



# A Case Study of Family-Centered Early Intervention Literacy Initiative: The Parent Child Mother Goose Program

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## The Rationale

- To trial the program in the North West focusing on children with developmental needs.
- To provide an option for families who are waiting to commence a specific early intervention service.
- From a research point of view, the interest was in learning about prevention and intervention in early childhood programs.

# The Principles of the PCMG

- A group program involving parents and children.
- Teaching is directed to parents, children join in as appropriate.
- Interactive rhymes, stories and songs are presented orally. No toys or props are used.
- Story telling is an important part of the program.
- The pace is slow and relaxed with plenty of time for repetition of material.
- The atmosphere is accepting and supportive, with the intention of building the confidence of all participants.
- The Program is aimed at families in need of support for any of a variety of reasons. There is no cost to the parents who participate.
- For further information visit the website on <http://www.nald.ca/mothergooseprogram/About.htm#2>

## The North & West PCMG

- PCMG was held at the Visy Cares Learning Centre in Meadow Heights
- PCMG was run in partnership between Specialist Children's Services and Hume City Council
- Selected families from the central waiting list were invited
- The group ran for two 10 week cycles

## The Program Aims to...

- Encourage positive interaction between parents and children.
- Improve preverbal and early language skills of children.
- Provide an opportunity for parents to support each other.
- Have fun!

# The Research Aims to

- Look at the effectiveness of the North-West early childhood program as a preventative intervention for children with additional needs through action research.
- Uncover the characteristics of the Mother Goose Program; the role of the professional; and the effects of the intervention on parents and children.
- Outline some of the most important concepts in early childhood education which include: **Parent-Focused Programs, Family-Centred Practice, Inclusive Practice, and Retention in Early Intervention.**
- Examine the gaps in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and discusses issues such as: *Concept Clarity, Cultural Competence, Access and Participation, Follow ups and Feedback, Fathers in the Early Years and Evaluation in Early Childhood.*

# The research intended to address the following questions...

- What is early intervention?
- What constitutes a preventative intervention?
- Is the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program an effective preventative intervention?
- Does the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program empower parents and facilitators to meet the needs of children with developmental delay?

# The Study Design

The study uses interactive evaluation as a framework

- Interactive Evaluation:
  1. Focuses on program improvement and helps staff to understand why a program operates in a certain way (Lienert, 2002).
  2. Emphasises the connection between what programs are trying to achieve, how services are being delivered and whether the services work in favour of the program.
  3. Concentrates on finding more effective service delivery strategies to enhance the service outcomes.

# Data Collection

- Participants in the study include parents, program facilitators and children (including infants, toddlers and preschoolers).
- Data collected include...
  1. A parent questionnaire,
  2. A one hour interview with the facilitators,
  3. Field observations.

# Research Limitations

- **Small Population**

With a typically small population and a small playgroup, it was hard to generalise the outcomes of the research and use it beyond the children enrolled in the current playgroup.

- **Accuracy of Parental Satisfaction**

Measures of parental satisfaction including questionnaires and interviews indicated generally high satisfaction levels. However, parents only had experience with the services they received; they were unable to compare the current experience with anything else.

# Findings- Parents' Outcomes

Parents stated that they:

- Spent more time with their children.
- Were confident using the Mother Goose Strategies to enhance their child's communication and time spent together.
- Understood their children more (including behaviour).
- Were happy to use program materials and strategies in their every day routines and interactions.
- Were more confident speaking to others in the group.
- Spent more productive time with their children.

