



*Raising A Reader*  
*Program Evaluation Handbook*



# How to Conduct an Evaluation

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To conduct your evaluation of the Raising A Reader program, you could hire an independent evaluation expert. However, program evaluation that is conducted by independent experts is expensive. If the cost is prohibitive, Raising A Reader has provided this handbook to help affiliates conduct their own evaluations. To develop this handbook, Raising A Reader has consulted with Applied Survey Research, an independent research firm, to ensure that the methodological recommendations this handbook contains are entirely solid. If you follow the instructions contained within this handbook, you should be able to:

- Design a basic outcome evaluation;
- Implement the Baseline Survey;
- Implement the Follow-up Survey;
- Enter your data;
- Understand your results and determine whether growth in book-sharing and library visits is statistically significant; and
- Communicate your results.

## About Applied Survey Research

ASR is a non-profit social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities. ASR creates meaningful evaluative and assessment data, facilitates information-based planning, and develops custom strategies. Incorporated in 1981, the firm has over 25 years of experience working with public and private agencies, health and human service organizations, city and county offices, school districts, institutions of higher learning, and charitable foundations. For more information about ASR, you can call 408.247.8319 or visit: [www.appliedsurveyresearch.org](http://www.appliedsurveyresearch.org)

## When Should You Start Thinking About Evaluation?

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You should plan your evaluation before the Raising A Reader program is implemented at your site(s). To measure the change that you have affected over time, you need to first measure family practices via a Baseline Survey before families have been exposed to the Raising A Reader program. Once you start Raising A Reader, if you have not done a Baseline Survey, there is no opportunity to go back and measure the change in book-sharing and library visits over time. Once Raising A Reader has been implemented, Follow-up Surveys can be done at a variety of times. Typically Follow-up Surveys are conducted approximately 4-8 months after the program has launched.

## **How Often Should You Conduct an Evaluation?**

The evaluation described in this handbook using the Parent Baseline and Follow-up Surveys is called an outcome evaluation because it provides information about whether you have achieved certain desirable outcomes – increasing book-sharing in families, for example. This type of evaluation should certainly be done the first time the Raising A Reader program has been implemented at your site(s). You should also re-do the evaluation any time your service population changes markedly, because you'll want to know whether and how the program is effective with your new population. Barring any major change in your population or delivery system, you should conduct an outcome evaluation every few years to ensure that the change you expect to occur is truly happening.<sup>1</sup>

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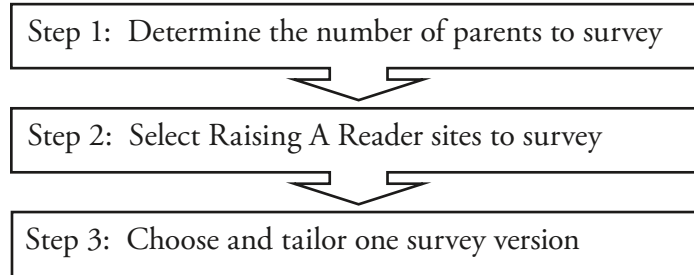
<sup>1</sup> Programs can also conduct what are called process evaluations, a topic that is not covered in this Handbook. Process evaluations focus on how a program has been implemented, and how closely those activities resemble the program's goals. Such information can be critical for continuous program improvement.

# Designing Your Evaluation

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## Overview

This section of the handbook will help you design your evaluation. In Steps 1 and 2 we will help you to plan and select your sample. In Step 3 we will help you to choose a version of the survey to implement. We will also cover ways in which you might revise the survey so that it is even more relevant to your community.



## Step One: Determine the Number of Parents to Survey

### Determining a Sample Size

- A. Use a sample size calculator to determine recommended sample size.
- B. Calculate actual sample size by taking into account response rates and attrition rates.

### A. Determining Recommended Sample Size

In order to have a valid statistical sampling of a population, you must have a sample size that is large enough to be representative of that population. Some quick counsel from a statistician can be helpful in determining an appropriate sample size for your particular RAR program (you can contact Applied Survey Research at 408.247.8319 for such assistance). Or, you can refer to any one of a number of internet “sample size calculators.” For example, go to <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html> and enter the following information (**recommended input values are highlighted in bold**):

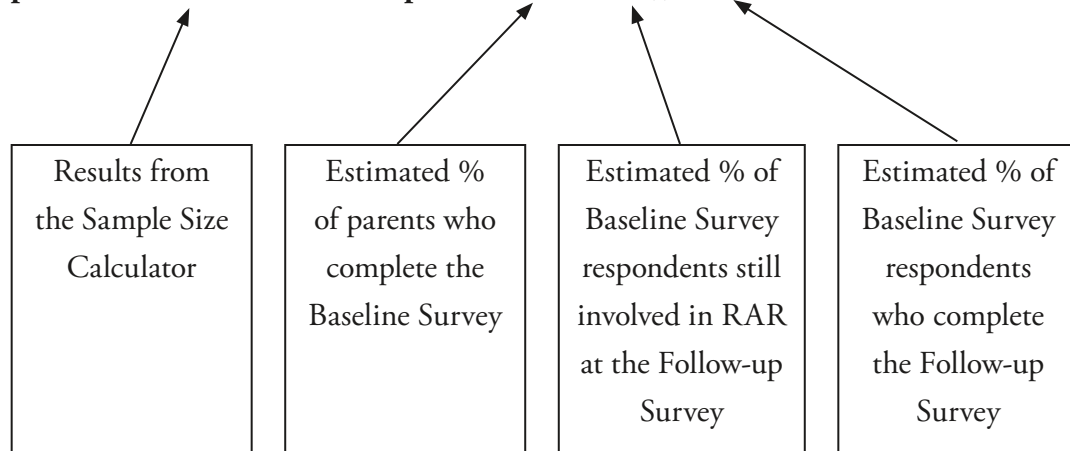
- Margin of error
  1. Definition: A measurement of the accuracy of the results of a survey.
  2. Example: A margin of error of plus or minus 4% means that there is a 95% chance that the responses of the target population as a whole would fall somewhere between 4% more or 4% less than the responses of the sample (an 8% spread).

3. **Recommended Input Values:** Very rigorous survey research adheres to a 3% margin of error; +/- 4% (or even +/- 5%) should be adequate for purposes of this evaluation. That means that your percentage findings from the survey should vary no more than plus or minus 4% from the true finding if you surveyed everyone in your population.
- Confidence Level
    1. Definition: The confidence level represents how much uncertainty you can tolerate. Typically, researchers like a confidence level of either 90% or 95%. The higher the confidence level, the more stringent the research.
    2. Example: For a confidence level of 90%, if a survey were repeated 100 times, then results will vary by less than the margin of error 90 of those 100 times.
    3. **Recommended Input Values:** We recommend using a 95% confidence level for this research.
  - Population
    1. Definition: In this case, your population would be the families of all of the children involved in your Raising A Reader program.
    2. Example: If 600 children are exposed to your Raising A Reader program, your population size is 600.
  - Response Distribution
    1. Definition: This phrase refers to the breakdown of yes/no responses, for example, to a survey question.
    2. Example: If 20% of parents would respond “yes” to the question “Have you visited the library in the past month?” your response distribution would be 20%/80%.
    3. **Recommended Input Values:** We recommend you use a response distribution of 50%, which is most conservative for estimating sample size.
  - Recommended Sample Size
    1. Based on the parameters you set for the margin of error, confidence level, population, and response distribution, you should see a recommended sample size reflected on the <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html> site.
    2. This sample size represents the number of parents from whom you need to gather completed Baseline and Follow-up Survey sets in order to have valid and stable results.
    3. By changing the margin of error and confidence level inputs, you can decrease or increase the size of the recommended sample.

