

A group of four women and four children are gathered around a large blue book, looking at it together. One woman is pointing at the book. The children are of various ages, including a baby and a young girl. The scene is indoors, likely in a library or community center, with a window in the background.

# Families First Waterloo Region Project For Project READ Literacy Network



CAPACITYCANADA

# Table of Contents

## MINI CASES FOR SUPPORT

<b>Families Supporting Families: Project READ develops leading Peer Mentoring Program</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Families Together: Project READ Mobilizes and Improves Family Literacy System</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Learning Together: A Community Development Approach</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Family Literacy Certification and Training Program</b>	<b>10</b>

## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

<b>Families First Project: Environmental Scan Report</b>	<b>13</b>
Community Engagement and Data Collection	15
Emergent Learnings	16
Appendix	24
<b>Families First Project: Design Thinking Approach</b>	<b>34</b>
What is Design Thinking?	35
Key Terms	40
Appendix	48
<b>Families First Project: Project Evaluation Framework</b>	<b>53</b>
Outcomes and Indicators	55
Tools for Testing	60
<b>Developmental Evaluation</b>	<b>62</b>
GSL Training and Certification	63
Families First Waterloo Region Project Planning	68
Lunch and Learn: Rate Family Literacy Understanding	83
Lunch and Learn: Summary Report	85
Project READ Workshop Session Evaluation	93
Prototype 1: Learning Plan	96
Sense-making and Reflection of Literacy Breakfast	100
Summary of Ongoing Project Lead Reflections	104
Summary Report: Family Literacy App	107
Prototype One: Pre- and post-survey summary	113
Reflection on Key Decision Points	122
Survey: Family Literacy App	127
Survey: Leadership Competencies and Capabilities	130
Survey: System Mobilization Reference Group Reflection	143
Workshop Evaluation Summary	151
Prototype One: Summary Report Reference Group Reflection	159
Family First Project Evaluation Survey	170
Final Project Evaluation Report	174





CAPACITYCANADA

## Families Supporting Families: Project READ develops leading Peer Mentoring Program

### Family literacy

Families reading, talking, writing, doing math, and playing together to improve their skills for learning and life.

### Sustainability

Mobilizing people, relationships, resources, and capacity to address community needs into the future.

### Scaling

A growth process that focuses resources to help organizations achieve greater impact.

### The Challenge

Many parents feel a stigma and negative emotions when acknowledging a lack of literacy skills. Feelings of social isolation, loneliness, shame and fear often accompany an inability to read. And the negative effects of not being able to read extend well-beyond parents – children of parents who cannot read face a series of challenges as well and are often not prepared for school and do not perform as well when there.

Parents, although well-meaning in their desire to improve their literacy skills and help their children, face a number of barriers to building and improving their literacy skills. They identify a lack of time, lack of support for other siblings and an uncertainty as to where to go given existing barriers. Project READ has offered targeted family literacy programs for years; however these programs only reach a small number of participants and have limitations in terms of length and frequency of support.

### Description

Families Supporting Families addresses this unique problem through a proven peer mentoring program. Through data collected during our design sprints with past and current family literacy program participants we learned that peer mentoring is already happening organically and informally among families. There was also specific interest in participating in a peer program as a way to gain skills, engage in community and help other families...it was starting to become clear that a peer mentoring model would be a good choice of strategy to scale the impact of family literacy.

### Users

Over the next two years, 20 Peer Family Literacy workers will engage with over one-hundred families to support parents' skills and confidence working with their children. Parents stretch their own literacy skills. Children are more ready for school. We will train and coach the Peer Workers them and help them to learn these important mentoring and facilitation skills and we will work with over thirty parents and over fifty children to spread this approach across neighborhoods that have the greatest literacy challenges.

### Rationale

Our community is home to several other successful peer programs: Parenting Now's Experienced Parents, the Region of Waterloo Peer Health Workers and Peer Nutrition Workers. We have already been offered supports in terms of documents, manuals and information sharing from these programs. Our participants in Get Set Learn also told us they would like to work with us for longer to improve their literacy skills in a more informal way and with peers and social connections they make during the program. By supporting this informal learning model, we also intend to not only build literacy skills in participants but also employment skills in the mentors themselves.

### Families receiving the service:

- Reduces transportation barriers
- Reduces complexity
- Helps with system navigation if it comes to them
- Enables participation
- Tailored to needs of the family
- Easy on time – appointments could be scheduled for client
- Socialization for kids
- Flexible location and timing
- Normalize parenting challenges

Inputs/Outcomes	Peer Coaching, Mentoring & Training		Families helping families.		
	Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes		
		Activities	Participation	Short (6-12 mos)	Medium (1-2 years)
Funds	Program development	Neighbourhood Associations	Increased understanding: • Peers' capacities & needs to deliver peer coaching • Appetite for peer mentoring across the community	Expansion of peer mentoring to other neighbourhoods/organizations etc.	Self-sustaining family literacy supports in place
Food	Training manual	Community Centres			
Transportation	Human Resources Planning	Faith Communities	Increased knowledge: • Best practices in training & supporting peers • Best practices for evaluating peer models • Risk management considerations	More peers employed as GSL facilitators	Increase employment rates
Personnel (e.g., admin & peers)	Evaluation & learning plan	Municipal Governments			
Space	Marketing & Communications Plan	School Boards	Increased skills: • Training & supporting peer mentors • Peers' leadership, teaching, and case management	Increased sense of belonging, connection, & confidence reported by peers	Challenging deficit perspective of people and neighbourhoods of low-income
Office supplies	Policies and procedures	Non-profits			
Cell phones		Literacy service providers		Improved employability, leadership, and communication skills reported by peers	
Training		Employment services			Policies and procedures developed
		Service sector			
<b>Assumptions/External Factors</b>					
Peers are already doing this work informally   Peers want to learn from peers   Peer model embraced by community through KW Counselling study "Exploring the Future of Parenting Education."   Peers are experts					
<i>Learning together as a family opens up a world of opportunity and creates connections within families and in communities.</i>					

### Peers themselves:

- Makes extra money
- Potential first steps towards employment
- Learn to problem solve daily barriers to work
- Makes connection with others
- Help with systems navigation
- It's education, training, and IT support
- Builds self-esteem and self-worth
- New friends
- Helps with childcare
- Build skills (good for finding jobs)
- It is evidenced-based
- On-going learning for peer
- Get adult time and interaction
- Builds broader outcomes beyond family literacy
- Reduces isolation



CAPACITYCANADA

## Families Together: Project Read Mobilizes and Improves Family Literacy System

### Family literacy

Families reading, talking, writing, doing math, and playing together to improve their skills for learning and life.

### Sustainability

Mobilizing people, relationships, resources, and capacity to address community needs into the future.

### Scaling

A growth process that focuses resources to help organizations achieve greater impact.

## The Challenge

Many organizations and groups have been working to help people improve literacy rates across Waterloo Region for many years now. Sadly, many in Waterloo Region still struggle with literacy skills.

Low-literacy levels in Waterloo Region are staggering...and getting worse. One in 4 or 24% of adults in Waterloo-Wellington 16 years and over fall into the lowest level of literacy. They experience daily challenges such as: trouble filling out a catalogue order form; difficulties following dosage instructions on medicine; completing a job application form; using online banking; completing the online application for Employment Insurance; and reading health and wellness information.

Our work demonstrates that there are many organizations working to improve early literacy adult literacy but very few link and integrate all of these services in a collaborative coordinated way. And with so many organizations working to address the issue without coordination or planning, their efforts will be diminished.

## Description

Families Together is our answer to this problem. Families Together is a coordinated systems leadership approach that pulls together early, family and adult literacy providers in a coordinated way to address family literacy issues. We provide leadership, education, planning and enhanced communication between literacy service providers who serve individuals from cradle to grave. We do this by providing community leadership on family literacy through research on the topic, hosting joint events between adult and early literacy providers and gathering input from stakeholders about needs that are currently not being met.

## Rationale

There will be a significant push in the coming years to “move the needle” on literacy as it is a key focus area to improve child and youth wellbeing. Project READ is well positioned to lead this work. Project READ has a solid track record of coordination and planning, especially leading adult literacy planning in Waterloo Region. Project READ also has experience providing backbone support to the Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region. We understand the importance of coordination and planning and have recognized expertise in these areas.

## Need

This work is critical to improving literacy rates in Waterloo Region. We want to continue to play the critical role of bringing diverse literacy stakeholders together to find solutions that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of what we do.

## Users

Organizations that provide service to young families in Waterloo Region will be the primary users of this program as will families, children and adults across Waterloo Region.

### Systems Mobilization | *The intersection of worlds and the literacy trajectories.*

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes		
	Activities	Participation	Short (6-12 mos)	Medium (1-2 years)	Impact (3-5 years)
Funds	Stakeholder meetings (one-on-one & group)	Literacy service providers	Increased awareness of: • Project READ • The Families First Project • Phase II program offerings	Operationalization of system leadership team	Connected & integrated (family) literacy systems
Personnel		Non-profits			
Space	Webinars	Municipal governments	Improved understanding: • Literacy & basic skills, generally and in Waterloo Region • Family Literacy • Impact of low literacy on individual, community, & society	Expansion of cross-sectoral partnerships	Collective Impact Strategy established
Office supplies	Training	School boards			
Web access	Community education sessions (e.g., Literacy Breakfast)	Post-secondary Institutions	Greater budget allocation for literacy at Regional Government	Increase in program referrals, incl. GSL for new audiences	More families in the Region benefitting from family literacy
Systems map	Materials (e.g., pamphlets, brochures)	Private sector			
	Social media		Increased skills in: • Storytelling about (family) literacy • Practicing family literacy	More requests for (family) literacy training	

### Assumptions/External Factors

System mobilization is foundational to solving complex social problems | The literacy system in Waterloo Region needs to connect and integrate further | Unsuspecting players (e.g., private sector) should be involved in system mobilization | Relationships are at the core of mobilizing systems | Project READ is an expert in (family) literacy | Smart Cities is interested in focus on literacy | Ongoing system transformation (e.g., ELAWR, EarlyON)

***Learning together as a family opens up a world of opportunity and creates connections within families and in communities.***

Inputs/Outcomes



CAPACITYCANADA

## Learning Together: A Community Development Approach

### Family literacy

Families reading, talking, writing, doing math, and playing together to improve their skills for learning and life.

### Sustainability

Mobilizing people, relationships, resources, and capacity to address community needs into the future.

### Scaling

A growth process that focuses resources to help organizations achieve greater impact.

## The Challenge

Many newcomers to Waterloo Region want to improve their literacy skills and lack resources and supports to do so. Literacy scores are lowest in neighborhoods with high levels of newcomers and also in neighborhoods with high poverty rates.

Newcomer parents in particular are looking for skills to navigate the school system, to support their child's education and to have enhanced literacy skills to support employment. Beyond newcomers and those living with limited financial means, there are countless other user groups within Waterloo Region with an appetite to improve their literacy and specifically their family literacy capacities. A one-size-fits-all approach won't work for these diverse possible family literacy clients.

## Description

Learning Together is both an approach to work with different audiences as well the programs and services tailored to meet new audience need.

Learning Together will provide customized coaching and support services to a broad array of clients to help them identify their family literacy needs as well as the tools and supports required to do so.

It will provide a series of coaching services to identify the family literacy problems and to identify possible family literacy supports that will meet these emerging needs. It will tailor family literacy programming to meet the needs of newcomers, the working poor, seniors and grandparents along with a broad range of other community groups and demographics.

## Rationale

Project READ has been excited by the interest from a variety of different user groups with an interest in helping to meet family literacy needs. These include neighborhood groups, youth serving organizations, newcomer and reception services along with counselling and community groups. Working alongside these unique users in a tailored and focused way will allow us to co-create solutions that best meet these unique user needs.

**Learning Together | A Community Development Approach.**

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes		
	Activities	Participation	Short (6-12 mos)	Medium (1-2 years)	Long (3-5 years)
Funds	Modify curriculum	Families: • With ESL • Indigenous • Francophone	Increased awareness: • Family literacy • Navigating the school system	Increase in program referrals	Families learning together
Space	Modify training program & materials			More organizations facilitating GSL	Family literacy and GSL are "household" names in the non-profit sector
Food				GSL 3.0 expands to more new audiences (e.g., tech, middle-income)	GSL to new audiences generates revenue
Transportation	Hire facilitators	Partners (e.g., neighbourhood associations, libraries, employment services, non-profits etc).	Increased knowledge: • Family literacy • Parents as first teachers • Positive discipline		
Personnel (e.g., admin & facilitators)	Evaluation & learning plan			Greater budget allocation for literacy at Regional Government	
Space	Marketing & communications plan				
Office supplies	Outreach – through families and potential partnerships				
Training					

**Assumptions/External Factors**

Family literacy is important | All families benefit from practicing family literacy | Families do not know what family literacy is and its associated skills | Smart Cities might have a focus on Literacy | Ongoing system transformation (e.g., ELAWR and Early ON)

*Learning together as a family opens up a world of opportunity and creates connections within families and in communities.*





CAPACITYCANADA

## Family Literacy Certification and Training Program

### Family literacy

Families reading, talking, writing, doing math, and playing together to improve their skills for learning and life.

### Sustainability

Mobilizing people, relationships, resources, and capacity to address community needs into the future.

### Scaling

A growth process that focuses resources to help organizations achieve greater impact.

### The Challenge

Many organizations that interact with children, adults and families struggle with how to support those facing literacy challenges. Often these organizations don't hold literacy as a focus of their work; however, they are acutely aware of the negative impacts of low literacy on their clients. One in 4 or 24% of adults in Waterloo-Wellington 16 years and over fall into the lowest level of literacy. They experience daily challenges such as: trouble filling out a catalogue order form; difficulties following dosage instructions on medicine; completing a job application form; using online banking; completing the online application for Employment Insurance; and reading health and wellness information. They often interface with a number of other organizations including schools, EarlyON, healthcare facilities, etc. and yet their literacy skills often serve as a barrier to them in a myriad of ways.

### Description

The Family Literacy Certification and Training Program will provide organizations and individuals with a philosophy and approach that has proven literacy outcomes for adults, children and whole families.

With a rigorous approach to training and standards, the program closely monitors outcomes from participating agencies and offers certification. Organizations can choose to run the family literacy program as standalone program or embedded into other types of existing programming. We plan to certify a small number of organizations annually and to work with these cohorts to continuously improve the certification we provide. Organizations and practitioners who are certified will then be able to offer family literacy training to participants and will receive regular coaching and follow-up from our trainers.

### Rationale

This Family Literacy Certification and Training Program will allow us to improve the literacy levels of many more families in Waterloo Region. We know that our program works to improve literacy skills and yet our delivery methods limit the number we can serve. Working with other organizations while closely monitoring standards and outcomes will allow us to improve the literacy levels of many more individuals while maintaining a reasonably low cost per participant.

### Users

Over fifteen organizations have already identified interest in being trained to facilitate this certification approach. Organizations include, Early ON, the YMCA and others.

Certification & Training		Families accessing consistent & high-quality family literacy supports.			
Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes		
	Activities	Participation	Short (6-12 mos)	Medium (1-2 years)	Long (3-5 years)
Funds	Training manual	Literacy service providers	Increased understanding: • Training needs • Certification processes • Legal considerations • Appetite for training &/or certification	Creation of evidence-based inventory of family literacy knowledge & skills  Development of training & certification materials, including facilitator's guide	Sustainable funding for Project READ  More organizations facilitating GSL
Personnel (e.g., admin & facilitators)	Training materials	Non-profits			
Space	Facilitator's guide	Municipal Governments	Increase knowledge: • Legal process of certification • Evidence-based training & certification practices • Marketing & communications	Program evaluation & learning plan established  Marketing plan developed & implemented	Consistent & standardized family literacy practices
Office supplies	Webinar complement	School boards			
Web access	Standardized assessment	Post-secondary institutions	Increased skills: • Marketing • Incentivizing training & certification	Organizations participating in training & certification	
Legal	Marketing & communications plan	Program evaluation process and materials			
Assumptions/External Factors					
Importance of emphasizing family, not only early childhood and adult, literacy   Family literacy should be standardized   Project READ is the right organization to lead licensing and training   Many service providers are not familiar with different pillars of literacy   Project READ needs sustainable funding stream beyond grants and Regional Support					
<i>Learning together as a family opens up a world of opportunity and creates connections within families and in communities.</i>					



# Families First Project: Environmental Scan Report

Prepared for Project READ August 2017



CAPACITYCANADA



## Introduction

The Families First project will help generate a comprehensive understanding about the current family literacy landscape in Waterloo Region and possible strategic and operational directions and opportunities for Project READ in determining the future direction of Get Set Learn (GSL) so the program most effectively contributes to improving literacy and eradicating poverty throughout Waterloo Region.

This report reflects the voices of those we heard from in-person or via survey through an environmental scan. Community engagement beyond the environmental scan will continue to support the Families First project. Using Design Thinking, community stakeholders – services providers and families spanning socio-economic brackets – will be involved in creating and testing family literacy prototypes (programs or initiatives) in an effort to strengthen Waterloo Region’s family literacy system.

Community Engagement and Data Collection

---

### A note about terms

**Family literacy:** When families improve their skills for learning and life together. These are the nine essential skills: reading, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, working with others, thinking, computer use, continuous learning.

**Caring adult:** Parents, guardians, or other adult who is responsible for and committed to a child’s well-being.

---

## Community engagement and data collection

Community engagement and data collection activities included the following:

**Conversations** with local non-profits & families

**Survey** – online & hardcopy – distributed to Project READ’s and Capacity Canada’s networks

**Post-it Pop-up sessions** at various community organizations and events

**Facilitated arts activity** with former Get Set Learn participants

The purpose of these activities was to answer three broad questions related to family literacy in Waterloo Region. Specifically, the scan intended to generate ideas about how programs and services help and could better support families with pre-school aged children (ages 0-6) improve skills for learning and life together.

The three overarching questions guiding the environmental scan follow:

1. What makes families want to improve their skills for learning and life together?
2. What makes it hard for families to improve their skills for learning and life together?
3. What would most help families improve their skills for learning and life together?

**>250**  
Individuals  
engaged

---

*For a more detailed description of what these activities involved, including the conversation guide and a hardcopy of the survey, see Appendix A. See Appendix B for a list of organizations involved in the environmental scan.*



## Emergent Learnings

### There is not enough time...

- for families to take part in programs;
- for families, especially single parent families, to connect
- chores, daily life, and work get in the way.
- to build a shared vision for a family literacy system.

Emergent learnings from the environmental scan demonstrate that while there are various challenges that make it difficult to promote and practice family literacy in Waterloo Region, there is the energy along with creative ideas, solutions, and opportunities for supporting a robust family literacy system. Momentum is mounting.

### Challenges

Caring adults and service providers shared many of the factors that make it difficult for families with pre-school aged children to improve skills for learning and life together. Figure 1 compares survey responses between caring adults and services providers about some of these barriers to promoting and practicing family literacy. Consistent across settings, stakeholders we spoke with said lack of time was the greatest barrier to building a robust family literacy system that effectively supports families improve their skills for learning and life together.

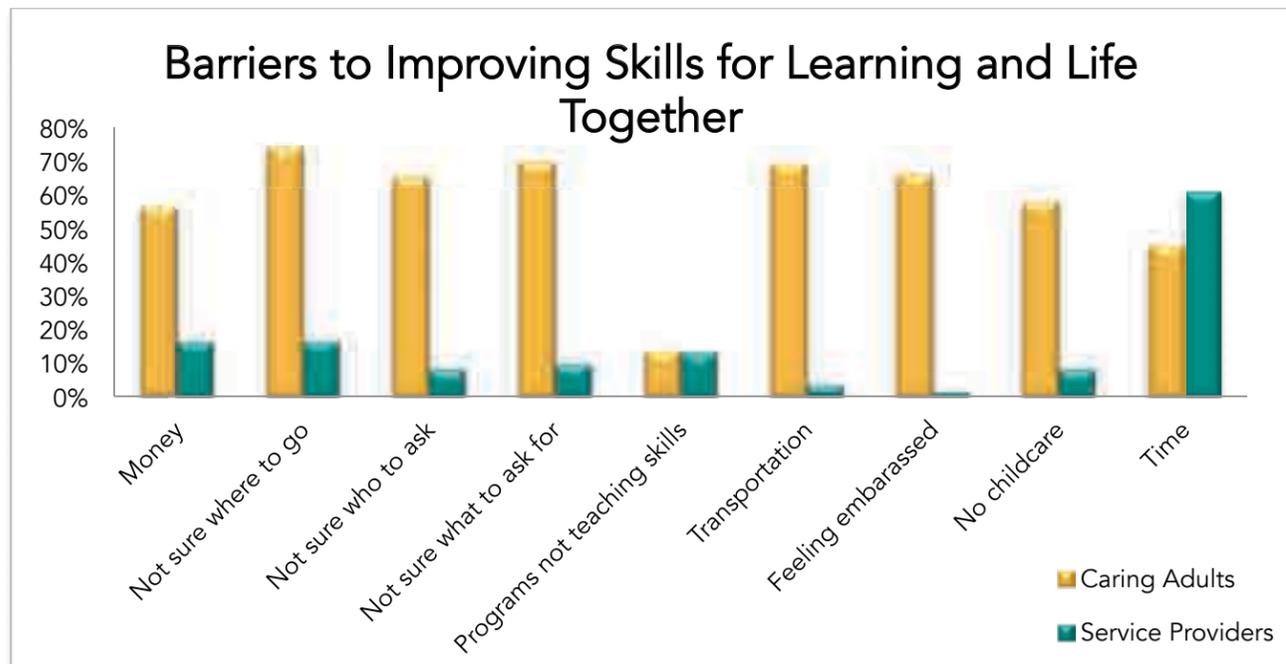


Figure 1 Survey Responses: "What makes it difficult for families to improve skills for learning and life together?"

