

Nagle & Associates

FAMILY PLACE LIBRARIES™ MODEL FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

A Report by:

Ami Nagle
Mariel Beasley
Sarah Griffiths
Catherine Jahnes
Sabine Schoenbach

February 1, 2016

Introduction and Overview

In early 2012, Middle Country Public Library asked Nagle & Associates to develop and implement a multi-year evaluation of its Family Place Libraries™ initiative. This evaluation was distinct from previous evaluation efforts because of its size (originally including 28 libraries from across the United States), duration (2012-2015), and range of informants (collecting information from library staff and leadership, parents, and community partners). Further, this evaluation is unique because of the wide variety of indicators of change it explored. Finally, this evaluation also was unique because it followed a cohort of Family Place Libraries™ from their initial training through two years of implementation.

The goal of this project was to evaluate the Family Place Libraries™ model for early childhood and family services as a vehicle for institutional change. To address this, the evaluation assessed:

- **Staff Change:** changes in children’s librarians’ and library leadership’s attitudes and practices,
- **Library Culture Change:** organizational dynamics, investment in children’s services, and attitudes towards children’s services among all staff, and
- **Change in External Position of Library:** among parents, resource professionals, and community agencies.

A logic model (see Appendix A) that calls forth four goals guides the work of the Family Place Libraries™ initiative. The goals include:

- Create a library culture and staff capacity that support the development of the Family Place Libraries™ model for early childhood and family support services.
- Implement the Family Place Libraries™ model for early childhood and family support services.
- Establish the library as a key institution and community partner that serves the information and education needs of families and young children.
- Develop parents’ knowledge and use of the library as an early childhood and family resource center.

Within the logic model, each goal is further articulated with a series of program outcomes.

Purpose and Structure of the Final Report: The purpose of this final report is to address the degree to which the Family Place Libraries™ initiative met its program goals and objectives as outlined in the logic model and to provide some insights as to why (or why not) progress was made on meeting goals and objectives based on a variety of data points and sources.

The evaluation team collected a large quantity of information on the Family Place Libraries™ initiative over the past three years. We use the logic model goals and objectives to help organize and display the information. Given the variety of informants—librarians, library directors, staff, parents, and community members—we try to provide multiple perspectives on the objectives to create a full, and complex, picture. The end of the report provides some additional themes that the evaluation team believe are worth raising.

The final report is organized into six sections and two appendices:

Section I. Summary of Findings

Section II. Create a library culture and staff capacity that support the development of the Family Place Libraries™ model for early childhood and family support services.

Section III. Implement the Family Place Libraries™ model for early childhood and family support services.

Section IV. Establish the library as a key institution and community partner that serves the information and education needs of families and young children.

Section V. Develop parents' knowledge and use of the library as an early childhood and family resource center.

Section VI. Additional themes

Appendix A. Family Place Libraries™ Logic Model

Appendix B. Methodological Notes

Appendix C. Participating Library Sites

Methodological Approach: The evaluation team used a mixed informant and mixed method approach to the Family Place Libraries™ evaluation.

Throughout the report, we refer to these informants as:

- **Librarians:** These were the key Family Place Libraries™-trained librarians at each location. These librarians were primarily responsible for the implementation of the program, but did rely on other staff within the library to achieve program goals. These staff were most likely to be making decisions about and implementing the core aspects of the Family Place Libraries™ program.
- **Library Directors:** The Directors of each implementing library (or library system) were asked to participate in this evaluation because of their knowledge of larger institutional forces.
- **Staff:** These key informants represent other staff (not key librarian) of the Family Place Libraries™ site. Staff come from a variety of departments, including adult, children's, circulation, administration, communications, etc. Staff were asked to participate in the evaluation in order to provide another view of implementation from the perspective of staff less invested in Family Place Libraries™ implementation but very invested in the culture and operation of their worksite (the participating library).
- **Parents:** These key informants represent parents and caregivers of children under age five who use the library. For simplicity, throughout the evaluation we use the label "parents" to mean parents and caregivers (for example, grandparents). To help complete our understanding of the perspective of and impact on parents, hearing directly from them was essential. Most of the parents who informed this evaluation were frequent users of

the library and all had been to their local library in the last year. The names of these parents were largely provided by participating library sites, though for one data collection tool (virtual focus group), we were able to include other local parents. It should be noted that all of our parent information is based on self-assessment. That is, we did not collect direct observations of parents and their children.

- **Community Partners:** These key informants represent public and private agencies (organizations) libraries connected with for their programming. To help complete our understanding of the connections between community partners and the library, hearing directly from community partners was critical. Names of community partners were generated by librarians.

To collect data from these key informants, we used a variety of tools—surveys, interviews, and focus groups. A quick overview of tools includes:

- Pre- and post-Family Place Libraries™ training surveys
- Library Director interviews
- Library Director survey
- Librarian surveys
- Librarian interviews
- Baseline surveys
- Staff surveys
- Parent surveys
- Parent Child Workshop pre- and post-program surveys
- Parent interviews
- In-person and virtual focus groups with parents
- Community partner survey
- Community partner interviews

Each of these tools is referred to by name in this report to help give the reader some context. A detailed list of tools, their implementation timeline, and response rates can be found in Appendix B.

Participating Libraries: To assess how much change the libraries have experienced and to what degree it is related to Family Place Libraries™, we need to start with an understanding of the:

- Initial degree to which key library staff understand child development principles;
- Original level of staffing;
- Construction of space prior to implementation; and
- Institutional commitment to improve connections between the library and families with young children.

At the start of the evaluation, there were 28 participating libraries in the program (six were stand-alone libraries and 22 were branches within nine systems). At the conclusion of the evaluation, 25 participating libraries remained in the program. Of the remaining libraries, six were stand-alone libraries and the other 19 were branches within seven library systems. The participating library sites were from all a variety of locations across the nation—from Southwest to Midwest to Central—and represent a variety of communities—urban, suburban, and small town. A list of participating library sites can be found in Appendix C.

Prior to Family Place Libraries™ implementation, according to the 2013 baseline survey:

- The average number of full-time employees in the children’s department was three, with a high of 11 and a low of zero (one library had only part-time staff).

- Participating libraries offered, on average, five regularly scheduled programs for young children. These programs each served an average of about 8,515 families annually.
- However, almost half of the libraries did not offer any regularly scheduled programs for parents.
- Only 27% limited the number of participants for programs for young children.
- 55% of the library staff had presented at regional or national library conferences.
- 24% of the children's departments maintained a listing of community resources for parents.
- 59% of the libraries were members of an early childhood or parent coalition.

In addition, based on the training survey, the majority of key librarians were familiar with Family Place Libraries™ before starting the program and felt this would build on the work their library was already doing. And, 24% reported having received formal training in brain or infant and toddler development.

Finally, it is important to note that the libraries chosen to participate in this Family Place Libraries™ training cohort and evaluation were selected because of assumptions by Middle Country Public Library staff that the libraries had the capacity and institutional support to successfully implement the program. All participating libraries had to enter a contract agreeing to send staff to training, implement the model, receive site visits and technical assistance from Middle Country Public Library, and participate in the evaluation. This selection on key participation characteristics likely sets these libraries apart from the general library population.

Based on these starting points, it is important to note that the libraries that participated in this initiative did not start with a blank slate. All of them had a children's program already in operation. All of them had some form of a children's space. Many of them had already been working to improve their early childhood and family program offerings, and, all of them had interest in and willingness to transform their programs along the lines of Family Place Libraries™ as a requirement of acceptance into the initiative.

Departures: As with any multi-year, multi-site initiative, some participating libraries left the program. Over the course of the initiative, two library systems¹ and four Library Directors left the program. Exit interviews conducted with key library contacts of library systems that left the program indicated that several forces influenced their exit. The two systems that left the effort faced significant staff turnover and inability to pay to have new staff trained in the Family Place Libraries™ approach due to resource constraints (the model requests that participating sites have an officially Family Place Libraries™-trained staff member). Other institutional challenges included larger scale space changes that were already underway that prohibited the required changes of planned Family Place Libraries™ program spaces.

Interestingly, staff turnover, which occurred at a variety of levels in most other participating libraries, did not have as substantial a negative impact as it did on the sites that left the initiative.

¹ As of December 2015, the two library systems that left the Family Place Libraries™ program are Boulder Public Library (Colorado) and Grand Rapids Public Library (Michigan).

And, while other sites faced space challenges, they did not undermine the ability of the library to implement the program.

Significance Levels: Throughout this report we provide perspectives on differences and changes. Sometimes differences and changes are due to random variation. Statistical tests help us understand the chance that a change in numbers or percentages are due to random chance versus real forces. In figures that examine change over time in this report, where possible, we note if a change has a significance level of .10, .05 or .01. A significance level of .01 indicates that there is only a 1% chance that the observed change is random. A significance level of .05 indicates that there is only a 5% chance that the observed change is random. Typically, changes with significance levels above .10 are considered due to chance rather than the forces being studied. Significance tests are not used on all figures due to variations in data sources. A number of our data points rely on small numbers of survey respondents. Significance tests can have difficulty identifying significant change with small datasets. As such, we included a range data points, but noted (where possible) their significance levels.

Section I. Summary of Findings

This evaluation looked at a broad range of goals and indicators and used a number of tools to help inform its work. While substantial detail appears later in the report, the evaluation team developed a quick overview of some of the key findings to make this work more digestible.

A logic model was used to guide the work of the Family Place Libraries™ initiative. Similarly, the evaluation team used the logic model to create data collection tools and structure the final report. Table 1 provides a quick overview of findings based on the Family Place Libraries™ logic model. Evaluation results are categorized as ‘Failed to Achieve’, ‘Moderate Progress’, ‘Good Progress’, and ‘Achieved’.

Table 1. Summary of Assessment of Family Place Libraries™ Goals

Goal	Indicator	General Assessment
Create a library culture and staff capacity that support the development of the Family Place Libraries model for early childhood and family support services.	Administrator and staff will participate in the Family Place Libraries™ Training Institute and related online training.	Achieved
	Library leadership will increase their knowledge, awareness, and support of Family Place Libraries™ objectives and the library’s role as a family support institution.	Achieved
	Family Place Libraries™ training participants will share knowledge of Family Place Libraries™ and the full range of services for young children and families with library staff.	Achieved
	Staff will participate in additional online training and technical assistance activities.	Achieved
	Library leadership will express support for and readily promote library-based early childhood and family support initiatives.	Achieved
	Staff from multiple departments will help connect families with Family Place Libraries™ and related services.	Achieved
	Staff from multiple departments will have increased ability to promote the role of the library in early childhood and parent support services within the library profession.	Achieved
Implement the Family Place Libraries™ model for early childhood and family support services.	Staff will create an interactive early childhood/parenting space in the children’s room including toys and collections for very young children and resources for parents.	Achieved
	Staff will plan and conduct the Parent Child Workshop.	Achieved
	Staff will have increased familiarity with key research on child development and family support.	Achieved

Goal	Indicator	General Assessment
	Staff will be better able to identify community resources to assist parents and caregivers.	Achieved
	Staff will be active members of the early childhood and family support systems in their communities.	Achieved
	Staff will have increased competencies and skills to act as critical communicators of early childhood development, parenting, and community support information.	Achieved
	Staff and administration will have increased ability to promote Family Place Libraries™ to parents/caregivers, community organizations, and the library community.	Achieved
	Staff will assess current library services, programs, and policies offered for young children and parents/caregivers and modify to conform better to evidence-based best practice.	Achieved
Establish the library as a key institution and community partner that serves the information and education needs of families and young children.	Staff will have gained the knowledge and skills necessary to be able to raise awareness for library programs, services, and spaces that serve the needs of families and young children.	Achieved
	Staff and administration will create a communications plan that focuses on Family Place Libraries™ services.	Achieved
	Staff will create and distribute promotional and public relations materials for the Parent Child Workshop and other family-serving programs.	Achieved
	Staff will outreach to families through direct contact, media relations, and other family support agencies.	Achieved
	Library will experience increased media attention on library services for families and young children.	Achieved
	Key library staff and administration will share information with local, state, and national library organizations.	Achieved
	Key family support agency partners will refer families to the library for early learning materials and activities, parenting information, and support.	Good Progress
	Community family support agencies will partner with the library and acknowledge it as a community asset for families and young children.	Achieved

Goal	Indicator	General Assessment
Develop parents'/caregivers' knowledge and use of the library as an early childhood and family resource center.	Parents, caregivers, and children will attend the Parent Child Workshop and interact with the children's librarian and family support professionals.	Achieved
	Parents will have increased awareness that the library is a place to connect with other parents and family-serving professionals.	Achieved
	Parents will have access to interactive developmentally appropriate learning spaces, collections, and resources and understand how to use them with their children.	Achieved
	Parents will have increased knowledge of ways in which they can support children's development.	Achieved
	Parents will meet family support professionals and have increased awareness of the library as a source of community information and early intervention resources.	Achieved
	Families with young children will increase the use of library programs, collections, and spaces.	Good Progress
	Parents will increase the time sharing books and engaging in developmentally appropriate play and communication with their children.	Achieved
	Parents will meet other parents and have a decreased sense of isolation.	Achieved

Section II. Create a library culture and staff capacity that support the development of the Family Place Libraries™ model for early childhood and family support services.

To achieve this goal, the logic model notes that the initiative would expose lead staff and administration to the core components of the model. These program leaders would then share that knowledge with other non-Family Place Libraries™ staff and continue to develop their knowledge and skills in order to build and support the model.

Summary: Based on evaluation data, 100% of the libraries were trained in the model and (at the very start) more than 50% of trainees were strongly in favor of becoming a Family Place Libraries™ program. Library leadership demonstrated increased knowledge and ability to understand and implement the key components, even when faced with staff turnover. Also, library leadership expressed considerable support for Family Place Libraries™ because of its impact.

Evidence indicates that knowledge was shared with other staff in the library. For example, 90% of key librarians reported an increase in awareness of the Family Place Libraries™ model among other library staff and all but three staff could accurately describe the impact of Family Place Libraries™ programming on their library. While knowledge increased, staff could not always identify how that knowledge was gained. There is strong evidence that the understanding and promotion of Family Place Libraries™ transcended the children’s area. For example, 82% of staff from departments outside the children’s department could explain the core tenets of the Family Place Libraries™ program.

Enthusiasm for Family Place Libraries™ was high at the start and was sustained over the course of the initiative. In fact, all sites plan to continue the program even after completion of the initiative.

Findings based on initiative outcomes include:

Administrator and staff will participate in the Family Place Libraries™ Training Institute and related online training.	ACHIEVED
Staff will participate in additional online training and technical assistance activities.	ACHIEVED

- **Training:** Each participating library sent at least one staff member and one administrator to the official Family Place Libraries™ training at the start of the initiative. In total, 51 people from 28 libraries were trained over three training sessions.²

² An additional five staff from participating libraries attended trainings at later dates. These staff were either new hires or brought on to the Family Place Libraries™ Library Initiative due to other internal staff changes.

- **Additional Online Training:** As of late 2014 (librarian survey), 95% of respondents had participated in online trainings offered by Family Place Libraries™.
- **Site Visits:** Each participating library received an in-person site visit from staff of Middle Country Public Library (national program team). These site visits provided an opportunity for the library site to demonstrate the progress they were making, hear reflections from the national program team, and receive technical assistance.
- **Interest:** In addition to being exposed to the model, there also needed to be an interest or desire to implement the program. According to the late 2013 librarian survey, over 50% reported being strongly in favor of taking on Family Place Libraries™. Only 15% were neutral or against implementation.