## B. Determining Actual Sample Size

Remember that the Recommended Sample Size represents the number of parents from whom you need completed Baseline and Follow-up Surveys for valid and stable results. You'll actually need to distribute more Baseline Surveys when you take into account response rates to the Baseline Survey (the percent of parents who will actually complete the Baseline Survey as requested), the percent of families whose children will still be in the program at the Follow-up Survey, and response rates to the Follow-up Survey. We recommend getting response from at least 80% of the parents you ask to complete the Baseline Survey and 90% (if not all) of the parents you ask to complete the Follow-up Survey. (High response rates enhance the validity of your conclusions.) Taking all of these factors into account, you can use the following formula to calculate your actual sample size – the number of parents to whom you need to distribute the Baseline Survey:

$$\text{Actual sample size} = [\text{Recommended sample size} / .80] / .95(?) / .90$$



For example, if the sample size calculator recommended a sample size of 200, you would actually need to distribute surveys to at least 292 parents ( $200 / .80 = 250 / .95 = 263 / .90 = 292$ ) in order to gather 200 completed sets of Baseline and Follow-up Surveys (assuming your response rate was 80% at the Baseline Survey, 90% at the Follow-up Survey, and 95% of your families were still involved with the RAR program at the Follow-up Survey).

## Critical notes:

- You should gather completed surveys from just ONE parent for each child involved in the program. In other words, do not have both the mother and father complete separate Baseline Surveys for the same child.
- The data analysis tool can not be used for samples containing more than 2,196 parent respondents. For analysis of large data sets, you can contact an evaluation firm like Applied Survey Research.

The Parent Behavior Evaluation of San Mateo County, California, measured Raising A Reader's impact on 400 families in 18 childcare center classes or family childcare homes, randomly selected from a total pool of 875 families from 37 classes. 91% of the families returned their surveys. The margin of error for overall results was less than +/- 4% (with a 95% confidence level). This survey pool was sufficient to compare the "read-aloud" behavior of English-speaking parents to Spanish-speaking parents. (SRI-designed survey and methodology.)

## Step Two: Select Raising A Reader Sites to Survey

After you determine the number of parents you need to survey, you need to determine which sites you will survey. You can choose to take a sample of sites or to select all sites. If you work with a large number of sites, surveying parents from a sample of sites can be less work and yet still offer a scientifically valid way of measuring impact across all sites – as long as the sampling is done at random! It is critical to use random sampling when deciding which sites to survey so that you can generalize your results to all children and families that you serve, within the margin of error identified on your sample size calculator.

In the case of a pre-school setting, there is a similar choice about whether to survey all classrooms at a site or to survey in a random sampling of classrooms. In either case, for a classroom setting, you'll want to gather surveys from parents of ALL children in each classroom.

In a Raising A Reader Parent Behavior Evaluation in San Mateo County, California, there was a random-sampling of childcare centers, a second random sampling of family childcare homes, and then within that pool, a third random-sampling where two classrooms were selected randomly from each of the pre-schools. In this way, Raising A Reader was able to study the cumulative effect of the program across several hundred sites, without doing the work of gathering data from all the sites.



Taking a random sample of sites can be as easy as “pulling names out of a hat.” However, if you have a large number of sites from which to choose, it can be easier to use Microsoft Excel to assign a random number to each site. To create a random sample of your sites, follow these steps:

1. Enter all of the names of your sites into one column in an Excel worksheet (e.g., Column A), with one site in each row.
2. In the neighboring column (e.g., Column B), insert the following function into each cell: =RAND(). This function returns a random number greater than or equal to 0 and less than 1. A new random real number is returned every time the worksheet is calculated.
3. Select the site that has been assigned a random number closest to 1.0. Proceed in descending order until you have as many sites as you need.

### Step Three: Choose (and tailor) One Version of the Survey

There are three versions of the parent survey from which to choose that are contained on the Raising A Reader Coordinator Manual Supplemental Disk. Raising A Reader headquarters would recommend implementing the 19-item survey (See Exhibit A). However, if length is a real concern, you may choose to implement the 14-item or 11-item versions instead. Although the 11-item version contains those items that Raising A Reader considers fundamental to evaluating the success of the program, the two longer versions include additional questions that may be of great interest to you. The table below provides some guidelines about the approximate time needed to complete each survey version.

Survey Version	11-items	14-items	19-items
Length of time it takes to complete the survey	~3 minutes	~4 minutes	~6 minutes
Number of “open-ended” or write-in questions	1	1	2

#### Tailoring the Survey

You may also want to **tailor the survey to your community**. For example:

- In the demographic section at the end of the survey, you may want to insert different languages to the question, “What language is spoken most often in your home?”
- You may also want to insert different household income levels for the question, “What is your family income per year?” The decision about income levels is important because the analysis will display findings for the lowest income level and the combined lowest and middle income levels together (in addition to results for the overall sample, as well). Make sure you tailor the income categories so that the output is relevant and of interest to you.

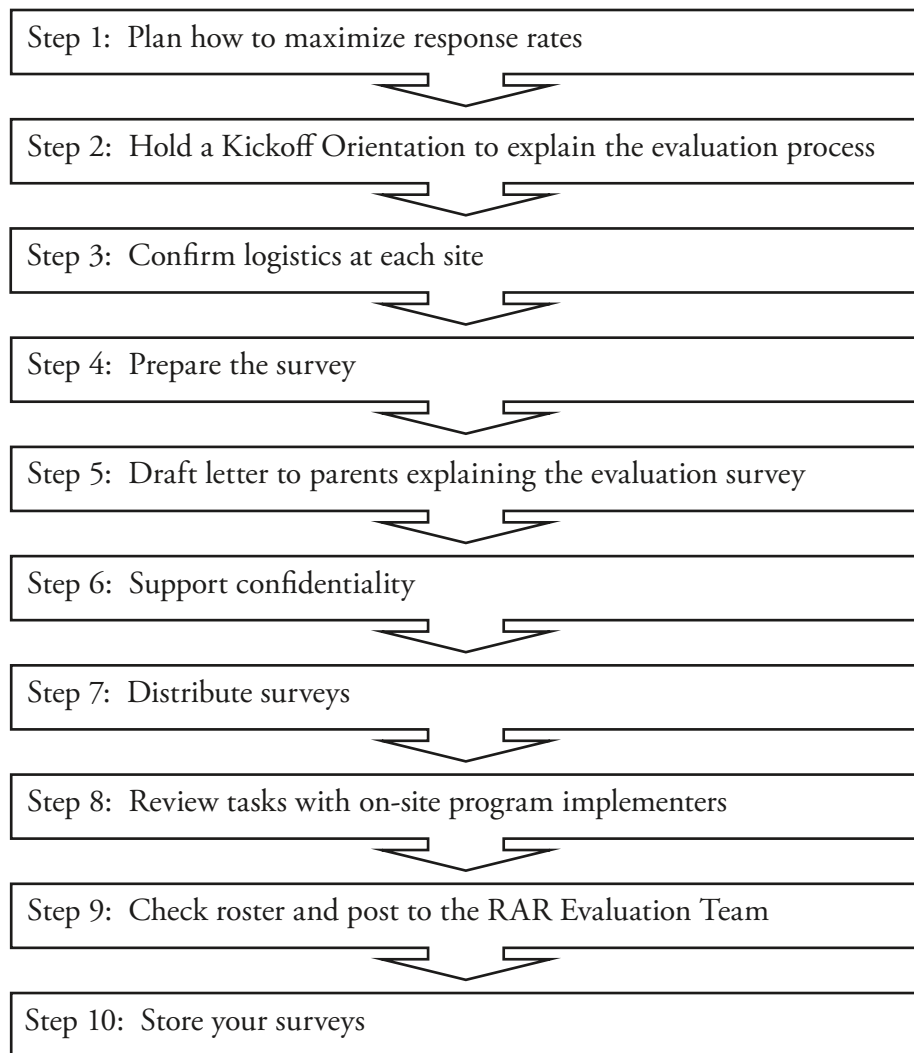
- You may also add questions to the survey. For example, it may be interesting to ask an open-ended question at the end of the Follow-up Survey to learn about parents' impressions of Raising A Reader in their own words. You might ask: "Do you have any comments to share about the Raising A Reader program?"
- We don't recommend deleting any items from the survey. It is particularly important to keep items like the family income and education level questions because they will help you when determining for whom the program has been particularly effective.

