

# CHANGING THE WORLD ONE BOOK AT A TIME

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## Background



The development of language and literacy occurs in a step wise fashion as a child learns oral language, then learns to read, and finally, learns to write. A child's early literacy environment plays a critical role in the emergence of knowledge. Early experiences with books and reading contribute to their later success or failure in learning to read. More than 1 in 3 American children start kindergarten without the language skills needed to learn to read.

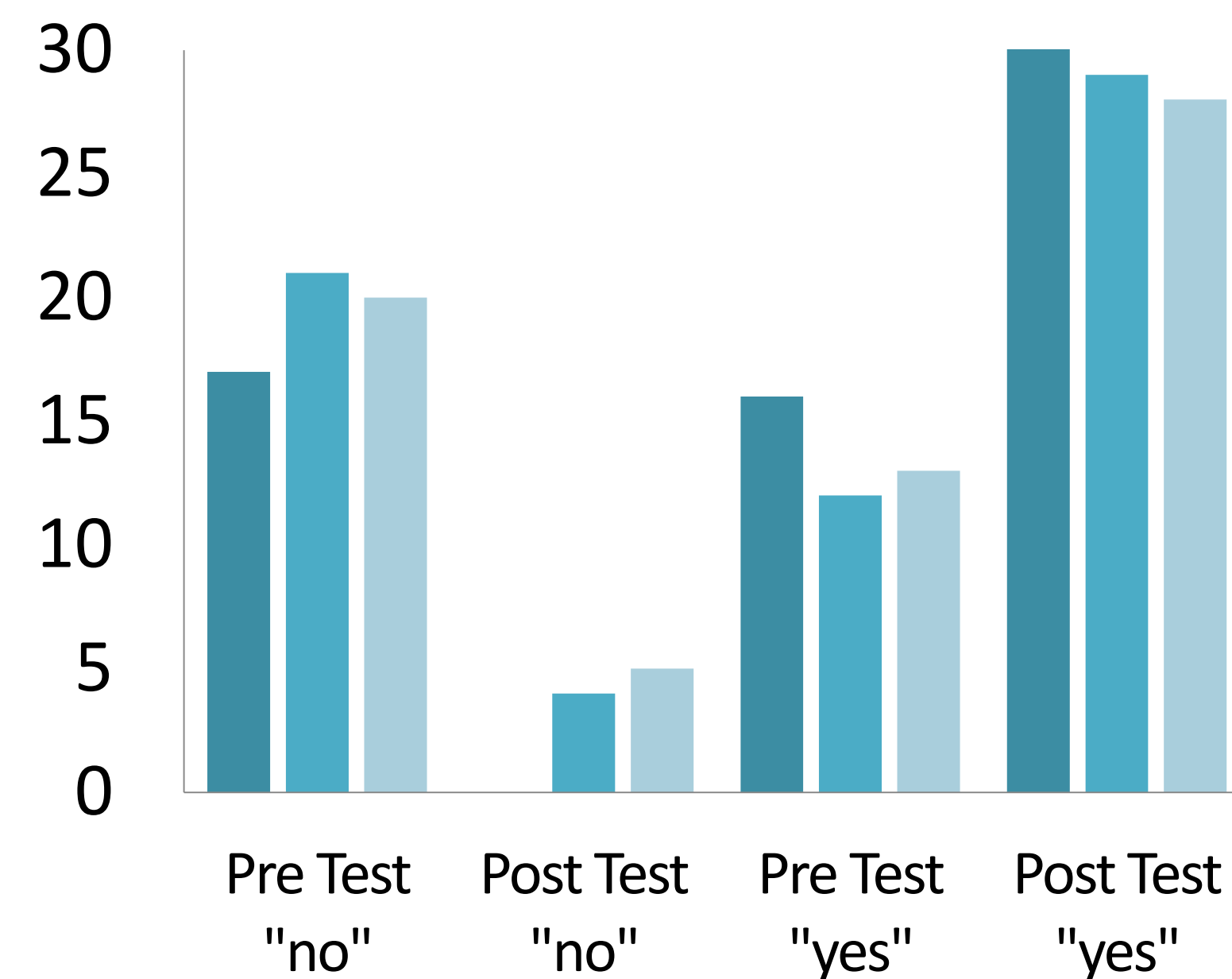
## Purpose

The purpose of the project was to encourage caregiver involvement in a clinic-based literacy promotion project that would increase routine reading time to their children.