Despite the challenges of implementation and staff and leadership turnover, interest in implementing the model remained high throughout the program. According to the fall 2015 librarian and Library Director interviews, all sites plan to continue using the Family Place Libraries™ model. In fact, many librarians described ways they plan to expand or alter programming to help meet the needs of families and their institutions. For example, one site plans to take its Parent Child Workshop “on the road” through a mobile version that can go out to more remote and isolated parts of their service area. Thus, they will be bringing the toys, books, and community-service professionals to families rather than exclusively asking families to come to them.

Library leadership will increase their knowledge, awareness, and support of Family Place Libraries™ objectives and the library’s role as a family support institution.	ACHIEVED
---	-----------------

Across a variety of tools, library staff and administration demonstrated a high level of knowledge, awareness, and support of Family Place Libraries™ objectives. Staff, both of the children’s department and other departments, noted that Family Place Libraries™ aligns with their libraries’ mission of serving young families. When starting with a high level of understanding, any change or movement is moderate.

- **Training:** There is excellent evidence from the pre- and post-training surveys that participants increased their knowledge of critical program components and early childhood development practices. A sampling of evidence includes:
 - **Early Childhood Best Practice:** Before the training, 49% of the participants believed that asking preschoolers to sit and learn how to focus on tasks increases children’s attention span. After the training, only 18% reported that belief (statistically significant at the .05 level).
 - **Space/Materials:** When asked to rate a series of questions (on a scale where one is “strongly disagree” and 10 is “strongly agree”) regarding the library space, the statement, “Toys for dramatic play are not appropriate for the public library floor” received the lowest average score before the training (1.76), but after the training,

“Toys should be on higher shelves and not openly accessible to very young children” received the lowest average score (1.36). This difference in scores illustrates that librarians gained knowledge about ways to use their space to promote early childhood best practices (including placement of toys).

- **Programming:** The greatest change in score (on a scale where one is “strongly disagree” and 10 is “strongly agree”) was for the statement “Limiting group size is essential for creating quality early childhood programs,” which increased from 6.41 to 8.47 (statistically significant at the .05 level). This illustrates that participants trained in the model were gaining knowledge about early childhood best practices (including limiting group size).

Many of the librarians entering into this Family Place Libraries™ project already had some knowledge of quality early childhood developmental programming. However, all indicated that they learned something new as a result of training and exposure to the model. The most frequent new information included “new ideas for developmentally appropriate programming,” and “the importance of play to literacy.”

Given the high level of pre-initiative awareness, increases in knowledge, awareness, and support for Family Place Libraries™ objectives are modest.

- **Librarians:** As noted in the training results above, librarians participating in the Family Place Libraries™ model had a fairly strong understanding of key elements of the model after the training. Their understanding continued and grew throughout the initiative. It is important to note that having a library staff member formally trained in the Family Place Libraries™ model was a condition of participation. While there was turnover in key staff, all libraries participating in the initiative at the end of 2015 had staff who had participated in training. This provided tremendous continuity in understanding and implementing the model.

For some librarians, Family Place Libraries™ training provided them the language with which to talk about and the research to back up what they had already started to put in place. It validated what they already knew or believed and helped them to be more intentional in their approach. As one librarian said:

“Things that already existed were tweaked so we thought of it in [a more] purposeful way. The training made us step back and think about engaging parents in a purposeful way.”

In addition, many library staff reported that their understanding of the elements of the model grew over time. While they understood the elements of the programs and the research behind the model as a result of training, it was not until they had implemented the model for several months to a year that they had a deeper understanding of their library’s role, their role as staff, and the role of others in the library in supporting families in new ways. As one librarian said:

“We had a pretty good selection of programs for families before we started. The training was really helpful because I felt I could back-up what we were doing with

research and got a lot of new ideas. But, it wasn't until we really started to put some of that into practice, to really work with families in a new way, that I learned what my approach was going to be, how I was going to use all this new knowledge in this library. It took some time for me to take it from paper to real life."

- **Library Directors:** The Family Place Libraries™ program has enjoyed very strong support from Library Directors since the start of the initiative. According to the 2014 Library Director survey, 88% of Directors reported that the Family Place Libraries™ program had exceeded their expectations. In interviews (fall 2015), Directors were asked to describe what a Family Place Libraries™ approach is. All of the Directors were able to provide a description of the initiative. As one said:

"Family Place brings together the critical elements for families—reading and learning, a relationship with a knowledgeable staff equipped with tools to support families, an opportunity to discover family learning in a new way, a place to meet others in the community and form strong cohort relationships."

Many Directors felt that the Family Place Libraries™ program aligned with their missions and gave more structure to what they were already working toward.

<p>Family Place Libraries™ training participants will share knowledge of Family Place Libraries™ and the full range of services for young children and families with library staff.</p>	<p>ACHIEVED</p>
--	------------------------

- **Librarians:** According to the 2013 librarian survey, 90% of librarians reported that there had been an increase in awareness of the Family Place Libraries™ model among other library staff (with the majority of this change attributed to participation in the Family Place Libraries™ initiative).

In the 2015 librarian interviews, librarians described their efforts to educate and engage other staff members. Librarians recognized the value of having buy-in from other staff members, both in being tolerant of play and noise and of being able to communicate the importance of play to patrons. Even in libraries in which other staff were already supportive of the philosophy, Family Place Libraries™ librarians talked about efforts to educate other staff by making presentations at staff meetings, inviting staff into the Workshops, or having informal conversations about the values behind Family Place Libraries™. Librarians talked about the importance of being armed with the Family Place Libraries™ terminology and research to be able to relay the importance of the program to other staff, especially in "adult land." As librarians said:

"At first, folks didn't know what the point of them (the program) was. Now they get it more. Those librarians in "adult-land" just didn't get it. We've spent time at staff meetings explaining what we are doing, and now that they have walked by and seen it and heard it, they understand it."

“[Other staff] are more aware that the kids are not just being loud, that there is an educational purpose to this.”

- **Staff:** When staff (summer 2014) were asked about exposure to the Family Place Libraries™ model, most indicated they had some exposure, but there was some variation in the staff’s reported exposure and experience with Family Place Libraries™. About 48% said they had not participated in any Family Place Libraries™ activities. On the other hand, almost one third of respondents reported participating in an internal meeting about the Family Place Libraries™ initiative. Almost 19% helped design and set up the Family Place Libraries™ space and about 10% noted that they had helped create or distribute promotional materials for the Parent Child Workshop.

These results held consistent a year later. In the fall 2015 staff survey, 52% of staff surveyed reported that they had not participated in any specific Family Place Libraries™ activities. Similar to 2014, more than one third of respondents reported participating in an internal meeting about the Family Place Libraries™ initiative. Almost 17% helped design and set up the Family Place Libraries™ space and about 18% helped create or distribute promotional materials for the Parent Child Workshop. Furthermore, of the 83 respondents to the 2015 staff survey, all but three could describe the import of Family Place Libraries™ program to their library. When asked how they would describe Family Place Libraries™ to a colleague, responses included:

“To provide support and education to families and caregivers of infants and young children, the library has a specific area set aside in the children’s department for adult/child interactive play and learning.” (Adult Assistant Librarian)

“To help parents in our area learn how to interact with their children through play and learning.” (Teen Library Assistant)

It is approaching early literacy by giving parents more tools and resources for playing and engaging with their children and fostering literacy from birth to school. (Shelver)

“It’s a concerted effort by the library to provide a multitude of workshops, story times and activities that focus on developing reading skills in children, and in giving parents the tools to continue to focus on developing literacy for their children.” (Communications Specialist)

While staff with a connection to the children’s department had the easiest time explaining the import of Family Place Libraries™, ability to describe it was not limited to these staff.

Library leadership will express support for and readily promote library-based early childhood and family support initiatives.

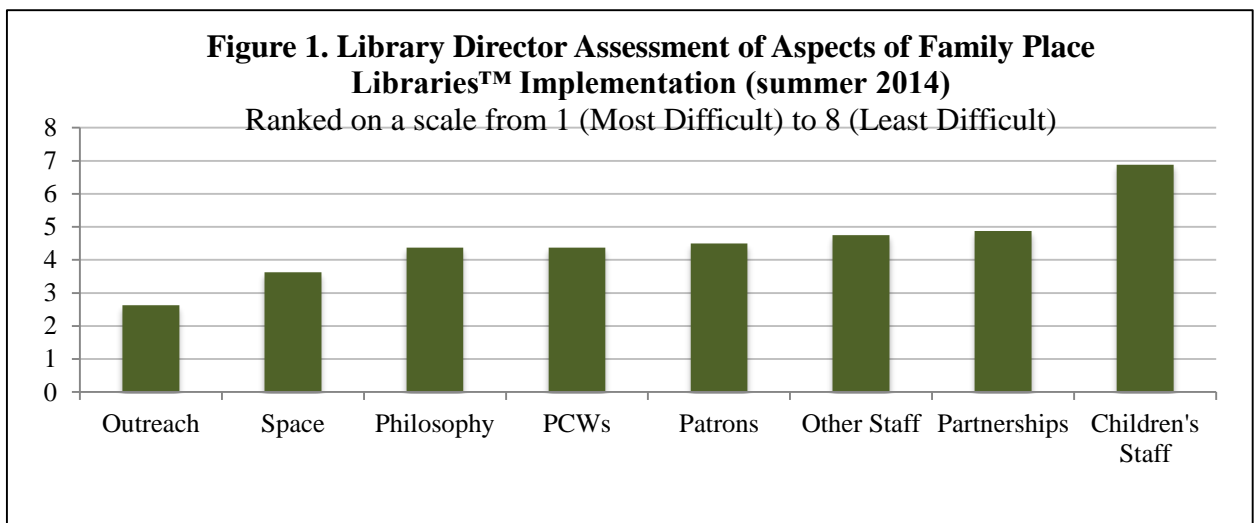
ACHIEVED

- **Librarians:** According to the late 2013 librarian survey, 90% of librarians reported an increase in support among library leadership for Family Place Libraries™.

This sentiment was repeated in the summer 2014 librarian interviews in which more than one third of interviewees explicitly stated that administration and staff have demonstrated interest in and support for the Family Place Libraries™ programs. The vast majority of librarians continued to feel supported by their administration late into the initiative (fall 2015). In fact, 96% of librarians believed the library would continue the Family Place Libraries™ program even if they (as key staff) left. According to librarians, the continuation of the development of the space, programs, and community partnerships were less dependent on the presence of a specific librarian, but highly dependent on the support of the administration.

- **Library Directors:** According to the Library Director survey (summer 2014), Directors felt well-informed of the Family Place Libraries™ model and programming and all were supportive. However, it is important to note that Library Directors indicate that their libraries were undertaking other changes during the implementation of Family Place Libraries™ and they had difficulty attributing specific changes to Family Place Libraries™.

While enthusiastic, library directors did find the implementation challenging. Figure 1 charts their ranking of most difficult (score of one) to easiest (score of eight) elements of the model to implement.



Source: Library Director Survey, summer 2014. There is a statistically significant difference between outreach and children's staff (.01 level). The inner options are not statistically different from each other.

Late in the initiative, Library Directors continued to express support for Family Place Libraries™ and many were very enthusiastic about their library's role in promoting quality early childhood experiences. As one Director said:

“We are a critical part of the fabric of community. Early literacy is one of our main priorities. If we get to kids early we can change their lives. We're part of the wrap-around services that any child and family would need.”

When asked about the value of Family Place Libraries™ to their institutions, Library Directors reported (fall 2015 interviews):

- **Early Brain Development:** Family Place Libraries™ makes sure that families and community partners are aware of the research on brain development and the role the library plays in building young brains. As one Director said:
“We know that the most important stage of brain development is 0-3. If young children are not ready for school they will struggle with all areas of cognitive development, language development, reading and learning. It makes perfect sense for the library to be a leader, but it takes a village.”
- **Reading and Kindergarten Readiness:** Many see the Family Place Libraries™ program as critical to helping promote school readiness. It is a piece of the lifelong literacy work that the library holds. As one Director said:
“If children can become proficient early, it changes their lives”.
- **Gateway to Lifelong Learning:** Family Place Libraries™ is where communities start to create lifelong learners. As one Director said:
“It's important to get families through the door so we can connect them to resources for [the] spectrum of lifelong learning.”
- **Building Library Users:** Library Directors also discussed the importance of the Family Place Libraries™ initiative in building value for the libraries. As one Director said:
“The community has a large population of families. They find the library welcoming and use the services—this justifies our existence. So, there is a financial element. We are also responding to community needs.”

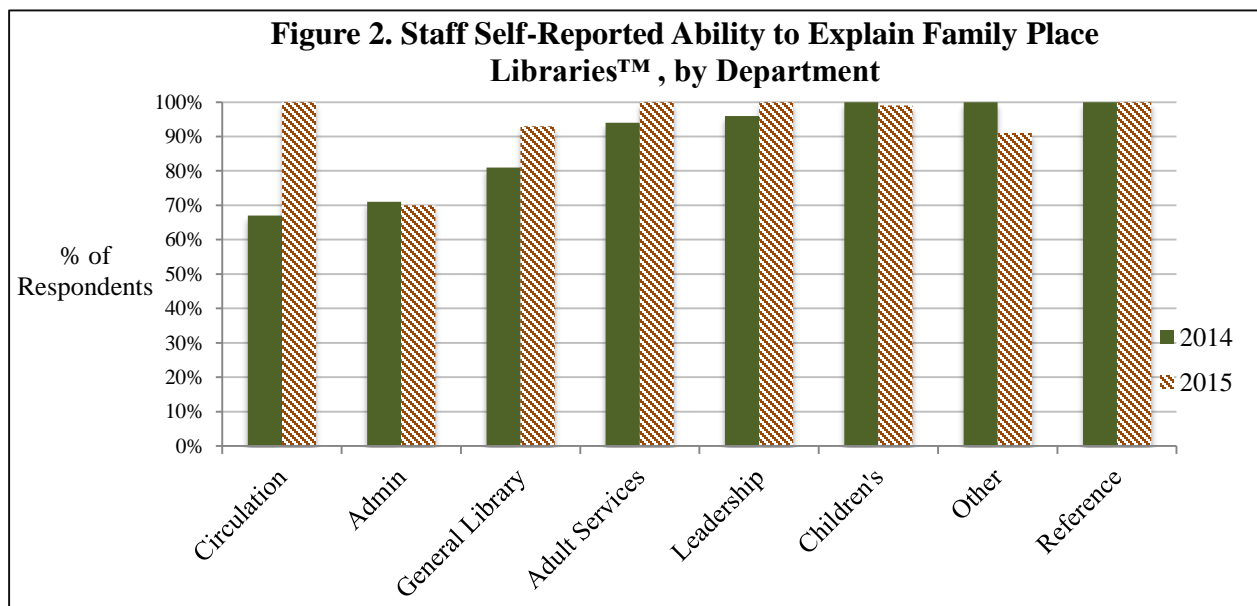
Most interestingly, we did not see a difference in knowledge or ability to support staff in implementing Family Place Libraries™ between Directors who had been part of the initiative since the start and the several who took leadership positions during the initiative. Part of this lack of observed difference might be that these new Directors were already beginning to think about the role of the library in supporting families with very young children and the role of the library with community partners and thus were supportive of the Family Place Libraries™ approach.

Staff from multiple departments will help connect families with Family Place Libraries™ and related services.