"I know what resources are available...but it feels overwhelming to fit those into our busy schedule among all the other family management things that I have to think about"

– Parent

Commonly, stakeholders also shared additional challenges to promoting and practicing family literacy:

### Access

- Timing of programming often conflicts with families' schedules.
- For families with multiple children programs do not meet the needs and interests of children that are different ages and stages of development, or those who have different learning styles
- Getting to programs can be difficult for families that do not have enough income, have a car, have only one car, or who use public transportation. In this region snowy sidewalks and bus stops make it difficult to get out of the house and go to programs.
- Families may not return to programs if they did not make a connection with someone at their first point of contact, especially if accessing the program was challenging for them in the first place.

### Screens and technology

- Replacing engagement between caring adults and children.

- It is so easy to use TV, phones, and tablets.
- Screens provide caring adults with much needed "quiet time."
- Societal message there is increasing importance of digital literacy (e.g., kids' coding programs; typing vs. cursive writing being taught at school).

### Too much/not enough information

- Too much information, which becomes overwhelming.
- Not enough information or families do not know where to go for information.
- Lack of awareness and understanding about literacy and family literacy, their value and benefit, and "how to integrate this into their daily lives."
- Misconception that schools will teach children literacy skills.

### New to Canada: Unique challenges

- Language barriers, including feeling shy about one's English language skills.
- Worry that accessing mainstream organization may strip you of your culture.
- Newcomers' priority tends to be helping their children read and write in English, rather than on play/discovery.



- Skepticism that organizations are telling you the right/enough information; in some cases this requires newcomers to do their own research, but this means they need to have access to, and skills to navigate, the internet.

### Living on the margins of society

- Stigma, shame, and “fear of feeling judged” prevents people from attending programming and/or asking for help.
- Some families must focus on basic needs and survival because of poverty, mental health, immigration, housing needs, family conflict, and related stressors.

### Money

- Inconsistent funding for family literacy programming.
- Competition for funding between family literacy vs. early literacy focused programming and supports.

### Opportunities and Approaches<sup>1</sup>

- Stakeholders consulted through the environmental scan highlighted some key opportunities for mobilizing a family literacy movement in Waterloo Region, as well as approaches and strategies for doing so:

### Project READ leadership in the family literacy movement

- There is widespread acknowledgement of the value of family literacy. Among service providers, family literacy is seen as a component of eradicating intergenerational low literacy and poverty.
- Mobilizing this movement will require developing a shared understanding about literacy and family literacy. All stakeholders – families, direct practitioners, funders, the general public – need to be educated about what these terms mean and what their practices involve.
- Recognition of Project READ’s increasing representation on community tables.
- Further work is needed to identify and work with the “champions,” “influencers,” and “changemakers.”

*“Families [are] not always sure how to incorporate these activities into their daily routine and do not realize the simple things they could do with their children to support the learning of these skills”*

– Service Provider

### We do it for our kids and our family

Project READ knows that caring adults are drawn to their programs because they want to help their child(ren) – **to succeed academically, to foster a love of learning, and to have a better life than they had** – and to build stronger connections within their families. This evidence was supported through the environmental scan (Figure 2).

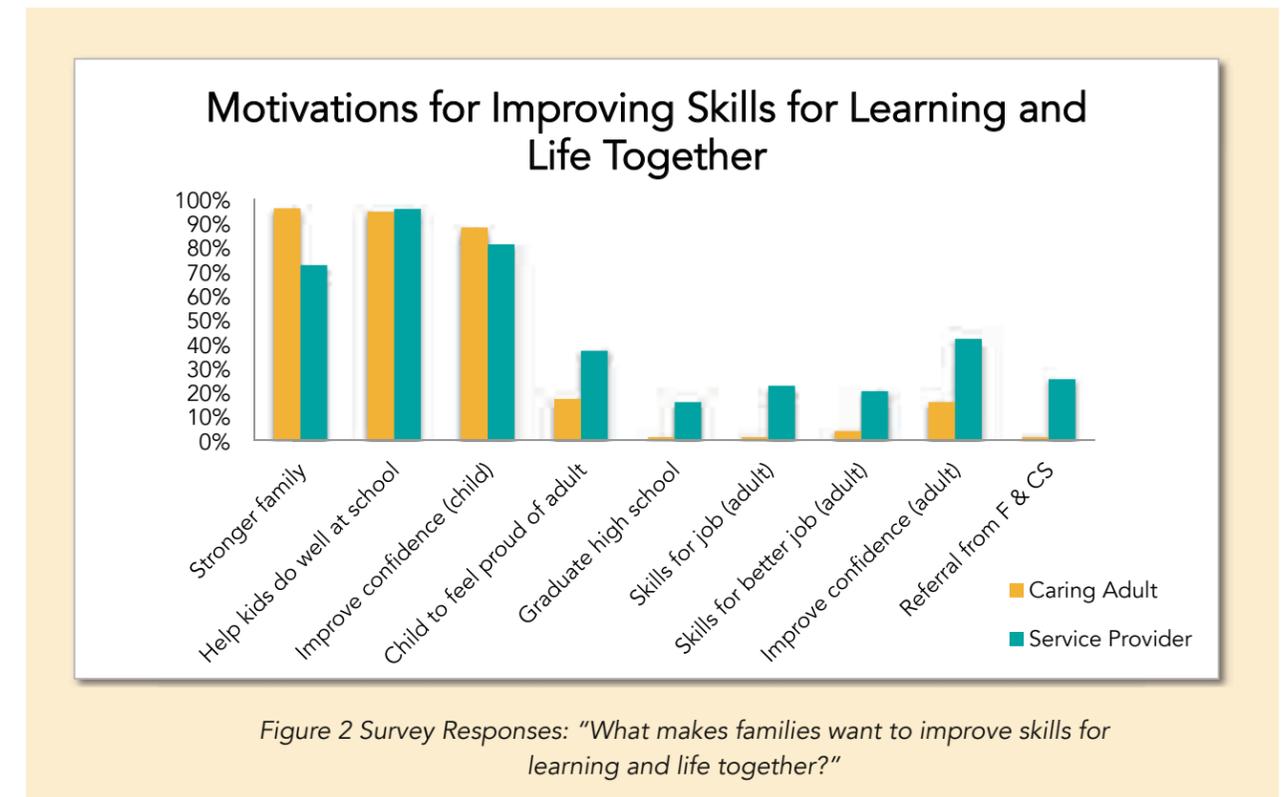


Figure 2 Survey Responses: “What makes families want to improve skills for learning and life together?”

Participants elaborated on the above motivations in the survey and at post-it pop-ups:

#### Caring Adult

- Model lifelong learning
- Foster love of reading
- Help child develop fully (quality of life; mental health; prepared for future; achieve potential)
- Teach family values and stories
- Develop skills (i.e.)critical analytical skills
- Democratic goals (help children become thoughtful, caring, civic-minded, engaged; develop children’s empathy)

#### Service Provider

- Build better relationships
- Help caring adults feel they are contributing to their child’s well-being and development
- Help kids in all areas of life
- Child care so parents can work
- Help kids at-risk of developmental delays
- To have fun and spend time together
- Skill development (linguistic; cognitive)

<sup>1</sup> Responses from former GSL participants are underlined. Interestingly, at the facilitated arts activity we overheard families supporting one another informally, highlighting the importance of peer support.



## Relationships and collaboration

- Relationships within families (including nannies), between families, and between service providers and families are essential for day-to-day family literacy work.
- To strengthen the family literacy system, a collective impact approach involving cross-sectoral collaboration has been suggested. Indeed, business, tech, health, and social profit sectors all have a stake in supporting family literacy.



Figure 3 Collages from Facilitated Art Activity

## Measuring outcomes and impacts of family literacy

- Stakeholders consulted have begun to identify outcomes and impacts related to family literacy (Appendix C), many of which align with the four foundations for learning and development Ontario's Ministry of Education outlines in the How Does Learning Happen?: Ontario's pedagogy for the Early Years framework.
- Aligning the family literacy movement strategically with this framework was suggested and is already happening in practice at Project READ.

## Promoting and practicing family literacy

Community stakeholders have identified various factors (Figure 2) that would most help strengthen this region's family literacy system and help more families practice their skills for learning and life together. Additional details about the most common themes follow.



Figure 4: Factors to promote and practice family literacy

### Accessible programs

Close to home; provide food; support with transportation (i.e., provide bus tickets); accommodate children with special needs; accommodate different work schedules; drop-in and pre-registered, with easy registration process; offer programs and resources online; diverse, inclusive, and culturally relevant; make programs fun, involve play, do hands on activities, access nature; offer childcare for children of different ages; FREE!

### Mentors and Coaches

Provide individualized and group support; should be a combination of peers (informal) and experts (formal); consistent, long-term, and follow-up; provide resources along with discussion about those resources; provide assistance accessing community referrals (i.e., make the call for the family or encourage a buddy system in which peers go to programs



together); advocate for families they are working with; provide opportunities to observe other parents/caring adults; role models from diverse communities with varying experiences; take a strengths-based approach; create a welcoming, friendly, and respectful environment.

#### **Awareness**

Increase awareness about where to access programs; do more marketing about family literacy programs and make sure marketing is clear and understandable, as well as draws on caring adults' motivations to help their child(ren) succeed and thrive; go to where young families are (e.g., social media; baby and kid stores; grocery stores); emphasize the value of family literacy, including its the long-term benefits.

#### **Resources, training and workshops**

Taking part in training and workshops, and getting resources and practical strategies to use in real life would help families with pre-school aged children with their skills for learning and life. Suggested content for resources, training, and workshops included the following: reading, writing, math; health and nutrition; mental health and self-care; time management; healthy relationships and communication; child development; discipline and routines; budgeting; academic school prep for kids; school prep for caring adults – what now?; integrating learning into daily activities; field trips. It was also suggested to develop more programs that target literacy specifically.

#### **Culture shift**

Reduce stigma and shame around accessing literacy supports; support flexible work hours; remove financial barriers (i.e., more affordable housing; guaranteed basic income).

## Moving Forward

The environmental scan has been used both as a vehicle to gather meaningful data about family literacy challenges, opportunities, and perceptions, as well as a focused engagement strategy that involved community partners – staff and volunteers from non-profit organizations and possible end users of new program offerings or services – that will support and build family literacy capacity across Waterloo Region.

Findings from this scan will inform a Design Thinking process to create and test family literacy prototypes. Developmental evaluation is being used throughout the Families First project and will continue to capture emergent learnings and inform decision making throughout prototyping and testing. Community engagement will continue to support relationship building and collaboration, amongst service providers and from families who would benefit from family literacy interventions.



## Appendix



# Appendix A: Community Engagement and Data Collection Activities

## Conversations

We engaged 13 representatives from local community non-profit organizations and 3 parents in one-on-one conversations.

The following questions, adapted to fit the context within which we were speaking, guided these conversations:

1. How does programming in Waterloo Region support literacy development for families with pre-school aged (0-6 years) children?
2. What are the gaps that make it difficult to better support families with pre-school aged (0-6 years) children in Waterloo Region improve their family's literacy?
3. What opportunities are there to better support families with pre-school aged (0-6 years) children in Waterloo Region improve their family's literacy?
4. When we know the service delivery system in Waterloo Region is effectively improving literacy in families with pre-school aged (0-6 years) children, what will be in place?
5. What are the current barriers in Waterloo Region to creating a shared vision for a service delivery system that effectively improves literacy in families with pre-school aged (0-6 years) children?
6. In the current service delivery system that supports families with pre-school aged children (0-6 years) improve their family's literacy, which stakeholders are not involved but should be.
7. What does a program/initiative absolutely need to do to improve family literacy?
  - a. Prompt: What one thing would most help families with pre-school aged youth (0-6 years) get better at the nine essential skills?
8. Please share any other comments or questions.

## Survey

The survey that follows was distributed widely online and by hardcopy to Project READ's and Capacity Canada's networks. About 200 people completed the survey. About half said they or someone in their family goes to a program for families with pre-school aged children and half work or volunteer with a program supporting these families.



# Families Writing Children Adults Time



## Project READ Literacy Network Environmental Scan

**W**e want to understand how programs and services in Waterloo Region are helping families with pre-school aged children (ages 0 to 6) and their parents, guardians, or caring adults improve their skills for learning and life together. These are skills like reading, writing, math, communication skills, and working with others. We also want to understand how these programs and services could help more families improve these skills together.

It is your choice to answer these questions.  
You may choose not to answer any questions.

We are not asking you to share your name.

This survey will take you about 5 minutes to finish



## Project READ Literacy Network Environmental Scan

**1.** Please tell us about yourself.

- Me or someone in my family goes to a program that is for families that have children who are 0 to 6 years old and I live

\_\_\_\_\_ (put the neighbourhood, major streets, or postal code)

- I work or volunteer with a program that supports families that have children who are 0 to 6 years old and the families who use my organizations' program and services tend to live in the following areas

\_\_\_\_\_ (put the neighbourhood, major streets, or postal code)

- I am someone else and I live \_\_\_\_\_ (put the neighbourhood, major streets, or postal code)

**2** When families read, talk, write, do math, and play together, they improve their skills for learning and life. What makes families want to improve skills for learning and life together?





Project READ Literacy Network Environmental Scan

- To build stronger links within their families.
- To help their kids do well at school.
- To help the parent/guardian/caring adult get a high school diploma.
- To help the parent/guardian/caring adult get an apprenticeship.
- To help the parent/guardian/caring adult go to college.
- To help the parent/guardian/caring adult go to university.
- To help the parent/guardian/caring adult learn skills that will help them get a job.
- To help the parent/guardian/caring adult learn skills that will help them get a better job.
- To improve the parent/guardian/caring adult's confidence.
- To improve the children's confidence.
- Parents/guardians/caring adults want their children to feel proud of them.
- Families who attend our programs are told they have to.
- Ontario Works/Ontario Disability Support Program tells families to go to programs to improve these skills.
- Family and Children's Services refers families to improve these skills.
- Other (list all)



Project READ Literacy Network Environmental Scan

- 3** When families read, talk, write, do math & play together, they improve skills for learning & life. What makes it hard for families to improve these skills together?
- Programs do not teach families these skills.
  - Transportation - no car.
  - Transportation - bus is hard to use with children or bus is too costly.
  - Feel embarrassed.
  - Do not have access to childcare.
  - There is not enough time to learn these skills together.
  - Other (list all)
  - It costs too much money to go to programs.
  - Families are not sure where to go to improve these skills.
  - Families are not sure who to ask to improve these skills.
  - Families are not sure what to ask for.



- 4** What three (3) things would most help families with pre-school aged children (0-6 years old) with their skills for learning and life? examples: free bus tickets, programs closer to me or programs at night.
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

**5** If you would like to learn more about the Families First Project, please write down how we can contact you. We can text, phone, or email you.



## Post-it Pop-Ups

The post-it pop-up approach engaged families around the community in locations where they were already participating in activities. One staff person from Project READ or Capacity Canada set up a display table and asked families that approached the table to answer three overarching questions:

1. What makes families want to improve their skills for learning and life together?
2. What makes it hard for families to improve their skills for learning and life together?
3. What would most help families improve their skills for learning and life together?

Responses were written on sticky notes and displayed on a white board. To thank families for their participation we offered child(ren) of the caring adults we spoke with a free book. A craft activity and floor puzzle were also available so children had something to do while their caring adults shared their insights.

The Post-it Pop-Up activity took place at the following organizations:

- Elmira Farmer's Market
- Victoria Hills Community Centre
- Kitchener Public Library
- Mill-Courtland Community
- Centre Market
- Country Hills Community Centre
- Our Place Early Year's Centre
- Waterloo Memorial Complex

## Facilitated arts activity

Six caring adults who previously attended Get Set Learn and their 13 children gathered at Mill-Courtland Community Centre to participate in a facilitated arts activity. These families were asked to create a collage in response to the following question:

If Project READ were starting a new program, what should happen in that program?

The following prompting questions were used to assist families answer this question:

- What would you want to learn?
- What would you want to do?
- What would you want your children to do in the program?
- How would the program help you or your family get to the next step you want to get to?

Families described their collages to facilitators from Project READ and Capacity Canada individually. A few families described their creations with the whole group. To thank families for their participation we offered child(ren) of the caring adults we spoke with a free book. Project READ's Early Childhood Educator and Capacity Canada's Communications and Events Assistant supervised a craft and activity table for children, so their caring adult could continue with the facilitated arts activity when they wanted to do something different.



## Complete list of Organizations Consulted During the Environmental Scan

(excluding survey respondents)

Carizon Family and Community Services City of Kitchener

City of Waterloo

Country Hills Community Centre

Elmira Farmer's Market

Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region Idea Exchange

Kitchener Public Library

Mill-Courtland Community Centre (Market Day) Our Place Early Year's Centre

Reception House Waterloo Region

Region of Waterloo

Shelldale Better Beginnings, Better Futures Sunlife Financial Canada

Victoria Hills Community Centre

Waterloo Public Library

YMCA

## Outcomes and Impacts of Family Literacy: A preliminary list

### Belonging

- Decreased isolation
- Increased sense of belonging
- More connections with other new parents
- Increased network

### Engagement

- Creation of a culture of continuous learning
- Increased high school graduation rates
- Greater participation in democratic processes
- Availability of peer-support

### Well-being

- Improved well-being
- Extended life span
- Creation of new pathways in your brain
- Build confidence

### Expressions

- Improved learning through play
- Curiosity ignited through play
- New parenting skills through experiential learning and role modeling



# Families First Project: Design Thinking Approach

Proposal for Project READ



CAPACITYCANADA

## Background

The Families First Waterloo Region Project is well-positioned to utilize a Design Thinking approach to prototype and test thinking related to how to both broaden and deepen the work they've demonstrated through the Get Set Learn (GSL) program to other segments and aspects of the community in Waterloo Region. Historically limited by funding sources, Families First provides a safe container for the staff and stakeholders of GSL, a program of Project READ Literacy Network (Project READ), to rethink how they might broaden and deepen the work they do to support family literacy.

This document provides an overview of what design-thinking is, how it will be used and the sequencing and staging proposed for different phases of the Families First Project.

## What is Design Thinking?

Design Thinking is the practice of design (typically the tools and approaches) by individuals without formal scholarly background in design. Design Thinking is a human-centred approach to innovation that uses concepts and tools of design to incorporate people's needs, technology, and requirements for business success (Tim Brown, CEO of IDEO). It integrates what is desirable from a human point of view with what is technologically possible, strategically viable, and economically feasible to provide creative tools to address challenges (IDEO, 2017). This approach "utilizes elements from the designer's toolkit like empathy and experimentation to arrive at innovative solutions. By using design thinking, you make decisions based on what future customers really want instead of relying only on historical data or making risky bets based on instinct instead of evidence" (IDEO.com).



For example, Design Thinking has been used to reengineer nursing staff shift changes in hospitals. By closely observing frontline staff during actual shift changes, and combining this with brainstorming and quick prototyping, the health care provider was able to streamline information and create more time for nursing, better patient care, and more satisfied nursing staff (Harvard Business Review, 2008). Another example of this approach was used at Shimano, a bicycle manufacturer, which learned why 90% of American adults did not ride bicycles. After learning that the complexity, cost, danger, and intimidation of buying bicycles were the main factors why adults chose not to ride, the company developed a “Coasting” bike, a new category of cycling, and developed new sales strategies and a public relations campaign to identify safe areas for cycling (Harvard Business Review, 2008).

Design Thinking is solution-focused and action-oriented towards creating a preferred future of what could be – it is not problem-based. Overall, it tries to inspire creativity in order to take an abstract idea and create something with it, continually evolving, through a series of activities that allow idea generation and adaptation to occur quickly (Forbes, 2014). This approach uses a design mindset and usually involves a five-stage process:

1. empathize,
2. define,
3. ideate,
4. prototype, and
5. test.

The first stage (empathize) of the Design Thinking process is to achieve an empathic understanding of the problem that needs to be solved in order to set aside any assumptions about the issues and gain insight into clients/end users and their needs.

