



Connecting Early Literacy and Social Responsibility to Strengthen Support for Aboriginal Learners

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UBC
Leslie MacKay
Shannon's Spirit Project
Kim Soo Goodtrack
Vancouver School Board

Handouts: <http://educ.ubc.ca/faculty/kent.mcintosh>



This Session

- Kent McIntosh
 - Recent research linking reading and behaviour support
- Leslie MacKay
 - Comprehensive support provided through the Shannon's Spirit Project
- A brief break
- Kim Soo Goodtrack
 - Connecting traditional Aboriginal teachings with today's social responsibilities in the classroom
- YOU
 - Questions and answers with the panel

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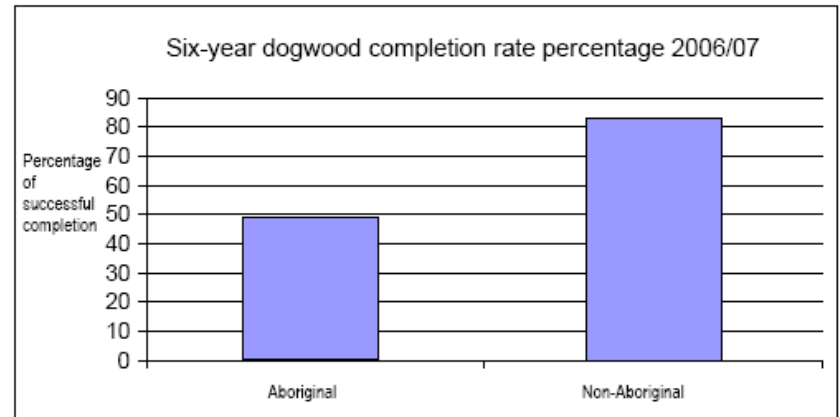


Why the particular focus on Aboriginal learners?

- Little research on the connection between reading and behaviour for Aboriginal learners
- But...our system fails Aboriginal learners more often than non-Aboriginal learners

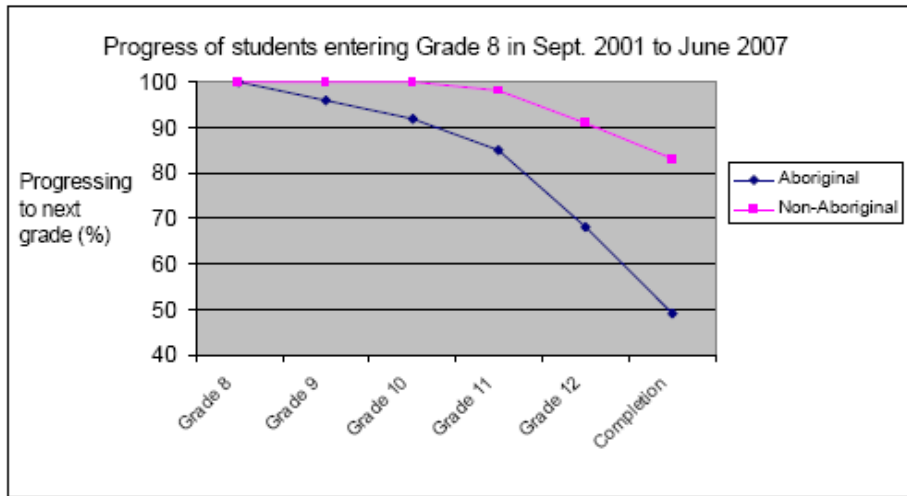


High School Completion Rates



Data Source: Ministry of Education Aboriginal Report 2002/03 – 2006/07 How Are We Doing?

non-Aboriginal students:
83%
Aboriginal students: 40%



(BC Ministry of Education, 2008)

Why do students drop out?