ACHIEVED

- **Staff:** While there is clear evidence that staff directly related to Family Place Libraries™ were connecting families with support services (noted in Section IV), there was some evidence that staff from other departments were also serving this role.

According to the staff survey (summer 2014), 85% of staff could explain the Family Place Libraries™ model to a colleague. As noted in Figure 2, staff associated with the children’s department and all library leadership (save one assistant manager) could explain the Family Place Libraries™ initiative. Those in general services were slightly less able to explain Family Place Libraries™.



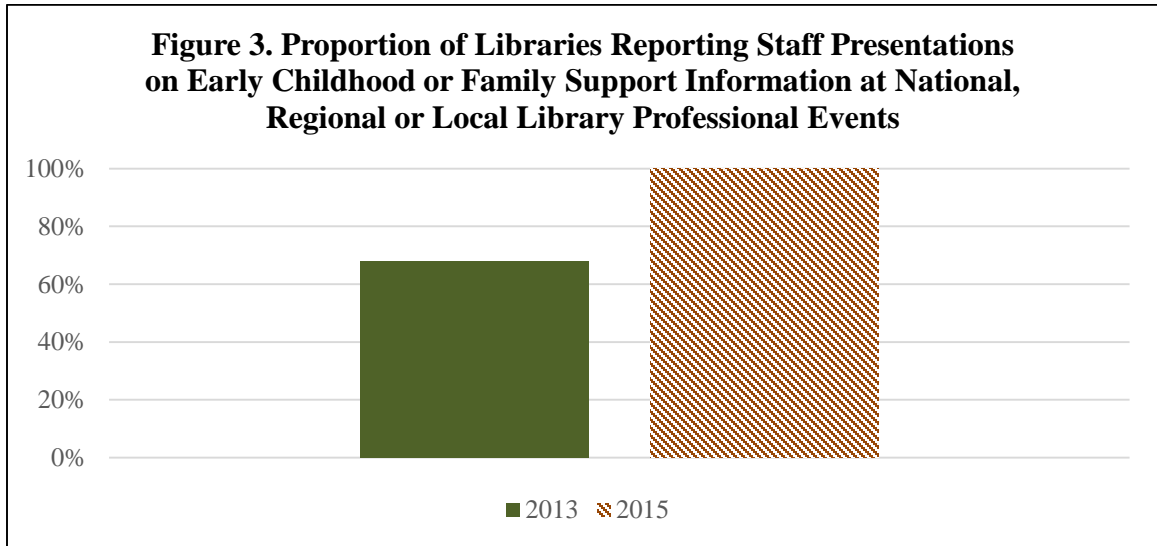
Source: Staff Survey, summer 2014 and fall 2015; Note that staff that attended Family Place Libraries™ training are not included in this chart. No differences between 2014 and 2015 are statistically significant. All are statistically different from zero at 0.01 level.

Staff will have increased ability to promote the role of the library in early childhood and parent support services within the library profession.

ACHIEVED

- **Librarians:** The librarian’s ability to promote the role of the library in early childhood development and parent support services within the library profession is a result of confidence and opportunity. As noted earlier, from the beginning of the initiative, librarians had a strong sense of the purpose of the Family Place Libraries™ model and the role of the library in supporting families with young children. This understanding grew over the course of the initiative.

According to the baseline survey (submitted in late 2013 and late 2015), there also appears to have been opportunity for library staff to promote the role of the library in early childhood and parent support in the profession. As noted in Figure 3, librarians report providing presentations to local, state, and/or national professional associations increased from 68% in 2013 to 100% in 2015.



Source: Baseline survey, 2013 and 2015. Difference is significant at the .01 level

Section III. Implement the Family Place Libraries™ model for early childhood and family support services.

To achieve this goal, the logic model notes that the program would need to create a unique space, conduct Parent Child Workshops, be familiar with child development best practice, and promote the library as a source of information for parents.

Summary: All (100%) of participating libraries substantially transformed their spaces into destinations for families with young children. In addition to being welcoming, the new spaces also use early childhood best practice. For example, the percent of libraries that had at least some parenting collection in the children’s area increased from 56% to 95%. Changes to the library’s space, addition of toys, and movement of collections were recognized and valued, though did present some challenges.

All (100%) of library sites conducted at least two Parent Child Workshops series that provided support to thousands of families. Evidence is strong that librarians increased familiarity with early childhood research and community support services and used evidence-based practices in their work. For example, 85% of librarians reported a positive change in their ability to modify programs based on child development best practices. For example, the placement of toys and books in areas where small children can reach them and the limiting of class sizes.

Staff had increased ability to share early childhood learnings and connect parents to community resources. By late 2015, 95% of librarians felt more secure in their ability to identify community resources to assist parents. More than 80% of parents report that the library has supported them in their role as parents and 65% report that staff at the library talked with them about child development. There is evidence that parents feel supported by their library regardless of whether they participated in the Parent- Child Workshop. There is strong evidence that these libraries were seen as vital and important links in their local early childhood support systems. For example, between 2013 and 2015, the percent of libraries that participated in family support coalitions increased from 59% to 79%, and community partners gave their libraries an average score of 95 out of 100 on the statement “my organization sees this library as a vital link in supporting families.”

Findings based on initiative outcomes include:

<p>Staff will create an interactive early childhood/parenting space in the children’s room including toys and collections for very young children and resources for parents.</p>	<p>ACHIEVED</p>
---	------------------------

- **Librarians:** As of the summer of 2014 librarian interviews, all librarians reported having transformed their space to incorporate the learnings of the Family Place Libraries™ model. While gratifying, altering the spaces and purchasing new furniture, books, and toys were considered two of the harder aspects of implementation. For those libraries that already had space in acceptable condition, adjusting to fit the Family Place Libraries™ approach, ordering new toys, and

rearranging the furniture was less of a problem. For those with structural space constraints or space that was part of a larger renovation, addressing the critical space component of Family Place Libraries™ was a challenge.

The new space was, however, one of the areas that librarians felt was the biggest impact of implementing Family Place Libraries™. According to the late 2014 librarian survey, 82% of librarians reported that their space had become more welcoming (with about half of that positive change due to Family Place Libraries™). By the time of the librarian interviews, space changes were one of the most discussed aspects of program implementation. Furthermore, according to the baseline survey, there was a 40% growth in libraries with a parenting collection (regardless of where the collection was located).

As of the fall 2015 interviews, librarians continued to uniformly remark about the substantial impact the space had on their jobs and parental experiences. A number of librarians used the word “destination” to describe the children’s area. No longer was the space a place to conduct transactions; it is now a place where families come to play and learn together. As one librarian said:

“We’ve become a community-based destination. The Family Place space is used every hour the library is open. It shows us the community values what we are providing.”

Particularly for librarians who work in distressed neighborhoods, the space represented an investment in the community and in families. As one librarian noted:

“This community doesn’t have many people investing in them. The parents felt like the library was.”

According to the baseline survey, libraries did see some changes between 2013 and 2015:

- **Parenting Collection:** The percent of libraries reporting having at least some of their parenting collection located in the children or youth department increased from 56% to 94% (significant at the .01 level).
- **Developmentally Appropriate Materials:** The number of different types of materials for children—toys, blocks, board books, themed kits, etc.—in the children’s area increased from 12.8 to 14.8 (significant at the .01 level).
- **Library Directors:** One of the largest impacts of the Family Place Libraries™ model noted by Directors (2014 survey and 2015 interviews) was the development of a welcoming space. Directors noted:

“Children and parents are spending more time in the Family Place area exploring and connecting with other kids and parents.”

“The introduction of toys and the special Family Place area has generated a lot of excitement and support from community families. They are pleased with that direction.”

“We had already begun the work of reengineering the kids area, making it more of a destination. Family Place accelerated this process”

While libraries did make changes to their spaces, for many it was a substantial undertaking. For those with space and resource constraints, it impacted the degree to which changes were possible. As one director said:

“The children’s area is about 360 square feet. Within that I have shelving and a play area with a few toys, but there’s no space for expansion. It’s impossible to create a true play area. It’s just too tight.”

- **Parents:** According to the parent surveys (fall 2014 and summer 2015), the most exciting change libraries undertook this past year was the space. This reaction is not surprising as the change is immediately visible. Example responses include:

“I really like all the toys and special children’s space. My daughter loves it, and there’s really nothing quite like it in town, outside of school or daycare.”

“My kids are exceptionally excited about the redesigned play area and children’s computers.”

Staff will plan and conduct the Parent Child Workshop.	ACHIEVED
---	-----------------

- **Librarians:** As of the fall 2015 interviews, all sites had implemented at least two series of the Parent Child Workshops.

According to data provided by participating libraries to Middle Country Public Library, over the course of the initiative more than 3,200 children and 2,900 adults participated in Parent Child Workshops offered by libraries in this initiative.

Staff will have increased familiarity with key research on child development and family support.	ACHIEVED
Staff will assess current library services, programs, and policies offered for young children and parents/caregivers and modify them to better conform to evidence-based best practice.	ACHIEVED

We grouped these two indicators together because key informants often discussed them in tandem.

- **Librarians:** According to the librarian survey (winter 2013), 85% of respondents indicated a positive change in their ability to modify programs based on child-development best practices. And, 81% reported a positive change in their ability to understand growth and development of young children. In the 2014 librarian interviews, several librarians noted that having a better understanding of the research has given them tools to communicate better and engage with parents of young children.

According to the baseline survey, libraries did make adjustments to programming. For example, between 2013 and 2015:

- The average number of regularly scheduled programs for young children increased from 5 to 7.
- The average number of regularly scheduled programs for parents increased from 2.5 to 3.
- The percentage of libraries that limit the number of participants in programs for young children grew (21% in 2013 and 26% in 2015).

It is important to note that while these changes are observed in the data, they are not statistically significant.

- **Library Directors:** According to the Library Director survey (summer 2014) and interviews (fall 2015), 87.5% of Directors believe that youth department staff have increased understanding of child development, are able to modify programs to represent best practices, and understand the concerns of parents as a result of participating in Family Place Libraries™. In addition, Directors attribute between 54% and 61% of the change in the last year to Family Place Libraries™. Department directors also saw positive changes in other staff promoting programs, valuing community partners, and understanding the concerns of parents. As one Director noted in the 2015 interview:

“Understanding the research has made us a better partner. We bring a researched model to the table.”

Staff will be better able to identify community resources to assist parents and caregivers.	ACHIEVED
--	-----------------

- **Librarians:** At the time of the late 2013 survey, many librarians were gaining knowledge and ability to direct families towards community services, but this milestone had not yet been reached. For example, 50% of survey respondents indicated they had seen a positive change in their ability to identify support services and less than 50% had seen a positive impact in terms of creating a database of agencies. While these changes were modest, some positive change was expressed, including:

“I have more confidence in approaching them (parents). I no longer feel like I have to know all the answers, just where to direct them for help.”

By late 2015 (interviews), almost all (95%) Family Place Libraries™ librarians felt more secure in their ability to identify community resources to assist parents. This is a substantial increase over the 50% that felt confident in their abilities at the time of the 2013 survey. Librarians shared many examples of parents getting referrals to auditory or sensory specialists that they would not have otherwise seen. As one librarian noted:

“Some (parents) wouldn’t have asked for help or even have known that they need help. We’ve had a hard time getting families to put things in writing (examples in surveys), but we know that some parents wouldn’t have known about community services.”

- **Parents:** According to the 2015 parent survey, 56% of parents received information about other community resources while at the library.

Staff will have increased competencies and skills to act as critical communicators of early childhood development, parenting, and community support information.	ACHIEVED
Staff will have increased ability to promote Family Place Libraries™ to parents/caregivers, community organizations, and the library community.	ACHIEVED

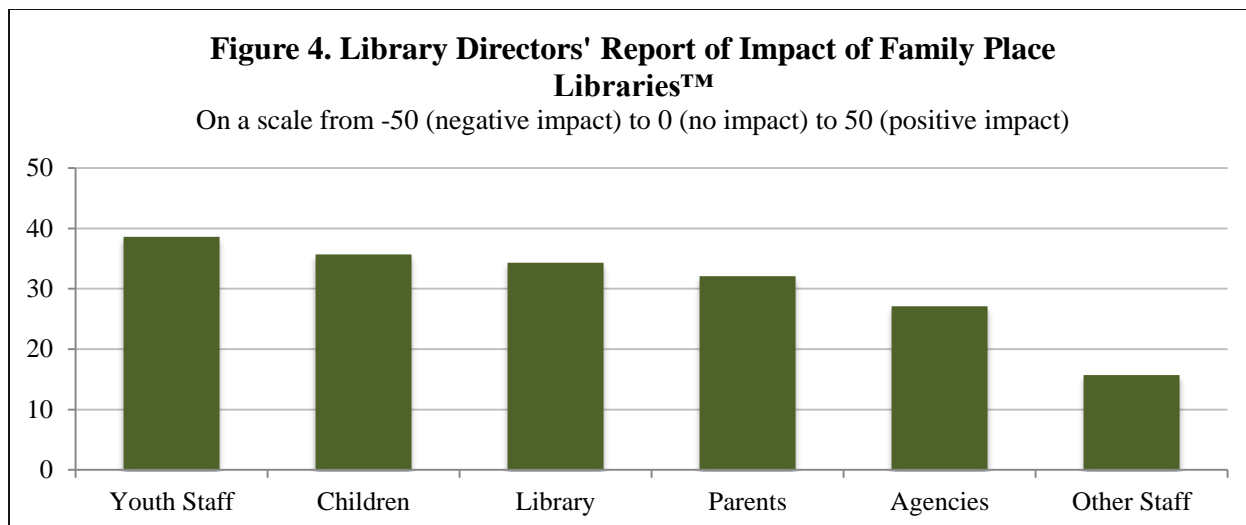
We grouped these two indicators together because key informants often discussed them in tandem.

- **Librarians:** Librarians (in the late 2013 survey, and the summer 2014 and fall 2015 interviews) indicated an increased ability to communicate early childhood development and parenting strategies, work with community partners, and to promote Family Place Libraries™. As noted by one interviewee in the summer 2014 interviews:

“All of us are engaging with them (parents) more because it’s easy to talk about (child development). It’s easy and natural to mingle in the toy areas, also post-programs like story time.”

Another librarian noted that she is now more involved with parents’ questions and gets deeper into personal details to help answer questions.

- **Library Directors:** The summer 2014 survey indicated that Library Directors thought that participating in Family Place Libraries™ was positively impacting youth staff and other constituencies. Figure 4 outlines the results.



Source: Library Director Survey, summer 2014. All are statistically different from zero at the 0.01 level, except the impact on other staff, which is significant at the 0.05 level. Responses to impact on youth staff is statistically different from impact on other staff at the 0.05 level.

The evaluation team revisited this theme with Library Directors in the fall 2015 interviews. About 90% of Library Directors interviewed reported that the staff of the children’s section had become more confident and play a more active role in engaging families with young children as a result of Family Place Libraries™. As one Director noted:

“In the children’s area, staff are more active and confident in referrals and more engaged in talking to families and playing with kids. They are changing every dynamic in the kids area.”