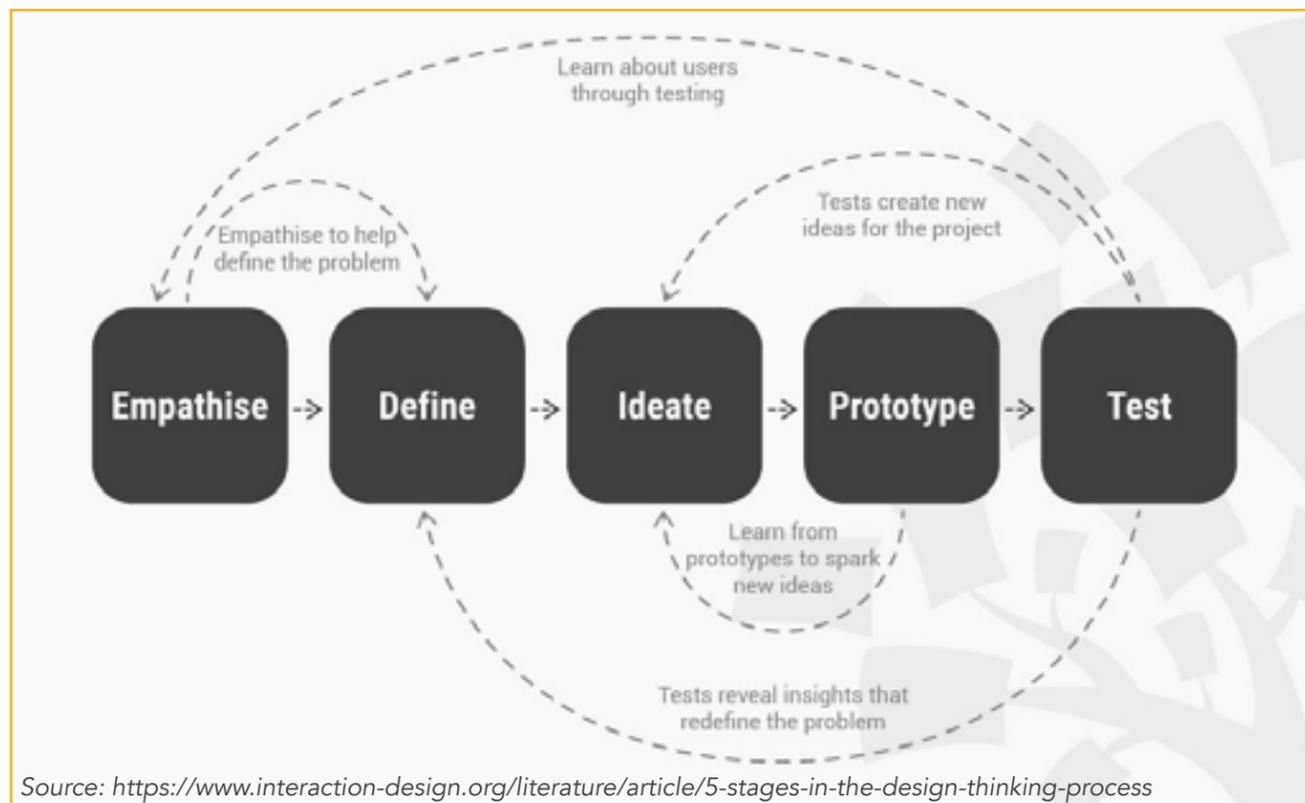
The second stage (define) is to define the problem based on the information gained during stage one in order to generate ideas about features, functions, or other elements that will allow designers to solve the problem.

The third stage (ideate) is where as many ideas as possible are generated in order to ‘think outside the box’, identify new solutions, and view the problem from different ways.

The fourth phase (prototype) is where a number of inexpensive, experimental, scaled-down versions of a program, product, or service are produced and tested within the team or organization in order to adapt, modify, accept, or reject the idea on the basis of user experiences.

The fifth stage (test) is where the complete idea is rigorously tested using the best solutions identified during prototyping and can be redefined based on the results of this stage.

### Design Thinking: A Non-Linear Process



These stages may not always occur in sequence and contribute to the creation of the project – Design Thinking is a non-linear process and these stages may be revisited at any time or used in parallel with each other.

### Why Use it in this project

Design Thinking allows organizations to ‘rethink’ their approach, services, and products that impact clients—the end users. This approach moves away from looking backwards at historical data to determine what services to provide and how to deliver them. For this project, Design Thinking enables GSL to utilize imaginative, human-centred thinking by focusing on three key aspects. First, using Design Thinking, this project can invent a future in order to look at what clients want but do not have currently, to observe client behavior, and ask questions about clientele. Second, this approach allows GSL to test new ideas and services by prototyping and adapting in order to adjust in real time to see how clients respond. This reiterative process is beneficial in that modifications can be made quickly and at relatively low costs in order to create effective programming and services. Third, Design Thinking then enables GSL to bring new services and programs to life by identifying opportunities, resources, partners, etc., based on the refined prototype(s) of programs and services created through the Design Thinking process. Overall, Design Thinking enables Project READ and GSL to create a future that clients desire, rather than using historical data to anticipate client wants. Using this innovative approach will allow Project READ to develop creative solutions and consider what is technically possible, strategically feasible, and economically practical.

### Inputs to the Development of the Design Thinking Strategy

Several inputs have been considered in the development of the Design Thinking strategy. In particular, these include:

- Feedback and findings from the initial project work done between Capacity Canada and Project READ to develop possible sustainability models for GSL
- Key Terms that were generated through small group discussions either with Reference Group members or with internal staff at Project READ. A Design Thinking approach was used to generate these terms and definitions were then iterated to ensure they were clear and meaningful to the project.
- Environmental Scan and the emergent findings from this process have also informed the Design Thinking strategy as well.

Methods used thus far have supported the project team to begin to empathize, define and ideate. Further work in ideation will be required before finalizing the below proposed prototypes. In the following section, further detail will be provided on the key terms that were identified as well as emergent learnings from the environmental scan.



## Key Terms

Central to this project has been a desire to conceptualize more broadly what family literacy might mean for Project READ as well as what the terms sustainability and scaling mean, especially as these terms relate to GSL. Each of the following definitions were generated through a series of small group discussions and form the container for thinking about what will be essential criteria in the Design Thinking process and what will be required in each prototype. The following are the working definitions for family literacy and sustainability. The definition for scaling moved away from a concrete definition to a discussion about competencies and expertise that might be scaled or leveraged.

### Family literacy

A family that learns about, interacts with, and interprets the world together opens up a world of opportunity by creating connections within their families and with their communities.

### Sustainability

Sustainability is generating the skills, knowledge, and revenue to develop human and financial resources and plan for mobilizing these capacities to address community needs into the future.

### Scaling

As previously noted, the definition for scaling took a different trajectory in that a formal definition was not created, nor did the key project members from Project READ identify a need to do so during the conversation. Instead the discussion to define scaling internally at Project READ identified the organization's unique expertise and a desire to combine this expertise with learnings emerging from the environmental scan, to inform the suggested prototype options. Specifically, Project READ identified the following two areas of expertise that they believe need to be further understood and incorporated into potential prototypes:

- Andragogy – teaching adults
- Family literacy and the role of intergenerational low literacy (though Jane doesn't like the word intergenerational)

## Environmental Scan

The environmental scan has been used both as a vehicle to gather meaningful data about family literacy challenges, opportunities and perceptions across Waterloo Region and also as a focused engagement strategy that would engage possible end users of new program offerings or services that support and build family literacy capacity.

(See Appendix A)

Emergent learnings from the environmental scan include:

- Harness the family literacy movement- identify and work with the “champions”, “influencers” and “change makers”
- Take a universal and targeted approach to program/service development – balancing inclusiveness and meeting specific needs
- Be intentional moving forward- embrace a collective impact approach;
- Complete a list of outcomes and impacts of family literacy – foundations from the How Does Learning Happen framework is a good start
- Create mitigation strategies through program/service development to the challenges to promoting and practicing family literacy- time, information, new to Canada, Access, Screen Time



## Prototype Possibilities

The following provides an overview of potential prototypes that are being considered at this stage in the project. The prototype iterations will each involve diverse stakeholders that are relevant to the identified prototype theme and will involve a series of creative methodologies that will support the identification and inclusion of user-perspectives to generate and build prototypes that can be tested and iterated. Prototypes developed will not necessarily be ready for implementation but will involve significant user data as well as background research to support potential implementation at a future point.

The prototypes identified will each need to meet the following criteria:

- Leverage Project READ's strengths
- Clearly identify components, markets and users Meet outcomes? related to:
  - Expand Family Literacy Service Offerings
  - Sustainability needs
  - Feasibility, viability and usability

A methodology or decision matrix will need to be established to help prioritize the prototypes that will move forward to the prototype iteration and testing phase of Design Thinking.

### 1. Expanding GSL to New Demographics

**Who:** This might include targeting newcomers and better understanding their needs in Waterloo Region. It could also mean a travelling GSL or a

**What:** A prototype will be generated that identifies possible program offerings and intended demographics.

**Why:** GSL has identified a significant gap in meeting the family literacy needs of a variety of different populations in Waterloo Region. This prototype will help them to identify and examine how best to meet these needs.

**How:** Design Sprint as a start

**When:** September – December 2017

### 2. Coaching and Mentoring

**Who:** Supporting families across Waterloo Region with a family literacy coaching and mentoring model.

**What:** Coaching and mentoring are high impact strategy to embed learning. This focus on coaching and mentoring could take a number of forms. This might include coaching and mentoring organizations to be family literacy friendly or could also be a model that would support families through a learning coach or lastly might be a model of peer learning that supports family literacy learning. This could be a peer to peer program or could be a business model that would generate revenue in higher income families. This model needs significant development to determine who the users would be, what the model would look like and what needs it is meeting.

**Why:** Identified as a possible strategy to enter new markets and to provide directed services and support to a broad range of families, this coach model has been identified as holding merit and leverages existing strengths at Project READ. Coaching could be delivered to families, to organizations or to support peer to peer networks.



**How:** Design Sprint as a start

**When:** January to April 2018

### 3. Licensing and Segmenting GSL Curriculum

**Who:** Broad array of families in Waterloo Region

**What:** This could involve a point of sale system for users on a website or a camp where families can come together to participate and receive GSL in a directed way, or it could be a mechanism to sell components of training or the GSL curriculum.

**Why:** There is incredible strength in the curriculum and how to marketize this has not been fully conceptualized. It could involve the development of an app or a family camp model to attract different funders or clients.

**How:** TBD

**When:** April – September 2018

### Mobilizing Waterloo Region for Family Literacy Policy Changes

**Who:** Internal stakeholders in Waterloo Region involved in service delivery related to family literacy as well as external stakeholders such as government and funders as well as other communities who might use Waterloo Region as an exemplar.

**What:** Supporting individual families to achieve work-life balance will only accomplish so much without a systemic approach moving this forward. We see that Project READ could act as a systems leader for family policy change. A revenue generating opportunity would be to work with our local NDP government who is vocal about its intentions for supporting families.

**Why:** There are a number of diverse stakeholders in Waterloo Region supporting family literacy initiatives. These players are disconnected

and may not understand fully the ways they could work together. This prototype would build a model for service providers in Waterloo Region and could be shared with other communities.

**How:** shapes or forms this could take include:

- Family literacy campaign: this is emerging from data, including Project READ expertise (i.e., family literacy movement; needing family literacy champions). This option could also focus on how to get information out widely and in a way that is not overwhelming, both for intergenerational Canadians and those who are new to Canada.
- Developing an evaluation strategy for family literacy for programs throughout the community: with a range of stakeholders identify outcomes for all community programs that would show the impact of literacy focus.

**When:** TBD

### Other Emerging Themes Requiring Conversation:

1. **Time:** this is the most common barrier identified and spans socioeconomic brackets (in our limited information). A prototyping option here may be to engage in systemic advocacy about how to better support families, and influence family policy changes. This might not be a direct practice prototype, but a macro focus option. We tell families enough they need to balance and make time. This message can get out in other ways, but it would be a good way to demonstrate the range of impact Project READ could make.
2. **Technology:** Project READ likes the idea of using technology to support Family Literacy. This might mean creating an app with fun games; delivering online training which they could charge for (this also fits with the Androgogy certificate). Tech might be the medium of a prototype, but perhaps not the prototype itself (i.e., tech for the sake of seeming innovative or relevant). I'm including this as a separate point because they get excited about tech.

## Families First Waterloo Region



## Project Schematic

The schematic on the next page depicts a vision for how the various prototypes may intersect to achieve the ultimate Project READ goal of improving Family Literacy within Waterloo Region. It is designed to be a fluid picture supporting the iterative nature of Design Thinking- many paths may lead to the same end point or create new ideas that move toward the same end point.

## Next Steps – Moving the Design Thinking Strategy Forward

Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Create a decision-making matrix for prioritizing the prototypes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criteria for assessing plausibility of prototypes</li> </ul>	Reference Group	August/September 2017
Confirm the prototype priorities	Reference Group	August/September 2017
Detail the Design Sprints	CC and Project READ Teams	August/September 2017
Confirm methodology	CC and Project READ Teams	September 2017
Identify and confirm participants	Project READ	October 2017
Secure Design Sprint Resources	Project READ	October 2017
Launch Design Sprint and Evaluate	CC and Project READ Teams	November 2017

## – Schematic



## Appendix

### APPENDIX A

## Key Findings from the Environmental Scan

The scan aimed to answer the following questions:

- To understand what motivated families to improve skills for learning and life together. These are skills like reading, talking, writing, doing math, playing, and having conversations together.
  - To understand what makes the above difficult for families.
- To learn from the community – including professional partners, and families especially those families who are living most on the margins of society – what family literacy initiatives should include.

Data collection for the environmental scan has included the following methods:

- One-on-one conversations with key community partners (11 complete; 1 pending)
- One-on-one conversations with families (3)
- Conversations with organizations across Canada doing family literacy: Dakota, BC; Centre for Family Literacy (AB); Saskatchewan Literacy Network; East Coast, name TBD (completed and pending TBD when Joanne returns from holiday)
- Engagement with various members of the public through community pop-up post-it engagement activity (tracking numbers)
- Survey respondents (138 responses after one email blast through Project READ; Joanne; and Jen email blasts and distributing on social media)
- GSL participants (arts based group activity)



Emergent learnings from the environmental scan include:

### A family literacy movement

- High level acknowledgement of the value of family literacy for helping to eradicate intergenerational low literacy and alleviate poverty
- Mobilizing this movement will require developing a shared understanding about the terms family literacy and literacy and their associated practices. All stakeholders – families, direct practitioners, funders, the general public – need to be educated about what these terms mean and what their practices entail.
- Project READ is well-positioned to be a leader in family literacy and the organization's increasing representation on community tables has been recognized
- Family literacy needs "champions", "influencers", "change-makers"

### A universal and targeted approach

- Family literacy is for everyone – for everyone in the family; it's not only for the nuclear family; it spans socio-economic brackets and nationalities
- Interventions ought to meet families where they are at (e.g., an emergent curriculum for both the children and their caring adults; be geographically close)
- At the same time, interventions would bring together a diverse group of families to build community and capital
- Difficult balance between being inclusive and meeting a specific need(s)

### An intentional approach moving forward

- Aligning the family literacy movement strategically with the early literacy system's overarching framework How does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years.
- To address this complex social problem, embrace a collective impact approach – involve the unsuspecting actors, too

- Draw on a combination of peer support and professional facilitators

### A beginning list of outcomes and impacts of family literacy

- Stakeholders consulted have begun to identify outcomes and impacts related to family literacy, many of which align with the four foundations for learning and development in the How Does Learning Happen framework: belonging, engagement, well-being, and expression.

### Challenges to promoting and practicing family literacy

- **Time:** for families this means there is not a lot of time to do things together (i.e., at home or by attending programming)
- **Information:** There can be too much information which is overwhelming. On the other hand, some people have talked about there being not enough information, inaccessible information, or not knowing where to go for information.
- **New to Canada:** tension between maintaining cultural identity and risk of losing identity by participating in programming; must trust information professionals are giving you, without necessarily knowing if they are telling you the right/enough information; newcomer's first priority is to help their children read and write in English; play/discovery is not a priority
- **Access:** timing of programming conflicts with families' schedules; lack of childcare for children who do not meet program's age requirements; location is far from home and lack of accessible/convenient transportation can be a barrier to going to programs.
- **Screen time:** Use of screen time a crutch.



# Families First Project: Project Evaluation Framework

Proposal for Project READ



CAPACITYCANADA



## Introduction

This evaluation framework focuses on anticipated short term (attitude) and medium term (behavioural) outcomes of the Families First project. It includes targets for measuring if, and to what extent, this project is achieving these outcomes, the activities that will help achieve anticipated outcomes, and the tools for testing prototypes and tracking progress towards these outcomes. The outcomes presented in this framework will support the achievement of the longer-term goals of family literacy (FL):

## Activities (Outputs)

The following are the activities that will support the achievement of the Families First project’s anticipated outcomes.

- Project Charter & Workplan
- Project evaluation framework & tools
- Development Evaluation Framework for prototypes & tools
- Workshops and training with Project READ
- Definitions created (family literacy; sustainability; scaling)
- Environmental scan (Tools; data; report)
- Reports (Environmental scan and final – scaling up in small organization\*; progress on organizational sustainability\*; summary of program impact on family\*)
- Prototypes & supplementary tools
- Systems map

## Outcomes and Indicators

Indicators	Progress	Comments
<b>Outcome 1.</b> Enhanced understanding about and comfort with techniques, tools, and mindsets that support organizational capacity building (i.e., strategy; design thinking; developmental evaluation; “failing forward”)		
# workshops and training sessions (group and one-on-one)		
% reference group report increased understanding of design thinking		
% reference group report increased understanding of developmental evaluation		
% reference group and project review team <sup>2</sup> report increased comfort with “failing forward”		
% increase in confidence to continue to build organizational capacity among Families First project review team		
% reference group and project review team report the developmental evaluation process contributed to choosing the best prototype		
% reference group and project review team describe ways they integrate learning from PD		

<sup>1</sup> Example to illustrate progress; What has helped get where you are now in your project; What has held you back.

<sup>2</sup> In this document, project review team refers to Project READ staff who are part of the project review team.



Indicators	Progress	Comments
<b>Outcome 2. Ignited FL movement (i.e., increased community understanding about family literacy; greater awareness of Project READ's role in family literacy)</b>		
# community engagements (e.g., individual meetings; community consultations; presentations)		
# unique individuals participate in community engagements		
# community partners engaged for the implementation stage following project completion		
% stakeholders consulted report improved understanding about FL (i.e., what it is; the role of parents in early literacy; the connection between supporting parents and outcomes for kids)		
% stakeholders consulted report improved understanding about FL and early literacy systems		
% stakeholders consulted report improved understanding about Project READ's role in FL		
Project review team reports greater understanding of how to engage potential partners		

Indicators	Progress	Comments
<b>Outcome 3. Greater understanding about scaling up in a smaller organization</b>		
"Scaling" defined		
Project READ has documented process of scaling in a smaller organization		
% reference group and project review team express increased understand about scaling in smaller organizations		
# partners receive summary of learnings about scaling in smaller organizations		
<b>Outcome 4. Improved progress on organizational sustainability</b>		
"Sustainability" defined		
# increase in identified partners in community*		
# champions/influencers identified and consulted		
# and type of additional opportunities for ongoing training and development for Project READ identified		
# additional funding sources identified and applied for \$ secured for ongoing operation and program costs		



Indicators	Progress	Comments
<b>Outcome 5. More families effectively practicing family literacy</b>		
# families attending program-focused prototypes*		
% of families report (anticipate) they are (will be) stronger (i.e., families developing skills identified in existing GSL program evaluation)		
% report learning new skills (caring adult and children) (e.g., expression and communication)		
% report feeling confident they can apply new skills (caring adult and children)		
% caring adults observe improved confidence and improved sense of self in their children		
% report increased sense of belonging (caring adults and children)		
% report increased engagement with the world around them (caring adult and children)		
% report increased curiosity in the world around them (caring adult and children)		

Indicators	Progress	Comments
<b>Outcome 6. More collaborative family literacy system</b>		
# identified partners in community*		
Processes identified to increase and support diversity of membership on community leadership groups		
Stakeholders and relationships between stakeholders in and related to the FL system identified		
<b>Outcome 7. Greater breadth and depth of family literacy programming</b>		
Key factors in your prototype decision tracked and documented*		
Process in place to reach a diversity of families through prototypes		
# service providers embedding family literacy practices in their programming		
# of programs delivered		
# new audiences reached through programming (i.e., urban/rural; new communities; SES etc.)		



Indicators	Progress	Comments
<b>Outcome 8. Effectiveness of and satisfaction with the Families First project process</b>		
Terms of reference approved		
Reference group identifies their input and expertise was valued and used throughout the project		
% reference group and project review team are satisfied with the Families First project's process (e.g., reflective, creative, inclusive, pragmatic)		
% reference group and project review team are satisfied with the Families First project's methods (e.g., Design Thinking, Developmental Evaluation, group structures)		

## Tools for testing

- Activity tracking
- Pre and post-survey (reference group workshops and training)
- Satisfaction survey (reference group workshops and training)
- Post-prototype activity and/or survey for families and partners
- Project READ staff observation and reflection
- Survey and/or interviews with key partners, including Families First project review team and reference group to reflect on overall project
- System map



## GSL Training and Certification

### Training

1. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the training provided for this pilot.