(McIntosh, Flannery et al. 2008)

- Persistent academic failure
 - Low reading skills
- Patterns of problem behaviour
- Disengagement from school
 - Exposure to exclusionary discipline (suspension)
 - Feeling that school is “not for them”
- NOT:
 - Cognitive ability

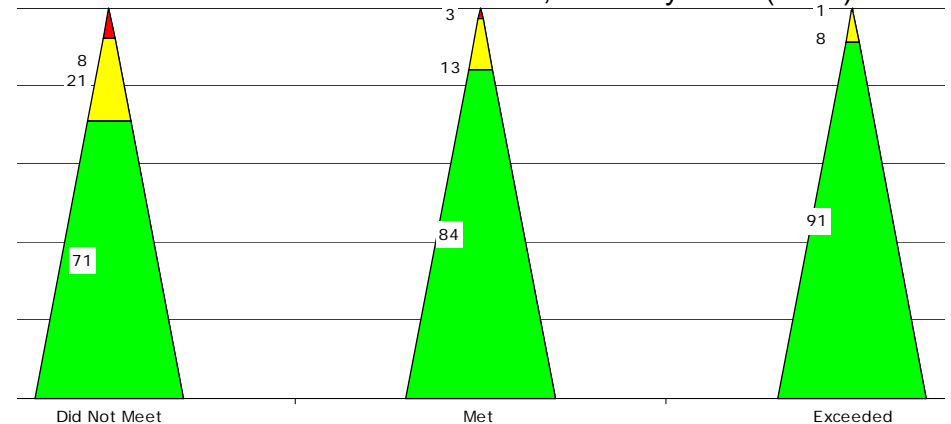
OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS ENTERING SCHOOL

	HIGH READING SKILLS	LOW READING SKILLS
HIGH SOCIAL SKILLS	POSITIVE SOCIAL OUTCOMES	AT RISK: READING (AND SOCIAL)
LOW SOCIAL SKILLS	AT RISK: SOCIAL (AND READING)	NEGATIVE SOCIAL OUTCOMES

Relation between grade 8 reading test and grade 9 ODRs

Proportions of Grade 9 Office Discipline Referrals by Grade 8 OSA Reading

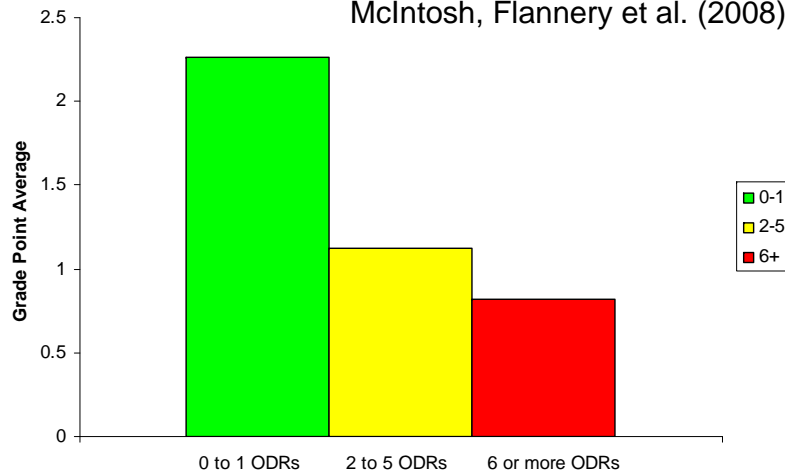
McIntosh, Flannery et al. (2008)





Relation between grade 8 ODRs and grade 9 academic marks

McIntosh, Flannery et al. (2008)



How can you identify and support students **AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE**?

- Early intervention (grades K to 3) is the most effective way to divert students from negative life outcomes (Juel, 1988; Kazdin, 1987)
- What do you use in your schools to identify students for support?



Just what is DIBELS???

- Dynamic
- Indicators of
- Basic
- Early
- Literacy
- Skills
- A brief, standardized measure of reading and prereading skills from grade K to 6

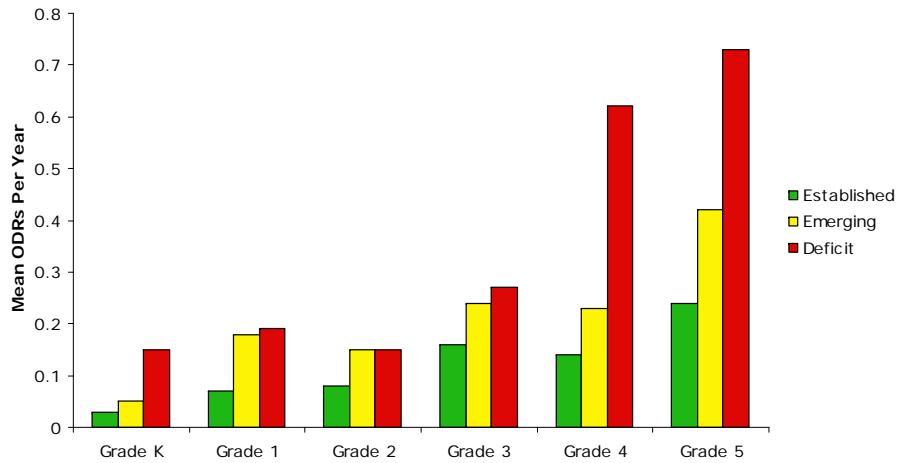


Just what is DIBELS???