Several Library Directors specifically noted how library staff had altered programming to reflect new thinking and approaches to the library’s role supporting parents and children. They noted instances when Family Place Libraries™ programming helped staff to “burst out of the box.” As one Library Director noted:

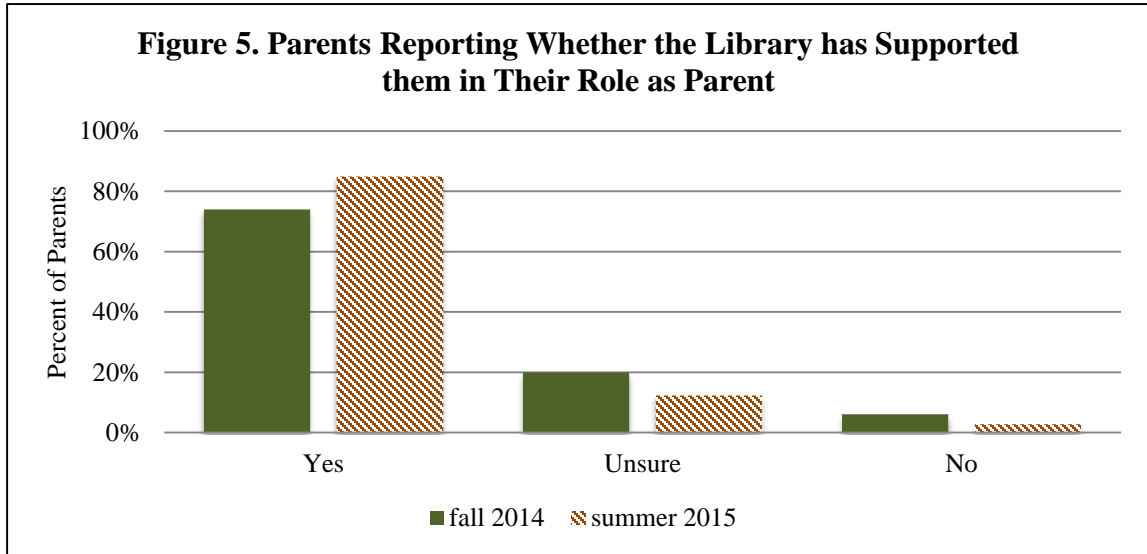
“We think less about fixed and rigid programming and more about a rich experience every time they (families) come. As a result we have liberated staff from the routines of the role so that the everyday interactions are a program in and of themselves.”

In addition, Library Directors articulated how non-librarian staff are involved in promoting early learning. As one Library Director noted:

“All the staff have more understanding. Like the custodian knows that for finger painting for 2 year olds the tables don’t get put up, they stay on the floor so that children can use them.”

- **Parents:** While information related to parental experience appears later in the report, some perspectives offered by parents help to shed light on the staff’s ability to be a critical communicator of early childhood information and to promote Family Place Libraries™ to parents.

Figure 5 illustrates that the majority (74% in 2014 and 85% in 2015) of parents report that the library has supported them in their role as a parent. When we look at the difference between parents who have participated in the Parent Child Workshop versus those who have not, we find that in 2015, 86% of parents who participated in the Parent Child Workshop reported feeling supported by the library as compared to 75% of parents who have not participated in the Workshop (this difference is significant at the .1 level). While there is an observed difference in support, the data indicates that parents, even if they did not participate in the Workshop, still feel supported by the library.



Source: Parent Survey, fall 2014 summer 2015. Differences are statistically significant at the 0.1 level.

Parents provided many examples of the ways that their local library support them, including:

“It helps me help her learn. I can find tons of books on a certain topic that we learn about for a week.”

“They (library staff) listened very attentively when I explained we wanted to learn how to teach my daughter to read, since my first language is Spanish and her’s is English, and they helped me by finding books for me to achieve this, and we did it!”

“At story times, the librarians are always so positive and talk a lot about how important parents are in their children’s lives. This positive reinforcement is great to hear.”

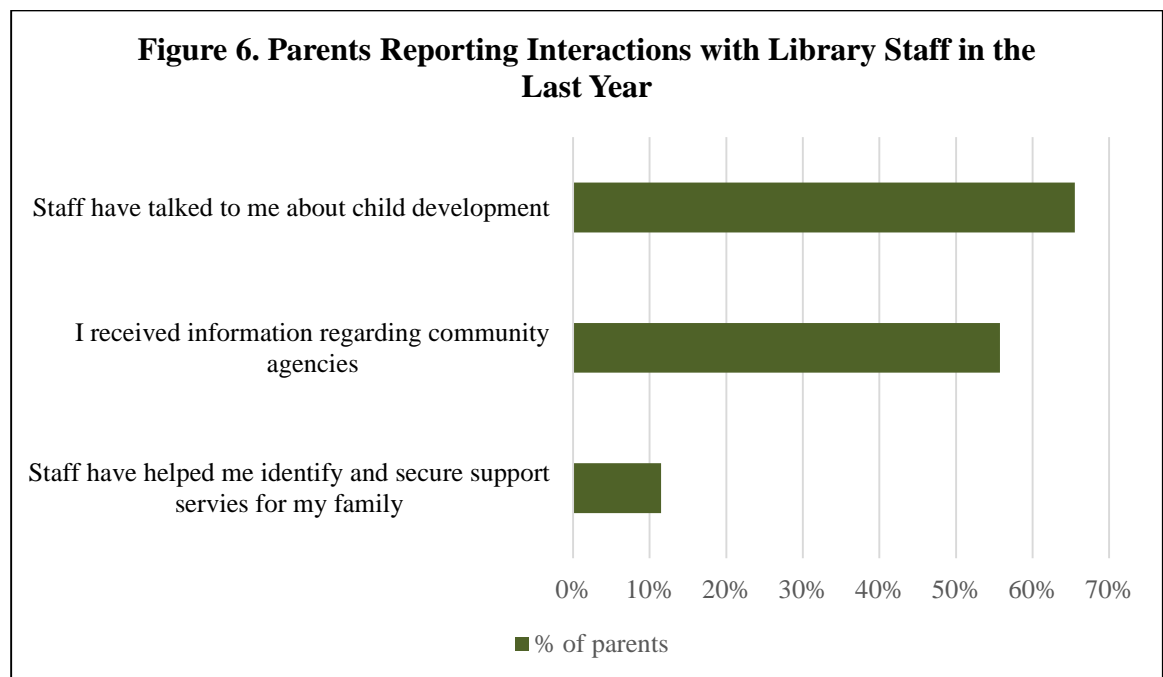
“I had never taken care of children before my daughter was born, so I wasn’t too confident communicating with her. Attending a weekly story time and a workshop gave me a lot of ideas and made me more comfortable communicating with my daughter.”

“I have been bringing my kids since they were a few months old. They are always giving me pointers on books, music, and other activities I can use to enhance my kids’ learning skills. Like dancing, using audio books, puppets, kits at the library. All this stuff I wouldn’t know if I didn’t come here.”

“I’ve attended almost all parenting classes and speaker series, and those were very helpful. I wish all parents would take the classes to learn better and positive parenting.”

“They have pointed me to a parent resource book area when I’ve questioned behavior and potty training.”

In terms of staff’s ability to act as early childhood communicators, parents provided some additional perspectives through the 2015 parent survey. Figure 6 illustrates that more than half of parents have talked with staff about child development and received information on community agencies, though about one in eight parents received help from library staff in securing service for their family.



Source: Parent survey, summer 2015. All are statistically significant different from zero at the 0.01 level.

Parents who are very regular library visitors (once or twice a week) do report larger changes in the last year regarding staff’s ability to understand parental concerns and staff’s ability to understand growth and development of young children.

The online focus group conversations raised an interesting perspective on the role of the librarian. Focus group members could clearly articulate coming to the library and obtaining information that helped them in parenting. They did not, however, see the role of their local librarian to be a child development or parenting expert. Rather, they

look to the librarian to help connect them to information (through books, magazines, websites, connections to community organizations, etc.), not necessarily to directly provide parenting advice.

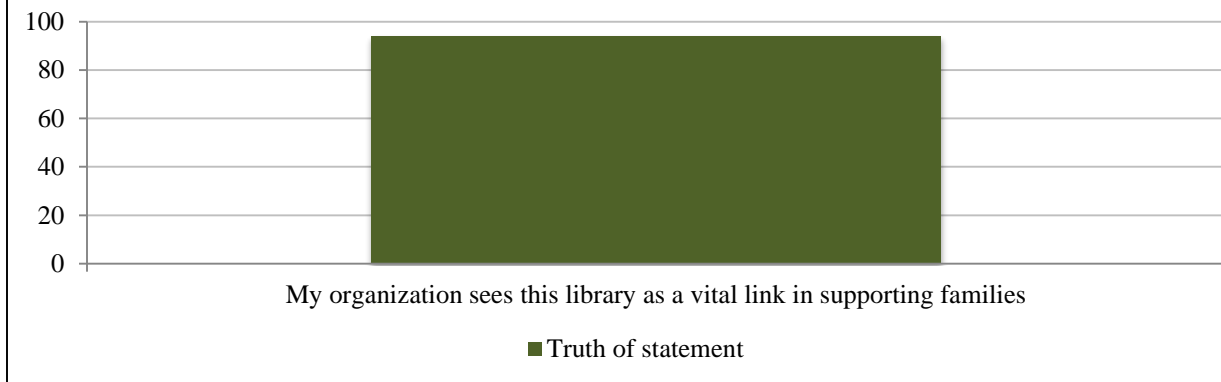
There is mixed evidence for parents directly making connections to community resources that they learned about through the library. The 2015 parent survey indicates that 57% of parents reported an increase in the library's participation with community programs. While the parents participating in the Parent Child Workshop can uniformly identify specific community resources, the case is less clear for parents who did not participate. For example, in interviews and focus groups with parents, parents who did not participate in the Parent Child Workshop were less able to identify connections they had made to community resources through the library.

Staff will be active members of the early childhood and family support systems in their communities.	ACHIEVED
---	-----------------

- **Librarians:** According to the baseline surveys and the fall 2015 librarian interviews, librarians feel that they are more active in their communities now than when they started the initiative. For example, the proportion of participating libraries reporting being an active member of a local early childhood or family support coalition increased from 59% in 2013 to 79% in 2015 (significant at the .1 level). As will be described in greater depth in a subsequent section, as reported in the fall 2015 interviews, about half of the librarians created reciprocal relationships with key community partners.
- **Community Partners:** In the summer 2015 community partner survey, the evaluation team asked community partners to identify the ways in which their local library interacted with their organization and others in the community. As can be seen in Figure 7, community partners give a 94 out of 100 “truth rating” to seeing the library as a vital link in supporting local families.

Figure 7. Community Partner Perceptions of Library Activity in Community

On a scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 100 (strongly agree)



Source: Community Partner Survey, summer 2015. This is statistically different from zero at 0.01 level. It is statistically different from 89 at the 0.05 level.

In the fall 2015 interviews, community partners provided more detail on how they view library staff as active members of the early childhood and family support community. Community partners report library staff helping them meet their program goals (like Affordable Care Act enrollment or promotion of vaccinations), being a conduit for parents to receive information, making referrals, providing space for early childhood partners, and serving on committees and taskforces.

The community partner survey (summer 2015) revealed additional perspectives:

“We collaborated for our Summer School program in order to ensure that every student enrolled in our program participated in the summer reading program provided by the library. Staff also attended several parent events that we sponsored in order to connect with parents about library cards, programming, etc.”

“We have set up information booths at the library and at other events.”

“On several instances the library helped facilitate a family to receive outside services from my agency. On several instances librarians also emailed me to find out resources for families struggling with a certain issue.”

Section IV. Establish the library as a key institution and community partner that serves the information and education needs of families and young children.

A core component of Family Place Libraries™ is to create connections to community agencies serving families with young children. To evaluate the success of this program goal, the first step is to identify whether knowledge and skills were acquired. Then, the evaluation can gauge whether activities were undertaken and determine the level of impact.

Summary: Evaluation data indicate that librarians increased their awareness of and experiences with outreach over the course of the initiative, though outreach has slowed some. All (100%) crafted communications plans as well as promotional materials. Less than half of librarians reported increasing outreach in the last year. While a plan and materials were in place, many struggled to find time to conduct more than basic outreach. Those with specific time allocated to outreach as part of their job description had ability to shift the outreach paradigm. But, the outreach libraries were doing does seem to be reaching parents. For example, 72% of parents indicated they received information about library programs in the community.

There is evidence that the libraries expanded partnerships and many created deep reciprocal relationships with core partners. For example, 83% of Library Directors reported a moderate or significant increase in community partnerships as a result of participating in Family Place Libraries™. And, 89% of libraries reported providing referrals to families. Community partners report working with libraries, including 74% who report providing outreach materials to libraries. Community partners see libraries as critical partners. Community partners provided an average score of 95 out of 100 on the statement “my organization sees this library as a vital link in supporting families.” The specific objective of providing and receiving referrals remains unclear as there was less evidence of this practice.

There is evidence of increased media activity and coverage, but word of mouth remains a strong outreach mechanism. Libraries substantially increased sharing of their model and approaches with early childhood support and professional associations (from 68% of libraries in 2013 to 100% in 2015).

Findings based on initiative outcomes include:

<p>Staff will have gained the knowledge and skills necessary to be able to raise awareness for library programs, services, and spaces that serve the needs of families and young children.</p>	<p>ACHIEVED</p>
---	------------------------

- **Training:** Exposure to the principles of community engagement was introduced at the Family Place Libraries™ training. Based on the pre- and post-training survey (spring 2013), participants already knew this was of value. Because the library staff are coming to the program with already high levels of knowledge and strong skills, observing “gains” is more difficult.

On the pre- and post-training surveys, the statement “a strong partnership can equally benefit the library and the community organization” received the highest agreement, increasing from 9.6 to 9.8 (one is “strongly disagree” and 10 is “strongly agree”) (statistically significant at the 0.05 level). The statement “professionals outside the library have very little to offer me as I design programs for young children and their families” received the lowest agreement, decreasing from 1.7 to 1.4 (which observed, difference is not statistically significant). Responses to all of these statements were relatively constant. The greatest change was for the statement “community outreach means sending staff outside the library walls” which increased from 8 to 8.9 (difference is significant at the 0.05 level).

- **Librarians:** While librarians have gained knowledge, they have not necessarily increased their outreach. According to the librarian interviews (summer 2014), less than half of the librarians reported increasing their outreach over the previous year. One librarian even noted that that she is doing less now than prior to starting the Family Place Libraries™ initiative as she no longer has time due to increased responsibilities. However, librarians did express a desire to do more outreach, particularly to vulnerable populations.

In the fall 2015 interviews, 90% of librarians noted that their knowledge of how to raise awareness of their space and resources increased over time. As they became comfortable with their new knowledge and abilities, they were able to explore new ways to reach parents and community members.

In the 2015 interviews, 21% interviewees mentioned taking active steps toward reaching underserved populations (and another 26% interviewees identified this as a future goal.) For example, one librarian described her efforts to host a story time at a homeless shelter and she is planning on crafting Family Place for a transitional population. In addition, another librarian who was already working with teen mothers through a different program was thinking through the logistics of how to engage these vulnerable moms in Family Place. As this librarian said:

“I would love for those moms to come to a workshop, but transportation is a problem and it takes more than one class period. The teacher and I are trying to find a way to do that.”

Staff and administration will create a communications plan that focuses on Family Place Libraries™ services.	ACHIEVED
---	-----------------

- **Librarians:** According to data contained on the Family Place Libraries™ portal, 100% of sites created a formal marketing plan. Library staff appear to have based their marketing plans on a standard model. Library sites seem to have made modest changes to this model based on their local environments or needs.