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
<input type="radio"/>				

2. What, if anything, about the training for this pilot worked well?

3. In what ways could the training for this pilot been improved?

## DE Appendix



## Partnerships

4. Please rate the effectiveness of the working relationship between the pilot's partnering organizations?

Very ineffective      Ineffective      Neutral      Effective      Very Effective

5. What, if anything, worked well with the relationships between partners?

6. What, if anything, could have worked better in the relationships between partners?

## Program fidelity or consistency

7. Please describe your level of confidence that the program was delivered as it was intended.

Not at all confident      Not confident      Neutral      Confident      Very confident

8. In what ways, if at all, did you observe the program to be delivered as it was meant to be.

9. What were the key challenges, if any, to implementing the program as it was intended?



10. Please describe what you believe would be the ideal roles and responsibilities of each of the partnering organizations?

Project READ Literacy Network (Program Owner)

Waterloo Public Library

YMCA

13. Please share anything else you think is important to know about the training and implementation of the GSL pilot.

Some final questions

11. Please indicate how much you would be willing to pay for GSL certification.

Note: If you are a program facilitator (adult or child), please answer for yourself. If you are a manager, please respond with how much you would be willing to pay per staff person as if your organization does not have any funding constraints.



12. Please tell us what your role was in this pilot.



## Families First Waterloo Region Project Planning

Key Information Conversation Summary



CAPACITYCANADA

## A Vision for Family Literacy in Waterloo-Wellington

### Individuals.

- More basic needs would be met
  - People may not be struggling so much if they had the skills to meet their basic needs (i.e., they could use kijiji to look for housing rather than housing)
- Improved sense of well-being
  - Individuals' sense of well-being would increase exponentially
- Power, autonomy, and a sense of control over one's own life
  - Daily tasks and engaging in new experiences would feel less scary (i.e., taking the bus twenty minutes to get to participate in GSL would not be a barrier to participation).
  - When you have low literacy you almost need to do one of two things: 1) rely on others and trust the people around you are telling you the truth, or 2) you stop trusting people and become pessimistic. With improved literacy individuals would:
    - Be able to advocate for themselves
    - May be less likely to get pushed around the system or to be taken advantage of
- Enhanced sense of safety
  - People would feel more safety because they advocate for themselves
- Improved physical and mental health
  - Individuals with low literacy are afraid of asking their health care professionals if questions because they don't want to be caught as illiterate
  - The healthcare profession usually refers their patients to brochures and sending people to website, which requires people have literacy
  - Connection between low literacy and type 2 diabetes



- Having good literacy is connected with living a longer life
- Improved sense of self-esteem (i.e., children will feel like they can keep up with other kids and will not feel like they are falling behind.
- Developing critical thinking skills
- Improved employment prospects
  - More likely to graduate high school and have the literacy skills to pursue further education/training.

### Families.

- Literacy built into parent/guardian and child relationship
- Intergenerational low literacy is eliminated.
  - This is a long term game (One to three generations)
  - “If you can change the environment in the home it can make a big difference for that child and family”
- Engaged families
  - Less [more intentional?] use of technology (e.g., phones, tv, iPad)
  - Develops a back and forth communication between parent and child
    - Serve and return conversations, and interaction, build brains

### Schools.

- Level playing field
  - 30 million words
    - Kids from families who have low literacy are already behind by the time they get to kindergarten (i.e., the 30 million word gap between children from low-income families and children from professional families)
- Every child reading to learn at grade three
  - By grade three schools expect students can read to learn the curriculum and are no longer being taught to read. For kids where there is not a literacy rich environment at home they will have a harder time keeping up with the curriculum because their literacy skills are already behind. This speeds many of these children up on a trajectory for poor academic outcomes.

### The Community.

- Poverty reduction
  - Correlation between literacy and SES
  - Relationship between improved literacy and poverty reduction
    - “We know that if we can impact peoples’ literacy we can move them up and out of poverty, and I think that’s possible”.
  - If you don’t reduce poverty you will never have well-being
- Less crime
- Engaged citizenry
  - People would vote because they would have, and would feel like they have, the power to create change
  - People who have literacy cannot be dictated to; they are able to contribute to the political process
  - More likely to participate in the community if you can understand literacy rich environments and if you feel welcome in those environments



- More likely to disengage if you are bombarded with text (i.e., Region’s OW office is overwhelming with text)
- More awareness and critical thought about different aspects of community life (e.g., waste management) and their role/ contributions in this ecosystem.
- Individuals would feel like the community belongs to them and they want to take ownership of it (i.e., individuals would be more likely to respond in government consultation sessions; individuals would vote)
- People would trust each other
- A clean city and a sustainable environment
  - Individuals would think critically about what garbage collection means (i.e., what it means to have products with less packaging; garbage collectors are paid through taxes they, or citizens like them, pay for)
- Robust economy
  - Productivity at work would increase because there would be less waste
  - 1% increase in literacy has been found to return \$321 billion to the economy.
  - Support individuals to work in a highly skilled workforce [knowledge economy].
  - Craig Alexander, former Chief Economist at TD, noted the importance of supporting literacy for economic development.

### What’s needed to achieve this vision?

- Family literacy
  - GSL is successful because it takes an intergenerational approach
  - Families need to be modeling reading.
- Multi-pronged approach
  - Need programs that work adults and children individually, as well

- Collaboration
  - It’s important to build relationships with other community agencies to more fully support families (in reference to Smart Start).
- Funding
- Scaling GSL
- Education and awareness
  - About literacy (i.e., what low literacy looks like; the impacts of low literacy; the benefits of a literacy rich community)
  - Challenging misperceptions (i.e., low literacy happens because individuals are not applying themselves or are lazy; it’s an issue that effects individuals who have English as a Second Language)
  - More connection between people to facilitate more conversation and awareness about what family literacy is
  - Need to get people thinking about literacy as a long term solution.
- Advocacy
  - The general public needs to become more aware about literacy and low literacy and to pressure the government to see literacy, and Project READ, as important in achieving outcomes (e.g., economic, education).
- School interventions
  - High school literacy test does a disservice to students. Those who fail it three times take the literacy course and everyone passes that, so some students are graduating with low literacy
  - Would holding kids back in the early years set them up for more success, give them a more solid foundation on which to learn?



## GSL's Role in Achieving this Vision

- Education and increasing awareness
  - About what developing early literacy involves (e.g., talking, reading, singing, drawing, playing with shapes and numbers)
  - Educating families with low-literacy about the impacts of low-literacy on their family
  - Educating the broader community about the effects of low literacy and about GSL.
  - Getting the school system to recognize GSL, the impact of low literacy on children, and to promote it to parents within the school system.
  - It would be great if GSL was a household name among non-profit agencies.
  - Promote a broader awareness that responsibility for literacy comes first from families.
  - Need a plan to get people aware about family literacy
- Outreach to families with the highest need
  - Families on OW and ODSP
- Promotes family literacy
  - It's the only program they know of that involves children and their parents in a really in depth way.
  - Builds brains through back and forth communication/serve and return conversations between parent and child
  - Changes the environment by promoting a culture of literacy within families
- Builds and fosters safe and healthy relationships
  - Within families
  - Between families and instructors
  - GSL instructors create an environment that does not replicate the negative experiences that many of their clients had in school (i.e., the instructors do not act like teachers)

- Hidden curriculum
  - While they get families in the door by promoting GSL as a way for parents/guardians to spend time with their child(ren), improve family literacy, help parents engage more with their children, and build positive discipline skills, GSL has a secondary which is to get parents thinking about their own future (i.e., by getting parents thinking about their individual goals; referring parents to additional programs such as academic upgrading).
- Builds social capital
  - GSL could create bridging capital within the group by having GSL where families from different SES could meet, share experiences, and learn and grow from one another.

## A 3-5 Year Vision for GSL

### Scaling up.

- We know GSL works; we're confident about that, but what we don't know is how to scale it up.
- Doing more GSL is going to help more. Right now we're only serving a subsection of the population.
- We know so many families need this. Even middle class families don't read enough or talk with one another enough.
- We need to figure out if people would be willing to pay for GSL.
- An additional session in the fall?
- Expand across the province?
  - Would we have to change our mission and vision?
- What would growth look like [requires more clarity]
  - It could look like anything
  - "I don't think it's gonna change that much. I think it's laid out really well".
  - I am "open to changing the program for low-income families, but that is not the focus right now"



- The reason for doing this program is to improve family literacy for families with low-incomes.
- Willing to adapt, “blow-up”, the model for other markets (e.g., schools, other organizations, middle class families) if it means delivering GSL to more families with low-incomes.

### Model(s) for sustainability.

- GSL would have started implementing a model, or different models, to sustain GSL, in its current form, for low-income families – those accessing OW, ODSP, or the working poor.
- Potential models identified later in this document.
- Developing and testing models during Families First Project (1.5 years)
- Implement model(s) for 3-5 years. This will require more funding.

### Evaluation.

- Would like to evaluate the program better. There is no evaluation that meets the needs of the project. To get it funded we need to show something concrete.

## Opportunities

- Explore corporate sponsorship
  - Collaborate with the tech sector
    - Tech companies, with their younger workforce, seem to have a bigger social conscience than older companies (i.e., some companies allowing employees to take time off of work to volunteer in the hopes they continue to volunteer on their own time)
  - Would like to see digital groups understand the need for literacy, to sponsor GSL, and lobby the government because they have the government’s ear

- Apply for more grants
- Building a fundraising/resource development culture at Project READ
- An appealing cause
  - Family literacy is a cause people are quite drawn to when they understand it
  - It’s an issue mothers and fathers can identify with
  - Buy-in is easier when the program involves kids
- Storytelling
  - They have requested a summer student to do some videos about GSL
  - Need to consider how to highlight success stories in a way that is respectful to those who are putting themselves, and their experience with low literacy, out there
- Communications and promotion
  - Project READ is currently working with Leadership Waterloo Region to develop a communication plan
  - Applied to Social Venture Partners for a grant to help with promotion
- Getting buy-in for family literacy is a gateway to talking about the importance of adult literacy, another component of Project READ’s work
- Project READ champions
  - All Project READ staff talked about the importance of networking with people to educate and build awareness about family literacy and Project READ’s work.
  - Community champion in Ruth Cruikshank who helped them review their SVP application
- Expanding GSL, or a model of GSL, to other markets
  - Schools
    - It would be smart for the education system to put money into GSL because it would foster better outcomes for them in the future.



- Churches
  - Churches are concerned about poverty
- Community Centres
  - They are already accessing families because they are running programming for children
  - Communities are pods that reflect the surrounding neighbourhood
  - People are already comfortable in their community centre which might increase attendance
  - Would still encourage people to go to different community centres, so people with different SES are connecting.
- Train the trainer
  - GSL has a really great curriculum and books to go with it. It would be a doable role for Project READ to train others to deliver GSL.
- Workshops
  - For grandparents about digital literacy
  - How to make digital literacy a literacy rich activity
- There are other people who could deliver GSL, in order to financially support GSL for low-income families, but what would that look like, what does that mean, and what are the risks and opportunities associated with that?
- Need to be open to change
  - Project READ needs to be open to growing and we have a board that is visionary and can see that. If GSL grows, Project READ will grow with it

## Potential Challenges

- Education and awareness
  - Lack of awareness about literacy, family literacy, and the impacts of low literacy

- Can be uncomfortable to tell people that if they have low literacy their kids probably will, too
- Outreach to families with low-literacy can be difficult because many do not have the literacy skills to engage with the promotional material (e.g., posters, flyers)
- Focus on the individual – one's own interests and well-being – prevents millennial from engaging in becoming aware and getting involved
  - Need more help with communication and promotions.
- Project READ's organizational capacity
  - Small staff
- Funding
  - Grants require a lot of reporting which takes up a lot of the organization's time
  - It's difficult to develop a culture of funding/resource development because Project READ gets government funding
  - Non-profits who are not necessarily experts in the literacy field are competing for funding
  - Where will funding for the ongoing sustainability of scaling models come from?
  - Having to seek funding, or defend why you should get more funding, every 1-2 years is draining. Government should do three year contracts.
- Scaling
  - Mission drift: if other organizations grab onto the concept it was noted that the driving force behind GSL, should remain
  - Program fidelity: potential risk of compromising GSL's concepts and purpose if other organizations and groups begin to deliver the program. Get those who buy the program sign a fidelity agreement?

## Model(s) for Sustainability



- Replicate the program (i.e., they have done this in Guelph with Better Beginnings, Better Futures with an OTF grant, but there is no money to sustain it there).
- Train the trainer at other community organizations. Provide ongoing support.
- Selling the GSL curriculum
- Embedding GSL principles and concepts in other community programming
- Whatever we come up with has to be reasonable, realistic, and doable. We're small and mighty.
- Would allow for increasing the number of people who are permitted to attend the group
- Would allow the group to run even if they did not have the minimum required numbers [10?]

## Project READ Roles

- Robin
  - Approximately 8 hours/week, or ¼ of her time is put into family literacy and supporting Joanne's admin time
  - She takes care of GSL registration, technical details, organization and coordination
  - Processes matters with Joanne before making decisions about what to bring to Jane
- Joanne
  - Families First project lead
  - Half of her time is allocated to Families First project in its first year. All of her time will be dedicated to the project in her second year.

- Jane
  - Direct link to board
  - Sees her own role as encouraging, keeping the board informed, giving her staff autonomy to do their roles, share background knowledge based on her experience in the literacy field, and asking questions to help keep the project within parameters
- A few board of directors are on the Families First Steering Committee, including the Board Chair

## Working with Capacity Canada

- Capacity Canada's Role
  - To guide Project READ
  - To acknowledge and appreciate Project READ's extensive knowledge and experience
  - To be adaptable and play different roles during different phases of the project (e.g., listening and scoping, facilitating and training, reporting, coaching during times of uncertainty)
  - To know what their role is at different points in the process and to know when it is Project READ's role to make the decision (i.e., at a fork in the road)
  - To develop a process for design thinking and DE, so that the Project READ team has a solid grasp of what these things are.
  - Feed what we are learning back to Project Read with Joanne being the first point of contact and all team members seeing what's in a report before the report goes to the Board of Directors.
  - To be good listeners
  - Creating an evaluation of GSL is part of this project.
  - To provide connection to other groups and opportunities



- Expectations of one another
  - Continuing to check-in about how things are going, formally and informally
  - Talking things through
  - Being open and direct
- Goals and timeline
  - Testing phase (1.5 years)
    - The Families First project will test model(s) of sustainability
  - Implementation phase (3-5 years)
    - Will this happen after the families first project?
    - More funding will be needed for implementation
  - Common understanding and definitions needed (e.g., sustainability; literacy; financial literacy)
  - To get really clear about what it is this project is doing.

## Lunch and Learn: Rate Family Literacy Understanding





## Before the Lunch & Learn

On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate *your level of understanding about what Family Literacy is.*

Please circle your answer.

- |             |             |             |                  |                  |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1           | 2           | 3           | 4                | 5                |
| <b>Poor</b> | <b>Fair</b> | <b>Good</b> | <b>Very good</b> | <b>Excellent</b> |

Name:

## After the Lunch & Learn

On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate *your level of understanding about what Family Literacy is.*

Please circle your answer.

- |             |             |             |                  |                  |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1           | 2           | 3           | 4                | 5                |
| <b>Poor</b> | <b>Fair</b> | <b>Good</b> | <b>Very good</b> | <b>Excellent</b> |

Name:

## Lunch and Learn: Summary Report



## Testing prototype one: Lunch & Learn

On Thursday February 1, 2018 at St. Louis Adult Learning and Continuing Education Centre 15 literacy, early childhood, and education service providers met for the purposes of 1) reviewing and reflecting on the outcomes of Family Literacy day and 2) a presentation by Joanne Davis about Family Literacy and Project READ’s GSL.

One of the Families First Project’s outcomes is to Ingite a Family Literacy Movement by increasing the community’s understanding about family literacy and generating greater awareness of Project READ’s role in family literacy. For this reason we asked those who attended to participate in two pre and post-test activities:

1. To rate the following statement on a scale ranging (1) poor, (2) fair, (3) good, (4) very good, and (5) excellent: your level of understanding about what family literacy is. On average, attendees reported an improved understanding about what family literacy is after the presentation and discussion, moving from 3.8 (pre) to 4.5 (post).

2. On sticky notes, to write as many responses as they could think of in response to the question: what is the impact of family literacy?

This remainder of this document presents a summary, by themes, of attendees’ responses to the second activity.

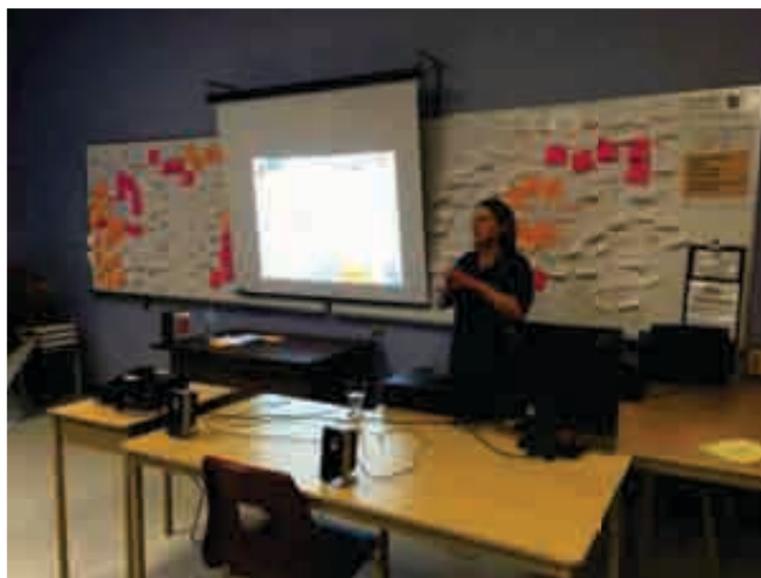


Figure 1 Joanne Davis presenting and responses to one pre and post activity

<sup>1</sup> We were initially going to ask the group what is family literacy? However, it emerged quickly this group was familiar with what family literacy is – its activities and the philosophy behind it. To better assess if this presentation contributed to increasing the community’s understanding about family literacy, we modified our original plan and asked them to consider what the impact of family literacy is instead.

## Impact of family literacy: Themes that emerged before and after the presentation

Before	After
<b>Theme: Building capacity for better futures</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased opportunities for growth and development (personal and business)</li> <li>Educational growth</li> <li>Life trajectories</li> <li>Long term opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better quality of life</li> <li>Having everything you need...more than the basics</li> <li>Help people find a sense of agency over their lives</li> <li>A better future for the whole family</li> <li>Change/improve life trajectories</li> <li>Creating a sustainable future</li> <li>Building capacity in the family unit and family members</li> <li>Raised capacities</li> <li>Improved childhood capacity and resilience</li> </ul>
<b>Theme: Centering learners – learning styles and interests</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Builds children’s skills outside of a traditional learning environment</li> <li>Gives different ways to learn</li> <li>Engages children’s love of literacy in ways that capture and engage them based on their interests (ex. music/coding/building etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on children’s interests</li> </ul>
<b>Theme: Economic – opportunity, stability, and breaking the cycle of poverty</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic security/opportunity</li> <li>Better work ethic; stability with employment</li> <li>Economic stability in family</li> <li>Economic status</li> <li>Breaks cycle of poverty</li> <li>Financial/poverty reduction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential for economic stability</li> <li>Decrease in poverty</li> <li>Decrease poverty</li> <li>Bridge out of poverty</li> <li>Breaking barriers/cycles</li> <li>Breaking cycles</li> <li>SES</li> </ul>



Before	After
<b>Theme: Connection and belonging – in community and in families</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection</li> <li>• Community engagement; connections</li> <li>• Creates conversations</li> <li>• Brings ppl together</li> <li>• Community involvement</li> <li>• Social engagement opportunities</li> <li>• Brings community together</li> <li>• Connectiveness (community; family)</li> <li>• Increased connectiveness between families, neighbours, and community</li> <li>• Happier family (connections; dynamics)</li> <li>• Quality connections with family members</li> <li>• Increase family connectedness</li> <li>• More connections with family</li> <li>• Family togetherness/strength</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections</li> <li>• Relationship building</li> <li>• Support networks</li> <li>• Connection with each other</li> <li>• Chance to find place in community</li> </ul>
<b>Theme: Growth in knowledge, understanding, and awareness of others, self, ideas</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self awareness (general and of strengths) (4)</li> <li>• Empathy/compassion (2)</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of world around (1)</li> <li>• In general (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergenerational growth</li> <li>• Awareness of strengths</li> <li>• Understanding perspectives</li> <li>• Foundation for family growth and endurance (1)</li> <li>• In general (2)</li> </ul>
<b>Theme: Health and well-being</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased confidence and self-worth (6) – in self, others (1), children (1)</li> <li>• Health improves</li> <li>• Brain development</li> <li>• Mental health</li> <li>• Physical health</li> <li>• Health and well being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-confidence (5) – as individual (1), as parent/teacher (2)</li> <li>• Feeling valued</li> <li>• Better mental health</li> <li>• SES</li> </ul>

### Impact of family literacy: Themes that emerged before or after the presentation

Before	After
<p><b>Creativity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Inspiring creativity</li> <li>• Increased creativity</li> </ul> <p><b>Joy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for more fun and playing time</li> <li>• Happier community</li> <li>• Laughter</li> </ul> <p><b>Trust</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased confidence in self and others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Future Thinking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hope (3) – “opportunity to see a future story/plan</li> <li>• Planning for the future (2)</li> <li>• Family with future thinking</li> <li>• Painting the future</li> </ul> <p><b>Impact at all levels – micro, mezzo, macro</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An effective and cost-effective response to many social barriers</li> <li>• Impacts on person, family, community</li> <li>• Stronger communities</li> <li>• More impact on individual, family, community listed throughout</li> </ul> <p><b>Paying it forward</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming a resource for others</li> <li>• Families will support other families</li> </ul> <p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential component of human dignity</li> </ul>



When asked what stood out for them attendees shared the following:

- Service providers need to readjust expectations of what is possible for that family in the moment given various barriers they may be facing and that survival may be the priority. As service providers we need to ask “how can we help?” keeping this in mind
- Surprised about how parent engagement transcends social class in contributing to learning and academic success
- Mastering executive functioning between 25-30 means that a lot of people with young children are using services and they still have potential to develop executive functioning
- Sparked the thought about how barriers come about; how policies directly result in poverty; how society creates obstacles; how big initiatives can add to obstacles.
- Was surprised to hear “A Future Story is not something they think about” they were surprised someone that this is our community. It’s not somewhere else. It’s happening here.
- Need to celebrate the small victories.