- Used to identify students in need of support and monitor student progress
- **Research validated** indicator of reading skill level and need for reading support
 - Shown to be as predictive of reading achievement for Native American (Sioux) students as Caucasian students (Pearce, 2008)
- **Free** (<http://dibels.uoregon.edu>)
- Soon to be available in French (IDAPEL)



ODRs by K *DIBELS PSF* Score



(McIntosh, Sadler, & Brown, 2008)



HOW can we use this information to help students?



Improve Support by Addressing Both Reading and Behaviour

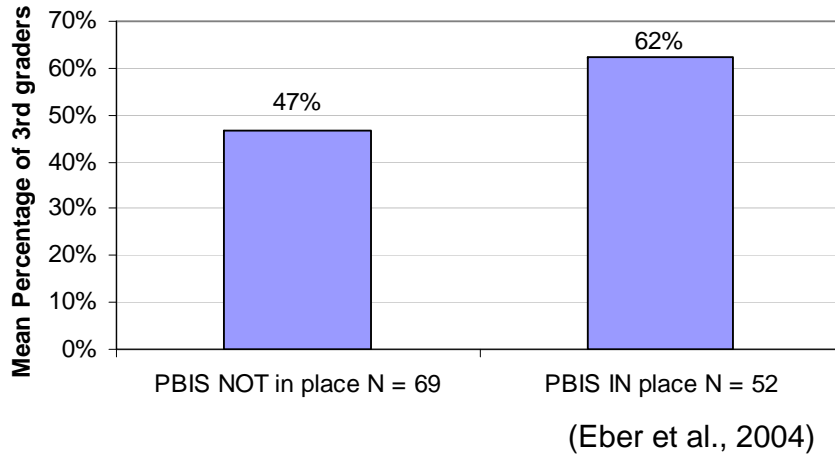
1. Create safe, positive, welcoming classroom environments where instruction can take place
2. Provide evidence-based reading instruction to encourage success and prevent academic failure



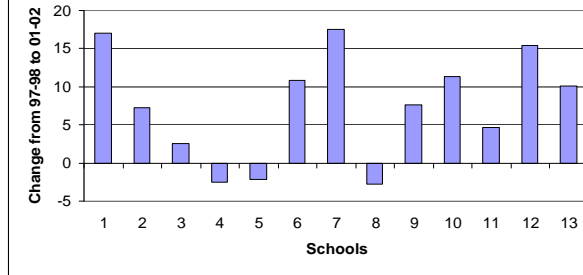
Can PBS lead to improved reading achievement?



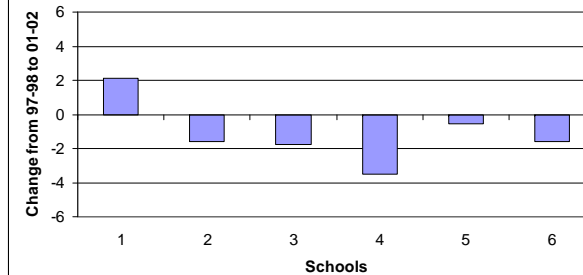
Illinois 02-03 Mean Proportion of Grade 3 Students Meeting ISAT Reading Standard *t*-test (df 119) *p* < .0001



Elem With School-wide PBS



Elem Without School-wide PBS



4J School District
Eugene, Oregon

Change in the percentage of students meeting the state standard in reading at grade 3 from 97-98 to 01-02 for schools using PBS all four years and those that did not.