# Implementing the Baseline Survey

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## Overview

This section of the handbook will help you actually implement the Baseline Survey, including how to complete the following steps:



## **Step One: Plan How to Maximize Response Rates**

Within the chosen site or classroom, the ideal is to survey all the parents and build in a process to insure a high rate of return. Response rates can be maximized by doing any number of the following:

- Alert the parents to the survey process ahead of time, and ask them to allow an extra five to seven minutes at the child pick-up or drop-off times to fill out the easy questionnaire and place it in a confidential envelope.
- Ask your sites to assign one staff member to distribute surveys to parents –personally handing the survey to each parent communicates that you value the data. With a high degree of presence at the entrance door, it is easy to catch just about everyone in a week’s time.
- Offer an incentive to complete the survey – some sites have offered a children’s book for every completed survey.
- If you have mandatory parent meetings, set aside 10 minutes from that meeting for parents to complete the survey. It is much easier to insure a high response rate if parents do not take the survey home.

## **Step One: At Your Kickoff Orientation Explain the Evaluation Process**

Exhibit F provides you with an introductory letter to Program Implementers. It is important to help the implementers understand how important the evaluation is in terms of program sustainability and that the process can be simple and non-intimidating if it is done as outlined. The three critical messages are:

**#1:** The evaluation is important and linked to the development of funding sources.

**#2:** The surveys take only a few minutes of parents’ time.

**#3:** The parent Baseline Survey must be collected before the implementer begins the program. Ideally, parents should be asked to complete the Baseline Survey before there is much attention on literacy or any information about the Raising A Reader program. Parents could either complete the survey during a parent meeting, or stay for an extra few minutes when dropping off or picking up their children. (We discourage sending questionnaires home, as getting them back is usually very problematic.)

## **Step Two: Confirm Logistics at Each Site**

Contact the lead people in charge of the sites to further review the process and to obtain information on the timing and details of survey distribution. If the sites prefer you to make all copies of materials, then you will need to know the number of non-English speaking families, and the specific languages, in order to have questionnaires and parent cover letters translated and copied. (A Spanish translation is available on the supplemental disk that accompanies this manual.) Each site needs to provide a class roster where the teacher has indicated the primary language spoken in the home.

## Step Three: Assign a Code Number to Each Child and Mark the Code on the Same Class Roster

(See Exhibit C for a sample roster and Exhibit D for a data management tool.) Each child/family that will be evaluated needs to be assigned a code number (also referred to as an ID number) so that the surveys can remain anonymous. This code number must be recorded at the top of each individual’s Baseline Survey, with the same code written on the top of the same individual’s Follow-up Survey. The code for each child/family should represent the site, the classroom within the site (if relevant), the child, and whether the survey represents the Baseline Survey or the Follow-up Survey.

For example, a code could be 02-03A-01E-B. In this example, “02” represents the Belle Haven Childcare Center; “03” represents classroom #3; “A” is the morning class, “01E” is Johnny Jones, and he is an English-speaker; and “B” represents the Baseline Survey. The codes ensure that each individual’s Baseline Survey and Follow-up Surveys can be matched so that change for each individual can be determined. Below is an example of the top of the class roster form, which you can use to help you keep track of code numbers:

<b>Raising A Reader® Program Evaluation</b> <b>Belle Haven Childcare Center</b> <b>Classroom #3 / Morning Session</b>				
<b>Child's Name</b> <i>(teacher submits)</i>	<b>Primary Language</b> <i>(teacher submits)</i>	<b>Code Identifier</b> <i>(coordinator completes after teacher submits)</i>	<b>Baseline Survey Returned &amp; Completed by:</b> <i>(coordinator completes after surveys come back)</i>	<b>Baseline Survey Returned &amp; Completed by:</b> <i>(coordinator completes after surveys come back)</i>
<i>Johnny Jones</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>02-034-01E-B</i>	<i>✓mom</i>	<i>✓mom</i>

Below is an example depicting the top of an actual survey:

Today's Date: _____
Name of Site: _____
ID number: _____ (To be completed by administrator)

**Thank you for answering the questions below! Your honest answers are important to us and will be kept confidential.**

### Step Four: Prepare the Survey

(English: Exhibit A; Spanish\* included on supplemental disk). Check with Headquarters regarding availability of the survey in additional languages. Code each questionnaire as described above. In order to code the questionnaires, you'll need to have a classroom roster from each site. Be sure to check with RAR headquarters and other RAR program coordinators for other languages already translated. Make sure that you've tailored the survey (if desired) as instructed in Step Three of Designing Your Evaluation.

\*Note: Just the 19-item survey is translated into Spanish and other languages. If you would like to use the 14-item or 11-item survey in one of the translated languages, simply delete the unnecessary questions in the 19-item translated version.

- 14-item survey: Delete #1, #8, #11, #13, # 16 and then re-number the survey appropriately
- 11-item survey: Delete #1, #3, #8, #10, #11, #12, #13, #16 and then re-number the survey appropriately

### Step Five: Draft Letter to Parents Explaining the Survey

(English: Exhibit I; Spanish: included on the supplemental disk) Be certain to provide translated letters in all the languages of the families in your study. It is also very important to make sure that Raising A Reader is not mentioned in this introductory letter because the knowledge of a program promoting early literacy may bias the survey results.

### Step Six: Support Confidentiality

Attach the letter and coded questionnaire to a #10 envelope with the child's code (example: 02A-01E) on it. This coding system creates a way for parents to know that their answers are confidential and not shared with the Program Implementer involved with their child. The parents fill out the survey, seal the survey in the envelope, and place the envelope in the evaluation box near the site door. The Program Implementer note which numbers are there and alert parents who still have surveys to fill out. The Program Implementer checks off the completed envelope codes on the Raising A Reader master roster.

## Step Seven: Distribute Surveys

- Make copies of the Baseline Survey in one color paper (e.g., green) and copies of the Follow-up Survey in a different color (e.g., yellow). This makes it easier to identify matched sets of Baseline and Follow-up Surveys when sites are organizing their data.
- Bundle questionnaires, parent cover letters and envelopes under a cover letter to the Program Implementer (Exhibit E) with a pre-addressed and stamped large envelope for the professional to use when returning the parent questionnaires. Sending copies of materials, already stamped with postage makes it easier for the implementer to return those important questionnaires.
- If the Program Implementer cannot easily send you information on the primary language by child, another option is to include letters and questionnaires in English and the other language, all stapled to the envelope. The parent makes the choice about which one to fill out. Note: This can confuse parents as well.
- Deliver the entire bundle to the site and confirm by phone that the Program Implementer has received the bundle.

## Step Eight: Review Tasks with On-Site Program Implementers

- Ensure that each survey has a different code on it that can be matched to the child roster.
- Attach the cover letter (Exhibit F) to each survey.
- Attach the letter and coded survey to a #10 envelope with the child's code (example: 02A-01E-B) on it. This coding system creates a way for parents to know that their answers are confidential and not shared with the Program Implementer involved with their child.
- The Program Implementer hands out an envelope packet to each parent according to the code on the master roster.

**It is critical that each parent receive the correctly matched code.**

- If a parent has more than one child at a site, the parent should complete one Baseline Survey and one Follow-up Survey for each child.
- The parent is asked to complete the questionnaire on-site. The process takes just a few minutes. If implementers are concerned that parents' low literacy would make taking the survey too difficult, implementers may want to administer the surveys verbally. Questions and response options can be voiced out loud, while parents record their answers on their paper surveys. If parents have trouble with this method, implementers can work one-on-one with parents. It is important to survey all the parents, not just those who are literate or who come to parent information meetings.

Note: It is important that the same parent who completes the Baseline Survey also completes the Follow-up Survey. For example, if Johnny's Mother completes the Baseline Survey, only Johnny's Mother can complete the Follow-up Survey.