Before	After
<b>Theme: Intergenerational</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspires next generation (to be/do better)</li> <li>• Preservation of stories and culture traditions and language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transmission of knowledge from parents to children (2)</li> <li>• Most vulnerable can show strength and resiliency to children</li> <li>• Parents can imprint on child</li> <li>• Parents and children learning together and from each other</li> <li>• Intergenerational growth</li> </ul>
<b>Theme: Lifelong Learning</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds lifelong learning (4) – in children (1), in reading (1)</li> <li>• Learn ok (safe) to make mistakes</li> <li>• Positivity around learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life long learning</li> <li>• Commitment to lifelong learning</li> </ul>
<b>Theme: Skills – communication, literacy, critical thinking, and other</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication (4) – respectful communication (1), social skills (1)</li> <li>• Literacy (7) – increase vocabulary (1), media (1), tech (2), reading (1)</li> <li>• Critical thinking (2)</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Life skills</li> <li>• Build’s children’s skills outside of a traditional learning environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved communication (2)</li> <li>• Improved reading (2)</li> <li>• Confidently advocating</li> <li>• Life long skills</li> <li>• Life skills</li> </ul>
<b>Theme: Strong families</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved communication (4)</li> <li>• Facilitates family bonding (4)</li> <li>• Improved connections (5)</li> <li>• Quality time (2)</li> <li>• In general (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building capacity in the family unit and family members</li> <li>• Family relationships</li> </ul>



Before	After
<b>Theme: Support academic success</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readiness for school</li> <li>• Improved academic outcomes (2)</li> <li>• Long term graduation rates</li> <li>• Academic performance</li> <li>• Reinforces what is being taught at school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforces what children are learning at school</li> </ul>
<b>Theme: Impact for parent</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influences parents</li> <li>• Engaged parents</li> <li>• Improvement of adult and child literacy skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for growth (adult; child)</li> <li>• Self-confidence as parent/teacher</li> <li>• Improved parent confidence</li> </ul>
<b>Theme: Impact for children</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build's children's skills outside of a traditional learning environment</li> <li>• Improvement of adult and child literacy skills</li> <li>• Engages children's love of literacy in ways that capture and engage them based on their interests (ex. music/coding/building etc.)</li> <li>• Confident children</li> <li>• Builds lifelong learning in children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for growth (adult; child)</li> <li>• Based on children's interests</li> <li>• Improved childhood capacity and resilience</li> <li>• Children can be strong</li> </ul>

## Project READ Workshop Session Evaluation



CAPACITYCANADA



The most valuable aspects of this workshop were:

As a result of what I learned at this workshop, I will:

The workshop would have been better if...

A topic/question that has emerged for me during this session is...

Thinking about your overall experience at today’s workshop, please rate the following on a scale of 1 (not really) to 5 (very much).

Before	1 Not Really	2 A Little	3 Not sure	4 Some-what	5 Very Much
The presentation was at the right level for my learning					
The workshop provided useful information					
I learned useful skills in the workshop					
I learned new insights/knowledge I can apply to my work					
The presenter(s) was interesting and engaging					
My questions during the presentation were answered to my satisfaction					
The workshop inspired new ideas and plans of action					
I had opportunities to meet and network with other participants					
I feel confident I can apply what I learned during the workshop					

Below, please share any other thoughts that would be valuable for us to know about your experience with the workshop.



## Prototype 1: Learning Plan

### Prototype one: System mobilization

Leveraging their experience in the adult literacy and family literacy fields, Project READ, acts in a leadership role to engage a range of stakeholders in developing and delivering a collaborative and robust family literacy system in Waterloo Region that other communities can use as an exemplar (i.e., knowledge sharing, policy advocacy, evaluation strategy).

#### Families First Reference Group: Learning goals identified

Through consultation, the Families First Reference Group and approval of the Families First Project Review team, our evaluator has generated the following list of themes. These themes factors to pay attention as they learn what about the prototypes is working, what is not working, and why. This learning will inform decisions about if and how to move forward with each prototype. Three themes reflect curiosities about program delivery oriented prototypes: Families' connection to purpose; connection to facilitators/facilitation; universal or targeted approach; and, impact, which are not included below. The following list captures themes and brief description that emerged from these questions and that are related to the system mobilization prototype.

**Service user participation:** How end users are involved in this prototype; how community partners keep service users in mind.

**Who cares, why, and how do they show it?:** Importance of family literacy; opportunities and challenges in getting stakeholders to care about family literacy



### Sustainability

Opportunities and challenges in mobilizing people, relationships, and resources – including funding – to address community needs into the future.

**Scale and scope:** The prototype is bold, while at the same time realistic, reasonable, clear, and understandable.

**Strategic & respectful collaboration:** Building trust; sharing ideas; expressed value for collaboration and coherence in family literacy messaging; casting a wide net with boundaries (i.e., identifying who is needed at the table to scale for greatest impact; respecting other service providers' boundaries (national and local); aligning with How Does Learning Happen; government relations.

### Awareness and understanding

Stakeholders' knowing about family literacy practice and programs

**Access:** Service providers' awareness and practice of accommodating different needs

### Future oriented

Positioning for the future; innovation for family literacy and organization sustainability; ongoing program evaluation

**Technology:** Opportunities and challenges related to technology (e.g., staying relevant; enhancing or replacing technology; role in family literacy; impact of technology innovation in not-for-profit sector generally)

**Increasing complexity:** Flexibility and reasonable for changing needs of the Region and complexity of families and literacy.

### Values:

What are the driving values and how do values inform decision-making (i.e., is it consistent with organizational mission and goals?)

**Strengths-based:** Service provider's approach to programs, partnerships, and service users.

### Learning Activities

- Online survey for reference group
- Brief interview questionnaire for stakeholder consultations
- Engaging activity at Family Literacy Day
- Observations and reflections for Project READ staff
- Pre and post survey for Project READ key staff
- Interviews (2) with Joanne
- System map

### Tools

- Observation and reflection prompts
- Surveys
- Fun activity
- Focus group guide
- Interview guide



## Sense-making and Reflection of Literacy Breakfast



CAPACITYCANADA

## Audience and Purpose

On Friday September 14 at the Google building in Downtown Kitchener Project READ brought together various community partners from the not-for-profit and social sectors that have a stake in mobilizing the family literacy system. Following this breakfast Project READ distributed a survey to all participants to gather feedback about the event and to get a better understanding about what participants learned at the breakfast. A summary of this survey is also included in this report's appendix. The purpose of this appendix is to summarize feedback from a reflection exercise Capacity Canada facilitated with the Families First Waterloo Region Project Reference Group (RG) who were asked three questions: what, so what, and now what?

## Outcomes

### What: The objectives of the breakfast

Reference group participants described the stated objectives of the breakfast as follows:

1. "Intersection of worlds and literacy trajectory" (coined by RG member): Bringing together everyone in the literacy worlds in Waterloo Region for the purposes of getting to know one another and facilitating connections between people. It was hoped the different worlds would want to work, learn, and plan together in order to scale the impact of literacy work happening in the community. Further, it was an opportunity to situate Project READ as the connector of these worlds and leader in Family Literacy.
2. Education: The breakfast was intended to provide participants with information about Project READ, demystify different kinds of literacy (e.g, early, adult, and family), as well as learn about the work of key community partners.



### So what: Impacts of the breakfast

- The breakfast brought together the usual suspects, but there were also unexpected participants (e.g., 22 members of the early literacy alliance, someone from the business sector, editor and reporter from a local newspaper).
- People appeared interested in the presenters' topics (e.g., early, adult, and family literacy; Smart Cities).
- Recognition that even the literacy worlds can get to know each other better.
- The format and structure worked (e.g., breakfast is a good time; questions at the table helped people get to know one another).
- More could have been done to promote Project READ.

### Now what?

This event brought up questions for the reference group about Project READ's role in the literacy worlds:

- Should Project READ be the go-to organization where community stakeholders can learn about literacy?
- How might Project READ become this go-to organization?
- What role, if any, ought Project READ to have in EarlyOnN Centres transformation?
- Does, and how does, literacy fit into Regional programming?
- How do we publicly identify Project READ as distinct from ELAWR?

There was also consensus that events like this should be held again in the future. In moving forward, some areas of consideration include the following:

#### Context

- Be even more explicit about the ultimate goal of the event.
- Consider the event's short-term goals as well, and how an event like this might fit into those goals.
- Host 2-3 more events like these and then explore opportunities to change up the type of event/activity.

#### Event format

- Encourage participants to bring their materials with them.
- Ensure the keynote speaker is dynamic and consider someone who can bring the three literacy worlds together (e.g., early, adult, and family).
- "Speed dating" activity to help participants get to know what each is doing.
- Explore corporate sponsorship for future events.

#### Participants

- Invite larger companies/corporations (i.e., a focus could be on the fit between literacy and wellness programs).
- Include more front-line staff and people with lived experiences at future events.
- Invite LSP table to the next event.



## Summary of Ongoing Project Lead Reflections



CAPACITYCANADA

## Audience and Purpose

In alignment with a developmental evaluation approach, Capacity Canada asked the Families First Waterloo Region project lead and Project READ's Family Literacy Manager, Joanne Davis, to engage in ongoing written reflection throughout the project. These reflections were intended to capture what was emerging, as well as the context and meaning surrounding what emerged. In addition, to tap into that which might remain hidden there were also prompts to consider emergent issues more holistically and consider what these issues felt, tasted, and sounded like.

These reflections, numbering 11 in total, were a launching point for conversations between the Families First Waterloo Region Project Lead and the Capacity Canada consulting team. In what follows we identify and present a brief analysis of three key themes that emerged throughout the reflections.

## Key Themes

### Sustainability

Reflections on sustainability, and specifically concerns about financial sustainability and funding, emerged regularly in the reflections. This is not surprising given it was one of the terms defined early on in the project and one of the identified areas for evaluating idea areas through. Mid-way throughout the project Capacity Canada's consulting team asked the following question to consider if and the extent to which sustainability should be a focus when evaluating prototypes:

While sustainability is of course important for Project READ, is an attachment to the idea of sustainability a barrier to failing fast and if so, how? Additionally, would it be worthwhile considering how might we move away from sustainability as a core element of this project?



## System mobilization

Written reflections demonstrate the Project Lead grappling with the meaning of system mobilization for Project READ early on in this project. These reflections also often portray a sense of excitement gained when building relationships with local literacy partners and nationally with other family literacy providers, and educating others about family literacy. An enthusiastic tone also appeared at the point at which there was a recognition that Project READ might take a greater role as a capacity building organization that would support others to deliver family literacy programming.

## Methodologies

Getting oriented to and comfortable with the project's methodologies – design thinking and developmental evaluation – were a common thread throughout the project. This, too, emerged in the project lead's reflections. We can see a discomfort with ambiguity (e.g., seeking more concrete plans, structure, and examples), as well as a fear of failing (e.g., wondering about finding ideas that were "reasonable and doable) is evident in the reflections. Nevertheless, the reflections also have a tone of openness, curiosity, and willingness to experiment with these new methodologies, as reflected in a few excerpts from these written reflections: "how to stay positive when things are complex – what competencies do we need to acquire" and "transitions can be challenging and invigorating."

# Summary Report: Family Literacy App

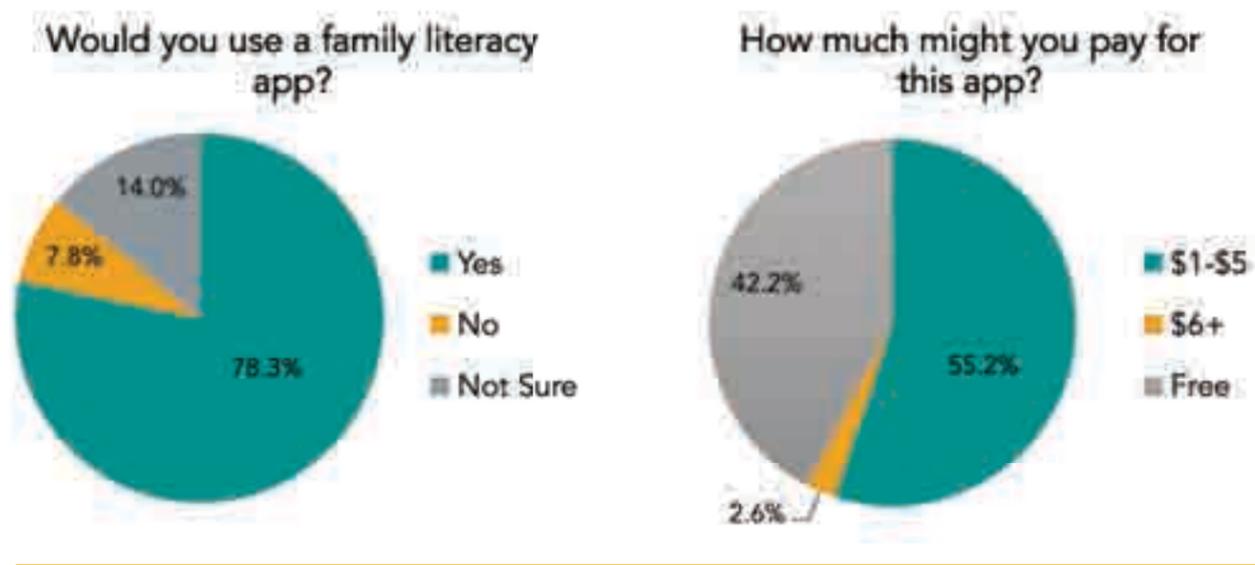


# Prototype Test: Family Literacy app

**Family Literacy Day at Conestoga Mall**

**Sunday January 28, 2018**

**# Respondents: 136**



On the following pages is a summary of participants' responses to the following two questions

1. What is one thing this app would need to have to make you want to use it? (Table 1)
2. What would stop you from using this app? (Table 2)

We have provided an overarching theme for a variety of categories (left column) and have included direct participant's responses (right column) to assist you in your own meaning-making of the data, decision-making, and to share with any potential app developers.

Theme	Responses	
User friendly (23)	Easy to use (13) Simplicity (2) Easy for kids 5-7 to use (1) Easy for the whole family (1) Readable font (1) Child could use it independently (1) Something that is easy for young kids (1)	User friendly (1) User friendly so my children would be able to navigate it as well, to help keep them engaged (1) Android friendly (1)
Learning (20)	Kids really learn (9) Learning games (2) Activities on learning (1) Children's learning (1) Educational (1) Learn to read (1)	Learning lessons (1) Learning letters numbers (1) Learning new words in a fun way (1) Help with putting sounds together (1) Newcomers with low English literacy where parents could learn at the same time as their children (1)
Fun and games (19)	Entertaining for kids (6) Be fun (2) Learning new words in a fun way (1) Family fun (1) Game fun (1) Games for each child to enjoy (1)	Games or play prompts (1) Interactive games (1) Interesting to the kids (1) Songs and activities to do together (1) Songs, stories, games, puzzles (1) Gamifications (1) Activities kids would use (1)
Books and reading (6)	Books kids like (1) Books (1) Book suggestions (1) Links to physical reading projects (1)	We use Libby...free and uses local resource (1) Reading (1)
Family literacy (6)	Collaboration between parents and child (1) Family activities (1) Quality family time (1) Family fun (1)	Newcomers with low English literacy where parents could learn at the same time as their children (1) Songs and activities to do together (1)



Theme	Responses	
Limits on technology (6)	A way to look at the app so kids don't have access to other apps (1) Child restrictions (1) Parental control (1)	Not overtaking the time kid spend on non-app stuff (1) Not too stimulating (1) Trying to avoid tech (1)
Provide Information (5)	Current resources (1) Family events in town (1) Gain more info (1)	Local information (1) Resources on health, recreation, budgeting, working through the school system, how to on various topics (1)
Interactive (5)	Interactive (4) Interactive games (1)	
Age range (4)	Be useable for all ages and skill levels (1) For different ages (1) Age appropriate levels (1)	Variety of activities for various age groups (longevity to grow with a family, especially if there is a cost) (1)
Prompts (4)	Games or play prompts (1) Original ideas (1)	Book suggestions (1) Suggested activity (1)
Quick (4)	It is quick (1) Quick (1)	Fast and easy tips (1) Short duration for activities (1)
Accessible (3)	Easy to use that is helpful for all languages (1)	Narration in English and French (1) Accessibility (1)
Other	Inspire creativity (1) Awesomeness (1) No ads or in-app purchasing (1) Learning plans and progress tracking (1)	Time for other baby (1) Music (2) Singing (1) Parenting (1) Pictures (3)

Table 2 What would stop you from using this app?

Theme	Responses	
Cost (21)	Cost (7) Price (2) Having to pay (2) High cost (1)	Too expensive (4) In-app purchases (3) Too many in-app purchases (1) Ads and constant upselling (1)
User friendly (21)	Too complicated (3) Not user friendly (3) Hard to use (3) Difficult to navigate (2) Glitches (1) If it failed out (1) Inconsistent experience (buggy) (1)	Lots of ads, freezing (1) Pop ups (1) Too many notifications and alerts (1) Too much clicks (1) Too much flashiness, or quick changes (1) Inconvenience (1) Poorly created (1)
Ads (14)	Ads (9) Sketchy ads (1) Features (1)	If there were ads interrupting the learning (1) Ads and constant upselling (1) Lots of ads, freezing (1)
Curriculum and Pedagogy (14)	Poor learning quality (5) If there were ads interrupting the learning (1) Information is not helpful (1) If it did not have a variety of reading materials (1)	Lack of updated content (1) Not useful (1) Poor content (1) Not get the information I want (1) Not linked to actually reading a book (1) If it's preachy (1)
Kids not interested (9)	Kids not interested (8) Kids stop asking to use it (1)	
Limits on technology (8)	Too addictive (1) I try to limit screen time (1) It seems counterintuitive to use an app to spend time with family (1) Kids on device too long (1)	Not too good too much technology (1) Too much digital media already available (1) Try to stay away from devices (1) Trying to limit screen time (1)



Theme	Responses	
Time (7)	Busy lives (3) Requires a lot of time to use it (3) Time (1)	
Accessible (5)	Difficult language or complicated ideas (1) Difficult for child with fine motor delays to navigate (1)	Difficult for child to use (1) If it was not useable for all ages (1) Not accessible for people with low-English literacy (1)
Child not interested (2)	Disinterest from child (1) The kids stop being interested (1)	
Other	Not sure (2) Nothing (2) Slagle grammar (2) Completed all the modules (1) Not effective in achieving goals (1)	Not needed (1) Easier to talk in person/one-on-one (1) Uses up my battery (1) Lack of promotion/awareness of the app (1)

## Prototype One: Pre- and post-survey summary



## Quantitative Responses

The following graphs present the average of the responses to the following question about organizational leadership skills and competencies:

On a scale of poor (1) to excellent (5), please rate your organization's abilities on the following key leadership skills that the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) has identified as the key skills nonprofit leaders need at different points in an organization's growth and development.