(Horner et al., 2005)



Incorporating Aboriginal Culture into PBS – Bernard Elementary



S BE SAFE AND REMIND OTHERS TO BE SAFE
WALK IN CLASS
KEEP HANDS/FEET OFF
TAKE CARE OF YOUR BELONGINGS
FOLLOW DIRECTIONS IN GYM
FOLLOW RULES ON PLAYGROUND



P PRACTICE PEACE
MAINTAIN A QUIET PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE
ALLOW OTHERS TO WORK
WAIT FOR YOUR TURN TO SPEAK
USE YOUR HAND FOR RECOGNITION



A KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE
BE READY FOR WORK
LISTEN AND FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS
COMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS
ASK QUESTIONS IN A POSITIVE MANNER
USE YOUR TIME WISELY



R SHOW RESPECT
FOLLOW CLASS PROCEDURES/RULES
SPEAK IN A POSITIVE MANNER
FOLLOW DIRECTIONS
WORK INDEPENDENTLY
BE POLITE
RESPECT DIFFERENCES



K BE KIND TO OTHERS
BE SENSITIVE TO OTHERS' FEELINGS
REMEMBER YOUR MANNERS
WELCOME AND SHOW KINDNESS TO OUR VISITORS
SMILE



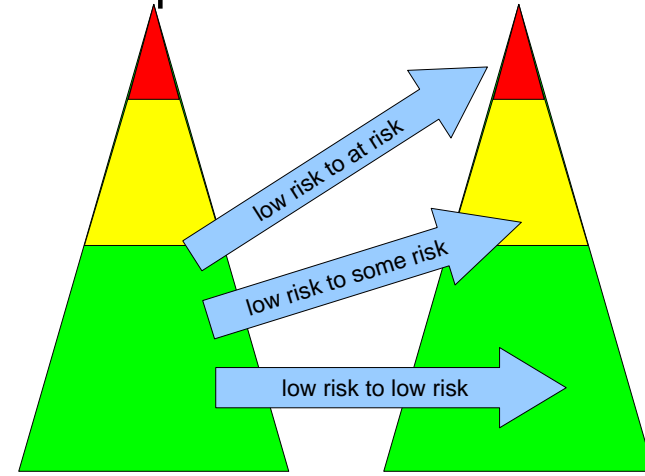


Can a school-wide approach to reading lead to improved behaviour?



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Risk for Problem Behaviour Grade 5: Response to Intervention in Grade K



Fall Kindergarten ISF

Winter Kindergarten ISF

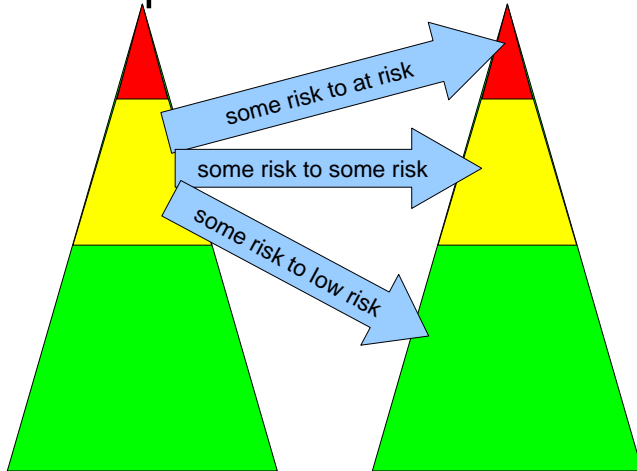
Conditional Probabilities for 2+ ODRs

(McIntosh, Sadler, & Brown, in prep)



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Risk for Problem Behaviour Grade 5: Response to Intervention in Grade K



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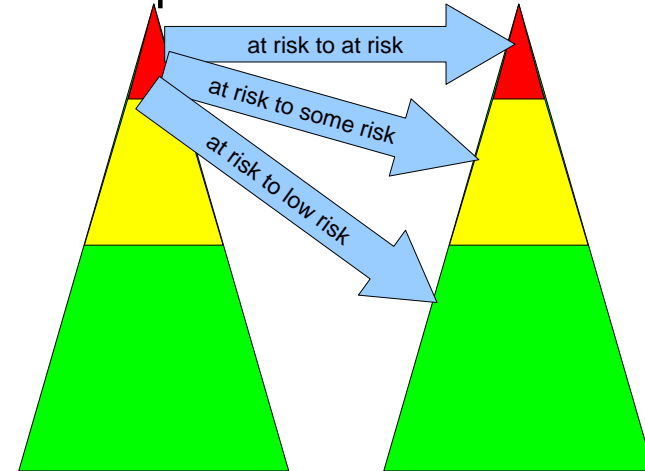
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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Risk for Problem Behaviour Grade 5: Response to Intervention in Grade K