- The Program Implementer makes every effort to collect all questionnaires on-site. If parents choose to take the surveys home, the Program Implementer makes every effort to collect the surveys within one week.
- Program Implementers should try to get at least 80% of the Baseline Surveys returned. If there are a substantive number of returns, with one or two outstanding, the Program Implementer sends the entire bundle back to the Raising A Reader coordinator and mails the last pieces separately, if they are received.
- Importantly, thank parents for their time!

## **Step Nine: Check Roster**

- When the questionnaires are back, check off the child's code on the roster to show that the questionnaire has been returned. This final tally is used to calculate response rates for the Baseline Survey. This roster is also critical for the implementer when beginning the Follow-up Survey process, because only parents who have filled out the Baseline Survey can be involved in the Follow-up Survey. The Program Implementer needs to know which families are participating throughout the evaluation cycle.
- Exhibit G can help you track survey returns and calculate response rates.
- Calculate your response rate for the Baseline Survey by dividing the number of completed surveys received by the number of surveys handed out. For example, if Program Implementers handed out 100 surveys and received back 85 surveys, your response rate for the Baseline Survey would be 85% ( $85 / 100$ ). If your response rate is less than 80%, calculate response rates for each site and make a stronger effort to get completed surveys back from parents.

## **Step Ten: Store Your Surveys**

Treat your surveys as you would any confidential documents. Store your surveys in a locked file cabinet.

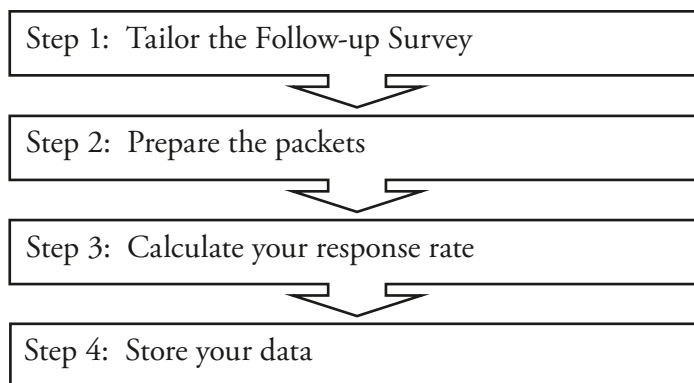


# Implementing the Follow-up Survey

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## Overview

This section of the Handbook sets out the steps to follow to implement the Follow-up Survey, including:



## **Step One: Tailor the Follow-up Survey**

Recall that you chose either, the 19-item, the 14-item, or the 11-item survey to implement at the Baseline. You should choose the same survey version to implement at the Follow-up. You may also have tailored the Baseline Survey to your community, inserting different home language or family income options. Make sure that you make the same changes to the Follow-up Survey.

The Follow-up Survey is also a good time to collect parents' impressions of the Raising A Reader program. You may want to add open-ended question like, "Do you have any comments to share about the Raising A Reader program?" Answers to this type of question can be very illuminating and of interest to program funders.

## **Step Two: Prepare the Packets**

- Write the code of every child/family who returned a Baseline Survey on the front of the Follow-up Survey.
- Attached the cover letter to each survey.
- Attach the letter and coded survey to a #10 envelope with the child's code (example: 02A-01E-B) on it. This coding system creates a way for parents to know that their answers are confidential and not shared with the Program Implementer involved with their child.

- The Program Implementer hands out an envelope packet to each parent according to the code on the master roster.

**Reminder: It is critical that each parent receive the correctly matched code.** Also, please remind the Program Implementer that the parent who completed the Baseline Survey must be the parent that completes the Follow-up Survey.

- The parent is asked to complete the questionnaire on-site. The process takes just a few minutes. It is important to survey all the parents, not just those who come to the parent information nights.
- The Program Implementer makes every effort to collect all questionnaires on-site. If parents choose to take the surveys home, the Program Implementer makes every effort to collect the surveys within **one week**.
- Program Implementers should try to get at least 80-90% of the distributed surveys returned. If there are a substantive number of returns, with one or two outstanding, the Program Implementer sends the entire bundle back to the Raising A Reader coordinator and mails the last pieces separately, if they are received.
- Thank the parents!

### **Step Three: Calculate Your Response Rate**

Calculate your response rate for the Follow-up Survey by dividing the number of completed surveys received by the number of surveys handed out. For example, if Program Implementers handed out 85 surveys and received back 80 surveys, your response rate for the Follow-up Survey would be 94% (80 / 85). If your response rate is less than 80%, calculate response rates for each site and make a stronger effort to get completed surveys back from parents.

### **Step Four: Store Your Surveys**

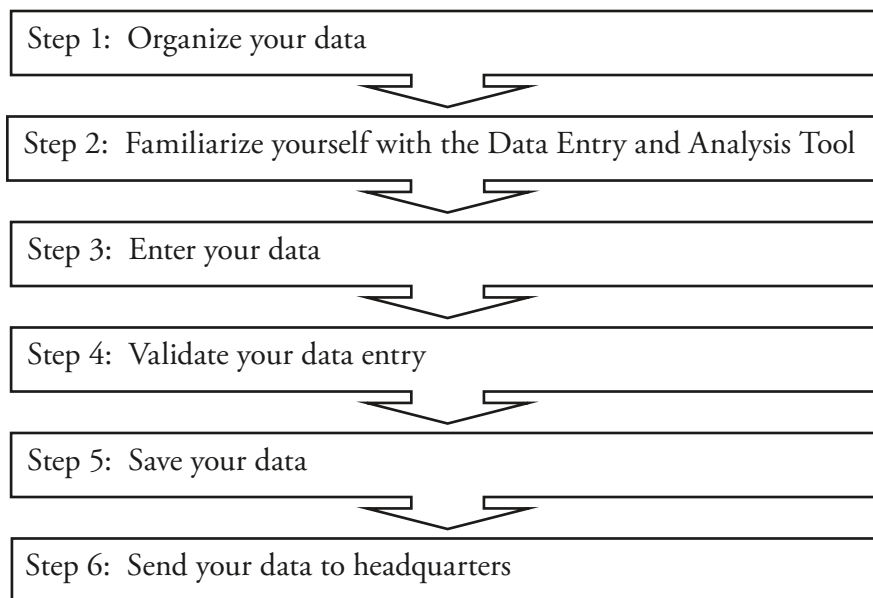
Treat your surveys as you would any confidential documents. Store your surveys in a locked file cabinet.

# Entering the Data

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## Overview

Raising A Reader has provided a data analysis tool to help you make sense of your survey results. This section of the Handbook includes information for how to organize your surveys and enter the data into the analysis tool. To understand this section of the Handbook, you need a basic familiarity with Microsoft Excel.



## **Step One: Organize Your Data**

To organize your data, you first need to match each child's Baseline Survey to their appropriate Follow-up Survey. Match the Baseline and Follow-up Surveys by:

- ❑ Matching the codes found on the upper right hand corner of the surveys.
- ❑ Double check the accuracy of each match by ensuring that the gender and birthdates are the same for each Baseline / Follow-up Survey set. (For example, a Baseline Survey for a girl born on August 2 should be paired with that same child's Follow-up Survey).
- ❑ It is preferable to have the same parent complete both the Baseline and Follow-up Surveys. As you match the sets of surveys, note how many Baseline / Follow-up Survey sets are completed by different family members. If results are not as you would expect, you may want to remove from analysis any survey sets that were not completed by the same family member.
- ❑ Set aside any surveys that do not have matches – for example, Baseline Surveys that do not have a matched Follow-up Survey, or Follow-up Surveys that do not have a Baseline Survey match. These unpaired surveys should NOT be entered into the data file.