Staff will create and distribute promotional and public relations materials for the Parent Child Workshop and other family-serving programs.	ACHIEVED
Staff will outreach to families through direct contact, media relations, and other family support agencies.	ACHIEVED

These two objectives are grouped together because they were often simultaneously referred to by library staff.

- **Librarians:** According to the librarian survey (late 2013), librarians felt that there had been some changes in outreach, but this was an area that had yet to reach full potential. About one in four reported that during early implementation, there was no change in partnership and outreach efforts. The reported lack of change was mainly due to the sentiment that libraries felt they already had strong partnerships developed and that the depth of those partnerships would not change until later in the program year.

According to the librarian interviews (summer 2014), marketing and outreach continued. They reported creating special marketing materials—flyers, mailings, newsletter articles, etc.—to promote the Parent Child Workshop and other programs for families with young children. However, these are often tasks they were already taking on. In fact, less than half of the librarians reported increasing their outreach over the past year. Later in the initiative, outreach continued to play a secondary role to program implementation. For many libraries, outreach materials that had been created earlier in the initiative were still relevant and in use.

While formal marketing materials are helpful, many librarians indicated that parent direct experience with the space and word of mouth were the most effective means of getting the word out. Some noted, however, that word of mouth was less successful in reaching new or underserved audiences.

In the fall 2015 librarian interviews, interviewees, on the whole, spoke about the importance of going out into the community to do outreach and make personal connections, yet very few felt they had the time to do so. As was evident in the interviews with librarians, they have interest and ideas for additional outreach, especially to hard to reach community members, but no time to take on that activity. As one said:

“Outreach is critical, I just don’t have the time. My first priority has to be making sure that we are doing now we are doing really well. Then I can do more outreach. But, I never seem to have the time.”

A few librarians, through the support of their administration, were extremely focused on outreach and talked about the importance of creating relationships. According to the fall 2015 librarian interviews, the support of administration took several forms, including building outreach into the job description and work plan of designated librarians. This additional time and intentionality was most effectively used for

outreach when the library staff had taken time to build partnerships with community partners prior to or as a part of the Family Place Libraries™ initiative. As two librarians noted:

“For someone who thinks they shouldn’t come to the library, it takes more than just telling them to come to the library [or delivering a flyer]. It’s slow going, but we keep plugging away at it. “

“We were able to get our outreach expanded by upping one of our librarian’s hours. She’s been working with the schools and bringing groups into the library to do story times and been doing site visits. She’s formed a new partnership with our community food bank. Family Place has given us the reasoning to ask for more – we’ve never had a designated outreach position before.”

Some librarians would also say successful outreach takes more than just time. For these sites, they also dedicated time to thinking strategically about outreach targets and ways to build relationships to encourage engagement with the targets. As two librarians said:

“... (we are) trying to be more strategic with partnerships, targeting organizations that we know work with families with young kids. Encouraging them to promote the idea and if they actually touch families, say encourage a family to come and you come with them. Often it happens because of one-on-one relationships.”

“We are working with a local initiative doing (health) clinics in the schools to ask them how to build trust with the families. We are hoping to bring in, next time, lay community advisors already established in [our area] as known community resources.”

- **Library Directors.** In the fall 2015 Library Directors interviews, Directors were asked to rate the importance of the different roles of children’s librarians at their library. Only 16% directly mentioned outreach as a top three priority activity for librarians. Though it should be noted that another 16% percent prioritized creating connections to community organizations, which could be considered another form of outreach. When asked about the greatest challenges their library faced in creating a family-centered library, a top answer was marketing, outreach, and awareness building for families who need the support the most.

Interestingly, when Library Directors were asked what lessons they learned as a result of participating in the Family Place Libraries™ initiative, the need to shift attention to outreach and building relationships was a top learning for Directors.

- **Parents:** While it wasn’t a significant focus of the evaluation team’s investigation with parents, parents did comment on outreach. In both the 2014 and 2015 parent survey, over 70% indicated that they received information about library programs in the community.

Community family support agencies will partner with the library and acknowledge it as a community asset for families and young children.	ACHIEVED
Key community family support agency partners will refer families to the library for early learning materials and activities, parenting information, and support.	GOOD PROGRESS

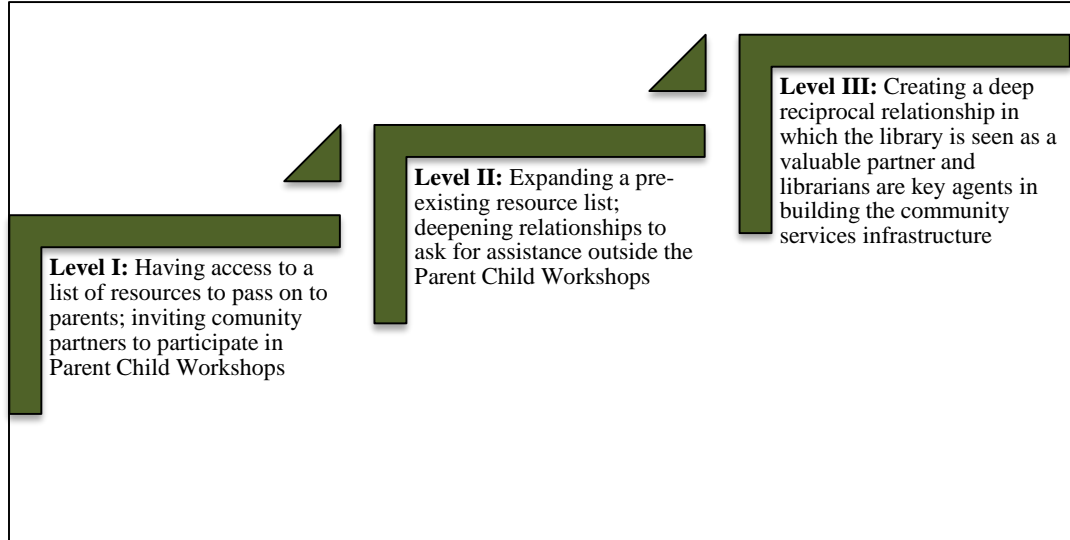
These outcomes are grouped together because key informants often talked about them in tandem.

- **Librarians:** Early in the evaluation (summer 2014 librarian interviews), all participants reported connections to community partners to implement the Parent Child Workshop and other programs for young children. Two-thirds of the interviewees felt it was easy to find resource professionals because they were eager to participate in the program, the library administration did all of the outreach and leg work to line them up, or they found one contact that connected them to many other professionals. Most reported that they would use the same professionals for future Parent Child Workshop sessions.

In 2014, many of the interviewees noted already having strong relationships in the community. However, they say talking about Family Place Libraries™ with them has “cemented their relationships.” For most, however, the connections had not yet evolved beyond this transactional relationship.

By the fall 2015 interviews, librarians had had time to develop more significant relationships with community partners. The evaluation team found that, for most libraries, relationships grew deeper and stronger. Engagement can be viewed along a continuum (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Ladder of Engagement between Librarians and Resource Professionals



Source: Librarian interviews, fall 2015

Level I (about 4.5% of libraries) consists of a basic familiarity with the organizations in the community and what they can offer to families. Especially for those librarians who were establishing relationships for the first time (and whose primary point of contact with the community resources was the Parent Child Workshop), having a list of resources to pass on to parents was the first tier of engagement.

Level II (about 50% of libraries) consists of libraries expanding pre-existing relationships, establishing new relationships to facilitate the Parent Child Workshops, and broadening these relationships to enable librarians to ask partners for collaboration outside of Workshops. For example, one librarian started a sensory story time and asked community partners to take a look at the space for the program and train staff on working with children on the Autism spectrum. This relationship grew out of the Workshops.

Level III (about 46% of libraries) connotes an even deeper level of engagement based on reciprocity. For some libraries, expanding and deepening relationships with community professionals meant that community partners were turning to the library as a community resource, including turning to the library for expertise. Librarians reported that partners are starting to see that the library is a good place to get their message out and build them into their service model. Another librarian mentioned that the visibility of the library as a community partner has increased. This librarian noted:

“We are getting asked to come out into the community more. We had a relationship before, but that relationship has deepened. They now know that we are open to partnering on other things and they call us to bring us in for workshops and meetings.”

In what seems like the top of the ladder of engagement, one librarian described a relationship that grew out of the Parent Child Workshop in which a local speech and hearing clinic decided to build a literacy workshop and came to the library for advice on choosing books, evidence both of a genuine partnership as well as a view of the librarian as an expert and community resource. This librarian noted:

“We are giving support to that effort to make sure they are choosing the best books to use in a clinical setting.”

In addition to the nature of the relationship changing, libraries also described an increase in the number of community partners. According to the baseline survey, the average number of community partnerships increased from 6 to 12 (significant at the .05 level).

In addition, the percentage of libraries whose children’s departments provide information and referral services for parents increased from 61% in 2013 to 89% in 2015 (significant at the .1 level).

- **Staff:** Staff also reflected that the library was providing a valuable service to the community in the staff survey (summer 2014 and fall 2015). Comments included:
 - “The impact our branch is trying to create in the community is now recognizable due to Family Place. In a sense, Family Place makes our goals less nebulous, and more concrete.”*
 - “As word gets out about Family Place Libraries™, I believe it will be easier to position the library as an important part of the educational infrastructure in our community.”*
 - “It demonstrates to the community that we care about young children, families, and literacy.”*
- **Library Directors:** At the mid-point of the evaluation, Library Directors (summer 2014 survey) reported little or no change with their partnerships, collaborations, and outreach. The largest reported change was more partners distributing information about the library and its programs; Directors attributed almost half of that change to Family Place Libraries™. However, according to Library Directors, there was essentially no change in the numbers of staff serving on community coalitions or with partners offering other programs for their clients at the library.

Interestingly, a year and a half later (as reported in the fall 2015 interviews with Library Directors), there had been a substantial shift in the degree to which their library connected to community partners. Of the 12 Library Directors interviewed, seven noted a significant increase in community partners, three noted expansions related to the Parent Child Workshop, one indicated a continuation of already strong partnerships, and only one was unsure of the status of the community partnerships being built. This indicates first and foremost that most (92%) had some level of understanding of the community partnerships being built. Of the 11 that had awareness, 10 felt that the partnerships were expanded due to participation in Family Place Libraries™.

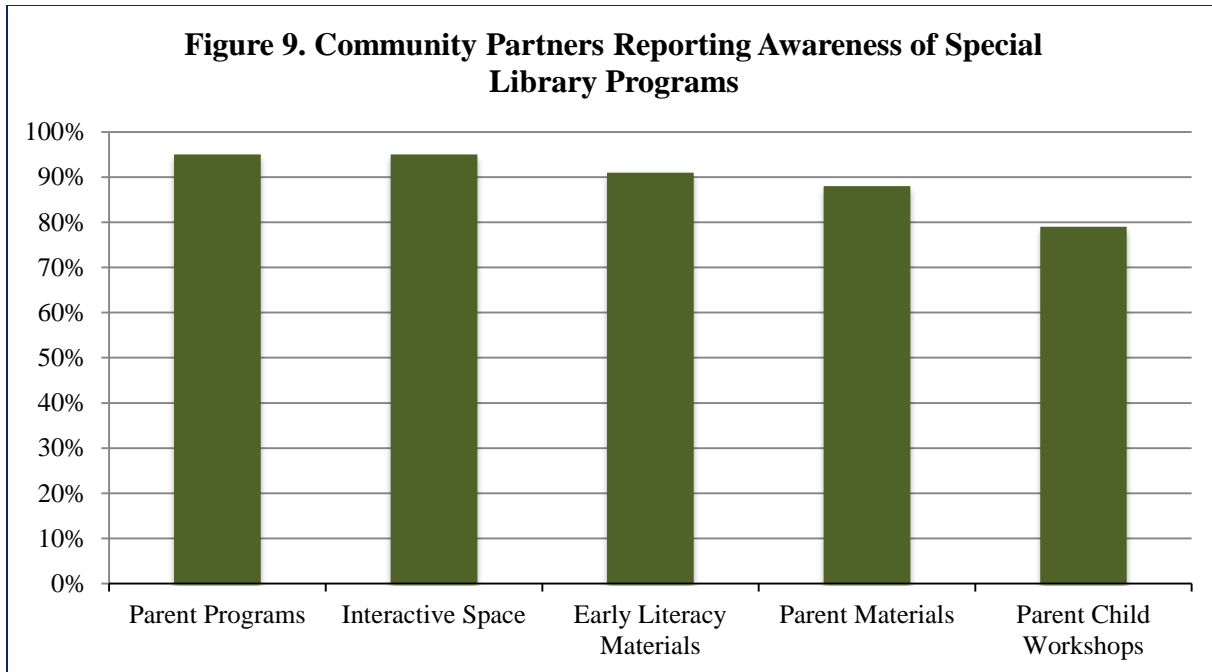
In the fall 2015 interviews, Library Directors continued to describe substantial evolution in the relationship. Library Directors shared:

“Family Place forced us to think about who is in the community and how can we engage them. It also forced them to think differently about what they do and how they translate it for parents.”

“We are now regarded as experts and leaders in early childhood education”

- **Community Partners:** In the summer and fall of 2015, the evaluation team had the opportunity to hear directly from community agencies themselves about the nature and depth of their relationship with their local library through an online survey and follow-up interviews with 10 partners.

In general, community partners responding to the survey reported being well informed about the library’s offerings and increases in direct experiences with the library (see Figure 9). The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who knew that the library offered a variety of services.



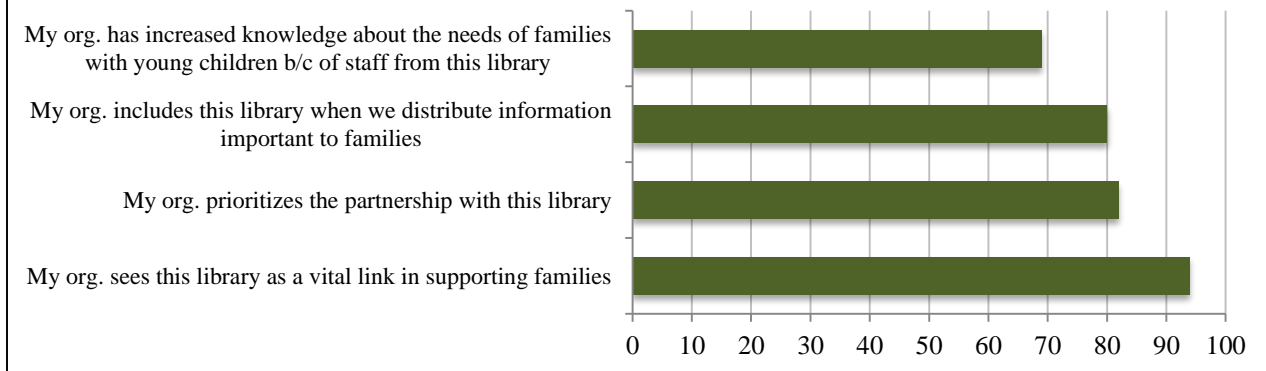
Survey: Community partner survey, summer 2015. Parent Child Workshop is statistically different from Parent Materials and Early Literacy Materials at 0.1 level and different from Interactive Space and Parent Programs at 0.05 level. No other differences are statistically significant from each other.

Overall, community partners had high opinions of their library partners and believed that the larger community views them that way, too. When asked how the library is viewed by the agency and the community on a scale of 0-100, the highest rating was given for the library receiving positive press (97 out of 100). The lowest rating was given for whether the organization asks staff from the library to serve on committees, coalitions, or other community events (58 out of 100).

