



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Summary of Research

Welcome to the Imagination Library

Imagination Library began with Dolly Parton's desire that every child, regardless of income, would have access to books. Since its founding, the Dollywood Foundation has conducted and encouraged research on the Imagination Library program in an effort to assess communities' reactions to the program and its impact on children's literacy. The majority of this research has been implemented at the local community level, by program staff or local researchers, to provide formative and summative feedback to support local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) implementations.

"We love the Imagination Library program! My daughter is so excited to get her new book each month. It supplements our trips to the public library and gets her excited about entering kindergarten as well."

The Dollywood Foundation initiated a review of over 20 years of research conducted on Imagination Library programs in the U.S. and internationally. The findings from the body of DPIL research indicate the program is extremely popular in the communities where it is implemented and show promise in promoting changes in home literacy environments, children's attitudes toward reading, and early literacy skills.



Positive Perceptions

- Participating family members were overwhelmingly positive about the program and its impact on their children when asked in questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups.
- Community members, including Imagination Library partners and preschool and kindergarten teachers, also had positive views of the program and its impact on book ownership and literacy practices in homes.
- The positive views of the program and its impacts were present regardless of the demographic characteristics of the community or its participants, and longer program participation often resulted in more positive outcomes.



Richer Home Literacy Environments

- Parents read aloud more to their children and were more comfortable reading as a result of DPIL.
- Parents reported their children owned more books as a result of participating in the program.



Dream More, Learn More, Care More, Be More



Improving Attitudes and Skills

- Parents believed their children were more interested in reading due to receiving the books each month.
- Participating children were excited when their DPIL books arrived in the mail monthly, addressed specifically to the child.
- Some studies found DPIL had promise with respect to developing children's early literacy skills, as participants had more advanced skills than their classmates who did not participate in the program.



Logic Model

The Dollywood Foundation is committed to supporting local DPIL programs and communities. One focus of our recent work has been identifying common outcomes for all DPIL programs. This will ensure we are all on the same page and provide the best program possible for children and families. These research-based outcomes were identified through reviews of the literature and are considered to be building blocks for lifelong literacy, supported by the research, and aligned with DPIL's philosophy and goals.

Imagination Library strives to...

Enhance participants' home literacy environments so that...

- ✓ Books are available in homes
- ✓ Caregivers begin reading to children early in life
- ✓ Caregivers read to children frequently and for increasing amounts of time as they age

Promote positive attitudes and increased motivation to read so...

- ✓ Children ask adults to read to them
- ✓ Children "play" with books independently

Increase the number of interactions between caregivers and children during reading so...

- ✓ Children respond and contribute to book reading
- ✓ Children practice reading skills

Such that children develop emerging literacy skills including...

- ✓ Understanding print conventions
- ✓ Naming letters and making letter sounds
- ✓ Increasing their vocabulary
- ✓ Understanding oral sounds, syllables, and words
- ✓ Improving auditory memory



Logic Model (continued)

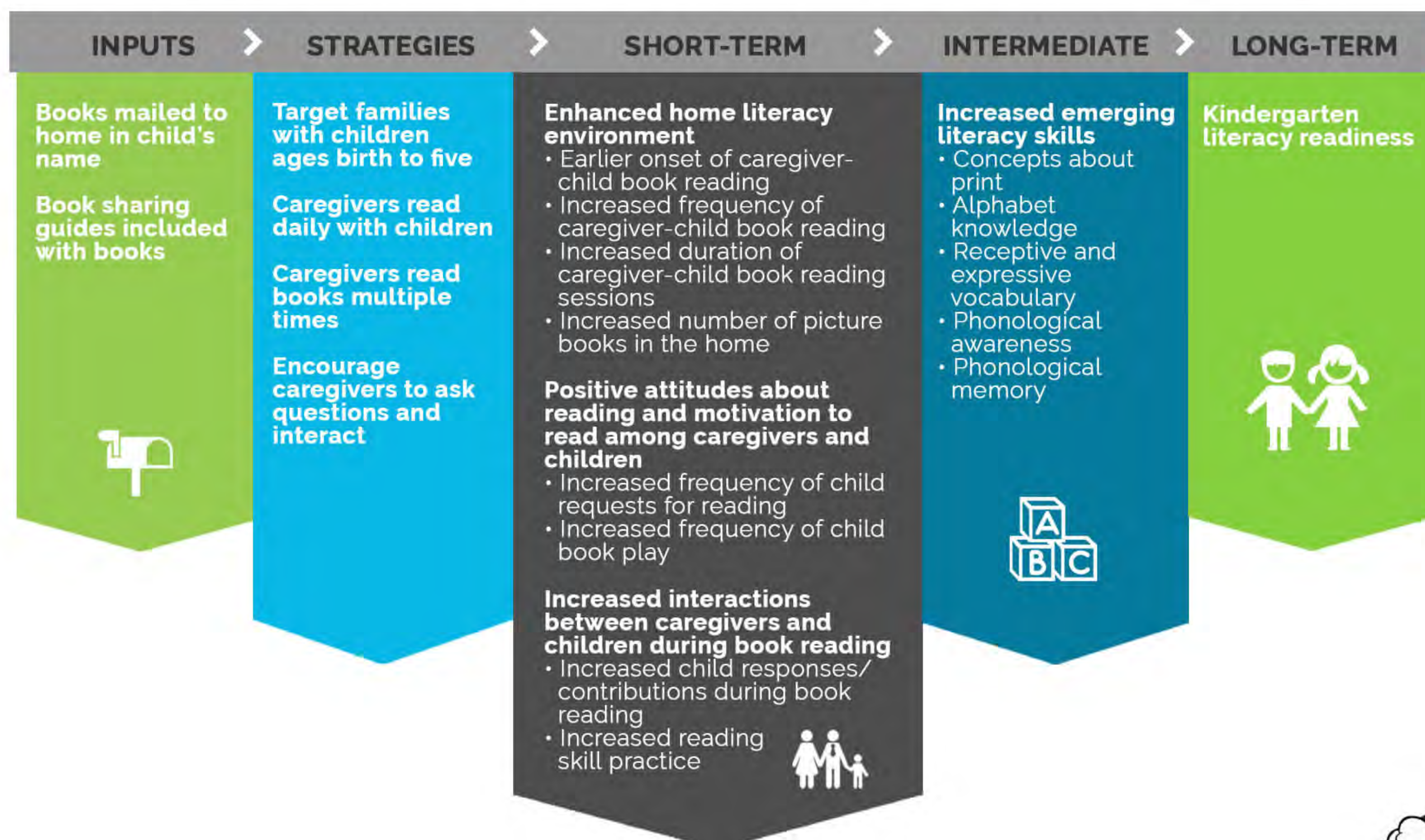
The Dollywood Foundation is committed to guiding and assisting community-based DPIL programs to provide the best experience for all participants. The Foundation will support both beginning and existing community-based DPIL programs by providing resources to help organizations...

- ✓ Plan how to research and evaluate the program
- ✓ Establish partnerships with local researchers
- ✓ Become familiar with the research on DPIL and what lessons were learned
- ✓ Use the Dollywood Foundation's resources and guidance to communicate effectively with researchers and other community stakeholders
- ✓ Conduct innovative research to assess DPIL's identified outcomes

The Foundation looks forward to continuing our work supporting rigorous research on Imagination Library in existing and new DPIL communities. Through this research, we can continue to expand Dolly's vision of ensuring every child is exposed to the magic of books!

Logic Model

Based on Imagination Library Research Findings and Literature Review.



For information and program details, please visit ImaginationLibrary.com.