## Step Two: Familiarize Yourself with the Data Entry and Analysis Tool

- On your Raising A Reader Coordinator Manual Supplemental Disk, you will see three folders, one of which will match the survey version that you implemented – either the 11-item, the 14-item, or the 19-item survey. In that folder you will find a Data Entry and Analysis Tool (a Microsoft Excel file). Open this file to familiarize yourself with the tool.
- Note that there are several different worksheet tabs at the bottom left of your screen. To view different worksheets, just click on the desired tab.
- The only worksheets you need to examine are the first four worksheets. Please do not work in the remaining worksheets, as they contain the formulas to calculate the statistics. The four worksheets that you will use include:
  - The “Data Entry” worksheet into which you’ll enter all of the Baseline Survey and Follow-up Survey data that you’ve collected.
  - The “Overall Results” worksheet where you can examine results for all of your respondents after you’ve entered the data.
  - The “Low Income Results” worksheet, which summarizes results just for families that fall into the lowest income category on the survey.
  - The “Low-Mid Income Results” worksheet, which summarizes results just for families that fall into the lower two income categories on the survey.
- General Set-Up of the Data Entry Sheet.
  - The Data Entry Sheet is set up into rows and columns.
  - Each row will contain the Baseline Survey scores and the Follow-up Survey scores for one child/family. Each column represents one of the questions from the Baseline Survey and Follow-up Survey.
  - Note that the worksheet is color-coded. The first several columns are in green and represent Baseline Survey responses. Remaining columns are in yellow and represent Follow-up Survey responses.
  - In the first few rows of the Data Entry Sheet you’ll see question numbers so that you know what data to enter in each column. If you roll your cursor over the red triangles in the upper right of the cells to expose the comments boxes, you can see the full question text.

## Step Three: Enter Your Data

**Critical Note #1:** You will only enter data for families that have completed BOTH a Baseline Survey AND a Follow-up Survey.

**Critical Note #2:** The data analysis tool can only be used if you have no more than 2,196 parent respondents. If you have a larger sample size, you will need to analyze your data using a different program or tool. If this is the case, you can call an evaluation consultant like Applied Survey Research (408.247.8319) for assistance.

- Take each matched set of Baseline Surveys and Follow-up Surveys and enter the answers from each survey into the appropriate columns.
- Remember, each row contains the Baseline Survey AND Follow-up Surveys for the parents of ONE child.
- In the “ID” column, enter the child’s code from your roster.
- “Today’s Date” refers to the date that the Baseline or Follow-up Surveys were completed.
- You’ll notice that two columns are orange ... please don’t enter anything in these columns. They contain formulas to calculate children’s ages based on their birth dates.
- In the top few rows of the data entry sheet you’ll see instructions on what values to enter for each question on the survey. For example, if the child is a boy, you’ll enter a “1”. If the child is a girl, you’ll enter a “2”. For “Relationship to the Child”, you’ll enter “1” if the mother completed the form, “2” if the father completed the form, and so on.
- IMPORTANT: What do you do if a respondent skipped a question, leaving an entire question blank?
  - In general, please type the word “missing” into that cell of the spreadsheet.
  - There are a few items for which respondents could provide more than one answer – the “check all that apply” questions. The 19-item survey version contains three of these questions: “Q5. Which of the following happened the LAST TIME you looked at books with your child?”; “Q10. Which of the following things do you or your child do at the library?”; and, “Q14. In the past year, have you ...?” For these multiple response items, please follow these steps:
    - 1 Note that the Data Entry sheet contains one column to represent each of the response options. For example, for Question 5 “Which of the following happened the LAST TIME you looked at books with your child?” there is a column for the first check box (My child did not pay much attention to the story), the second check box (My child quietly listened while I read and/or talked about the book most of the time) and so on.
    - 2 Determine whether the respondent completed the item. If there are any check marks at all for the item, consider it complete. If there are no check marks at all for the item, the respondent skipped the question.

- 3 For completed items, enter a “1” if the respondent did check the box. Enter a “0” if the respondent did not check the box.
  - 4 For items that respondents skipped, enter the word “missing” into each column for that question.
- All three survey versions include at least one “open-ended” question where respondents can write-in their own answers. For example, respondents may have written in the routines or traditions that they follow when looking at books with their children (Question 7 in the 19-item survey version). In the Data Entry sheet, you should type in the exact words that respondents recorded. If respondents did not write in any response, just leave the cell blank.

### **Step Four: Validate Your Data Entry**

Once all of the data have been entered, it is good practice to make sure that those data have been entered correctly. Select about 10-15% of your questionnaires and review all of the data that have been entered for those surveys. If there are any discrepancies between the Data Entry sheet and the paper survey versions, you’ll need to validate a higher percentage of your paper surveys.

### **Step Five: Save Your Data**

Make sure that you save a clean copy of your data. Once data entry has been completed, researchers often save one file as an “Original Data File” and a second file as a “Working Data File.” The “Original Data File” is only opened if the “Working Data File” becomes corrupted.

### **Step Six: Send Your Data to Headquarters**

Raising A Reader Headquarters would like to keep a repository of evaluation data from all the sites that implement the Baseline and Follow-up Surveys. By aggregating data across sites, we can better understand how the program is working ... and for what types of children and families. When your data entry and analysis are complete, please send a copy of the data to:

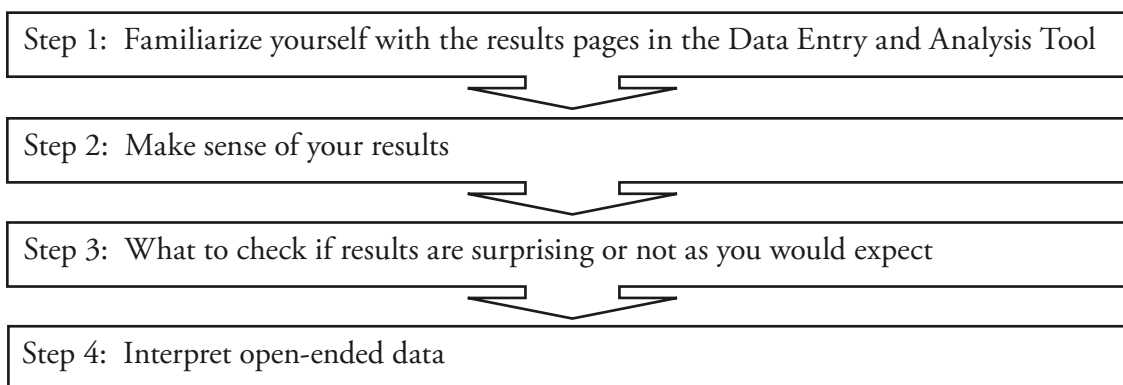
Raising A Reader National Headquarters  
Evaluation Department  
1700 S. El Camino Real, Suite 300  
San Mateo, CA 94402

# Understanding Your Results: Data Analysis

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## Overview

Raising A Reader has provided you with the Data Entry and Analysis Tool so that your program results are displayed as soon as your data have been entered. This section of the Handbook reviews how to interpret the results of your evaluation. We review the following topics:



## Step One: Familiarize Yourself with the Results Pages Contained in the Data Entry and Analysis Tool

There are three worksheets that summarize results of the survey – the Overall Results worksheet, the Low Income Results worksheet, and the Low-Mid Income Results worksheet (you can select each worksheet by clicking on the appropriate tab at the bottom left of your screen). Each worksheet presents results from a different group of your respondents:

- The Overall Results worksheet presents results from all respondents, combined. This worksheet will show you whether the program is having an impact among participants overall.
- The Low Income Results worksheet presents results from just the low-income families – those that marked the lowest income category on the survey. By examining these results, you can determine how the program impacts attitudes and behaviors in low-income participants.
- The Low-Mid Income Results worksheet presents results for the low AND middle-income families – those that marked the lowest and middle-income categories on the survey. By examining these results, you can determine how the program impacts attitudes and behaviors in low- to middle-income participants.

Each results page is organized in the same way. Below is a definition of terms you will see on each results page.

- “Frequency” means the number of people who gave a certain response. For example, a “Frequency” of 6 for “Boy” in the second table for the Baseline Survey column means that there were 6 boys who are represented in the Baseline Survey.
- “Percentage” means the percentage of the group of Baseline Survey or Follow-up Survey respondents represented by a certain category. For example, a “Percentage” of “60%” for “Boy” in the second table means that 60% of the children represented in the Baseline Survey were boys.
- Results labeled as “Averages” are straight arithmetic averages.
- Pink shading highlights statistical tests that have been conducted to determine whether Follow-up Survey results are significantly different from Baseline Survey results. Significant differences are flagged with the word “SIGNIFICANT.” When data are in averages, paired t-tests have been conducted. When data are in percentages, chi-squared tests have been conducted. Results are significant if we can be 95% confident that the result did not happen by chance alone.