## Project Activities

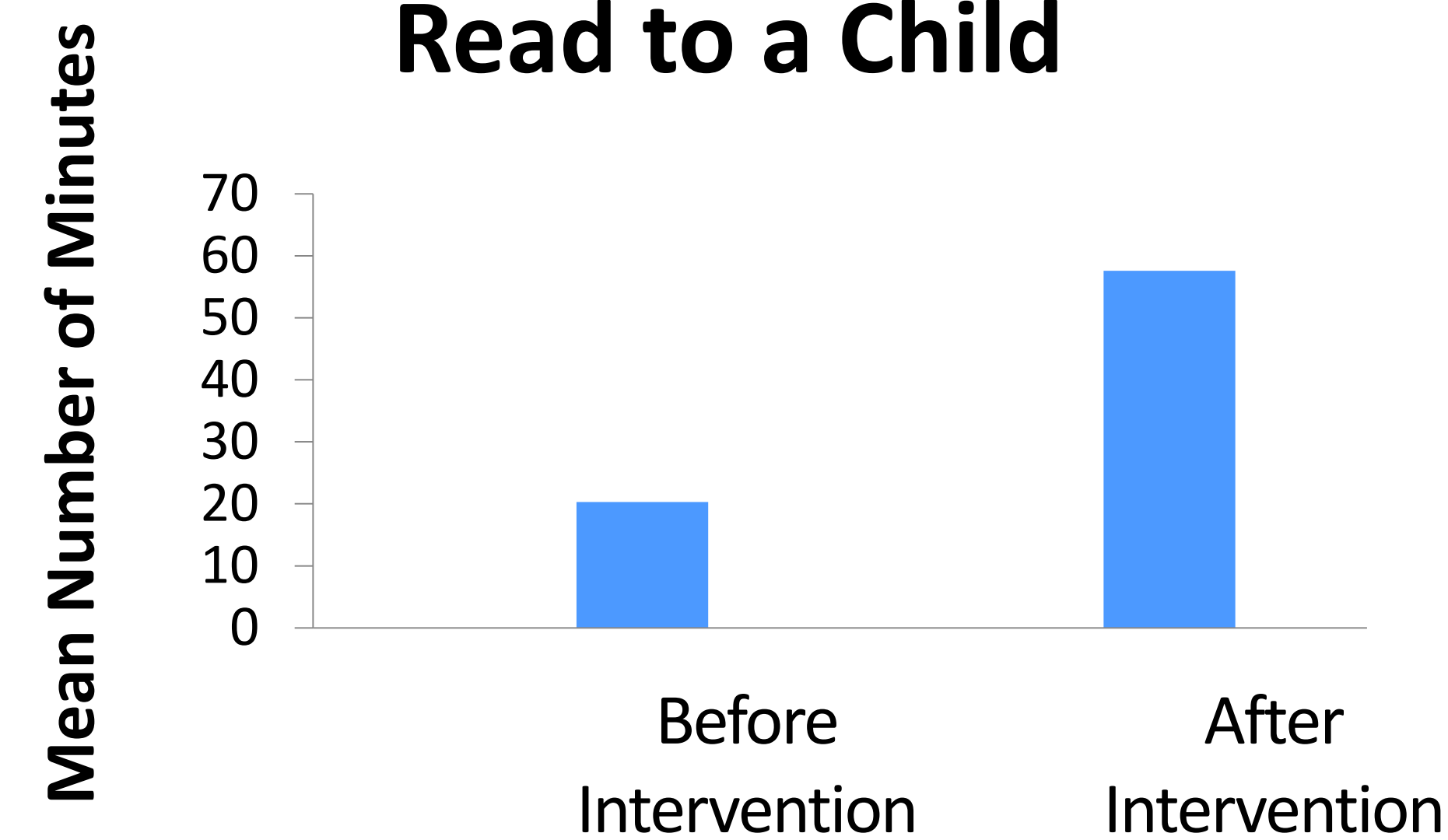
This was a pre and post test quality improvement project used to assess an increase in caregiver reading time to children ages five and under. The project took place over the span of four months. A total of 33 caregivers completed the pre test survey, intervention, and post test survey two to four weeks later. Steps used for the project include the following: the author explained the correlations between reading with young children, language development, and school readiness, handouts with statistical findings and useful tips associated with reading, singing, and talking to children was provided. While in the office, all eligible caregivers completed a Dolly Parton Imagination Library application; the author submitted the application. Directions to the nearest library, a library card application, and bookmarks were also provided. An interpreter was used for Spanish speaking families. IRB approval was obtained through Northwestern State University.

## Reading Survey Responses



- Has Anyone Talked About the Importance of Reading?
- Do You Read to Your Child?
- Does Your Child Enjoy When You Read to Them?

## Reported time per Week Read to a Child



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## Project Methods

Clinical significance was defined using McNemar's Test. Pre and post test questionnaire responses were compared using an excel spreadsheet. There was statistical significance among the pre test and post test scores indicating the intervention was effective.

- Greater than 50% of caregivers answered "no" in pre test responses to reading variables
- Greater than 80% of caregivers answered "yes" in post test responses to reading variables
- Before the intervention, a weekly average of 20 minutes was spent reading to a child
- After the intervention a weekly average of 57 minutes was spent reading to a child

## Project/Leadership Outcomes

The organization benefitted directly in the following ways: increased patient compliance with scheduled appointments, increase in number of new patient referrals, improved employee/patient relationship, and approved funding for Reach out and Read

The leadership journey during this project was vast. In the midst of having to change plans when least expected, this project was one thing that remained constant. By focusing on goals/plans, one must learn to adapt in any environment. Dream big, and never give up.

## Beneficiaries

- # of pediatricians: 2
- # of nurses: 4
- # of children less than 1: 3
- # of children age 1: 13
- # of children age 2: 2
- # of children age 3: 5
- # of children age 4: 9



## Conclusions

Reading 20 minutes per day has been shown to increase a child's cognitive and emotional development. By explaining to caregivers of children ages 5 and under the benefits of reading, children are more likely to flourish in meeting developmental milestones and are more likely to succeed academically. Despite a small sample size, this project showed that a simple educational intervention is an effective means of increasing caregiver reading time with children. Caregivers were excited to share an increase in their child's language skills, and were more likely to return for a scheduled appointment. Limitations were as follows: not all participants had a working phone number to complete the post test questionnaire, not all area codes were eligible for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program, many of the caregivers did not have transportation to take children to the library, and Hispanic families that were not documented were hesitant to apply for a library card.

## Future Implications

The project is to continue at David Raines Community Health Center however, improvements in data collection will be made. Books associated with Reach Out and Read will be given to the patient following a well child check. The project may also be initiated at another David Raines Community Health Center in Northwest Louisiana.

## References

- Larson, K., Russ, S., Nelson, B., et al. (2015). Cognitive ability at kindergarten entry and socioeconomic status, *Pediatrics*, 135(2), 440-451.  
O'Keefe, L. (2014). Parents who read to their children nurture more than literacy skills. *AAP News*, 35(8).