Fall Kindergarten ISF

Winter Kindergarten ISF

Conditional Probabilities for 2+ ODRs

(McIntosh, Sadler, & Brown, in prep)

Incorporating Aboriginal Culture into Reading Instruction

■ Stó:lō Kindergarten Curriculum

- by Margaret Greenwood and Gwen Point
- Introduction of regular letter sounds
- Paired with important cultural objects and Halq'emeylem language

Name Skwix _____

Ee

Everyone Mékw'wat

Eleven Ó:peł qas te lets'e

Elder Siyólexwa

Elk Shxwiyáxkel

E E

e e

Name Skwix _____

Pp

Paddle Sq'émel

Potlatch Hí:kw sq'ép

Pithouse Sq'émel

Pencil Xéłtel

Pow wow Sp'élhxel qw'eyilex

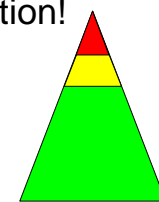
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So...how can we integrate academic and behaviour support?

Supporting Students in Academics and Behaviour

1. Provide **quality universal support** for all students in reading and behaviour
2. Provide **combined academic and behaviour support** for students who need additional support
 - Don't exclude students from instruction!
 - Functional Behaviour Assessment
 - Consider academic skills
 - Monitor progress in both areas





Contact Information

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Asst. Prof (2010-11)

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<http://ecps.educ.ubc.ca/scps>



The Shannon's Spirit Project

Leslie MacKay



Connecting traditional
Aboriginal teachings
with today's social
responsibilities

Kim Soo Goodtrack



Your Turn!

Questions and Answers
for the panel

Shannon's Spirit Project: An Intervention Program for Indigenous Adolescents and Caregivers

Leslie MacKay, MA: Literacy Research Assistant
Betsy Davis, PhD: Principal Investigator
Renate Dionne: Investigator

Walking The Good Path

Keeping Indigenous Adolescents Safe and Healthy
Strengthening the Connection to Ancestral Spirit

"Like the Thunderbird of old, I shall rise out of the sea, I shall grab the instruments of the white man's successes, his education, his skills and with these new tools I shall build my Race into the proudest segment of your society... So shall we shatter the barriers of isolation. So shall the next one hundred years be the greatest and proudest in the proud history of our Tribes and Nations (Teswahso Chief Dan George, 1967)



Significance of the Project

- The effects of historical trauma have brought drugs and alcohol into the lives of Indigenous adolescents
 - Obscuring for too many the Spirit and Strength of their ancestors
- Tragically, this weakening of ancestral connection and, for many, cultural identity has also contributed to increased risk for HIV/AIDS infection
- "There is great concern within the Aboriginal community as they realize that after surviving attempts against their souls of every description, HIV/AIDS is one discriminatory predator that presents the greatest challenge facing them in their lifetime" (Red Road, 1999)

Significance of the Project

- From 1989 to 1998 recorded Indigenous ethnicity rose from 1.2% to 10.9% of all HIV/AIDS cases reported in Canada (Centre for Disease Control, 1999)
- From 1996 to 1999 the number of Indigenous persons living with HIV increased 91% (Archibald, 2000)
- Adolescent females are at an increasing vulnerability for HIV/AIDS
 - Comprising 60% of all new HIV cases (DHHS, 2002).
- Drug Use is one of the most common avenues leading toward HIV risk (Red Road, 1999)

Factors contributing to increased drug use and other HIV risk behavior

- Academic failure and school drop out
- Lack of family connection
- Surrounding environment of risk

Academic Failure

- Adolescents with low perceptions of ability based on academic failure approach tasks with less confidence and experience less success, further lessening confidence in their ability (Wigfield & Karpathian, 1991)
- Academic failure and lessened self-efficacy and self-esteem can form a negative feedback cycle (Fredic et al., 2003) that builds across the academic career of students who fail
- Indigenous youth disproportionately experience the cumulative effects of school failure across their academic life (Indian Health Service, 1997)
- Indigenous youth report feeling isolated and alienated from school and view school as unfriendly (Brendo, et al., 2002)

Lack of Family Connection

- Low family connectedness is linked with increase risk for drug use
 - Indigenous youth report lower levels of connectedness when compared to other cultural groups (Machamer & Gruber, 1998)
- Poor family affiliation combined with weakened identity, both stemming from historical trauma, are related to Indigenous adolescent drug use (Brave Heart, 1999)