Note that we have included extra information in blue text next to each table.

## **Step Two: Make Sense of Your Results**

Below is a description of what is contained in each table for the 19-item survey version. For those who chose to implement one of the shorter survey versions, not all of these tables will be included in your results pages.

- “Child’s Age” – This table presents the average age of the children involved at the time of the Baseline Survey administration and at the time of the Follow-up Survey administration.
- “My child is a…” – This table presents the number (“Frequency”) and percent (“Percent”) of boys and girls at both the Baseline Survey and at the Follow-up Survey. The Baseline and Follow-up Survey figures should be exactly the same, as data should only have been entered for matched sets.
- “Relationship to Child” – This table presents the number of Baseline and Follow-up Surveys completed by children’s mothers, fathers, grandparents, and “others.” Although there are matched sets of Baseline and Follow-up Survey surveys, the person completing the Baseline and Follow-up Surveys may not have been the same. Therefore, the Baseline Survey and Follow-up Survey columns may not match.
- “The amount of time that families have to look at books together can vary a lot from week to week. LAST WEEK, how many times did your child look at books with you or other people in your household?” This table presents the average number of times families looked at books with their children during the week preceding the Baseline Survey and during the week preceding the Follow-up Survey. You’ll note the word “SIGNIFICANT” if there has been a statistically significant increase in book-sharing since the RAR program was implemented.



- “How many minutes do you or other people in your household usually spend with your child each time you look at books together?” This table presents the average number of minutes families looked at books together before and after the RAR program was implemented. Again, you’ll note the word “SIGNIFICANT” if there has been a statistically significant increase in the amount of time families spend sharing books since the RAR program was implemented.
- “In the last week, how many times did your child ask to look at books with you or another person in your household?” This table presents the average number of times children asked to look at books before and after the RAR program was implemented.
- “Please think about the LAST TIME you looked at books with your child. Place a check mark next to EACH of the following things that happened.” This table paints a picture of book-sharing practices – the percent of families reporting each situation – before and after the RAR program was implemented.
- “In your opinion, how much does your child enjoy sharing books or stories with you or other family members?” This table shows average ratings from the Baseline Survey and the Follow-up Survey. Scores can range from 0 (“Does not enjoy”) to 4 (“Enjoys very much”).
- “When you or other family members look at books with your child, do you have any special routines or traditions, such as reading at a certain time of day or in a special place?” This table shows the percent of families with and without routines/traditions at the Baseline and Follow-up Surveys. Families who answered “yes” were asked to write-in those routines/traditions. A listing of these open-ended answers can be found below the results tables.
- “Overall, how difficult is it for you to share books with your child on a regular basis?” This table shows average difficulty ratings from the Baseline and Follow-up Surveys. Scores can range between 0 (“Not at all difficult”) and 4 (“Very difficult”).
- “In the past month, how many times did you visit the library with your child?” This table shows the average number of times families visited the library both before and after the RAR program was implemented.
- “Which of the following things do you or your child do at the library?” This table shows the percent of families who engaged in each type of activity before and after the program was implemented.
- “How likely is it that you will visit the library with your child in the next two weeks?” This table shows average likelihood ratings for families before and after the RAR program was implemented. Scores range from 1 (“Definitely will not visit”) to 4 (“Definitely will visit”).
- “About how many children’s books do you have at home?” This table shows the percent of families with each number of books in their home, both before and after the program was implemented.
- “Please rate the importance of reading and sharing books with your child.” This table presents average importance ratings before and after program implementation. Scores range from 1 (“Not at all important”) to 10 (“Absolutely essential”).

- The next item assesses parents’ exposure to information about book-sharing both before and after experience with RAR. The table presents the percent of respondents who had watched videos and/or attended workshops.
- The remaining questions assess demographic dimensions of the families. Included are percentages for:
  - Household language;
  - Education level for the household member who spends the most time with the child;
  - Income; and
  - Length of time the child has spent in the program.

### **Step Three: What to Check If Results Are Surprising or Not As You Would Expect**

- Make sure that the matching process was done correctly so that the Baseline Survey and Follow-up Survey scores entered on each row of the data sheet belong to the same child/family.
- Check to make sure the data have been entered correctly.
- Look at the “Relationship to Child” table ... are the Baseline Survey and Follow-up Survey results very different? If so, there may be many cases in which different people completed the Baseline and Follow-up Surveys (for example, the mother may have completed the Baseline Survey but the father completed the Follow-up Survey). You may want to remove these cases from your data set and re-examine your results. Save the file with a different name, then delete the cases in which different individuals completed the Baseline and Follow-up Surveys. Are the results more interpretable?
- If results are “flat” (i.e., there is little change between Baseline and Follow-up scores), examine how many parents actually watched the Raising A Reader video. Some parents may not have been exposed to Raising A Reader information and so did not make any changes in their household book-sharing habits. Other parents may have already been educated about the importance of reading aloud before the RAR program even started, and so there may not have been “room” for change at the Follow-up Survey.
- Consider hiring an evaluation consultant – you may need to draw out results for a more specialized subgroup of respondents (for example, respondents who have relatively lower incomes and lower levels of education) to see program impact. Applied Survey Research is one evaluation firm that would be happy to provide assistance for an hourly or by-project cost (call 408.247.8319).

### **Step Four: Interpret Open-Ended Data**

If you chose to implement the 19-item survey, you collected data from two open-ended questions – “What are the three things your child most loves to do with you?” and “Please list your routines and traditions”. (The two shorter survey versions included only this second open-ended item.) Although the open-ended data do not lend themselves as easily to the statistical analysis described above, your families’ responses to these questions can be eye opening.

You can take two approaches to reporting your open-ended data. You can report findings informally by including quotes and your own observations about response patterns in your reports. Or, more formally, you can conduct a “content analysis.” A content analysis involves categorizing responses and determining what types of responses were more common at the Follow-up Survey than at the Baseline Survey. To do a content analysis, you complete the following steps for each question. Again, if you’d like assistance with your content analysis, you can call upon an evaluation consultant like Applied Survey Research.

**Question: “What are the three things your child most loves to do with you?”**

We would expect to see instances of activities like “reading” or “looking at books” to be fairly infrequent at the Baseline Survey. We would expect, however, that these types of responses might be more frequent at the Follow-up Survey. To see whether there has been an increase in the number of mentions of reading between the two surveys, follow the steps outlined below.

- 1 First read through all Baseline Survey and Follow-up Survey responses. Note any activities that the Raising A Reader program advocates (e.g., reading, reading aloud, looking at books, telling stories, going to the library, etc.). Make a list of these “target activities” – these will be the activities that you count up for both the Baseline Survey and Follow-up Survey.
- 2 For each individual, first count up and record the number of target activities mentioned at the Baseline Survey. If families answered “no” to the question, “Do you have a routine for looking at books with your child?” they would get a “0” for the number of target activities.
- 3 Next, for each individual count up and record the number of target activities mentioned at the Follow-up Survey.
- 4 Calculate an average number of target activities for the Baseline Survey and an average number of target activities for the Follow-up Survey.
- 5 Finally, you can determine the percent increase between the Baseline Survey and the Follow-up Survey by using the formula below: In order to talk about a “percent increase,” first validate that your Follow-up Survey average is greater than your Baseline Survey average.
- 6  $[(\text{Follow-up Survey} - \text{Baseline}) / \text{Baseline}] * 100 = \% \text{ increase}$
- 7 For example, if your Baseline average is 1.0 and your Follow-up Survey average is 2.0, you could talk about a % increase in how frequently a target activity is one of children’s favorites.  
 $[(2.0 - 1.0) / 1.0] * 100 = 100\% \text{ increase}$

**Question: “Please list your routines and traditions.”**

For this question, you may see a change in the number of traditions that families report, as well as the types of traditions that they report. Below we explain each approach to analyzing your data.