Figure 1  
Innovator

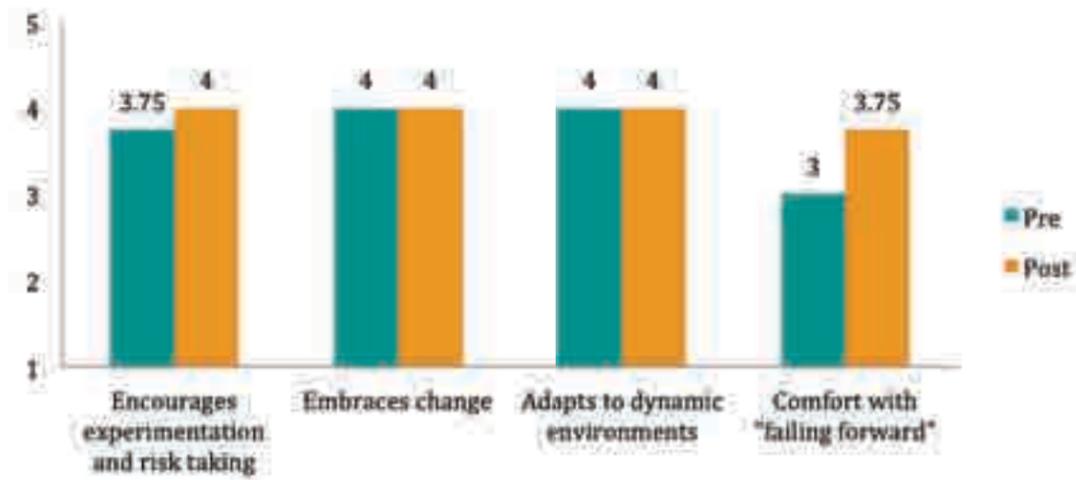


Figure 2  
Mentor

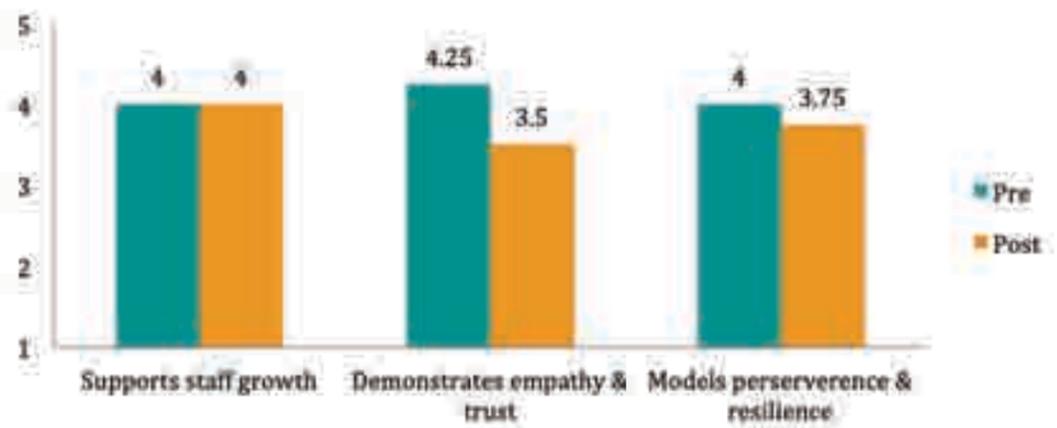


Figure 3  
Storyteller and  
Builder

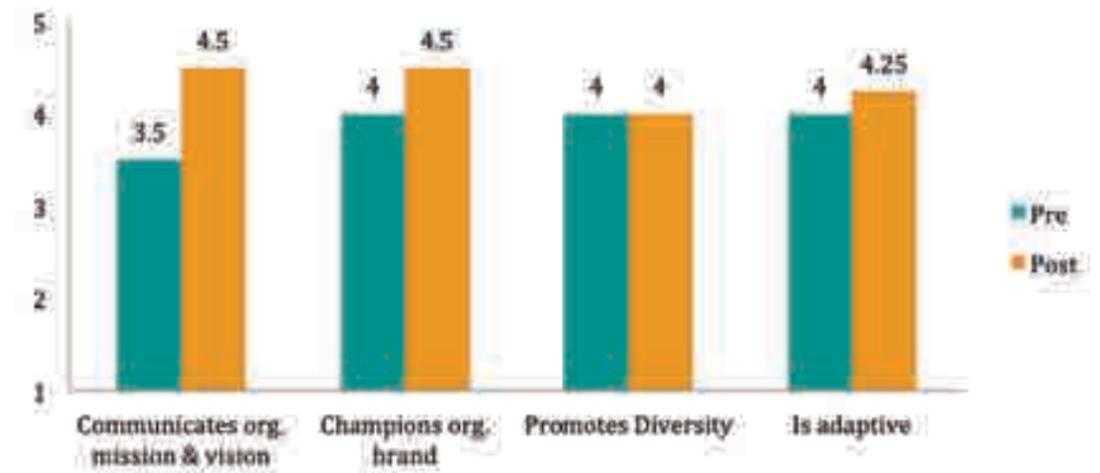


Figure 4  
Thinker

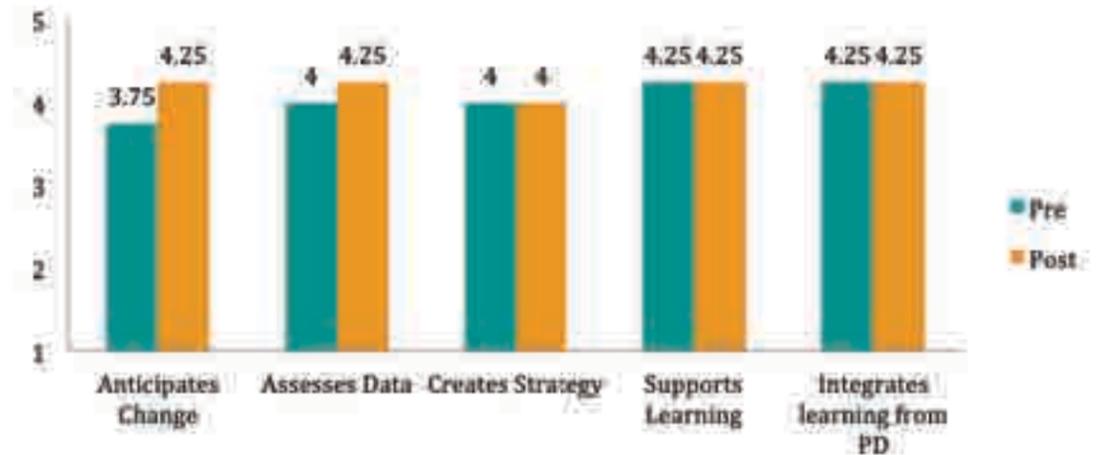


Figure 5  
Connector

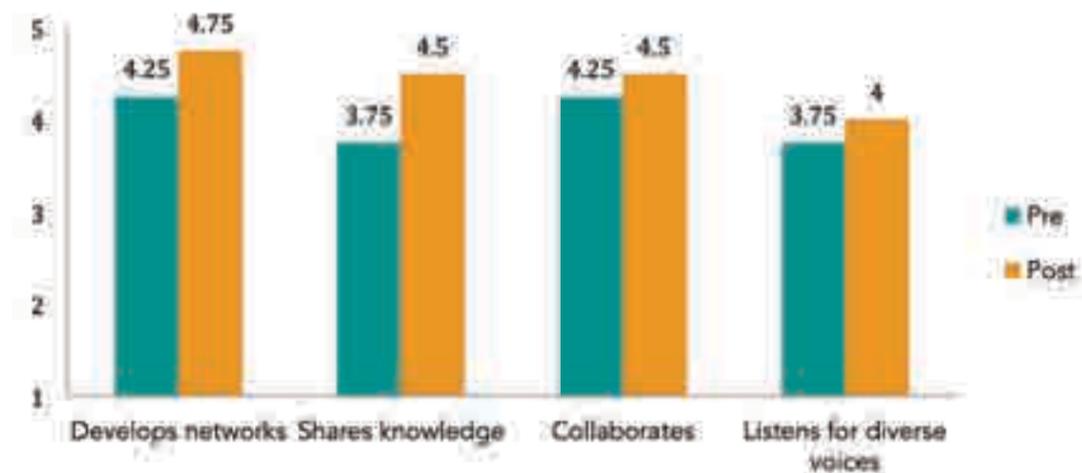


Figure 6  
Steward



## Qualitative Responses

This section presents a brief overview of some of the key themes emerging from the pre-survey, highlighting both the strengths and challenges the Families First project team brings to the project.

### Individual Strengths

Pre	Post
passionate	Experience
truly believe in the cause	Knowledge of history of literacy in the region (youth and adult)
focused on the client...the end user	Facilitation skills
embraces challenges	Collaboration skills (i.e., creating a service plan with multiple agencies)
problem solving skills	Sees and adapts to changing environments and other systems
continued openness and listening and being aware of how changes in the environment could impact the project	PD during the project (i.e., Conference)
good at investigating what's out there to adapt for my own purposes	Absorb large amounts of material and distill into user-friendly components
continuing to look for opportunities and relationships that are important for system mobilization	Speed reader
clear writing x2	Professional writer
project management training	Author
BFA fine arts w/experience in design/marketing/photography	Certified teacher at elementary level
Sales training	Provide encouragement
Tech skills	Project management
	Delegation strategies
	Making something from nothing



### Organizational Strengths

Pre	Post
Ability to move from idea to concrete event Expertise/knowledge in system mobilization in adult literacy sector Diverse board that can promote work into the community and businesses world Strong and eager staff	Networks and connections in three sectors (adult literacy, early literacy and family literacy) Experience Base of team spirit, not so much between employees, as a shared attitude

### Individual areas for improvement

Pre	Post
patience for the process unsure how design thinking has actually played a part in the process thus far to create new ideas How do we assess when something is working? How do we know when to say go/no go? What is a good process? learn to write grant proposals math and data – good enough to make it through	Patience System mobilization, but unsure what they are Systems thinking tools Network building Use of technology (e.g., social media)

### Organizational areas for improvement

Pre	Post
Diverse board that can promote work into the community, but not sure how to do this Increased presence at community tables Increased understanding what it means to become system leaders (i.e., what does it mean to mobilize a system, move the aspiration to reality) Need a clear message to communicate to community Increased clarity internally about Families First project – start engaging staff in process	Listening and openness to new ideas and approaches Supporting staff growth, empathy, trust, and comfort with failing forward It is hard for a non-profit that has seen a lot of ups and downs in funding not to be cautious

**Q5. Describe your response to question #7: “I feel confident in my ability to build relationships for the purposes of mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region”**

Pre	Post
Confident and somewhat confident  Good with promoting literacy Passion when promoting literacy Haven’t developed consistent messaging Reminders to build relationships would be helpful	Confident, very confident, and neutral  Putting needs of clients, not one’s own needs/ego first Learned new skills in managing open-ended meetings with systems influencers Great at pulling people together to work towards a common goal New to the community and feels like starting from zero or new kid on the block

**Q6. What might make you feel more confident in your ability to build relationships for the purposes of mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region?**

Pre	Post
Lack of clarity about what “mobilized system” means Do key players even want us to be system leaders? Is ELAWR ready to mobilize and change? Are key players and groups keeping clients, learners and the community in mind, or are they focused on what is important to individual key groups? Need more time to build relationships Need common/consistent messaging Need clarity about everyone’s goals for the project Would be good to feel a bit clearer about what it means to be a system leader and how that would scale impact of family literacy	Nothing, except more funds Sharing information with others More exposure to others in the field through meetings, professional development etc. More collaborative work so people can see what I have to offer If we had a CLEAR vision of what a mobilized system might look like to demonstrate potential success



**Q7. What stops you from building relationships for the purposes of mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region?**

Pre	Post
<p>Knowing who the players are or how to find out</p> <p>Lack of familiarity with key people</p> <p>Needing to develop common and consistent messaging</p> <p>Get clarity on everyone’s goals for this project before talking to others</p>	<p>Monetary capacity</p> <p>Only have a few staff</p> <p>Not always clear why I am meeting with a particular key influencer and what it means for systems mobilization</p> <p>Uncertainty and lack of background knowledge about who is who and does what</p> <p>Lack of specific knowledge about stats, so when people start asking specifics I have to defer to Jane...I don’t have those answers</p>

**Q8. What stops your organization from building relationships for the purposes of mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region?**

Pre	Post
<p>Difficult for general public to see/understand link between Adult Education and Family Literacy. Still requires explanation.</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Office space</p> <p>Update to promotional materials</p> <p>Limited awareness of Project READ as a system leader with skills/knowledge/capacity in adult literacy sector</p> <p>Hard to build a system when nobody really knows what family literacy is</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>I feel my org is good at this</p> <p>Fear from other groups: fear of change, lost funding, lost clients, losing their uniqueness</p>

**Q9. Describe the steps you would take to build a relationship with a key influencer (e.g., champion for your cause, elected official, external agency leadership etc.)**

Pre	Post
<p>warm referral...cold calls aren’t as good...there is always someone you know that can make that warm intro for you; find what is their motivation... what do they need the message to be so that they will champion us (e.g., politician needs something they can sell easily to constituents...the WIIFM is important; find something in their background and work that relates to what you’re talking about - education wise, children, etc.; you need to build significant relationship quickly to have impact</p> <p>define message, set up engagement opportunity, research background of key influencer, define outcomes for meeting, decide on how to continue relationship and for what purpose, define what’s in it for them, reflect on what this means for system mobilization</p> <p>phone contact, email follow up meeting, perhaps set up a standing meeting/presentation to be repeated, invite committees I am part of to meet at PRLN</p> <p>Provide example of successful coordination of these efforts (LSP): how to trust within the group and Project READ as coordinator enables successful campaigns (to politicians, funders, stakeholders etc.) and how our programs continue to be strong and meet the needs of the community (waitlists)</p>	<p>WIIFM - you have to build a solid case as to why they should support you or work with you. You need to know what motivates them and show how you fit into that motivation. Champion usually is what do our programs do to make your community/lift better? Elected officials is what do our programs do to show other voters that investment of government funds is worthwhile?, etc.</p> <p>ask to meet; meet; ask questions, find connections and leverage points; ask who to meet next; follow up; continue to involve</p> <p>phone, email, meet, follow up, try to find common ground where I might see that person again</p> <p>Introduce myself, find out who they are and what gets them excited and if they’ve done anything for charity in the past. From there, I zone in on what’s important to them and start talking about the programs/projects that we support in the area of interest, followed by the ASK of how they want to be involved with the work we do: either supporting with time, money, physical space, networking and connections, letters of support, etc.</p>



## Reflection on Key Decision Points



## Audience and Purpose

Two reflection sessions were held, one with Capacity Canada’s consulting team and another with key staff from Project READ Literacy Network, to identify key decisions made throughout the project, identify those that were most pertinent to moving the project forward, and to reflect on what was learned in relation to those decisions.

## Outcomes

Each group identified various key decision points (at the end of this appendix) and discussed consequent learnings, from which the following key themes emerged:

### System Mobilization

- This was a foundational idea area and thus an important starting point (i.e., better internal understanding about what it means to mobilize a system; built confidence; provided early wins in relationship building that generated momentum to continue with this idea area and launch into other idea areas)
- Getting more familiar with what other stakeholders are doing – first through deepening relationships between reference group members and then with broader partners at the literacy breakfast – generated buzz and momentum.
- Saying “yes” to opportunities to talk about family literacy, literacy, and their linkages helped them put the system at the centre.
- Through this idea area the family literacy system was explicitly identified as one component of the literacy system. This recognition brought forth the question “which system, exactly, are we mobilizing?” (i.e., which system is the anchor?)
- Seeing beyond traditional partners in the non-profit and literacy sectors (e.g., business, government, etc.).
- Mapping end-users into the system and having people interact with them through the mini-sprints amplified the importance of end-users.



- Relationships are essential and complex; they require letting go of personal agendas, focusing on what is in the best interest of the whole, can be rebuilt, and enhance influence.

### Project Methodology and Approach

- Initial and ongoing fear of taking risks, ambiguity, and failing (forward and fast), (i.e., fear it might compromise brand, reputation, and/or potential funding opportunities, uncertain how to communicate failures – learnings).
- However, Project READ expressed increased comfort with failing forward. As confidence as subject matter experts increased, there was greater comfort in failing forward also. They also felt like a project provided some safety and flexibility for taking risks and failing, skills they can now transfer to other projects/activities.
- While failing is still hard, Project READ expressed a new belief that failing can also be seen as a success.

### Individual and Organizational Capacity

- In getting started it would have helped to generate greater clarity earlier on about communication channels, decision-making processes (i.e., what should be done via consensus vs. direction), expectations, project scope, roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, including the board of directors, and accountability structure.
- In getting started it would have been helpful to identify strengths and limitations of various stakeholders, as well as establishing an ongoing communication process.
- Project READ’s confidence to speak up and be persistent in raising awareness about literacy and family literacy grew as their unique position as content matter experts and others’ lack of awareness/expertise in these matters became starkly clear. They realized they “don’t have to apologize” for being persistent in speaking to their areas of expertise.
- Growth in individuals’ curiosity and learner’s mindset, as well as a growing organizational learning culture.
- Areas of further growth identified (i.e., launching more quickly from idea to action; become even more curious).

- As the project closes, Capacity Canada and Project READ might work together to create a plan for ongoing capacity building work for Project READ to engage in (i.e., exploring Project READ’s positioning in relation to the system; strengthening communication processes between staff, Executive Director, and Board; more tools and practice facilitating design thinking activities internally).

### Scaling

- Early scaling happened through system mobilization.
- Activities like the system mapping exercise, ongoing work with ELAWR, project lead reflections, coaching with neighbourhood groups, and webinar with Elgin county, and more have helped Project READ challenge their comfort zone to explore scaling their expertise and services beyond individuals and families (e.g., neighbourhoods, train the trainer, mobilizing the system).

### Other

- Definitions created early were a useful lens through which to include/exclude idea areas, though might have aligned idea areas even further through definitions.

### Key Decision Points

Project READ Literacy Network	Capacity Canada
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What prototypes to pursue</li> <li>• System mobilization as first prototype</li> <li>• Through first prototype decided to keep going with the mobilizing system</li> <li>• Application for another grant</li> <li>• Peer mentorship prototype</li> <li>• Research on what the terms were</li> <li>• Common understanding of language</li> <li>• Scaling impact and scaling a program</li> <li>• Prototyping scaling the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # prototypes</li> <li>• System mobilization before service delivery</li> <li>• Mapping the system process</li> <li>• Service delivery to individuals, organizations, and communities</li> <li>• Mini-sprints to involve end-users</li> <li>• Broad-based engagement for environmental scan</li> <li>• Using design thinking prototypes with Overalp</li> <li>• Recognition of limitations</li> </ul>



Project READ Literacy Network	Capacity Canada
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental scan for decision making regarding populations to focus on</li> <li>• “Prototype” to “Idea Areas” as way of describing what we were doing</li> <li>• Established idea areas 4 to 7 to 4</li> <li>• Choosing to do the mini design sprints</li> <li>• What we were going to ask for came out of the mini design sprints</li> <li>• Research start and focus (e.g., surveys, data collection)</li> <li>• Selecting the idea areas</li> <li>• How to role out the idea areas</li> <li>• What to focus in on for phase 2 (implementation) in next application</li> <li>• Creation of work plans</li> <li>• Being backbone for ELWAR</li> <li>• Certify individuals rather than licensing</li> <li>• Understanding what certification really is</li> <li>• Other audiences – realization to broaden the focus – e.g. Francophone</li> <li>• Okay to fail forward and fast fast (e.g. decision to not go with the App)</li> <li>• Importance of clarity on TOR – roles, scope of responsibility, accountability,</li> <li>• What our next step should be</li> <li>• Progress of funder in terms of their acceptance</li> <li>• Setting up project’s foundational pieces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership coaching with Project READ</li> <li>• Detailing workplan</li> <li>• Reference group restructuring</li> <li>• Delegating deliverables to Project READ staff</li> <li>• Capacity Canada check-in schedule</li> <li>• Role clarity on team</li> <li>• Nimble and flexible team</li> </ul>

## Survey: Family Literacy App



CAPACITYCANADA



1. Would you use an app that will help your family spend more time together and improve your skills for learning and life?

 Yes  
 No  
 Not sure

2. What is one thing this app would need to have to make you want to use it?

3. How much might you pay for this app?

 \$1  
 \$2  
 \$3  
 \$4  
 \$5  
 \$6-10  
 More than \$10  
 I would only use this app if it were free

4. What would stop you from using this app?

**Your Email Address**

5. Please share your email address with us to find out what happens next with this project!



## Survey: Leadership Competencies and Capabilities



1. Please write your name.

All of your answers will remain confidential. We ask for your name so we can compare pre and post test information.

2. On a scale of poor to excellent, please rate **your own** abilities in the following leadership skills and competencies that the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) has identified as the key skills nonprofit leaders need at different points in an organization's growth and development.

