2 - 5 years

○ 5 - 10 years

○ >10 years

15. Do you have any other work experience that you consider to be relevant to your involvement in early literacy programs?

○ No

○ Yes. Please specify.

[   ]

16. What qualifications in library and information services do you hold? Please select all that apply.

☐ Librarian (undergraduate)

☐ Librarian (postgraduate)

☐ Library technician (associate diploma)

☐ Library assistant (Certificate III)

☐ Library assistant (no qualification)

☐ Other. Please specify.

[   ]

☐ None

17. What other formal or informal qualifications do you hold? Please select all that apply and specify the course and degree type (e.g Bachelor of Education (Primary), Undergraduate).

☐ Early Childhood Education

[   ]

☐ Children's Literature

[   ]

☐ Other. Please specify

[   ]

☐ No other qualification

Early literacy sessions for children

Section 2. Early literacy sessions for children

Early literacy sessions for children are regular sessions provided by local libraries designed for children aged from birth to school age and their families (e.g. 'story time', 'baby rhyme', 'lap sit', craft, etc.) and may take place at the library or as outreach visits (e.g. to childcare centres). The focus of this section is specifically on early literacy sessions for children.

Other types of early literacy programs are the focus of Section 3 of this survey.

When you have read and understood the focus of this section of the survey and are happy to proceed, please click on the 'NEXT' button.

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18. What types of early literacy sessions does your library offer? Please select all that apply.

☐ Sessions for infants and toddlers (e.g lap sit; baby rhyme)

☐ Sessions for 2-3 year olds

☐ Sessions for preschool children, aged 3-5 (e.g preschool storytime)

☐ Sessions for preschool children in languages other than English (including bi-lingual sessions). Please specify.

    [   ]

☐ Other sessions. Please specify.

    [   ]

☐ No early literacy sessions

19. Are you involved in early literacy sessions at your library (e.g. resourcing, developing, presenting or evaluating)?

○ Yes

○ No

20. What are your roles in these early literacy sessions at your library? Please select all that apply.

If a session type is not offered at your library or if you are not involved in it, please select N/A.

	Resourcing (eg allocating staff, budget, risk management)	Developing (eg selecting stories and songs, preparing activities)	Presenting/ Conducting	Evaluating/ Reporting	Other role/s	N/A
Sessions for infants and toddlers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sessions for 2-3 year olds	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Session for preschool children aged 3-5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sessions for preschool children in languages other than English	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other sessions. Please specify. [ ]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. Please specify what other roles you play in each early literacy sessions for children offered by your library service.

[   ]

22. Where are these early literacy sessions offered by your library service?

	At branches across the library service	Only at the branch where you work	Not offered
Sessions for infants and toddlers	◯	◯	◯
Sessions for 2-3 year olds	◯	◯	◯
Sessions for preschool chidren aged 3-5	◯	◯	◯
Sessions for preschool children in languages other than English	◯	◯	◯
Other sessions. Please specify. [____]	◯	◯	◯

23. For any type of early literacy session, please indicate how frequently it is offered at your library branch and across the library service.

If a session type is not offered at your branch or service, please write 0 in the corresponding cell. If you do not know the frequency for a session type at your branch or service, please write X in the corresponding cell.

	Frequency at your library branch	Frequency across the library service
Sessions for infants and toddlers	[____]	[____]
Sessions for 2-3 year olds	[____]	[____]
Sessions for preschool children aged 3-5	[____]	[____]
Sessions for preschool children in languages other than English	[____]	[____]
Other sessions. Please specify. [____]	[____]	[____]

24. Does your library service also offer any of these early literacy sessions as outreach visits (e.g. at childcare centres)?

For any session type not offered by your library service at all, please select 'N/A'.

	Yes	No	N/A	Don't know
Sessions for infants and toddlers	◯	◯	◯	◯

Sessions for 2-3 year olds	○	○	○	○
Sessions for preschool chidren aged 3-5	○	○	○	○
Sessions for preschool children in languages other than English	○	○	○	○
Other sessions. Please specify.	○	○	○	○

25. How frequently does your library service offer early literacy sessions for children as outreach visits? If possible, please specify for each session type.

[   ]

26. Do children need to be registered to attend early literacy sessions at your library?

For any session type not offered by your library service at all, please select 'N/A'.

	Yes	No	N/A	Don't know
Sessions for infants and toddlers	○	○	○	○
Sessions for 2-3 year olds	○	○	○	○
Sessions for preschool children aged 3-5	○	○	○	○
Sessions for preschool children in languages other than English	○	○	○	○
Other sessions. Please specify.	○	○	○	○

27. For any type of early literacy session, please indicate the capped number of attendees and the average number attending <u>at your branch</u>.