□ Examining the Number of Traditions

- Read through all of the responses from both the Baseline Survey and the Follow-up Survey.
- For each individual, count the number of distinct, non-overlapping traditions or routines that are reported. For example, the response “We sit in our favorite chair and cuddle at bedtime,” could be counted as indicating three traditions elements (favorite chair, cuddling, and bedtime) or as one general tradition. What is most important is that you develop a set of rules for yourself and follow them consistently as you count the routines and traditions listed for both the Baseline Survey and the Follow-up Survey.
- Calculate an average for the number of routines or traditions reported at the Baseline Survey and the number of routines or traditions reported at the Follow-up Survey. First ensure that the Follow-up Survey value is higher than the Baseline Survey value. After validating that there has been an increase in reading traditions, you can calculate the percent increase in these numbers using the following formula:
  - $[(\text{Follow-up Survey} - \text{Baseline}) / \text{Baseline}] * 100 = \% \text{ increase}$
  - For example, if families reported an average of 2 reading traditions at the Baseline Survey and an average of 6 reading traditions at the Follow-up Survey, you could discuss a 200% increase in the number of reading traditions, as follows:
    - $(6 - 2) / 2 = 200\% \text{ increase}$

2 Describing a change in the types of traditions

- Read through all of the responses from both the Baseline Survey and the Follow-up Survey.
- Organize comments into similar categories or themes.
- Label the categories or themes.
- Attempt to identify patterns in the types of routines families reported at the Baseline Survey and the types of routines they reported at the Follow-up Survey (e.g., are traditions richer at the Follow-up Survey? Do traditions reflect more family bonding at the Follow-up Survey?).

# Communicating Your Results

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## Using the Report Templates

Raising A Reader has provided you with Report Templates to facilitate your write-up of evaluation results. You can find the Report Template designed for the survey length that you chose (either the 11-, 14-, or 19-item survey) in the appropriate folder on the Raising A Reader Data Analysis Tool Disk.

You'll note that the Report Template contains the following sections: Executive Summary, Project Background, Evaluation Method, and Detailed Findings. The text that exists in the Report Template should be viewed as a guideline only – you will need to customize the text and charts throughout the report to fit your particular program, method of implementation, and results.

- To customize the charts: The report will need to be customized with your own data.
  - Each chart and table in the report template represents the findings for a particular item on the survey. The question numbers for each survey item can be found in the figure footnotes. Double-click on each chart to activate the data spreadsheet that you can use to enter your own findings. Refer to the results pages of the Data Entry and Analysis Tool for the data that you would enter into the chart spreadsheets.
  - Make sure that you highlight Follow-up Survey results that are significantly different from Baseline Survey results. (Check your Data Entry and Analysis Tool to see which findings are significantly different.) The Report Template uses yellow stars to flag significantly different findings. You can easily copy and paste these stars to highlight strong results. Make sure that you remove the stars from results that are not significantly different.
- Customizing the text: Areas that are highlighted in blue contain text that you will need to customize. Based on your evaluation results, you may also need to alter the explanations included for each chart. Consider these explanations as guidelines for how you might describe your own evaluation results.

If you would like guidance in writing up your evaluation results, you can contact an evaluation consultant for technical assistance. Applied Survey Research would be happy to write-up your survey results; you can call 408.247.8319 to discuss your project and to receive a quote.

## **Send Headquarters a Copy of Your Report**

Raising A Reader Headquarters would like to track evaluation findings across sites. Please send Headquarters an electronic copy of your report once it is complete. You can send your report to:

Raising A Reader National Headquarters  
Evaluation Department  
1700 S. El Camino Real, Suite 300  
San Mateo, CA 94402



## Exhibits

**Note: Please do not photocopy the following Exhibits.**

**To duplicate, please print the Exhibits from the  
Program Evaluation Disk.**

**Exhibit A:  
19-Item Parent Survey**



Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Site: \_\_\_\_\_  
(To be completed by administrator)

**Thank you for answering the questions below! Your honest answers are important to us and will be kept confidential.**

**Child's date of birth:** Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's initials:** First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's gender:**  Boy  Girl

**Your relationship to the child:** (Please check one box below):

Mother  Father  Grandparent  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
**1. What are the 3 things your child most loves to do with you?**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**2. The amount of time that families have to look at books together can vary a lot from week to week. LAST WEEK, how many times did your child look at books with you or other people in your household?**

About \_\_\_\_\_ times last week

**3. How many minutes do you or other people in your household usually spend with your child each time you look at books together?**

About \_\_\_\_\_ minutes each time

**4. In the last week, how many times did your child ask to look at books with you or another person in your household?**

About \_\_\_\_\_ times last week

**5. Which of the following happened the LAST TIME you looked at books with your child (check all that apply).**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> My child did <b>not pay much attention</b> to the story.                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> My <b>child turned the pages</b> of the book.                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My child <b>quietly listened</b> while I read and/or talked about the book most of the time. | <input type="checkbox"/> My <b>child asked questions</b> about the book.                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I <b>asked</b> my child questions about the story.   | <input type="checkbox"/> My <b>child "read" the book</b> to me or told me a story about the pictures. |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> None of these  |



6. In your opinion, how much does your child enjoy sharing books or stories with you or other people in your household? Please circle one number on the scale below.

Does not enjoy 0                      1                      2                      3                      4  
Enjoys somewhat                      Enjoys very much

7. Do you have a routine for looking at books with your child?  
Examples: reading at a certain time of day, reading in a special place

No     Yes → If yes, please list these routines or traditions:

---

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8. Overall, how difficult is it for you to share books with your child on a regular basis? Please circle one number on the scale below.

Examples of reasons it may be difficult to share books: lack of time, child not interested, not comfortable reading aloud

Not at all difficult 0                      1                      2                      3                      4  
Somewhat difficult                      Very difficult

9. In the past month, how many times did you visit the library with your child?

About \_\_\_\_\_ library visits in the past month

10. Which of the following things do you or your child do at the library? Please check all that apply.

- Browse and/or play in the children's section
- Get advice from the librarian about children's books
- Listen to "story-time" with library staff
- Check out children's materials to take home (books, videos, CDs, audiotapes)
- None of these

11. How likely is it that you will visit the library with your child in the next two weeks?

Definitely will not visit     Probably will not visit     Probably will visit     Definitely will visit

12. About how many children's books do you have at home? Please count ALL the children's books in your home – books that you own or have borrowed, library books, and homemade books.

None     1-5     6-10     11-20     21-30     More than 30

13. Please rate the importance of reading and sharing books with your child. Please circle one number on the scale below.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7                      8                      9                      10  
Not at all Important                      Absolutely Essential

**14. In the past year, have you ... ?** Please place a check mark next to all that apply.

- watched a video about the importance of sharing books with your child
- attended a parent education workshop about sharing books with your child
- neither of the above

**15. What language is spoken most often in your home?**

- English
- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**16. What is your child's primary ethnicity?**

- Spanish/Hispanic or Latino
- Caucasian / White
- Middle Eastern
- African
- Native American
- Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Tongan)
- East Asian (e.g., Japanese, Chinese, Korean)
- Filipino
- Southeast Asian (e.g., Thai, Vietnamese)
- South Asian (e.g., Indian, Pakistani)
- Multi-ethnic
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**17. What is the number of years of education that has been completed by the adult in your home who spends the most time with the child?**

- 1-6 years (elementary school, K-5<sup>th</sup> grade)
- 7-9 years (middle school, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade)
- 10-14 years (high school, 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)
- 2 years of training/school beyond high school, with degree
- Bachelor's degree (BA or BS)
- Graduate or professional degree (e.g., MA, PhD, MD, JD)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**18. What is your family income per year?**