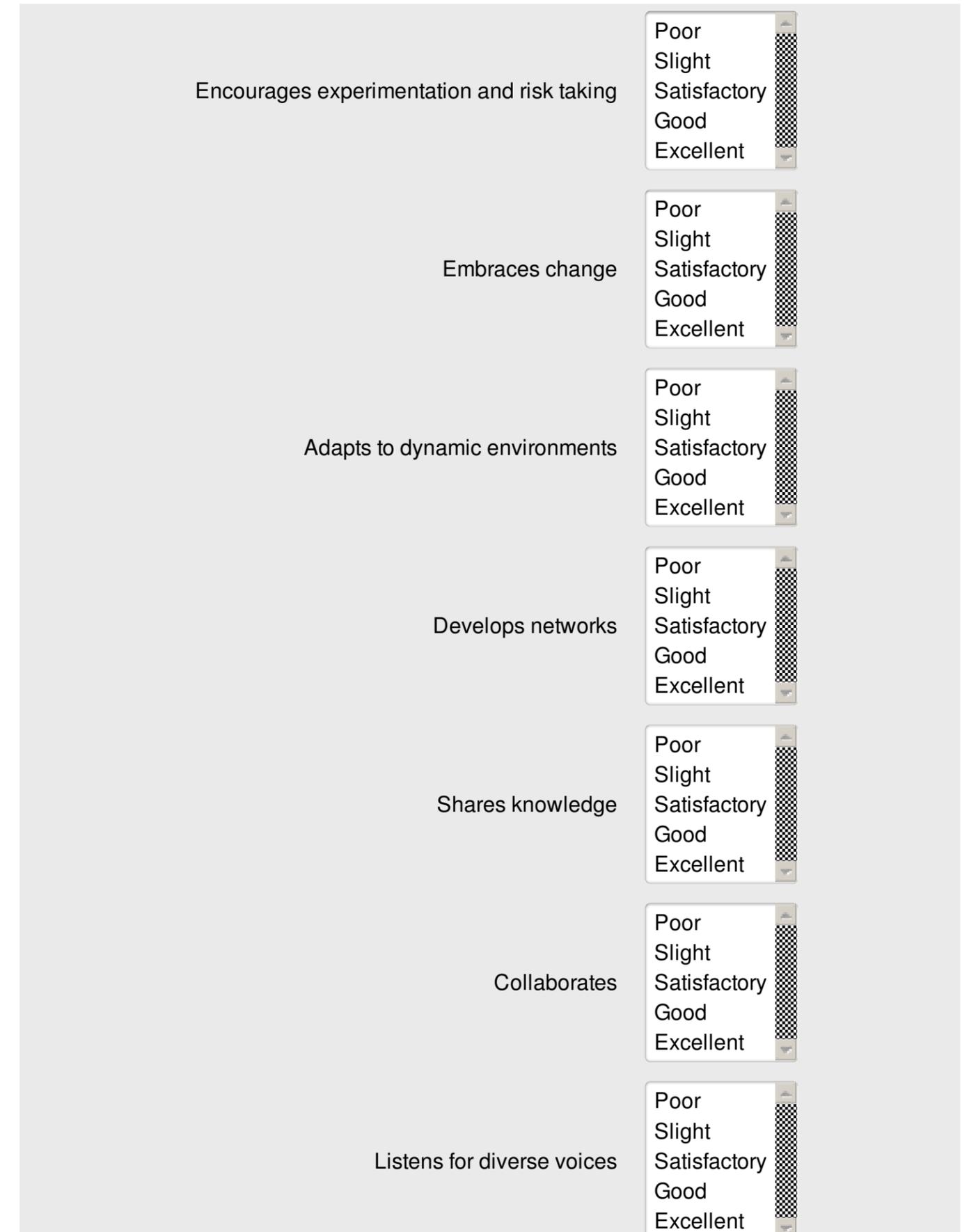
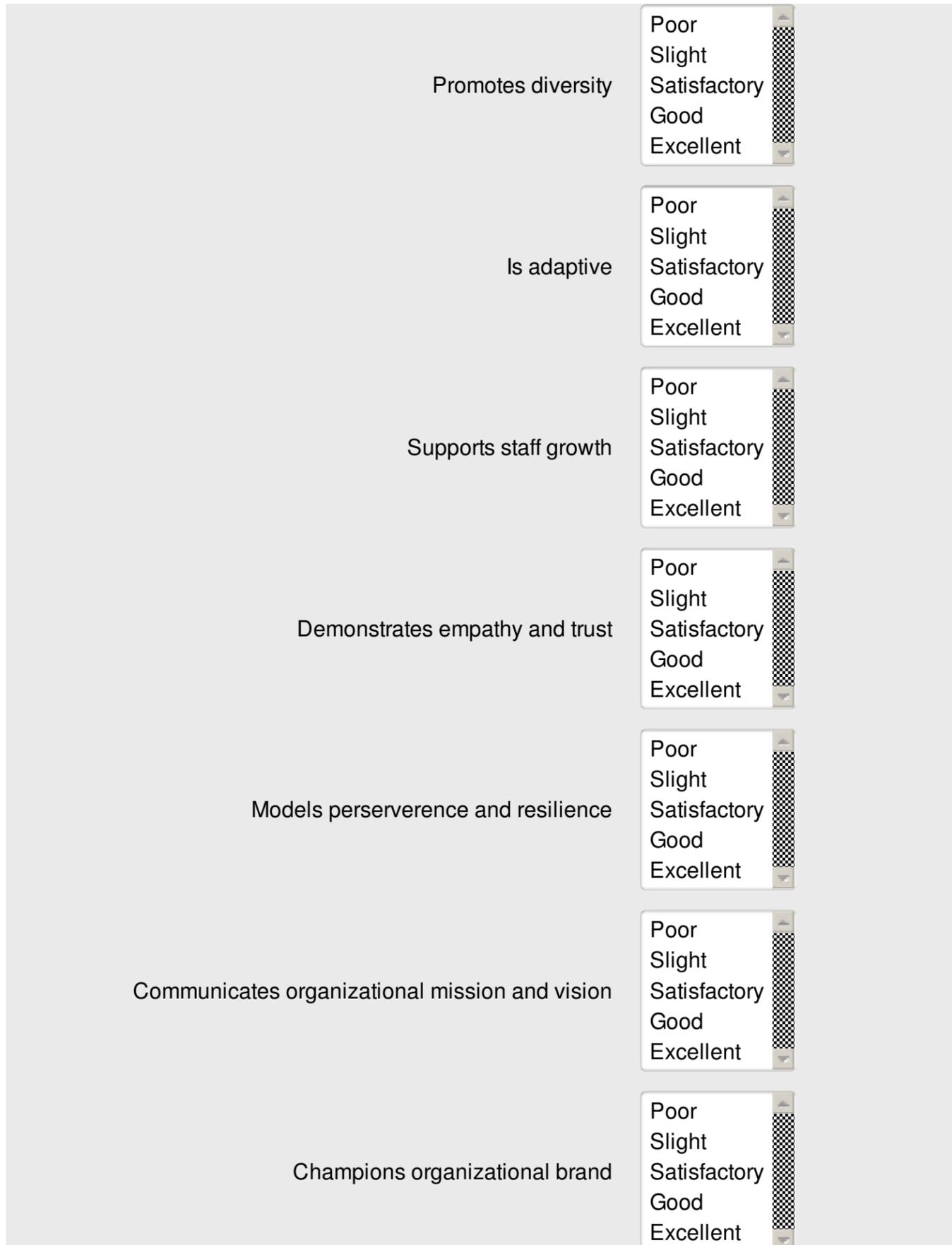
Anticipates change	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
--------------------	--

Assesses data	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
---------------	--

Creates strategy	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
------------------	--

Supports learning	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
-------------------	--





Strengthens capacity through technology	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
Demonstrates accountability	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
Promotes effective governance	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
Comfort with "failing forward"	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
Integrates learning from professional development	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
Motivated to engage in organizational capacity building	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>

3. Please describe any other capabilities you have, if any, that you think will help mobilize the Family Literacy system in Waterloo Region.

4. Please describe any other capabilities you need to improve or acquire, if any, that will help mobilize the Family Literacy system in Waterloo Region.

**Organizational competencies and capabilities**

5. On a scale of poor to excellent, please rate **your organization's** abilities on the following key leadership skills that the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) has identified as the key skills nonprofit leaders need at different points in an organization's growth and development.

Anticipates change	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;">                 Poor                  Slight                  Satisfactory                  Good                  Excellent             </div>
--------------------	--



Assesses data	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Creates strategy	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Supports learning	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Promotes diversity	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Is adaptive	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Supports staff growth	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent

Demonstrates empathy and trust	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Models perseverance and resilience	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Communicates organizational mission and vision	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Champions organizational brand	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Encourages experimentation and risk taking	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Embraces change	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent



Adapts to dynamic environments	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Develops networks	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Shares knowledge	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Collaborates	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Listens for diverse voices	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Strengthens capacity through technology	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent

Demonstrates accountability	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Promotes effective governance	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Comfort with "failing forward"	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Integrates learning from professional development	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent
Motivated to engage in organizational capacity building	<input type="radio"/> Poor <input type="radio"/> Slight <input checked="" type="radio"/> Satisfactory <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Excellent



6. Please describe any other capabilities PRLN has, if any, that will help mobilize the Family Literacy system in Waterloo Region.

7. Please describe any other capabilities PRLN needs to improve, if any, that will help mobilize the Family Literacy system in Waterloo Region.

### Relationships

8. I feel confident in my ability to build relationships for the purposes of mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region.

Very confident      Confident      Neutral      Somewhat confident      Not at all confident

9. Describe your response to question #7: "I feel confident in my ability to build relationships for the purposes of mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region".

10. What might make you feel more confident in your ability to build relationships for the purposes of mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region?

11. What stops **you** from building relationships for the purposes of mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region?



12. What stops ***your organization*** from building relationships for the purposes of mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region?

13. Describe the steps you would take to build a relationship with a key influencer (e.g., champion for your cause, elected official, external agency leadership etc.).

**Additional Thoughts**

---

14. Please share any additional thoughts or questions you have related to your own and PRLN's capabilities and competencies for mobilizing the Family Literacy System in Waterloo Region.

Survey:  
System Mobilization Reference  
Group Reflection



1. Prototype one increased my understanding about mobilizing a system.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

2. Prototype one increased my understanding about mobilizing a system in Waterloo Region.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

3. Prototype one increased my understanding of scaling.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

4. Prototype one increased my comfort with "failing forward".

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

5. Prototype one increased my understanding of design thinking.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

6. Prototype one increased my understanding of developmental evaluation.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

7. I have incorporated what I have learned in prototype one into my day-to-day work.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

8. Throughout prototype one my input and expertise has been valued.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					



9. Throughout prototype one my input and expertise has been used.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

10. Overall, I am satisfied with the Families First project's methods (e.g., design thinking, developmental evaluation, group structures).

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

11. Overall, I am satisfied with the Families First project's process (e.g., reflective, creative, inclusive, pragmatic).

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
<input type="radio"/>					

12. In this question we are asking you to talk about the theme(s) that you observed, experienced, or thought about during this prototype.

For this reflection, locate the the theme(s) that emerged in the left hand column and write your reflection in the box to the right of the theme. Even though it looks like the boxes are small, there is unlimited space to write your responses. You can also write in point form. There is also an option to write about other themes that emerged that have not been identified.

Some things you might consider in this reflection include, but are not limited to, the following:

- How did the encounter feel, smell, taste, sound?
- What challenges presented themselves or did the encounter make you think about?
- What opportunities presented themselves or did the encounter make you think about?
- What emerged around the context/environment surrounding family literacy?
- What emerged around relationships with stakeholders in the family literacy system?



Service user participation	<input type="text"/>
Who cares, why, and how do they show it	<input type="text"/>
Sustainability	<input type="text"/>
Scale and scope	<input type="text"/>
Awareness and understanding	<input type="text"/>
Access	<input type="text"/>
Future oriented	<input type="text"/>
Technology	<input type="text"/>
Increasing complexity	<input type="text"/>
Values	<input type="text"/>
Strengths-based	<input type="text"/>
Universal or targeted	<input type="text"/>
Impact	<input type="text"/>
Connection to facilitators	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

13. What, if anything, worked well during the design, implementation, and testing of prototype one?

14. What, if anything, could have been better throughout the design, implementation, and testing of prototype one?

15. What, if anything, did you learn during the design, implementation, and testing of prototype one?



16. What should be kept in mind as the project implements and tests the next prototypes?

17. Please share any other thoughts, observations, and experiences of prototype one.

## Workshop Evaluation Summary



## Families First Project Workshops

Capacity Canada facilitated a series of workshops for the Families First project reference group. These workshops were adaptive – designed and delivered to meet the project’s emergent priorities. Additionally, an overarching goal of the workshops has been to provide the reference group with foundational understanding about the project’s two principal methodologies: Design Thinking and Developmental Evaluation.

Below we highlight the main foci of each of the workshops:

Date	Workshop Focus
May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the project’s methodologies: Design Thinking and Developmental Evaluation</li> <li>• Use Design Thinking to begin to develop a common definition of the term family literacy</li> </ul>
September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present and discuss environmental scan findings</li> <li>• Confirm definitions: Family literacy, sustainability, and scaling</li> <li>• Overview of prototypes</li> <li>• Use Design Thinking activity to get feedback on prototype #1: Mobilizing the system</li> <li>• Use Developmental Evaluation to test prototypes: What are you curious about?</li> </ul>

## Workshop Evaluation

Following each workshop, reference group members in attendance were asked to complete a brief survey. This survey captured reference group members’ perceptions about what about the workshops worked well and what could have been improved. This information was used to inform the delivery of future workshops to have the greatest possible impact on reference group members and the Families First project.

In this survey, respondents were asked to rate a series of questions on a scale of 1 (not really) to 5 (very much) that captured to what extent,

- The workshops provided opportunities to learn (Figure 1)
- They felt they could apply what they learned (Figure 2)
- They were satisfied with the workshop’s delivery and facilitation (Figure 3)

Reference group members were also asked four open-ended statements:

- The most valuable aspects of this workshop were
- As a result of what I learned in this workshop I will
- The workshop would have been more helpful if
- A topic/question that has emerged for me during this session is

## Survey Results

In this section we present results from each of the unique workshops sessions, followed by a summary of respondents’ written responses.

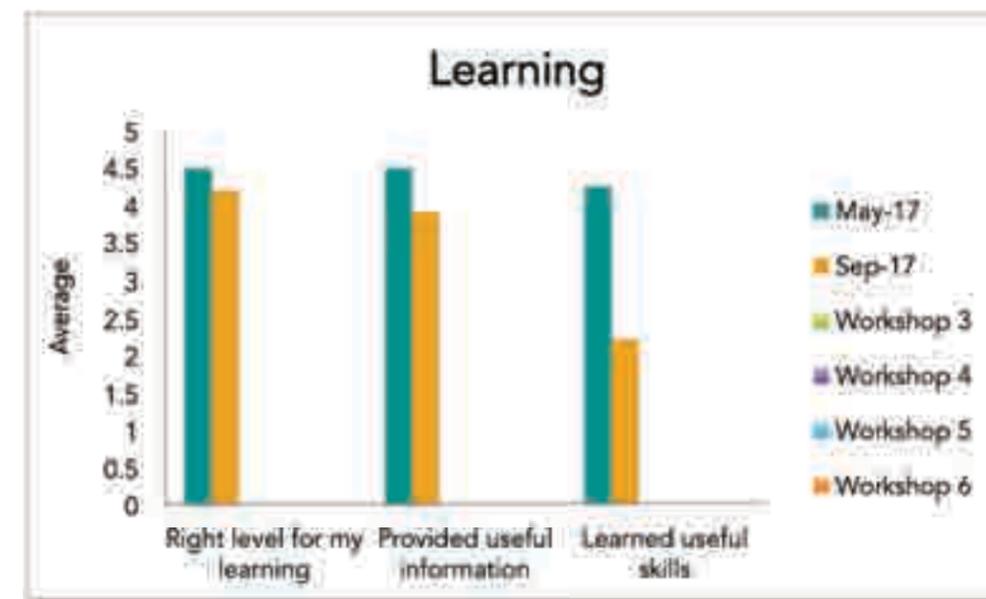


Figure 1 Opportunities for learning at the workshops



Figure 2  
Application  
to learning

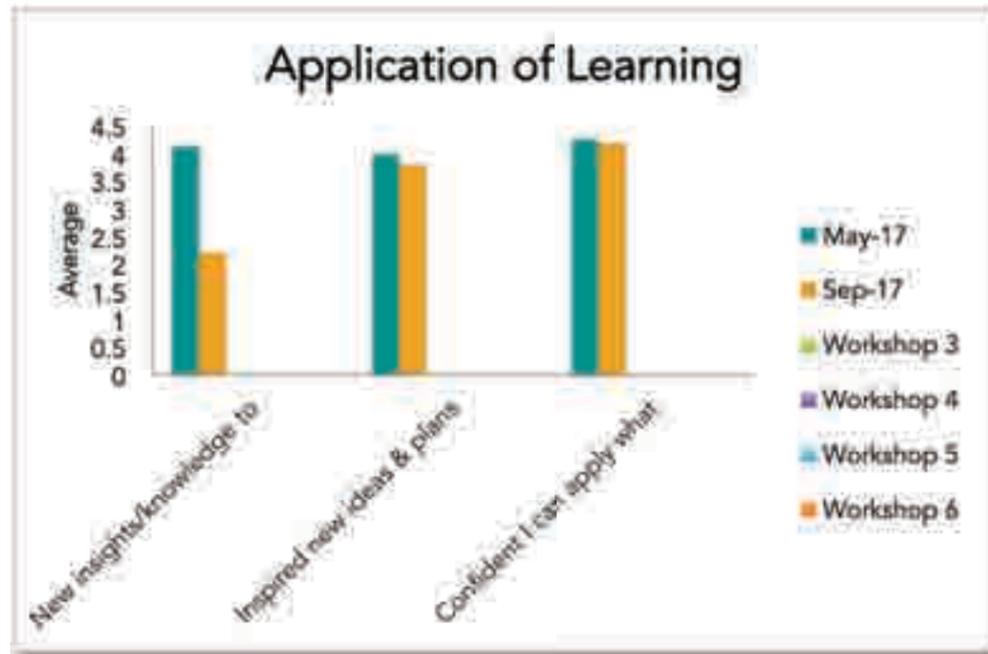
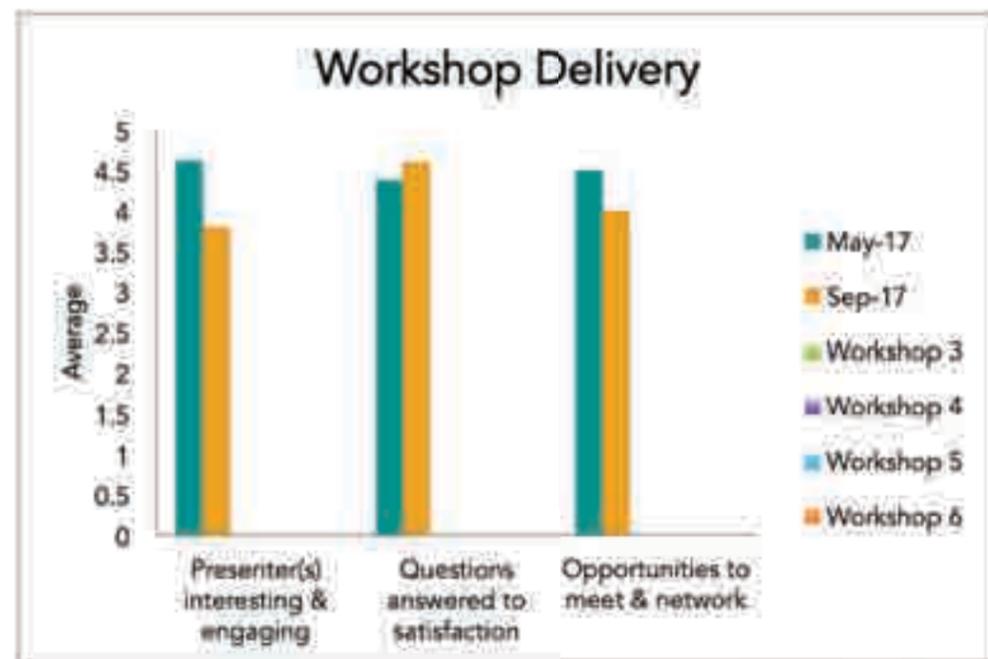


Figure 3  
Satisfaction  
with workshop  
delivery and  
facilitation



## Workshop 1 – May 2017

### Discussion and diverse perspectives

Overwhelmingly, respondents shared the most valuable aspects of the workshop were the “great”, “passionate”, and “lively” discussions and hearing others’ different views and perspectives. At the same time, three people commented the conversation could have been more open and equitable.

### Culture of Learning

A few people mentioned the workshop made them want to learn and explore more (i.e., to “investigate developmental evaluation; “continue to grow my understanding of family literacy system design thinking). One person said they valued the workshop “challenged my thinking and assumptions”.

### Application of Learning

A few reference group members shared they would apply what they learned when they returned to their own organizations (i.e., using this kind of thinking; add design thinking to toolbox to ideate; unpack words/terms).



## Workshop Logistics

### Worked well

- Homework ahead of time
- Excellent facilitation and scribing

### Suggestions for improvement

- Workshop could have been longer
- A larger room
- Overview of process “to try to head off some of the divergent conversations”
- A couple of people would have preferred to work on the family literacy definition at the start and to “skip the creative part”

## Emerging Topics/Questions

- What do you have to do to get people to understand literacy and what we do?
- Is this project limited to be geared towards low income? (like our funding currently is)
- How can we connect the family literacy work being done across the region? It feels very disconnected
- We have too many literacy people in the room – need more realistic impressions of perception of “family literacy”.
- How do I apply in my world?
- How do we take big social issues and all the complexities and the depth involved and make it manageable for this purpose?