Beyond having increased awareness of services, community partners can articulate the nature of their relationship with libraries. As noted in Figure 10, the average truth of the statement “my organization sees this library as a vital link” was 95 out of 100. And, 80% of community partners report using the library for distribution of information as being important to families. In addition, community partners report that all of these areas have had a positive increase in the past six months.

Figure 10. Community Partner Perceptions of Library Activity in Community

On a scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 100 (strongly agree)



Source: Community partner survey, summer 2015. All differences except between distributing information and prioritizing the partnership are statistically significant at at least the 0.05 level.

According to the community partner interviews (fall 2015), perceptions of the library were already high among some, but greatly improved among others. As community partners noted:

“My perception has changed 180 degrees. I thought it was just a traditional library with only books, but they do so much more. I have learned about the child development work that they do. Kids can even get a meal at the library.”

“Over time I’ve seen more of what they’re doing and how well they connect with families. At first, I expected more of a traditional library role. Family Place is different.”

“Good to great to amazing. I’m watching them evolve into a really integral part of the community.”

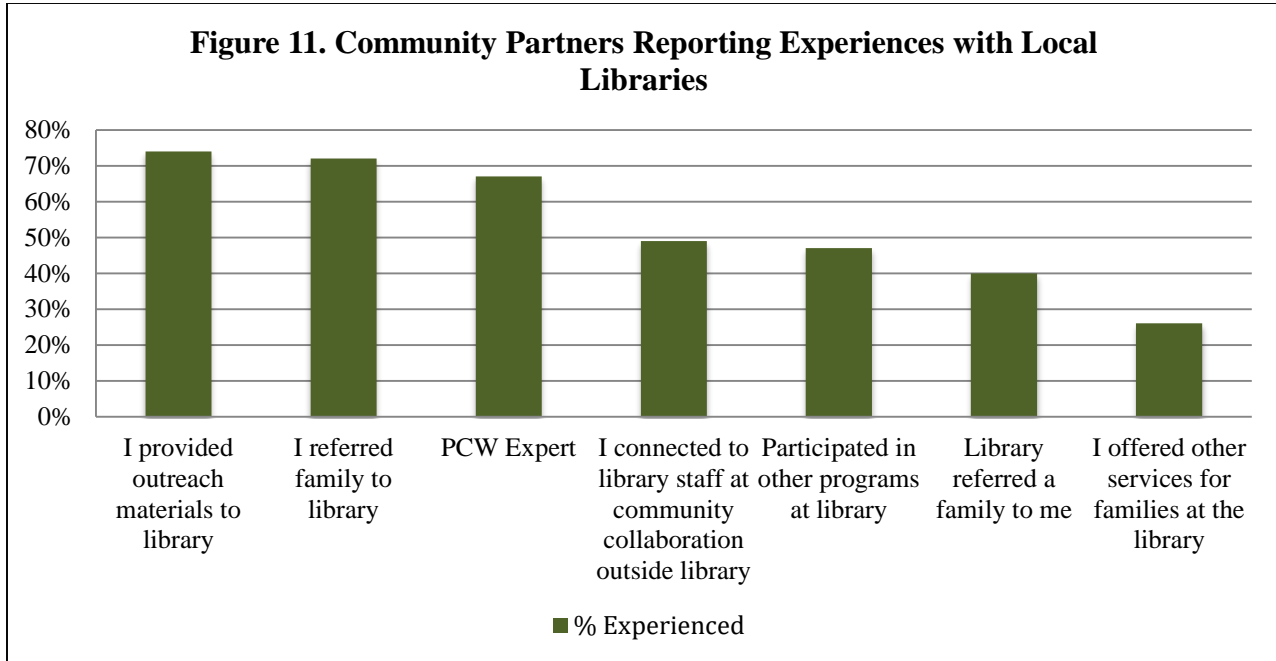
“I have always been a library person. Now we have a working relationship I see how smart they work. They think things through and communicate well with each other. They are strategic thinkers and are ahead of us. They made ECE their thing and figured it out before the rest of us jumped on board. They market beautifully. There’s good management. They have an initiative around inclusion and diversity. They are intentional and smart.”

“I have always loved the library but by adding Family Place: toys, encouragement for interaction—this has improved my perception. It makes it easier to refer families. Some families may have traditional expectations and negative connotations, but we tell them you don’t need to be a good reader to have the library impact your child.”

In addition to awareness of library programs and services and positive perceptions of the library, community partners report actually collaborating with their local libraries (see Figure 11). When asked about specific ways they have partnered with the library, the most common response was providing outreach materials (74%) and referring

families to the library (72%), followed by sharing information at the Parent Child Workshop (67%).

In considering changes over the past year, the largest increase reported was with the agency referring parents to the library (increased on average 26 on a scale of -50 to 50). Community partners report the smallest change occurred in the degree to which the library refers families to them (an average change of 10.8 based on a scale of -50 to 50). Community partners report positive changes in all of these areas over the past six months.



Source: Community partner survey, summer 2015. I provided outreach materials and I referred family to library are statistically different from I connected to library staff at Community collaboration and Participated in other programs at library at 0.05 level and from Library referred a family to me and I offered other services for families at the library at 0.01 level.

These results were confirmed in the follow-up interviews (fall 2015). When probed about the nature of their relationship with libraries, community partners offered reasons why they partner, including: 1) the library aligns with their goals; 2) the ability to extend community partner outreach; 3) the ability of the library to be a destination for diverse communities; 4) the library’s deep tie to the community; and, 5) the professional expertise of the librarian. As a few directors noted:

“The library is centrally located. They see families and have access to families that we wouldn’t otherwise have contact with and are making sure that barriers to services are reduced. They see families that we want to see. They have a great relationship with the families. The library is a safe haven. They have their fingers closer to the pulse of the communities we’re trying to serve.”

“Many people use the library; in the past few years it has turned in to a central gathering place. The library has become more community oriented—moving

beyond books on the shelf. They do a lot around child development, feeding kids, getting them ready for Kindergarten. They think outside the box and it's always a good relationship."

A key question in the Family Place Libraries™ model asks if family support agencies refer families to the library for early learning materials and activities, information, and support. The summer 2015 survey results note that more than 70% of community partners do refer families to the library. This is validated in the 2015 parent survey which noted that over 70% of parents received information about the library from a community partner or elsewhere in the community. The evaluation team had the opportunity to probe more deeply on the nature of referrals. To explore this, we specifically selected some interviewees who indicated on their surveys that they did not provide referrals to or receive referrals from the library.

We followed up on this finding in the interviews with community partners in the fall of 2015. Four of 10 interviewees indicated they did not make referrals to the library or receive referrals from the library. Upon closer examination, that the four non-referring partnerships did not have referrals as part of their service model and therefore defined “partnership” differently than those that did provide and accept referrals.

The interviewees that provided referrals to or got referrals from the library noted several reasons why referrals were useful to their work.

- **No Stigma:** As all kinds of families come to the library, it is seen by parents as a community service provider with no stigma.
- **Clearinghouse:** The library staff has information on a wide range of services. While a single community partner may only know one area (health, nutrition, language development, etc.), community partners perceive library staff as being able to provide information to parents on a range of issues and service areas.

Library will experience increased media attention for library services for families and young children.	ACHIEVED
--	-----------------

- **Librarians:** Librarians indicated that they undertook additional outreach and work with the media since starting the Family Place Libraries™ initiative. According to the baseline surveys, sites continue to reach out to the media to publicize their efforts. The average number of media outlets used increased from 5.9 in 2013 to 6.4 in 2015 (while observed, difference is not statistically significant). On average, libraries reported that the last time the library was in the press was a little over two months prior to the 2014 baseline survey. By 2015, the coverage in the press was more recent. According to the 2015 baseline survey, the average library had been in the press little over one month prior to the survey. (It should be noted that while these changes are observed, neither are statistically significant.)

- **Community Partners:** Many community partners also noted that the local library receives positive press attention. For example, in the community partner survey, partners gave the libraries a score of 97 (where 0 is “strongly disagree” and 100 is “strongly agree”) to the statement “The library receives positive press from the local media”. In addition, community partners noted there was a moderate increase in their feelings about the positive media attention paid to the library over the past year.

Key library staff and administration will share information with local, state, and national library organizations.	ACHIEVED
---	-----------------

- **Librarians:** According to the baseline survey, librarians did share information with local, state, and national library organizations. In fact, the percent of librarians that presented at conferences increased from 68% in 2013 to 100% in 2015 (a statistically significant change at the 0.01 level). Participating librarians made presentations to state and regional library associations and local library networking meetings. In addition, many librarians reported sharing information with other associations, including local chapters of the National Association for the Education of Young Children or state early childhood coalitions.

Section V. Develop parents'/caregivers' knowledge and use of the library as an early childhood and family resource center.

Over the course of the evaluation, the evaluation team was able to collect a variety of data from parents—opinion surveys, interviews, Parent Child Workshop participation surveys, and focus groups. It is important to note that participants in all of these data sources skew toward higher use participants. While this is helpful because these informants are able to provide a deep source of information, it also limits our understanding of the experience of lighter users of the library.

Summary: Every library offered the Parent Child Workshop, serving more than 3,200 children and 2,900 adults. There is evidence that more families are viewing the library as a place to connect with other parents and information on community services. Parents are noticing and taking advantage of the new space and collections (60% noted a positive change in the library space over the last year). Because most parent informants were already substantial users of the library, gauging an increase in usage was difficult. Their usage coming into the study was high and remained high. The evaluation indicates that while some parents are able to articulate a change in how they are using books and toys with their children, this is not universal. In addition, the majority of parents (56%) indicate that they have connected to community resources at their library and can articulate why this is of value to them.

Some parents reported decreased isolation after participating in the Parent Child Workshop. For example, 15% indicated that they do not have a chance to get together with other parents in the pre-Workshop survey. This decreased to 9% in the post-Workshop survey. For parents who voiced some isolation, the library is a place to make connections to other parents and extend personal networks.

There is substantial evidence that parents, especially frequent library users, increased their belief that they have additional knowledge of child development practices. For example, 79% of parents in the pre-Workshop survey indicated feeling informed about child development. In the post-Workshop survey, that increased to 89%.

Finally, the rates of parents reporting that they read to their children daily increased from 77% to 84% between the pre-Parent Child Workshop and post-Parent Child Workshop surveys.

Findings based on initiative outcomes include:

Parents, caregivers and children will attend the Parent Child Workshop and interact with the children's librarian and family support professionals.	ACHIEVED
--	-----------------

- **Parents:** The fall 2014 and summer 2015 parent surveys also illustrate that a substantial proportion of parents who come to the library are participating in the Parent Child Workshop. For example, of survey respondents in 2015, 46% had participated in the Parent Child Workshop. According to data collected by Middle

Country Public Library, more than 2,900 adults and 3,200 children participated in the Parent Child Workshops in 2014 and 2015.

Parents will have increased awareness that the library is a place to connect with other parents and family-serving professionals.
--

ACHIEVED

- **Library Directors:** According to the fall 2015 interviews, 11 of 12 Library Directors feel that participation in Family Place Libraries™ made a difference for families. Specific examples provided by Library Directors included increasing numbers of families coming to the library, becoming a destination for families with young children, increasing number of fathers coming into the library, forging connections between families, and increasing families’ understanding of early literacy and child development.
- **Parents:** Parents participating in the survey (fall 2014) indicated helpful changes that met their needs. For example, almost 60% reported positive alterations regarding the library’s involvement with community efforts and 55% reported positive changes in the library’s partnering with community agencies. Interestingly, even though positive changes had already been noted by some parents in 2014, parents completing the 2015 survey (very unlikely to have completed the 2014 survey) also reported positive alterations—57% reported positive changes in the last year regarding the library’s involvement with community efforts and 49% reported positive changes in the library’s partnering with community agencies.

Some survey respondents also indicate making connections to other parents. As one survey respondent said:

“I’ve made friends by meeting them through early childhood programs that have helped me as a newish mom.”

According to the parent survey (fall 2014), 48% of parents reported receiving information about community agencies and 9% reported having help identifying and securing support services from a youth librarian. These rates stayed about the same in the summer 2015 survey when 45% of parents reported receiving information about community agencies and 9% again reported receiving help to secure support services. These are still relatively low rates, especially when we consider that the majority of parents responding to the survey were very deep users of the library (i.e., in the 2015 survey, 72% of respondents came to the library at least once a week).

Participants in the virtual focus group provided several examples of meeting other parents at the library. For example:

“I met one of my best friends here at the library! She was breastfeeding her toddler son which gave me the courage to ask about breastfeeding past age 1, which feels taboo with many people. And we have met up there since then.”

Parents will have access to interactive developmentally appropriate learning spaces, collections, and resources and understand how to use them with their children.	ACHIEVED
Families with young children will increase use of library programs, collections, and spaces.	GOOD PROGRESS

As noted earlier in the report, the parents we collected data from were already substantial users of the library. As such, we predicted that this indicator, which highlights “increased use” of the library, would be difficult to measure. Throughout the course of the evaluation, parent usage of programs, collections and spaces remained high.

- **Librarian:** Based on librarian surveys and interviews, parents are being exposed to the core aspects of the Family Place Libraries™ model (as outlined in the two bullets above). According to the librarian survey (late 2013), librarians agree that the Family Place Libraries™ initiative has significantly changed the physical space. In fact, 82% of librarians reported that they were personally involved in altering the space to create a more welcoming environment, and 78% said they helped create a more developmentally appropriate environment.

Then, later in the implementation, several librarians in the summer 2014 interviews noted that their altered space had increased parent usage. For example, one librarian said:

“...it went from a place where not a lot of people played with our toys...we’re getting a lot of new users, and people are just coming to the toy area....it’s a big draw...”

However, a few librarians noted that some families are leaving young children in the (safe and welcoming) spaces without adult supervision.

- **Staff:** While non-children’s library staff are supportive of Family Place Libraries™ programming, several voiced concern over the appropriate use of toys in the library. About two percent of staff made comments illustrating their difficulty understanding the educational value of toys. Some of their quotes include:

“Having a toy area has been a big problem with the young children. Parents can tell their children to play and they can use their computers and smart phones. “

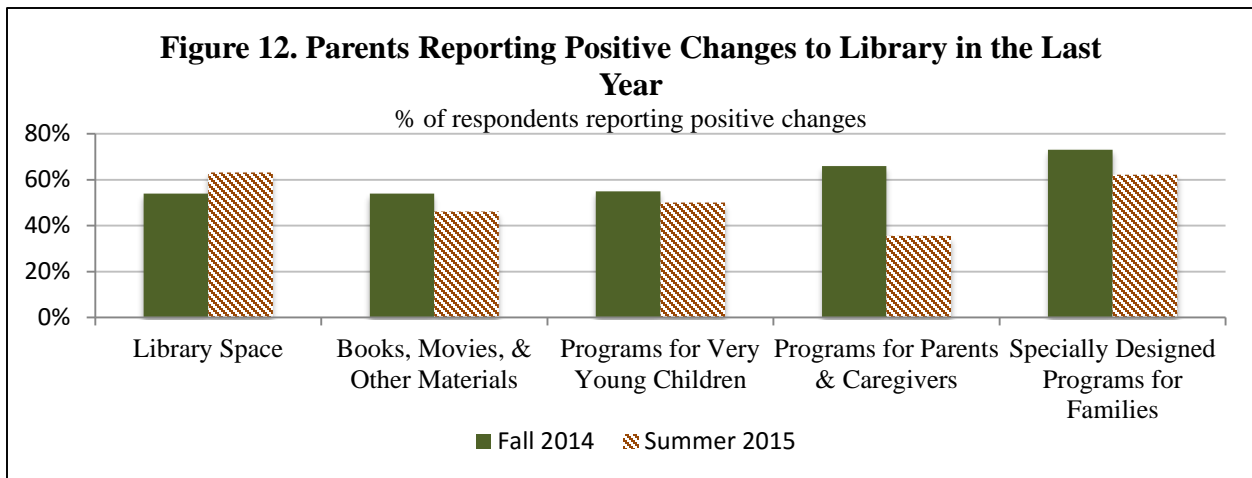
“Unsupervised children have caused many problems with children fighting with each other and in turn parents fighting each other.”

