

Smart Start Project Case Study 1

Case Study Title

REAL Project

Background

What is the background to the case study?

C is a young single mum with one 3 year old daughter. She lives with her mother and step father in North Warwickshire.

She is already a member of the library and takes her daughter there to choose books.

Activity

What was involved? Who? Where?

C and her 3 year old daughter attended a 5 week course REAL. These sessions involved four strands of literacy – early writing (mark making), books, oral language based around a rhyme/story session at the local library and a walk in the local area to look at environmental print. The tutor was also able to visit C in her home on one occasion.

Outcomes

What were the outcomes or learning points?

Sarah said that she recognised her daughter was looking at shop signs more. She was also trying to have a go at forming letters especially using some of the mark making ideas which had been suggested in the early writing session e.g. zipped bags containing poster paint well sealed for magic mark making.

Sarah said the course had given her ideas of activities to do with her daughter at home.

She also really appreciated the home visit, free picture book 'Dear Zoo' and the goody bag which we give out as part of the course.

Quote/Testimonial

Feedback given from the individual

'I have gained a stronger bonding experience with my daughter' Sarah

Smart Start Project Case Study 2

Case Study Title

REAL Project

Background

What is the background to the case study?

A is a young mum with one daughter living in supported mother and child unit. Children's Services suggested that she come on the course.

Activity

What was involved? Who? Where?

A attended REAL with her daughter. The course was held at a children's centre in Leamington. The tutor made a home visit as part of the course.

Outcomes

What were the outcomes or learning points?

A attended each session. At the beginning of the course A's engagement with her daughter was restricted to talking to her about 'manners' and she just watched her daughter take part in activities. By the end of the course A was playing alongside her and talking about the activities. Her daughter responded to this and was much more engaged with the activities. On the first session her daughter was not interested in listening to the story although she sat quietly with the group but by the last session she was very engaged with the story and joined in with rhymes. The relationship between mother and daughter became more positive and had a greater focus on playing and what her daughter was learning. She didn't mention her "manners" or behaviour.

Quote/Testimonial

Feedback given from the individual

A was delighted with the scrap book produced on the course with photographs of her daughter playing. She said "I can show it to my support worker so she can see what we have been doing."

Smart Start Project Case Study 3

Case Study Title

REAL Project

Background

What is the background to the case study?

Grandma and grandchild attended the 5 week course. The child has multiple, rare, disabilities which entail her wearing a colostomy bag and catheter. Mum could not cope and grandma has recently won permanent custody of her granddaughter.

Activity

What was involved? Who? Where?

Grandma and grandchild attended REAL at Camp Hill Early Year Centre in Nuneaton

Outcomes

What were the outcomes or learning points?

Grandma reported that because of the nature of her granddaughter's disabilities it has been difficult for her to attend activities in settings. However, the nature of REAL has been smaller groups, more options to offer personalised attention, which grandma has really appreciated.

When they first attended, both were quite reserved, but quickly began to blossom and by the end of the course were the 'life and soul of the party'

Impact:

They now have the confidence to attend the regular Stay and Play sessions, held in the same room as we ran Real.

Grandma has also completed a Story sack (with OCN) course with the same tutor and felt able to leave her granddaughter in the nursery while she attended.

On a happy note to end, the little girl is to have a ground breaking operation at Birmingham, which means she will be free from the restrictions she has now.

Quote/Testimonial

Feedback given from the individual

Grandma has said how much she has learned on the course about how she can help her granddaughter develop her skills, especially since she has suddenly become responsible for a 3 year old!

Smart Start Project Case Study 4

Case Study Title

REAL Project

Background

What is the background to the case study?

B, a dad with two young sons, attended the REAL course with her youngest son who was 23 months. The children's centre had suggested he might enjoy the course.

Activity

What was involved? Who? Where?

Dad attended the course with his son at Alcester Children's Centre.

Outcomes

What were the outcomes or learning points?