If there is no cap number, please write 0 in the corresponding cell/s.
If a session type is not offered at your branch, leave corresponding cells blank.
If you do not know the number, please write X in the corresponding cells.

	Capped number (adults and children)	Capped number (children)	Capped number (adults)	Number of [adults and children] attendees (on average)	Number of child attendees (on average)	Number of adult attendees (on average)
Sessions for infants and toddlers						
Sessions for 2-3 year olds						
Sessions for preschool children aged 3-5						
Sessions for preschool children in languages other						

than English

Other sessions. Please
specify.

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28. Are there criteria for participation in these early literacy sessions? Please select all that apply.

☐ Only children in the relevant age group are allowed to attend

☐ One lap/ parent per child

☐ Other. Please specify

☐ No restrictions

29. Please indicate any technologies that are integrated into the early literacy sessions for children offered by your library service. Please select all that apply.

☐ iPad / tablets with apps

☐ Powerpoint slides

☐ Videos / films

☐ Recorded music (e.g MP3/CD/DVD)

☐ Other. Please specify

☐ No technology integrated

30. Please describe how these technologies are used in early literacy sessions for children offered by your library serivce.

Early Literacy programs other than sessions for children

Section 3. Early literacy programs other than sessions for children

Early literacy programs encompass all initiatives that aim to support early literacy and target children from birth to school age and their families or communities. Examples include: distribution of book packs to families; outreach information events or workshops for parents or childcare staff; professional development initiatives for early childcare and education services; and early literacy sessions for children (e.g. craft, story time for pre-schoolers or baby rhyme time) offered at the library or as outreach visits. The term 'early literacy programs' in this section refers only to early literacy program initiatives other than sessions for children.

Questions about early literacy sessions for children (e.g. baby rhyme time, story time, craft sessions) were the focus of Section 2.

When you have read and understood the focus of this section of the survey and are happy to proceed, please click on the 'NEXT' button.

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31. What kinds of early literacy programs other than sessions for children does your library offer? Please select all that apply.

☐ Distributing information to families about early language and literacy development

☐ Distributing early literacy resources to families (e.g free book packs for babies)

☐ Partnerships with local child care and education settings for children aged birth to 5 (e.g. outreach visits)

☐ Participation in community based and other early literacy programs that include other organisations (e.g Let's Read; Ten Minutes a Day)

☐ Other. Please specify.

☐ Library service does not offer early literacy programs (other than sessions for children).

32. What are the names of these early literacy programs at your library service and/or branch? Please specify for all programs.

33. Are you involved in these early literacy programs (e.g. resourcing, applying for funding, preparing and/or presenting information events/workshops for parents, etc.)?

○ Yes

○ No

34. What are your roles in these early literacy programs? Please select all that apply.

If a session type is not offered by your library or you are not involved in it, please select N/A.

Developing

	Resourcing (eg allocating staff, budget, risk management)	(eg selecting stories and songs, preparing activities)	Presenting/ Conducting	Evaluating/ Reporting	Other role/s	N/A
Information events for parents and carers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information events for childcare educators	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other programs. Please specify. [____]	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

35. Please specify what other roles you play in each type of early literacy program other than sessions for children offered by your library service.

[_____]

36. Where are these early literacy programs offered by your library service?

	At branches across the library service	Only at the branch where you work	Not offered
Information events for parents and carers	○	○	○
Information events for childcare educators	○	○	○
Other. Please specify. [____]	○	○	○

37. How frequently are these early literacy programs offered at your library branch and across the library service?

If a session type is not offered at your branch or service, please write 0 in the corresponding cell.
If you do not know the frequency for a session type at your branch or service, please write X in the corresponding cell.

	Frequency at your library branch	Frequency across the library service
Information events for parents and carers	[____]	[____]
Information events for childcare educators	[____]	[____]
Other programs. Please specify. [____]	[____]	[____]

38. Does your library service offer these early literacy programs as outreach visits (e.g. at childcare centres)?

If your library service does not offer the program/s below, please select N/A.

	Yes	No	N/A
Information events for parents and carers	○	○	○
Information events for childcare educators	○	○	○
Other. Please specify.	○	○	○

39. How frequently does your library service offer early literacy information events as outreach visits? Please specify for each event type.

[   ]

40. Please indicate any technologies that are integrated into your library's early literacy programs. Please select all that apply.

☐ iPad / tablets with apps

☐ Powerpoint slides

☐ Videos / films

☐ Recorded music (e.g. MP3/CD/DVD)

☐ Other. Please specify:

[   ]

☐ No technology integrated

41. Please describe how these technologies are used in your library's early literacy programs.

[   ]

Professional competencies

Section 4. Professional competencies and development

In this section, we would like to know what you think are the key competencies for library staff involved in early literacy programs, including sessions for children.