- **Parents:** According to the parent survey, this key audience is using the Family Place Libraries™ space. According to the 2015 survey, the top three reasons parents come to the library are to check out books (87%), to use the early childhood space (80%), and to attend story time (72%). Furthermore, the 2015 survey indicates that on a scale where zero is “not at all” and 100 is “perfect”, parents gave the library a 91 for being a family-friendly location where you can bring young children. In both the interviews and the focus groups, parents reported being willing to travel distances to

libraries that they felt offered more interactive and friendly spaces, more attentive staff, and age-specific programming.

The evaluation team surveyed parents in the fall of 2014 (early in the implementation) and again in the fall of 2015 (later in the implementation). It is important to note that while the respondents from the fall 2014 survey are not the same respondents from the fall 2015 survey, the evaluation team believes them to be similar in key features, including average number of visits to the library each month. The results below provide a window into how families are responding to the Family Place Libraries™ model at two points, not a change over time. These results demonstrate whether changes stagnated or continued over time.

In terms of space, collections, and programs, parents reported improvements in both the fall of 2014 and summer of 2015 (see Figure 12).



Source: Parent survey, fall 2014 and summer 2015.

These results were underscored in the interviews. According to those parents, libraries have become a destination for families, especially because they offer age-appropriate activities for a wide range of ages, so a parent with a four-year-old and a one-year-old can bring both kids to the library and the kids will have things to do.

One parent liked that her daughter had access to toys at the library, like a play kitchen, that helped her be creative. This was especially important because they could not afford to have these toys at home. Other parents mentioned the ability to check out puppets so they could continue playing with their kids at home after watching puppets during story time.

The parent informants in this study were already substantial users of the library. Thus, gauging increased use is difficult. While there is evidence that families are using the library and that usage continues to be strong, observing increased usage is more difficult.

Parents will meet family support professionals and have increased awareness of the library as a source of community information and early intervention resources.

ACHIEVED

- **Librarians:** In terms of connecting to people and information, librarians indicated (in the librarian interviews, summer 2014) that they had been able to connect parents to resource professionals and community information. In the 2015 interviews, nearly all librarians talked about feeling comfortable with having a list of resources to provide to parents. One librarian told a story about a grandmother who comes to the library with her grandchild. The grandmother said:

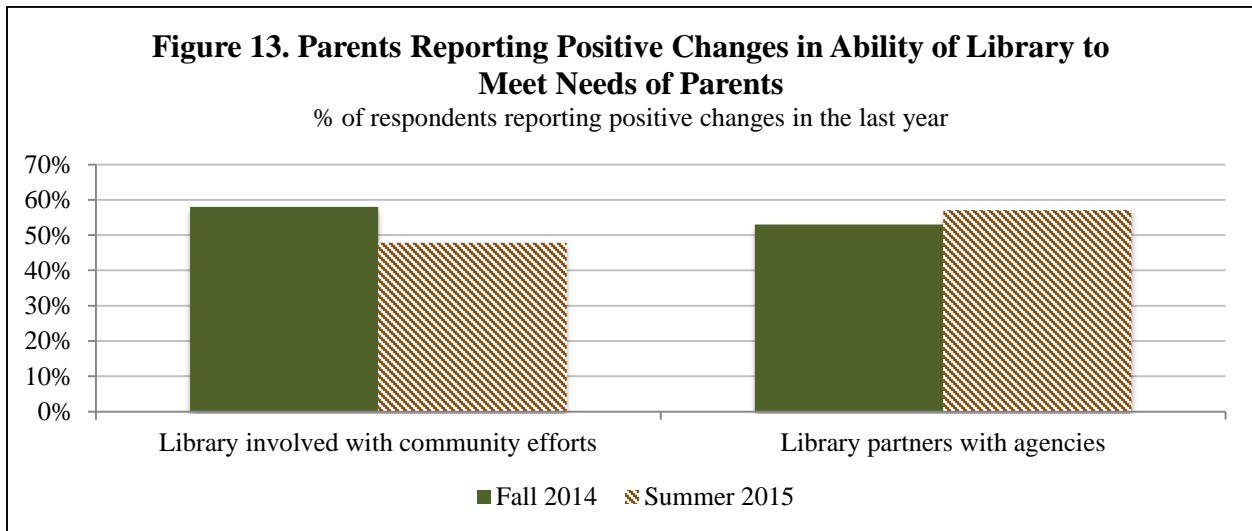
“This is really a wonderful thing. Twenty years ago, this information wasn’t out there, and families need to know this. I wish I knew these things for my children.”

A librarian said:

“Yes, we are much more quick to intervene when we see a need. We were more passive before. Now if we see an interaction or a kid in need, we are quick to jump in and provide resources. “

- **Parents:** Parents reported having the opportunity to receive information about community agencies at the library. According to the 2015 survey, 56% of parents reported receiving information about a community agency at the library.

Parents generally reported noticing positive changes in how the library is working with community efforts (see Figure 13).



Source: Parent survey, fall 2014 summer 2015. Differences between fall 2014 and summer 2015 are not statistically significant. All are different from zero (at the 0.01 level).

About one-third of the virtual focus group participants commented on the opportunities they had to meet community professionals and learn about resources at the library. As one parent reported:

“I think the library does a good job with the information they have available. If you ask a librarian about a resource in the community they would find out the information for you. The librarians try to share activities that are happening around the community during the groups. I know in the Family Place Learn and Play, community orgs were brought in to talk to us and observe, share materials. This was great.”

Parents who participated in the Parent Child Workshops particularly noted the value of meeting with community professionals. Parent interviewees noted that the Parent Child Workshop series, which included autism, nutrition, music, and speech therapy sessions, were particularly useful. In addition to being able to address specific questions, parents voiced appreciation over being exposed to creative parenting ideas. For example, during the nutrition week, one parent learned how to set up a child’s plate to get her children interested in food and engaged enough to sit through a meal. The parent reports that this has helped her toddler get through picky eating episodes. However, some parents also noted that it wasn’t always easy to connect with resource professionals and they did not always make an effort to address parents individually.

While those parents who did make connections and got information reported that it was very helpful, it is still a relatively low percentage of parents having these experiences.

Parents will meet other parents and have a decreased sense of isolation.	ACHIEVED
---	-----------------

- **Parents:** A common challenge of parents with young children is feeling isolated. Family Place Libraries™ programming seeks to provide a safe, inviting, and fun place where parents and children can come and meet other parents and children. Some parents did offer that coming to library increased their connections to other parents and decreased their sense of isolation. For example, seven out of 10 parents interviewed in the fall of 2015 reported that they go to the library to socialize with other parents. While this was not universally voiced, for those parents who had this experience, it was positive and very important. In the summer 2015 parent survey, some parents noted:

“The library has been a place for me to connect with other moms who have children in the same age range and value education/literacy.”

“What have I learned? I’m not alone!”

“Great space to meet other children and stay at home parents for support.”

“I took a class and learned about community agencies. Most importantly (for me), I met other stay-at-home moms with children my son’s age.”

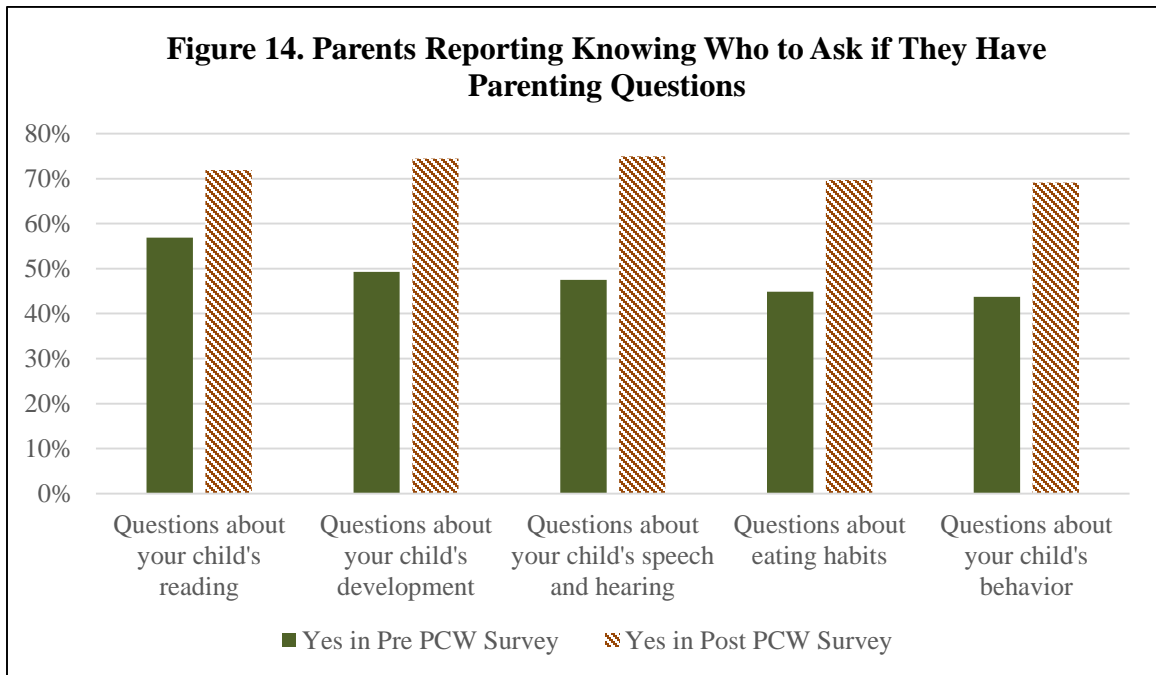
Respondents to the Parent Child Workshop surveys indicated less isolation over the course of the Workshop. For example, in the pre-Workshop survey, 15% of respondents indicated that they did not have a chance to get together with other parents with young children. In the Post-Workshop survey, only 9% indicated that they did not have a chance to get together with other parents (difference significant at the 0.05 level).

Parents will have increased knowledge of ways in which they can support children’s development.

ACHIEVED

- **Parents:** This is a challenging area to assess as the only source of data we have is self-report (as opposed to direct observation). During 2015, the evaluation team had several opportunities to get input from parents, including from surveys, interviews, and focus groups to provide a perspective on increased knowledge among parents.

A starting place of increasing knowledge for parents is knowing who to ask for help if they have questions. According to the Parent Child Workshop survey results, parents indicated an increased knowledge of who to ask if they had questions in all key areas of child development (see Figure 14).



Source: Parent Child Workshop, surveys 2014 through 2015. All pre and post differences are statistically significant at 0.01 level.

Furthermore, among parents who participated in the Parent Child Workshop, 33% of parents reported feeling “a little informed” or “not informed” about child development in the pre-Workshop survey. This decreased to 11% in the post-Workshop survey (difference is significant at 0.01 level).

In addition, parents reported that they learned a lot about their children and about parenting through their experiences with the library. Responses included gaining valuable information and resources - the importance of play, good books to read to children, and fun songs and activities - and learning how to interact and engage with their children. Even though parents don't always ask librarians questions about child development or see a direct link between going to the library and understanding child development, many of their stories indicate learning and feeling validated about their children's development. The kinds of learnings included:

- **Literacy:** Parents indicated that they are reading more to their children. In part, they report, this is due to better access to a wider selection of literacy materials and a better understanding of the kinds of literacy materials their children might connect to. One parent reported learning how to use musical movements to help build literacy skills.
- **Parenting Strategies:** Parents describe learning strategies to work with their children from discussions with and observations of librarians, other parents, and community partners. As parents noted:
 - “Just getting to see how staff interact with children in general has taught me about how to interact with mine.”*
 - “I have grown more confident in my ability to parent with encouragement from library staff.”*
 - “It’s ok for my kid to be who he/she is. It’s ok for me to do the best that I can as a parent as each child’s development is different.”*
 - “I feel validated that parenting is both important and hard when I’m at the library. It lets you know that you aren’t in it alone.”*
- **Use of Play:** A major focus of the Family Place Libraries™ model is raising awareness of the importance of use of play in building literacy and social skills. Many parents identified this as an area of learning. Parents noted:
 - “During story time, the librarian modeled how to use puppets for teaching children and engaging them in conversation around learning a new behavior or activity.”*
 - “It seems odd, but I have learned the importance of toys in my child’s early development. I knew about reading and talking to her but never really thought about how different toys can help her develop motor skills. It’s exciting to see her do new things with toys!”*
 - “I’ve learned a lot of different songs & rhymes to use with my children that teach a variety of skills.”*

- **Knowledge of Developmental Milestones:** Parents note they have learned about important developmental milestones and what it means if their children are or are not meeting those milestones. Parents stated:

“He (the child) is sometimes lacking in social skills with other children/parents.”

“My children are normal, and it’s ok to let them learn through play.”

“I can see that my daughter is right on track. That was a huge relief.”

“At the library, you can see that your children's behaviors are normal because other kids are doing the same things.”

While many parents could articulate what they learned as a result of being connected to the library, the general sentiment is that library staff can be a source of where to get information (books, etc.), but are not necessarily the right people to provide direct parenting advice. This is particularly the case for younger librarians who do not have children of their own. Parents see parenting advice as the domain of community services, pediatricians, etc.

Parents will increase the time spent sharing books and engaging in developmentally appropriate play and communication with their children.	ACHIEVED
---	-----------------

- **Parents:** According to the Parent Child Workshop surveys, there was an increase in the rate of parents who read to their children every day. In the pre-Workshop survey, 77% of parents reported reading to their children every day. In the post-survey, that increased to 84% (difference is significant at 0.05 level).

Several parents offered examples of the ways librarians had helped them identify developmentally appropriate books to read to their children. For example, one parent participated in a program on owls at her local library. After the program, the parent asked the librarian for age-appropriate books on owls so that the parent and child could continue to learn together.

Section VI. Additional Themes

As with any large research project, the evaluation team identified several additional themes outside of the concepts covered directly in the logic model. These themes include:

- **Strong Cohort:** As is noted in several places in the report, the libraries participating in this program (and subsequent evaluation) were chosen because they had institutional characteristics that made them likely candidates for successful implementation. These libraries already had strong children’s programs and leaders who were open to change. While this might limit the amount of change we see in some evaluation measures, it is also an important finding. Making sure that libraries who want to take on the Family Place Libraries™ model have some institutional features in place may lead to greater success in implementation and return on investment.
- **Institutionalization:** As with any major initiative, program initiators and investors are interested to know to what degree (if any) the program has become institutionalized. While this was not a specific element on the logic model, the evaluation team did collect evidence related to program institutionalization.