# Findings...

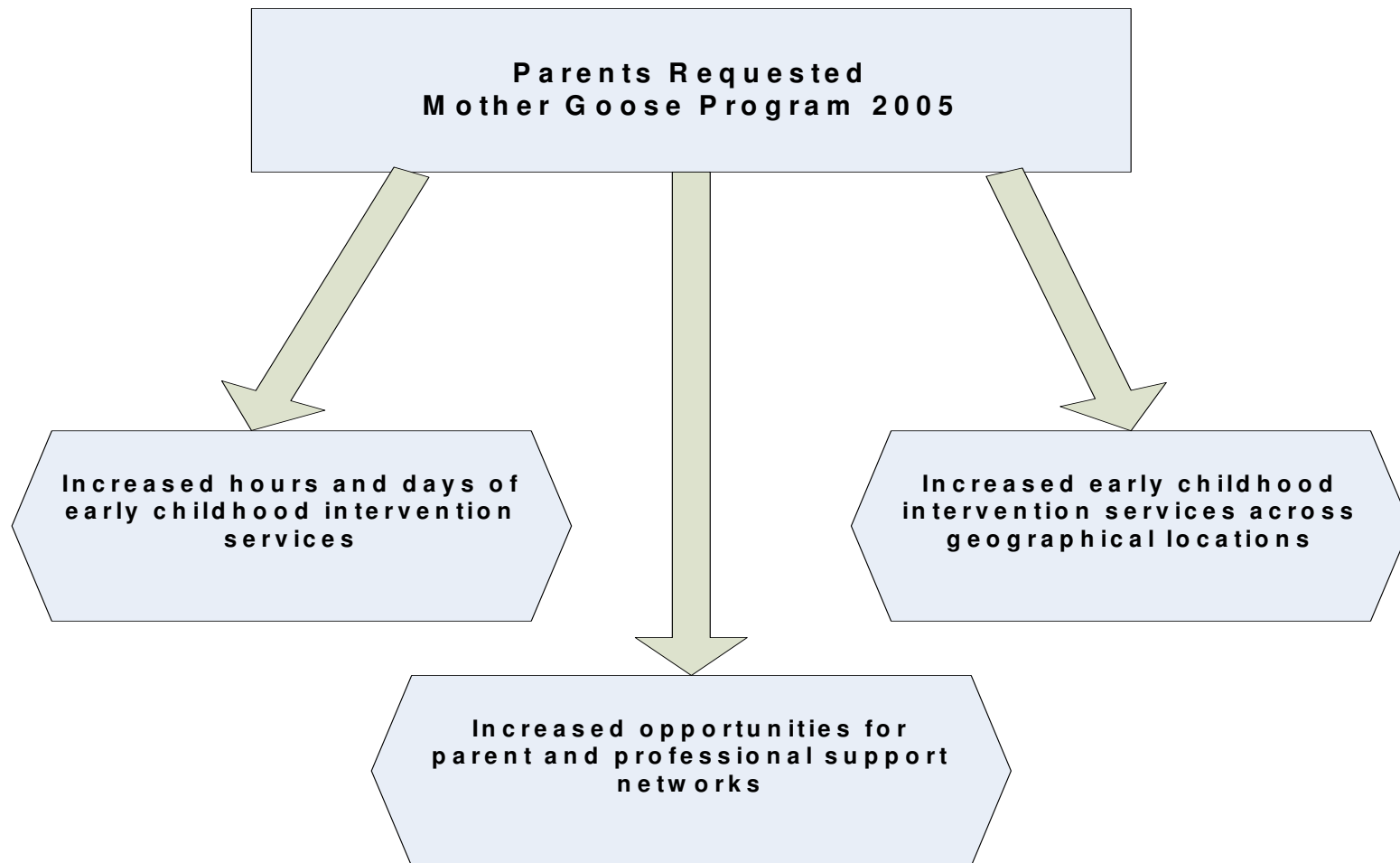
Parents stated that they enjoyed:

- Learning new rhymes.
- Networking with other parents.
- The pleasant atmosphere.
- The pleasant time experienced with the child.
- The teacher's enthusiasm.
- The nice people.
- The child's ability to communicate better, and the ability to socialise easily with other parents and teachers.

## Findings...

- In the first term, parents were happy with the format of PCMG.
- In the second term, parents expressed interest in specific services and early intervention.

# Findings...



# Findings- Facilitators' Outcomes

- Both facilitators saw the program as an opportunity for families to learn about how to help their children communicate without the need for any special material.
- Both facilitators valued the ability of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program to provide families with a supportive and nurturing environment.
- Both facilitators commented on the value of the collaboration between the Department of Human Services and Hume City Council.
- Facilitators had a split opinion about the philosophy of the program.

# Facilitators' Characteristics

- The facilitators' role was viewed as quite vital and essential to the program .
- They strengthened the relationship between the parent and child and increased parents' confidence level.
- They encouraged parents to create networks and share expertise.
- Most importantly, they provided a culturally sensitive environment to culturally and linguistically diverse parents.

# Parent Role & Characteristics

At the end of the ten week program, parents who attended the PCMG:

- Demonstrated a better understanding of their children's skills.
- Were able to spend more productive time with their children.
- Showed increased level of confidence in dealing with more complex parenting situations.
- Demonstrated enhanced parent-child relationships.
- Demonstrated more positive communication with staff members and program participants.
- were able to establish social networks with other parents and share their common expertise to benefit others.

# Children Characteristics

Children who attended the PCMG demonstrated:

- Higher levels of confidence.
- The ability to initiate, take turn and request songs when appropriate.
- The ability to make greater eye contact with the facilitators and other children in the group.
- More frequent positive responses to their parents.

# The study:

- Found that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program strengthened the relationship between parents and children.
- Found that the program provides parents and children with a nurturing and caring environment that encourages each and every parent to learn more about their children's most complex needs.
- Highlighted that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program helps parents establish social networks with other parents and share their common expertise.
- Suggested that children who attend the Mother Goose Program demonstrate noticeable progress in their social and emotional development and Communication.

## In Summary...

*Both parents and facilitators were able to demonstrate more awareness, higher levels of confidence, and more willingness to work on program improvements to meet the needs of developmentally delayed children.*