- Less than \$30,000
- \$30,000 - \$50,000
- More than \$50,000

**19. How long has your child been in (your organization)?**

- Just started (0-1 month)
- 2-6 months
- 7-12 months
- More than 12 months

**Thank you for your time!**

**Please fold your survey in half and place it in the envelope provided.**

**Exhibit B:**  
**Sample Checklist for Baseline Survey Implementation**



- 1. **Determine the number of parents to survey**
  - Remember you want minimum 80% return rate.
- 2. **Select Raising A Reader sites to survey**
- 3. **Choose one version of the survey and tailor, if needed**
- 4. **Explain evaluation process to implementers at Kickoff Orientation**
  - Plan how to maximize response rates
  - Emphasize value of evaluation and link to funding sources.
- 5. **Confirm logistics at each site**
  - Baseline Survey date- Follow-up Survey date-
  - Time of day/Location (for survey):
- 6. **Implement coding system by child, classroom & site**
- 7. **Prepare the survey**
- 8. **Draft letter to parents explaining survey**
- 9. **Support confidentiality**
  - Attach parent letter to coded questionnaire.
- 10. **Distribute surveys & other materials**
  - Organize easy-to-implement bundles for implementer-  
*Include:* Professional's introductory letter, parent cover letter, envelopes, questionnaires (all in appropriate languages), large pre-addressed/stamped return envelope.
  - Reminders for implementer-  
Do evaluation on-site.  
Gather all information within a one-week time span.  
Parents take survey BEFORE introduced to Raising A Reader.
- 11. **Review tasks with on-site Program Implementers**
- 12. **Check roster & post to evaluation team**
  - Match returned questionnaires to original roster.
- 13. **Store the surveys**



**Exhibit C:**  
**Sample Class Roster Form**

**Raising A Reader® Program Evaluation  
Belle Haven Childcare Center  
Classroom #3 / Morning Session**

<b>Child's Name</b> <i>(teacher submits)</i>	<b>Primary Language</b> <i>(teacher submits)</i>	<b>Code Identifier</b> <i>(coordinator completes after teacher submits)</i>	<b>Baseline Survey Returned &amp; Completed by:</b> <i>(coordinator completes after surveys come back)</i>	<b>Baseline Survey Returned &amp; Completed by:</b> <i>(coordinator completes after surveys come back)</i>
TOTALS:				

**Exhibit D:**  
**Sample of Data Collection Management Form**



<b>Raising A Reader® Program Evaluation</b>						
<b>Site A</b>	<b>Site Code (One code for each site) B</b>	<b>Class Code (One code for each classroom) C</b>	<b># of children enrolled at Baseline D</b>	<b># of Baseline Surveys completed E</b>	<b># of children with completed Baseline Surveys who are still enrolled at Follow-up F</b>	<b># of Follow-up Surveys completed G</b>
<b>TOTALS:</b>						

Calculating Response Rates:

- Baseline Survey Response rate = Column E / Column D
- Follow-up Survey Response rate = Column G / Column F





**Exhibit E:**  
**Baseline Survey Sample Letter to Program Implementers**

– English –

*(Date)*

Dear Program Implementer,

We are delighted your center will be joining the Raising A Reader program. The funders of the program require that we evaluate how well the program is working and whether it meets the needs of parents, their children and the early education settings. Your site has been randomly selected by the evaluators for this study. We ask you for a small time commitment, because we know how precious time is in your busy day.

### **The Process**

We will provide a short questionnaire, twice between the *(start of your program)* and *(at least three months out—you determine exact month)*. The questionnaire will have a code number for each child in order to ensure confidentiality. We ask that you be responsible for handing the questionnaires out and reminding parents to return them to our mailbox (either in your classroom or with the pre-stamped return envelope.) Parents seal the questionnaires in the coded envelope, so you are able to tell which envelopes are still outstanding, while the parents' answers remain confidential to all but the evaluation team.

Remember: In order not to lead the participants, steer clear from mentioning Raising A Reader or an early literacy book bag program because that may skew the data.

### **Next Steps**

As manager of the evaluation process, I will contact you in the next few days to discuss the process and answer any questions. The first questionnaire needs to be completed by all parents sometime before the book bag program begins in your classroom. A common practice that seems to work well in other site studies is handing the questionnaire out when the child is dropped off, and then asking the parent to fill it out during the day and return it when picking up the child. A very visible box next to the door—and an end-of-the-day verbal reminder and opportunity to still fill it out—may get you to the 80% in one day!

We ask you for a commitment to do the same process in *(whatever your timeframe is)*. Thank you for your support of Raising A Reader.

Sincerely,  
*(Your name, title and organization)*

**Exhibit F:**  
**Baseline Survey Sample Letter to Parents**



– English –

*(On your letterhead)*

*(Date)*

Dear Parent:

*(Name of your organization)* is funding a brand-new program in your child's classroom and is asking that families participate in an informational survey. As part of this study, you will be given questionnaires twice in the next several months. The questionnaires will always be short and require only a few minutes of your time.

Answers will remain entirely confidential within the *(your organization)* evaluation team.

### **The Process**

- (1) Fill out the short questionnaire and seal it in the attached envelope with the matching number in the corner.
- (2) Return the sealed envelope to your *(Program Implementer)*. They will then mail the envelopes to us.

If you have any questions about the questionnaires or if you want additional information about the evaluation, please call me at *(your phone number)*.

Thank you for taking the time to help us!

Sincerely,

*(Your name, title and organization)*

## Exhibit G:

### Follow-up Survey Sample Letter to Program Implementers



Dear Program Implementer:

We are now embarking upon the second phase of the evaluation process, trying to gather data to see if Raising A Reader® is changing families' patterns and behavior around reading at home. Once again, let me stress that this information will be kept strictly confidential.

#### #1: Pass out surveys to parents.

- The roster has names and corresponding codes as they also appear on questionnaire packets.
- The surveys **must** be passed out with the correct code number given to the matching parent/child.
- The same parent who completed the Baseline Survey **must** complete this Follow-up Survey (as noted on attached roster).

#### Questions?

- If a survey becomes lost before a parent returns it to you, fill in the appropriate code number on one of the blank surveys enclosed.
- If a child is no longer in your class, return the survey to us, marked "No Longer Here".
- If a child joined your class after the start of the book bag program, that child's family will not be asked to complete a Follow-up Survey.
- If a child's family did not complete the Baseline Survey, they will not be asked to complete the Follow-up Survey in this round as the evaluation is designed to compare answers.

#### #2: Pick a good time to pass out the surveys.

- We strongly encourage you to hand out the surveys when the parent is dropping off or picking up the child. If you are able to hand it to the designated parent, please ask that it be completed on the spot. If it must go home to be completed by the designated parent, ask that it be returned the next day.
- If parents lose the survey during the day, go to your blank surveys and envelopes—then write the child's code number from the roster on both pieces, as described above.

#### #3: Try to get everyone to return the questionnaires.

- Baseline Surveys need matched Follow-up Surveys to be useful.
- Mail the batch of surveys to me at the (*your organization*) in the pre-stamped, pre-addressed envelope.

Thank you for all of your help with this evaluation.

Sincerely, (*Your name, title and organization*)

#### REWARDS!!

By (date), if we receive all of your second-round questionnaires from all the parents who participated, we will send you (incentive option).



**Exhibit H:  
Follow-up Survey Sample Letter to Parents**



– English –

*(Date)*

Dear Parents:

A few months ago, your child’s educator asked you to complete a questionnaire as part of our study about “reading” in the home. Thank you so very much for your candid answers. Now we are asking you to complete a second questionnaire, thinking about your home and your habits today—be as honest as you possibly can. It is very important that the same person who completed the first questionnaire complete the second questionnaire.

All of your answers will remain entirely confidential within the evaluation team.

**The Process**

- (1) Fill out the one-page questionnaire and seal it in the attached envelope with the matching number in the corner.
- (2) Return the sealed envelope to your (Program Implementer) today. They will then mail the envelopes to us.

If you have questions about the questionnaires, please call me at *(Your phone number)*.

Thank you for your time and support!

Sincerely,

*(Your name, title and organization)*