In the fall 2015 interviews, Library Directors were specifically asked if they anticipated continuing to offer Family Place Libraries™ programming now that the project was completed. All Directors indicated they would continue the program. Some will:

- Make no changes/keep going and keep growing: “I think it’s a wonderful program.”
- Expand: “We are in the process of renovating all our locations and are trying to bring some of the Family Place Libraries™ elements to the plans—designing in play areas. Moving forward we’re hoping to even out implementation so that non-Family Place libraries are more fully onboard.”
- Increase outreach to families and community partners.

Furthermore, 99% of librarians believed that their library would continue to implement the program regardless of whether they continued on staff or not. Librarians attributed this to strong support by library administration.

- **Role of Staff:** In parent surveys, interviews, and focus groups, an overarching theme was the role of the librarian to the parent experience. Parents with deep connections to their libraries reported that they felt respected by the library staff and that their children were welcome and well-known by staff. Many parents noted that it was very meaningful that staff knew their or their children’s names. Several parents commented that staff had taken the time to set aside books for their children. These small acts of kindness endeared the librarian and the library, as an institution, to parents. In fact, some reported being willing to travel extra distances to go to the library site where favorite staff are located.
- **Destination:** An interesting development over the course of the evaluation was the increasing use of the word “destination” to describe the places that Family Place Libraries™ had become. For example, one parent noted that she “shopped” for libraries when her daughter was born and chose the one that provided the most services for families with young

children. To the evaluation team, this signaled that the transformations were not surface level or fleeting, but had been deeply absorbed by the library and recognized by community partners and parents. The transformations transcended beyond new space and toys to something more meaningful.

- **Core Role of Story Time:** While the high-touch approach of the Parent Child Workshop is in many ways the signature program of the Family Place Libraries™ model, most parents still connect to libraries through light-touch opportunities, including story time. The evaluation team noticed over the course of the evaluation that parents reported increasing changes to story time—introduction of new story time strategies and age offerings, changes to the way story time was conducted, and even changes in the make-up of regular story time attendees, which included more fathers. It appears to the evaluation team that the core philosophy of the model did move beyond the Parent Child Workshop and into other program areas, including story time.
- **Model Matters:** Family Place Libraries™ has a particular training model and set of expectations for libraries to be considered part of the initiative. Some elements of this approach—including requiring that all lead staff be trained in the official Family Place Libraries training center and requiring that the Parent Child Workshop be a five-series Workshop with informal community partner interactions—are viewed as onerous by some participating libraries.

However, it appears to the evaluation team that a strong stance on implementing key features of the model while allowing for some individual variation helped encourage libraries to continue implementation rather than altering their approaches as soon as challenges arose. While particulars of the model matter, there was evidence that because success had been demonstrated in the core program elements, the Family Place Libraries™ philosophy was extending to other interactions with families.

- **Flexibility and Adaptation:** On the flip-side of the previous observation, several librarians noted that, at the conclusion of this effort, they intended to adapt the model to address perceived concerns and take advantage of opportunities. The changes can be categorized as:
 - **Programmatic Adaptations:** One library, for example, shortened the Workshop to an hour because parents were leaving early and another developed a closing ritual with parachute time because circle time wasn't working. Another library that was having trouble with resource professionals showing up placed the early literacy session at the end of the series to have more flexibility. A library that was having trouble with few questions being asked of the resource professional developed an FAQ guide that the resource professionals now use.
 - **Timing and Attendance:** Several of the libraries experimented with the time and day the Parent Child Workshop was offered to increase attendance and retention. Some librarians relayed that they can get families in the door, but retention remains an issue. Librarians tried different strategies to increase retention. Some spoke about the importance of relaying the expectations in person prior to the first Workshop and one

librarian softened the language in the introductory message to keep the introduction “welcoming and not rule bound.”

- ***Cultural Awareness:*** Finally, librarians were very aware of the communities they serve and those they would like to serve. For example, one librarian switched out sand for rice in the craft area because he recognized that some families in his low-income community may see using rice for play as wasteful. A few librarians spoke about wanting to make the Workshops more accessible for Spanish speakers and talked about ways to authentically develop the relationships with Spanish-speaking families.

Section VII. Conclusion

Over the past three years more than two dozen libraries from across the nation worked to implement the Family Place Libraries™ model. As is noted in this evaluation report, libraries made great strides in implementing the model, reshaping their programming, impacting their institutions, creating community partnerships, and touching the lives of families with young children/

Of particular note, libraries substantially transformed their spaces—creating welcoming places where families come to learn and play, ask for information, and meet other families. While the space changes were perhaps the most obvious, important changes also were noted for library staff. In implementing this model, staff had to re-imagine their role, change long-held programming practices, and open up new kinds of relationships with parents. Using the child development research provided by Family Place Libraries™ training and other support, librarians created new programs (Parent Child Workshop being the most notable), tweaked existing offerings (story time), and worked to create relationships with families.

Creating or expanding relationships with community service providers to better assist families and becoming a greater leader in the local early childhood community were critical to successful implementation of the Family Place Libraries™ model. All participating sites created new community partnerships and grew in their leadership, though outreach and really serving as a conduit for relationships between parents and community service providers remained a challenge due to time constraints. While there is still room to grow in this arena, community partners reported important improvements of the positioning of the library and its willingness to be part of the safety net for families.

Finally, another real area of growth for participating libraries is in their relationship with families. Parents who made connections to their local libraries came to deeply appreciate and use the library as part of their support network. Librarians in the children's area are the critical connection point for families. Making connections to families who are deep users of the library is naturally easier than connecting with low-frequency users. Additional work needs to go into ways to expand the model to reach parents who (for a variety of reasons) are lighter users of the library.

Because most parents participating in this evaluation were already regular users of library programs, observing increases in usage was difficult. There is substantial evidence that families encountered community partners at the library and are looking to the library as a source of information on parenting and community services.

Overall, this cohort of libraries transformed their children's spaces into destinations for families with young children, built staff understanding of child development, shared their knowledge with families and partners through Parent Child Workshops and other programming, and developed new partners in the community. Each of these libraries is committed to expanding upon these changes and to reaching even more families.

Appendix A. Family Place Libraries™ Logic Model

For Libraries Internal

Evaluation measurements will include baseline surveys, parent surveys and interviews, staff surveys, interviews and observations, circulation, program attendance, early childhood/family space usage figures, and on-site visits from national Family Place staff.

Program Goals	Process/Service Objectives	Short-term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes
<p>Create a library culture and staff capacity that support the development of the Family Place Libraries™ Model for early childhood and family support services.</p>	<p>To train an executive level administrator and a children’s librarian in Family Place core components.</p> <p>To engage library leadership in the support of services for parents/caregivers and young children.</p> <p>To integrate Family Place principles, policies, and practices into the culture of the library.</p>	<p>Administrator and staff will participate in the Family Place Training Institute and related online training.</p> <p>Library leadership will increase their knowledge, awareness, and support of Family Place objectives and the library’s role as a family support institution.</p> <p>Family Place Training participants will share knowledge of Family Place and the full range of services for young children and families with library staff.</p>	<p>Staff will participate in additional online training and technical assistance activities.</p> <p>Library leadership will express support for and readily promote library-based early childhood and family support initiatives.</p> <p>Staff from multiple departments will help connect families with Family Place and related services.</p> <p>Staff will have increased ability to promote the role of the library in early childhood and parent support services within the library profession.</p>	<p>The Family Place Libraries model is fully integrated into the library’s plan of service for parents/caregivers and young children.</p>
<p>Implement the Family Place Libraries model for early childhood and family support services.</p>	<p>To establish a comfortable place/space for parents/caregivers and young children to be together, learn through play and reading, and interact with other families.</p> <p>To increase library collections for use by infants, toddlers, and parents/caregivers.</p> <p>To establish the Parent Child Workshop for babies, toddlers, and parents/caregivers.</p> <p>To develop and/or enhance outreach to and collaboration with key family service organizations.</p>	<p>Staff will create an interactive Early Childhood/ Parenting space in the children’s room including toys and collections for very young children and resources for parents.</p> <p>Staff will plan and conduct the Parent Child Workshop.</p> <p>Staff will have increased familiarity with key research on child development and family support.</p> <p>Staff will be better able to identify community resources to assist parents and caregivers.</p>	<p>Staff will be active members of the early childhood and family support systems in their communities.</p> <p>Staff will have increased competencies and skills to act as critical communicators of early childhood development, parenting, and community support information.</p> <p>Staff will have increased ability to promote Family Place to parents/ caregivers, community organizations, and the library community.</p>	<p>The library will nurture and sustain the Family Place Libraries model of service.</p>

			Staff will assess current library services, programs, and policies offered for young children and parents/caregivers and modify them to better conform to evidence-based best practice.	
--	--	--	---	--

For Libraries External

Evaluation measurements will include baseline surveys, parent surveys and interviews, staff surveys, interviews and observations, circulation, program attendance, early childhood/family space usage figures, and on-site visits from national Family Place staff.

Program Goals	Process/Service Objectives	Short-term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes
Establish the library as a key institution and community partner that serves the information and education needs of families and young children.	<p>To develop the Family Place Libraries model - an inter-disciplinary framework for programs and services that meet the needs of very young children and their parents and caregivers.</p> <p>To demonstrate that the library puts young children and families first, supports the role of the parent as the child's first teacher, and works in collaboration with the community early childhood/family support system.</p> <p>To increase the awareness of the community - parents, caregivers, family support professionals, media, government officials, and other supporters of young children - of the library as a significant community partner for addressing early childhood and family issues.</p>	<p>Staff will have gained the knowledge and skills necessary to be able to raise awareness for library programs, services, and spaces that serve the needs of families and young children.</p> <p>Staff and administration will create a communications plan that focuses on Family Place services.</p> <p>Staff will create and distribute promotional and public relations materials for the Parent Child Workshop and other family-serving programs.</p> <p>Staff will outreach to families through direct contact, media relations, and other family support agencies.</p>	<p>Library will experience increased media attention for library services for families and young children.</p> <p>Key library staff and administration will share information with local, state, and national library organizations.</p> <p>Key community family support agency partners will refer families to the library for early learning materials and activities, parenting information, and support.</p> <p>Community family support agencies will partner with the library and acknowledge it as a community asset for families and young children.</p>	Library is recognized as a key community institution for early childhood and family support services.

<p>Develop parents'/caregivers' knowledge and use of the library as an early childhood and family resource center.</p>	<p>To engage parents and caregivers with very young children in using the library's Family Place programs, collections, and space together.</p> <p>To provide access to children's librarians trained in early childhood development, early literacy, and learning through play.</p> <p>To enhance parent/caregiver knowledge of and capacity to support social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of very young children.</p> <p>To provide opportunities within the library for parents and their children to meet and learn from other parents and children.</p> <p>To make community resources, information, and appropriate referrals available to families when needed.</p>	<p>Parents, caregivers, and children will attend the Parent Child Workshop and interact with the children's librarian and family support professionals.</p> <p>Parents will have increased awareness that the library is a place to connect with other parents and family-serving professionals.</p> <p>Parents/caregivers will have access to interactive developmentally appropriate learning spaces, collections, and resources and understand how to use them with their children.</p> <p>Parents will have increased knowledge of ways in which they can support children's development.</p>	<p>Families with young children will increase use of library programs, collections, and spaces.</p> <p>Parents will increase time sharing books and engaging in developmentally appropriate play and communication with their children.</p> <p>Parents/caregivers will meet other parents and have a decreased sense of isolation.</p> <p>Parents will meet family support professionals, have increased awareness of the library as a source of community information, and have access to early intervention resources.</p>	<p>Parents and caregivers will view and support the library as a key community institution for themselves and their children.</p>
--	---	---	--	---

Appendix B. Methodological Notes

The Family Place Libraries™ evaluation gathered information from a variety of key players to help inform the findings. Over the course of the evaluation, informants included:

- **Library Institution**—This included Library Directors and librarians trained in and implementing the Family Place Libraries™ model, as well as other staff within the library.
- **Parents and Caregivers**—This included parents and caregivers who have participated in the newly-launched Parent Child Workshops and other programs developed by the library to meet the needs of young children and their families.
- **Community Partners**—This included staff of community-based organizations identified by librarians as partners in their emerging work.

It is important to note that this is an initiative evaluation as opposed to an evaluation of each participating library. While the evaluation team collected information on each participating library, that information was combined to help paint a picture of the initiative as a whole.

We used both qualitative and quantitative methods to help build a multi-faceted picture of the implementation and impact of the Family Place Libraries™ program. An overview of evaluation tools drawn on for this report includes:

Tool	Time Frame	Data Source Notes	Response Rate**
Pre- and Post-Training Survey	Spring 2013	On-line survey	51 surveys 100% response rate
Library Director Interviews	Winter 2013	Telephone interview	15 interviews 100% response rate
	Fall 2015	Telephone interview	12 interviews 92% response rate
Library Director Survey	Summer 2014	On-line survey	8 surveys 89% response rate
Librarian Survey	Winter 2013	On-line survey	28 respondents 100% response rate
Librarian Interviews	Summer 2014	Telephone interview	31 interviews 94% response rate
	Fall 2015	Telephone interview	29 interviews 90% response rate
Baseline Survey	Spring 2013	On-line survey completed by key library contact	29 responses 100% response rate
	Fall 2015	On-line survey completed by key library contact	21 responses 84% response rate

Staff Survey	Spring 2014	On-line survey; list generated by key library contact	185 respondents 74% response rate
	Fall 2015	On-line survey; list generated by key library contact	83 respondents 53% response rate
Parent Survey	Fall 2014	On-line survey; list generated by library	104 respondents 38% response rate
	Summer 2015	On-line survey; list generated by library	31 respondents 10% response rate
Parent Child Workshop Surveys	2014-2015	Paper survey distributed by libraries at Workshops	561 respondents
Parent Interviews	Fall 2015	Telephone interviews; list generated by evaluators based on survey results	10 interviews
Parent Focus Groups (in-person)	Fall 2015	Participant list generated by library	Two focus groups (Michigan and Ohio)
Parent Discussion Groups (virtual)	Fall 2015	List generated by evaluators based on survey as well as third-party vendor	Two discussion groups (Tulsa and national)
Community Partner Survey	Summer 2015	On-line survey; list generated by library	41 responses 47% response rate
Community Partner Interviews	Fall 2015	Telephone interview; list generated by evaluators based on survey results	10 interviews

Note: ** Rates are based on valid responses.

In addition, evaluation team members reviewed Family Place Libraries™ listserv postings and site visit reports prepared by staff of Middle Country Public Library.

Appendix C. Participating Libraries

Cuyahoga County Public Library (Fairview Park)
Cuyahoga County Public Library (Maple Heights Branch)
Cuyahoga County Public Library (Parma-South)
Cuyahoga County Public Library (Warrensville)
El Paso Public Library (Dorris Van Doren Regional)
Farmington Community Library
Kalamazoo Public Library (Central Library)
Kalamazoo Public Library (Oshtemo Branch Library)
Las Vegas-Clark County Library District (Clark County Library)
Las Vegas-Clark County Library District (Las Vegas)
Las Vegas-Clark County Library District (Whitney Library)
Las Vegas-Clark County Library District (Windmill Library)
Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library
Orion Township Public Library
Pikes Peak Library District (21c Library)
Pikes Peak Library District (Fountain)
Rochester Hills Public Library
Stark County District Library (Madge Youtz Branch)
Stark County District Library (Main)
Thomas Brannigan Memorial Library
Topeka & Shawnee County Public
Tulsa City-County Library (Hardesty Regional Library)
Tulsa City-County Library (Herman & Kate Kaiser Library)
Tulsa City-County Library (Martin Regional Library)
Tulsa City-County Library (Owasso Library)