Dad came to every session and clearly shared books with his son at home. He engaged with all the activities with his son. During the home visit mum was present too. She told the tutor that she had been going to hide away in the bedroom because she had great anxiety and also was too anxious to be with her child on her own. She also did not like leaving the house. She was very open and said she and her husband had met whilst undergoing inpatient treatment for mental health difficulties. The penultimate session was at the library and the tutor was very surprised when both mum and dad came with their son. Mum took an active part in the session and said that she was determined to take part with her son. The last session was an environmental print walk with a visit to a café. Mum came with her son to this session because dad was unwell. Her son was delighted to come to a session with mum.

Quote/Testimonial

Feedback given from the individual

Mum said she felt safe to come to the last session because she had enjoyed the library session and had felt supported

Smart Start Project Case Study 5

Case Study Title

REAL

Background

What is the background to the case study?

Sessions comprise a 5 Week “REAL – Raising Early Achievement in Literacy” programme to support early literacy development for young children and their families using the ORIM framework.

“The underpinning ORIM framework is used to plan and reflect on how parents help their children’s early literacy development by providing Opportunities, Recognising children’s achievements, Interacting and Modelling literacy use.” (National Children’s Bureau).

The programme aims to work in partnership with parents to support children’s literacy development in the four key areas: environmental print, books, early writing and oral language.

Activity

What was involved? Who? Where?

Programme of five sessions delivered over 5 weeks in 1.5 hour sessions within a Children’s Centre outreach setting (Clopton).

Week 1 – using sensory and mark making activities to promote early writing skills. Week 2 – Home Visit – Role Modelling storytelling and mark making, explanation of the ORIM framework.

Week 3 – Using sensory activities linked to a particular story to promote emerging reading skills.

Week 4 – Library visit. Oral Language

Week 5 - Environmental print, looking for letters, numbers / print in the community.

Outcomes

What were the outcomes or learning points?

The learning outcomes over the 5 weeks were to encourage parents to develop an understanding of the ORIM framework. Following this parents/carers could start to apply the ORIM framework to their child’s emerging literacy so that they could engage, participate and support literacy development. Through increased confidence and understanding parents can offer increased opportunities to support the development of oral language and early reading and writing skills.

Learners explained that they had developed their knowledge regarding how children learn and the importance of collaborative play and active learning as importance aspects of supporting development.

Quote/Testimonial

Feedback given from the individual

Learner S.S/N.S explained that she felt more confident in activities that she was doing as she had always done them instinctively but now realised that they linked to established learning theories. She also explained that she enjoyed engaging with new ideas especially linking themes together, i.e. using a favourite story as a base and using it to prompt art/creative activities.

Smart Start Project Case Study 6

Case Study Title

REAL

Background

What is the background to the case study?

Family A attended the course having seen it advertised in a local Children's Centre. Mum was interested in developing her own knowledge of her 3 year old child's literacy development. She, her 3 year old and her 18 month old attended the course. She provided lots of play opportunities at home but was unsure how they connected to literacy. She discussed her knowledge of literacy development being limited to knowing that children learn to read and write in school.

Activity

What was involved? Who? Where?

Family A attended every session and both children engaged in age appropriate tasks that promoted early literacy development. During the Home Visit, Mum asked for advice on how she could incorporate more literacy into her child's play at home. Tutor modelled using mark making and reading material. She suggested she could use post it notes from the mark making equipment in the role play 'post office' that was in the corner of the room, or create train tickets together to play with alongside the train set her child enjoyed using. Each week Mum asked questions about the activities and referred to the reading material she had been given during the Home Visit.

Outcomes

What were the outcomes or learning points?

Mum discussed applying the activities and ideas from the session at home – each week she had tried something new. She talked about having made letters, etc. in the post office and making train tickets for the train set – she said her child enjoyed this in particular and played this as a game with his grandparents when they visited!

Quote/Testimonial

Feedback given from the individual

Mum said she was far more confident in identifying Literacy opportunities within her child's play, in a way that is age appropriate. At the beginning of the course Mum worried she should be encouraging her child to write letters and by the end of the course she understood the value of mark making and emergent writing and had greater confidence in encouraging this. Mum took a lot of the activities from the sessions and replicated them at home and she said she has seen an improvement in the amount of mark making her child is doing, and in his speech and communication skills. She also fed back that she had seen an increase in her 18 month old's mark making and communication skills, as well as his engagement in stories.