42. What do you think are the key competencies that library staff need in order to be able to develop effective early literacy programs? Please rate the ones listed below from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important).

	Not important				Very important
	1	2	3	4	5
Understands theories of child development and learning and their implications for public library services	○	○	○	○	○
Understands theories of language and literacy developed in early childhood and their implications for public library services	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates an understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates an understanding of difference and disability	○	○	○	○	○
Regularly assesses the needs and preferences of the local community	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates familiarity with the early childhood care and education system in Australia	○	○	○	○	○
Maintains regular and effective connections with other services for children in the community	○	○	○	○	○
Identifies sources of funding and develops strong grant applications for early literacy	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates high level of administrative and management skills (e.g. in setting strategic plans and priorities, analysing costs of children's services and developing budgets, documenting and evaluating early literacy programs offered at the library, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates and maintains familiarity with and appreciation for appropriate reading materials for children	○	○	○	○	○
Ensures children have access to a rich and diverse range of materials that can support their language and literacy development	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates familiarity with and appreciation for emerging technologies that can support children's literacy development	○	○	○	○	○
Promotes children's access to emerging technologies that can support their literacy development	○	○	○	○	○
Maintains a high level of skills in using new technologies for successful communication and presentations	○	○	○	○	○
Pursues professional development and learning opportunities that could increase the potential of public libraries to support early literacy	○	○	○	○	○

43. Are there any other competencies that you believe library staff need in order to develop effective early literacy programs? Please specify.

44. What do you think are the key competencies that library staff need in order to be able to **prepare and present effective early literacy sessions for children**? Please rate the ones listed below from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important).

| | Not important | | | | Very important |
	1	2	3	4	5
Understands theories of child development and learning and their implications for early literacy sessions	○	○	○	○	○
Understands theories of language and literacy development in early childhood and their implications for early literacy sessions	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates an understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates an understanding of difference and disability	○	○	○	○	○
Maintains regular and effective connections with other services for children in the community	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates high level communication skills with children, families, caregivers and other adults who attend the sessions	○	○	○	○	○
Communicates effectively when presenting a session to groups of children and adults	○	○	○	○	○
Uses effective performance skills (e.g. for reading, singing, dancing, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○
Effectively communicates with adults and children during craft activities	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates familiarity with and appreciation for appropriate reading materials for children	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrates familiarity with and appreciation for emerging technologies that can support children's literacy development	○	○	○	○	○
Maintains a high level of skills in using new technologies for effective communication and presentations	○	○	○	○	○
Evaluates one's own performance in literacy sessions	○	○	○	○	○
Pursues professional development and learning opportunities that could increase the potential of public libraries to support early literacy	○	○	○	○	○

45. Are there any other competencies that you believe library staff need in order to be able to prepare and present effective <u>early literacy sessions for children</u>? Please specify.

> [   ]

46. Have you used any resources to help you with developing or conducting early literacy sessions (e.g. guidelines for reading books to children or preparing early literacy sessions at public libraries, etc.)? If so, please list some of these resources.

> [   ]

47. Do you have access to professional development opportunities for learning about early literacy and ways to support it? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Working Group (Young People in NSW public libraries)
- ☐ eList (young people)
- ☐ Other. Please specify.

> [   ]

Benefits and challenges of early literacy programs

Section 5. Benefits and challenges of early literacy programs

In this section, we would like to know what you think are the benefits and challenges of early literacy programs (including sessions for children) offered at your library.

48. In your view, what aspects of early literacy development are the main priorities in developing early literacy programs (including sessions for children) at your library?

> [   ]

49. In your view, what are the key benefits of the early literacy programs (including sessions for

children) offered by your library?

50. In your view, what are the key challenges for the early literacy programs (including sessions for children) offered by your library?

51. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the early literacy programs (including sessions for children) offered by your library?

52. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the early literacy programs (including sessions for children) offered by public libraries or any other related issues?

Invitation to participate in Stage 2

We would like to invite you to participate in the second stage of the project, which involves video recording of you presenting an early literacy session at your library, followed by an interview with you about the recorded session and your views on early literacy sessions in general. Please indicate if you are interested in participating in this stage.

○ Yes

○ No

Interest to participate in Stage 2

Please provide your name and contact details so we can send you an invitation and information about the next stage of this project. (Your name and contact details will not be disclosed to anyone outside the research team or used for any other purpose.)

☐ Name

☐ Email

☐ Phone

Thank you very much for completing this survey. Please be assured that your responses are confidential and your real name will not be used in any disseminated report. If you have any comments about this survey, please feel free to contact Dr Emilia Djonov on