## Workshop 2 – September 2017

### Discussion and diverse perspectives

As with the first workshop, respondents said the discussion was the most valuable aspect of the workshop and they spoke about specific topics of discussion they appreciated (i.e., conversations around family literacy, tech, universal programs, developmental evaluation questions, environmental scan)

### Culture of Curiosity

For a few people, this workshop inspired curiosity (i.e., “liked the question segment and curiosity factor; “feel more excited about the project moving ahead; “be more courageous about asking questions”; “think more about assumptions I am making on impact and barriers from a family perspective”).

### Deeper Roots in the Families First Project

One person made comments that imply they are getting more deeply rooted into the project itself (i.e., “understand more about the DE framework; feel more excited about the project moving ahead”).



### Workshop Logistics

Respondents provided suggestions for improvements related the workshop's logistics and delivery including having "stickier stickies", "clearer instructions", a better idea about the "hoped for outcome", more space, skipping design thinking "lingo". Mostly, they said the workshop would have been better if there had been more time and in particular more time to do discuss the prototype feedback they provided on sticky notes.

### Emerging Topics/Questions

- Align this project with other projects.
- How can we connect this project to other LSHF projects?
- Exploring cross pollination of projects (ELAWR & PLRN)
- Are we thinking too far out when it comes to tech (25 yrs!)? How do we scale?

## Prototype One: Summary Report Reference Group Reflection



## Scaling Questions

**Question 1:** Prototype one increased my understanding about mobilizing the system

Value	%
Neutral	14.3
Agree	42.9
Strongly Agree	28.6
Not applicable	14.3

Agree and strongly agree  
**71.5%**

**Question 2:** Prototype one increased my understanding about mobilizing a system in Waterloo Region

Value	%
Agree	71.4
Strongly Agree	14.3
Not applicable	14.3

Agree and strongly agree  
**86%**

**Question 3:** Prototype one increased my understanding of scaling

Value	%
Neutral	28.6
Agree	28.6
Strongly Agree	28.6
Not applicable	14.3

Agree and strongly agree  
**57%**

**Question 4:** prototype one increased my comfort with “failing forward”

Value	%
Neutral	42.9
Agree	28.6
Strongly Agree	14.3
Not applicable	14.3

Agree and strongly agree  
**43%**

**Question 5:** Prototype one increased my understanding of design thinking

Value	%
Disagree	14.3
Agree	42.9
Strongly Agree	42.9

Agree and strongly agree  
**86%**

**Question 6:** Prototype one increased my understanding of developmental evaluation

Value	%
Disagree	16.7
Neutral	66.7
Not applicable	16.7

Agree and strongly agree  
**0%**



**Question 7:** I have incorporated what I have learned in prototype one into my day-to-day work

Value	%
Disagree	14.3
Neutral	14.3
Agree	14.3
Strongly Agree	57.1

Agree and strongly agree  
**71%**

**Question 8:** Throughout prototype one my input and expertise has been valued

Value	%
Neutral	14.3
Agree	14.3
Strongly Agree	71.4

Agree and strongly agree  
**86%**

**Question 9:** Throughout prototype one my input and expertise has been used

Value	%
Neutral	14.3
Agree	57.1
Strongly Agree	28.6

Agree and strongly agree  
**86%**

**Question 10:** Overall, I am satisfied with the Families First project's methods (e.g., design thinking, developmental evaluation, group structures)

Value	%
Agree	42.9
Strongly Agree	42.9
Not applicable	14.3

Agree and strongly agree  
**86%**

**Question 11:** Overall, I am satisfied with the Families First project's process (e.g., reflective, creative, inclusive, pragmatic)

Value	%
Agree	57.1
Strongly Agree	28.6
Not applicable	14.3

Agree and strongly agree  
**86%**



## Themes observed, experienced, or thought about

### Service user participation

- I don't know what this means
- Valued the initial survey of service users and what they identified as possible barriers (e.g., time) to participate in GSL type programs
- There was understanding that all families could use this service and it was universally needed

### Who cares, why, and how do they show it?

- Very good to hear that national funding is starting to be provided for family literacy again
- Again, not sure what this means
- In each encounter, influencers were interested in family literacy and saw that it was of value to the community. These meetings felt warm and comfortable and positive

### Sustainability

- Have a hard time realistically considering selling the curriculum to non-profits when they don't have funding available
- I am not as concerned about sustainability as I am about updating the information...the family literacy landscape is always changing, is this map going to be an accurate reflection of the landscape in 6 mos/a year/5years. Does it need to be?
- Increased knowledge about what we do across the system and increased opportunities to engage at tables, and at other organizations raises our profile as a player in the system and that in addition to relationship/partnership building will definitely increase our sustainability

### Scale and scope

- Could learn a lot about successful scale and scope from the local Strong Start Organization
- It is possible that as we continue our work in system mobilization, the scope of our work will change
- Scale is large but I know that there are pieces missing – those at the table can't possibly know all of the players/programs

### Awareness and understanding

- Interesting discussions about family literacy and early literacy and cross-over; some of the Families First work has led to connections to provide some support for ELAWR
- Increased for people at table...how will that be shared with others?
- This definitely increased this among the influencers we met

### Access

- Could see some of the work from Bridges Out of Poverty influencing our discussion in a good way; the reference group seems to have a good awareness of working with people with limited income

### Future oriented

- I don't think we did any forecasting at all (See my note re: sustainability as well – first note)
- I'm still having a hard time with the disconnect between the GSL curriculum and the direction from the Ministry of Education (and the dollars and much-needed support that follow the MOE's direction)
- Systems mobilization is a long game and an investment into the future

### Technology

- Possibility to partner with libraries who have tech available for families to use; take field trips to the library or use Skype to have a video tour of the library; would lessen the digital divide and help families understand where and how they can access technology
- Could be part of this



### Increasing complexity

- This is a complex issue for families, but it is also complex in the community funding context – the BOE focus is on STEAM and high school grad rates, and most provincial and national early years support seems to be focused on self-regulation instead of early literacy
- Systems work is complex. If we take it on it required us (in family lit) to acquire new skills and competencies

### Values

- Families First aligns with the values of many local organizations and initiatives, although there is a stronger emphasis on user-experience and empowering families – perhaps because of the way that adult education principles are woven so well into PRLN's work
- This work is consistent with our organizational values

### Strengths-based

Necessary as a core foundation of any family literacy work

This work is definitely a strength

### Universal or targeted

- Seems to be more uptake for GSL from the middle and upper SES families, but is that where this work has the most impact?
- Universal

### Impact

- Increasing literacy can improve someone's life in many ways, but this is not a well-known fact in our community; a system mobilization would help to increase the awareness
- Potentially high

### Connection to facilitators

- The relationship-building that facilitators do with families is key to having families come and keep coming back; the challenge is having staff time and connections to bring families functioning with low-literacy into the program (the hand-to-hand approach that many organization are now doing)
- Mmm can see that

### Other

- How does the Families First proecjt align with LSHF's other projects and local work and where can intersections be made for greater impact
- I don't think this fits me...I'm not sure what you're looking for

## Overall Satisfaction

### What, if anything, worked well during the design, implementation, and testing of prototype one?

Appreciated having homework to do ahead of time to "spark" thinking

The meetings with Sandra Hamner were amazing, focused, and efficient. Just being in the room with Sandra is a learning experience. She does a great job of getting the best from people.

Huh....aren't we still doing it?

really liked the mapping and the illustrated work with Karen Scian.

Struggled a bit at the beginning with some of the design thinking work

it was great involving so many staff people in this. We all got a chance to participate and learn together. Sandra's support was great. This prototype i feel was very successful particularly for me in conceptualizing us as a back bone support to ELAWR and also that we made it happen. It was very well organized and we were able to check back in and report and decide a go/no.



### What, if anything, could have been better throughout the design, implementation, and testing of prototype one?

Didn't like feeling rushed in the meetings; would have helped to have a clear idea of the processes in advance

I was confused in our meeting with Matt. Not sure what the expected outcome was. Things happened but I felt I had to try to direct the flow in order for anything to be accomplished. So I guess the style of that meeting didn't work for me.

We could have easily done this without any of the work of the committee...it's not off what we already do, it just gave us some funds to do more

I'd like a broader discussion about the merits of mobilizing a family literacy system vs mobilizing a literacy system. I think this is an important piece of this prototype and it needs some attention.

nothing. I think it was great

### What, if anything, did you learn during the design, implementation, and testing of prototype one?

Really learned about keeping my eye of the ball of what we are trying to accomplish and how relationship building with influencers can lead to outcomes we want. Learned also to speak and email using more confident wording and to prioritize following up.

reference groups aren't always used appropriately Once again, I didn't find this to be new information or outside of work we do...it did mobilize some staff to think with a bigger picture

I learned that key influencers are very open to meeting. You just have to ask. I learned how to prepare myself with messages and perhaps requests but stay "loose in the saddle" as they may take the conversation down a different path. Always make sure you cover off your

message by steering the conversation back but be open to exploring new things and getting different advice than what you are expecting. Research the person before you get there to know what their interests are and to customized you messages and asks.

### What should be kept in mind as the project implements and tests the next prototypes?

Have regular email updates about the prototypes... I know bits and pieces about what happened, but I wouldn't be able to describe it in a comprehensive way to someone, and I wish that I could.

I want to keep doing the things that are working from prototype one and not have them get "lost" in making time for new initiatives. Also, I think our team works best with very structured meetings.

There needs to be some clear outline of the prototypes....something we can share with the board that sounds very distinct instead of what we have. It seems weird to me that we have Joanne's original take on what the prototypes should be after over a year of work....so what was the development process on creating prototypes that were already previously decided?

I think we need some clarity around the connections between our steering committee and the staff committee (and maybe there is a third committee) and what everyone's role is. I am a bit confused by all of the players and the roles.

be clear about what we are trying to learn



# Families First Project: Project Evaluation Survey

## Methodologies and key concepts

1. Please rate your level of understanding about design thinking

Very good	Good	Acceptable	Poor	Very poor
<input type="radio"/>				

2. Please rate your level of understanding of developmental evaluation

Very good	Good	Acceptable	Poor	Very poor
<input type="radio"/>				

3. Please rate your level of comfort with failing forward

Very comfortable	Comfortable	Moderately comfortable	Slightly comfortable	Not at all comfortable
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Please rate your level of understanding about scaling in smaller organizations

Very good	Good	Acceptable	Poor	Very poor
<input type="radio"/>				

5. Overall, please rate your level of satisfaction with the Families First project's methods (e.g., Design Thinking, Developmental Evaluation, group structures)

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
<input type="radio"/>				

6. Please describe any of the ways you have integrated your learning about these methodologies and key concepts into your work.



## Organizational Sustainability

7. Please rate the extent to which the Families First project has contributed to Project READ's organizational sustainability

To a great extent      Somewhat      Very little      Not at all

8. Describe how, if at all, this project did a good job of contributing to the organization's sustainability.

9. Describe how, if at all, this project could have done a better job of contributing to the organization's sustainability.

## Project Impact on Families

10. Please rate the impact the Families First project had on families.

High      Moderate      Low      None

11. Describe how, if at all, the project impacted families.

12. Describe how, if at all, the project could have better impacted families.

## Working Together

13. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the Families First project's process (e.g., reflective, creative, inclusive, pragmatic).

Very satisfied      Satisfied      Neither      Dissatisfied      Very dissatisfied

14. To what extent was your input and expertise valued and used throughout the project.

A great deal      Much      Somewhat      A little      Not at all

15. In thinking about this as a mid-point of a four-year Hallman-funded project – between design and project implementation – please share more about what you would like to start, continue, and stop doing.

16. Please tell us what your role was in this project

- Project READ staff
- Reference group member



# Final Project Evaluation Report – February 2019

This report summarizes responses to a questionnaire asking Families First project leadership to reflect on four key areas:

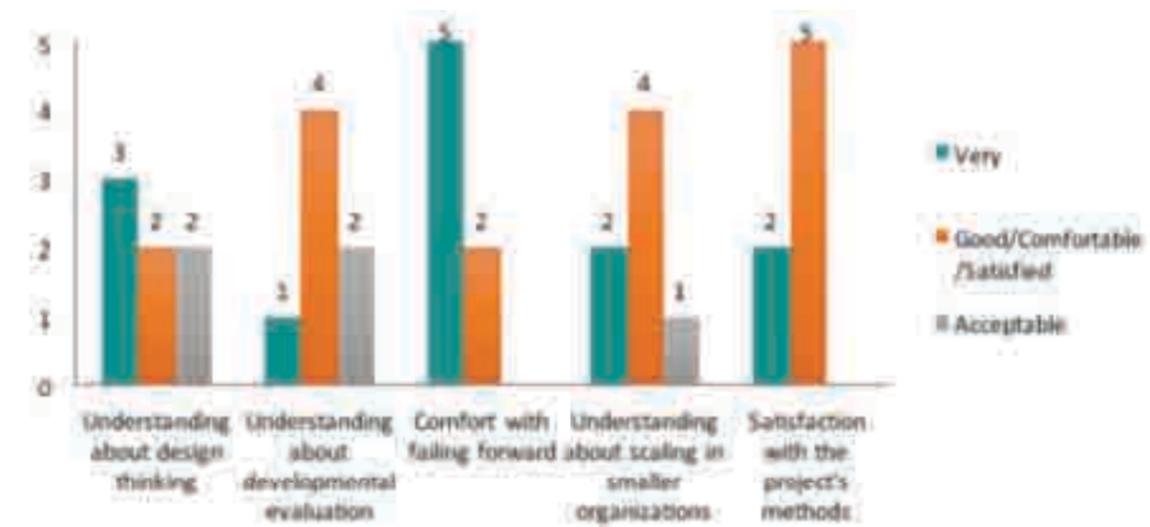
- 1) Key project methodologies
- 2) Organizational sustainability
- 3) Project impact on families
- 4) Working together

In total, seven people responded to the survey. One was Project READ staff and the other six were reference group members. While this questionnaire addresses many of the outcomes in the project's initial evaluation framework, the questionnaire was adapted to better reflect emergent learnings and an evolving context.

## Methodologies and key concepts

Survey participants were asked six questions about the project's core methodologies and key concepts (e.g., design thinking, developmental evaluation, failing forward, and scaling). There were five quantitative questions (see Figure 1 for average responses). It is worthwhile noting that while there were options to respond "poor" or "very poor/not at all comfortable/not at all acceptable," no one chose those options.

Figure 1 Responses to quantitative questions regarding the project's methodologies and key concepts



Finally, to complement the above, survey participants were asked to answer the following question: Please describe any of the ways you have integrated your learning about these methodologies and key concepts into your work. Of the four who responded, overall, they reported feeling increasingly comfortable with the concepts and practice of design thinking and failing forward. A couple people said they would like to learn more about developmental evaluation. Below are their verbatim responses.



**Figure 2 Responses to qualitative questions regarding the project's methodologies and key concepts**

*i had two exposures to design thinking through two different projects and feel completely comfortable with the principles of design thinking - all of the conversations I have at my work are now centered around design thinking - research, brainstorming, prototyping, testing, failing, trying again. We have used this approach in strategic planning at the library in the past year, in a problem we were having with our cash reconciliations, when deciding on new approaches in our programming lineups. Development evaluation I am less comfortable with by I am trying hard to remember to evaluate as I go (ask for feedback, suggestions and ideas) when I am planning a service change or new program.*

*We are beginning a project that involves development and piloting of specific programs and will be using the learnings of Design thinking in that work. We have been working with DE for some time now but there are always new interpretations!*

*I have become much more comfortable with the concept of learning from failure. We are forced so often by funders to get things right the first time that we become immune to the idea that learning is as important as delivering outcomes. Becoming comfortable with failure is hard but I not see the benefits if we are given opportunities to try things without fear of failure. With a new lens and a learner's mindset we can surface ideas and positive outcomes that otherwise would not have been uncovered. I learned that prototypes can be anything from a conversation to a full-blown pilot as long we are testing something and learning about it. I would like to have learned more about DE.*

*I had a lot of this before this project due to a background in fine art and design. I would say that training helped to give me language and techniques to bring these strategies/concepts into the workplace and get others involved (instead of doing mind mapping at home, alone, after work, for example).*

## Organizational sustainability

Survey participants were asked three questions related to organizational sustainability. First, they were asked to rate the extent to which the Families First project has contributed to Project READ's organizational sustainability. Of the seven who responded, four (4) indicated the project contributed to organizational sustainability to a great extent and three (3) indicated somewhat. Notably, no one responded to the available options "very little" or "not at all."

Survey participants were also asked to respond in writing to two additional questions related to organizational sustainability. They were asked how, if at all, the Families First project did a good job of contributing to the organization's sustainability (see verbatim responses in Figure 3) and how the project could have done a better job contributing to organizational sustainability. With respect to what went well one key theme emerged: the Families First project increased Project READ's visibility and capacity/profile as a Family Literacy leader. With respect to how, if at all, the project could have done a better job at contributing to organizational sustainability, there were three (3) responses. Given the brevity of these responses these responses, we include them immediately below:

- Maybe a more diverse reference group
- Creating an operational and strategic plan for family literacy
- Having more accurate costing breakdowns of GSL program to know true costs and profits and to identify the line req'd to sustain existing or add additional sites and programs

**Figure 3 Verbatim responses to the question "how, if at all, this project did a good job of contributing to the organization's sustainability."**

*Lots of interesting knowledge, guidance and consultation.*

*They have received new funding for the next phase of the project. Also, the process has enhanced Project's READ's visibility and voice in the literacy sector.*



*This project formed the basis of a new successful grant application which has allowed the org to temporarily increase it's capacity (during the project) with a long term goal of a permanent increase in monies coming into the org and capacity from within being grown.*

*I am not sure I know enough to really answer the above question or add comments. From the view of a community partner rather than a staff person of the organization, I think this project raised awareness of Project READ and led to greater involvement of the organization in the bigger picture of community planning.*

*Through the project we were able to connect to community partners and forge relationships in a deeper way. We engaged the public more as well. PRLN's participation at community tables and committees was noticed by other players. We raised the profile of the organization throughout the community and leveraging those relationships into the future will be very valuable. We secured next stage funding in part due to these relationships. This project enabled PRLN to take a leadership role in ELAWR and this continues to pay off through engagement in large community initiatives such as Wellbeing Waterloo Region, CYPT and Smart Waterloo Region. I would say our sphere of influence is greater now. Next stage funding has brought increased financial sustainability and also more time for resource development plan. Staff and community members were mobilized to address our issues. Capacities and skills of staff were increased.*

*It demonstrated that Fam Lit doesn't have to be just a small piece of what we do...there are big impacts with big outcomes that we can leverage. This highlights new avenues for funding possibilities which contributes to the sustainability. It also rocked us out of our organizational comfort zone of Adult Lit and got everyone involved from a Fam Lit perspective.*

## Project impact on families

Survey participants were asked to reflect on the project's impact on families. This section of questions received the fewest responses. We suspect, given a few of the responses indicating as much, that some survey participants did not have enough of an understanding of if and how the project impacted families. Nevertheless, of those who did rate the project impact on families on a scale of "high" to "none" (n=3), all responded the program impact was high.

Furthermore, survey participants were asked to describe how, if at all, the project impacted families. Overall, these responses were future-oriented in that respondents were thinking about how this project might have a greater impact on families as a result of this project and its growth. In addition to two comments indicating they did not/could not comment because they did not know what the impact might be (not included), four respondents shared the following:

- Helped us understand how we could expand services in a sustainable way.
- Better program development.
- We created new scale strategies and funding to implement across Waterloo Region. More families will receive family literacy supports than ever before.
- I know we engaged families at various points throughout. It seems like awareness of family literacy has increased and families that we connected with seem to engage in good Fam Lit practices more.

In addition, survey participants were asked how, if at all, the project could have better impacted families to which they responded with the following:

- I don't feel I have enough knowledge to accurately comment and answer this question
- None
- Any families that we connected with could receive a wrap-up summary or something as a thank-you for helping us with the project and to encourage ongoing engagement with our agency.



## Working together

Finally, survey participants were asked to reflect on the working relationship between Project READ Literacy Network and Capacity Canada.

The first question asked survey participants to rate their level of satisfaction with the Families First project's process (i.e., if it was reflective, creative, inclusive, and pragmatic) on a scale of "very satisfied" to "very dissatisfied." Of the seven responses, three (3) responded they were very satisfied and four (4) responded they were satisfied.

The second question asked survey participants to rate the extent to which their expertise was valued and used throughout the Families First project on a scale of "a great deal" to "not at all." Of the seven responses, five (5) responded a great deal and two (2) responded much.

To end, survey participants were asked to think about this time as a mid-point of a four-year Hallman-funded project – between design and project implementation – and as such were asked to share more about what they would like to start, continue, and stop doing. Their verbatim responses follow:

- I will look for ways to continue my involvement with the literacy sector. Also, very interested in seeing the outcomes of the implementation phase.
- I am sorry, I do not understand this question.
- Bring a greater variety and number of people together to inform the work of the project
- Start embracing the broader definition of sustainability wholeheartedly start intentional activities to build team spirit start thinking more strategically continue to relationship build and engage community partners and sectors continue to be positive and develop trust continue to learn from failure continue to grow and learn stop thinking of ourselves as small
- start: planning / understanding how input was tracked and used  
continue: planning and adapting as needed. stop: ?