Instilling Protective Factors

- Family Connectedness
 - Indigenous adolescents find themselves in many different family contexts, including adopted homes and group homes by virtue of historical trauma
 - Regardless of home environment, protection from immediate environmental risks can be strengthened through improved family communication and functioning
 - With protection from immediate risk in place, potential for longer term healing and protection can be instilled through opening the door for connection to, and healing through, ancestral spirit
- Academic Success
 - Provides immediate protection by lessening the potential for drop out into surrounding high risk environment
 - Provides longer term protection by imparting important skills that will strengthen the minds of Indigenous students as well as the Spirit through increased esteem and trust in self and community

Project Goals

- The true healing of Indigenous youth who are suffering today can only come through connection to their Ancestral Spirit
 - The accomplishment of this goal resides with the Indigenous peoples and no one else
- The goals of *Shannon's Spirit Project* are to provide immediate protection for Indigenous adolescents from the perils that reside in their environment such that they are given time to pursue cultural and spiritual healing
- Immediate protection is provided by implementing a culturally appropriate family-strengthening substance use/HIV prevention program embedded within a literacy strengthening program
- We are evaluating for the Indigenous community the impact of this protective program on
 - Academic performance
 - Display of substance use and HIV-risk behavior

Shannon's Spirit Project

Literacy
Strengthening
Program
(school-based)

Family-strengthening
Substance Use/HIV
Prevention Program
(community-based)

Project Progress: Literacy Strengthening

- We are in our fifth and last year of the project
- The Vancouver School Board has now assumed responsibility for the literacy strengthening program in four schools in the Eastside Downtown Area
- Literacy strengthening is offered to students most in need, as defined by the school, and is open to any student regardless of their cultural affiliation
- Of those Indigenous youth who are involved in literacy strengthening, their families are invited into the family strengthening portion of the study
- As well, we offer the family strengthening portion of the project to any Indigenous youth, age 12-18, even if their school is not part of the literacy implementation
- Participation in literacy-strengthening is not contingent upon agreement to participate in the family-strengthening HIV/substance use intervention

Project Progress: Literacy Strengthening

- We collected literacy data for schools on a total of 679 students over the course of the prior four years of the project
- Year 1 n=245; Year 2 n=350; Year 3 n = 614; Year 4 n=679
- Of those students falling 2 or more grade levels below where they should be in reading and/or writing (N=380), further skill assessments were conducted
- Based on skill level assessments and school capacity, 264 6th-10th grade students (69% of those 2 or more grade levels below) have been accommodated into literacy strengthening classes across schools and project years
 - Year 2: 74 students; Year 3: 104 students; Year 4: 86 students
- Of these literacy students, a total of 140 (53%) were of Indigenous descent

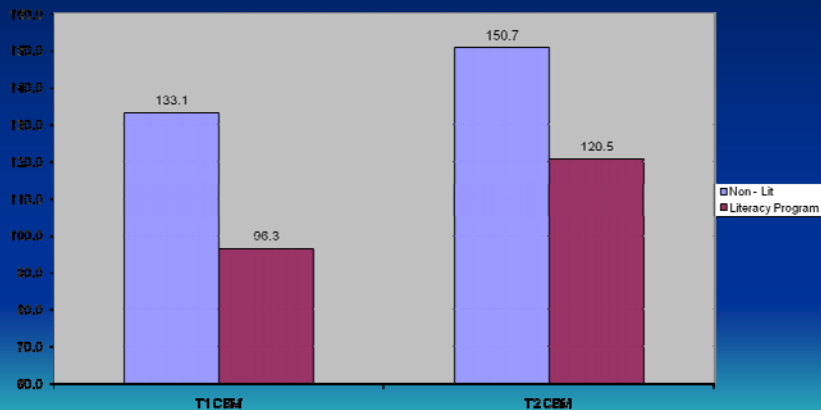
Project Progress: Literacy Strengthening

- Analyses comparing yearly literacy performance of students in the literacy strengthening with students who were not, demonstrated a significant time point x literacy participation interaction
 - MAST $F(1,236)=4.24, p < .05$
 - This reflected a greater than 2 grade level improvement in one year for students in literacy strengthening
- CBM Reading data reflected similar improvements for those in the literacy strengthening
 - $F(1,169)=9.54, p < .01$
- Relative to reading placement achievements, over the same period
 - 61% improved from Decoding C level or lower to Reading Mastery levels

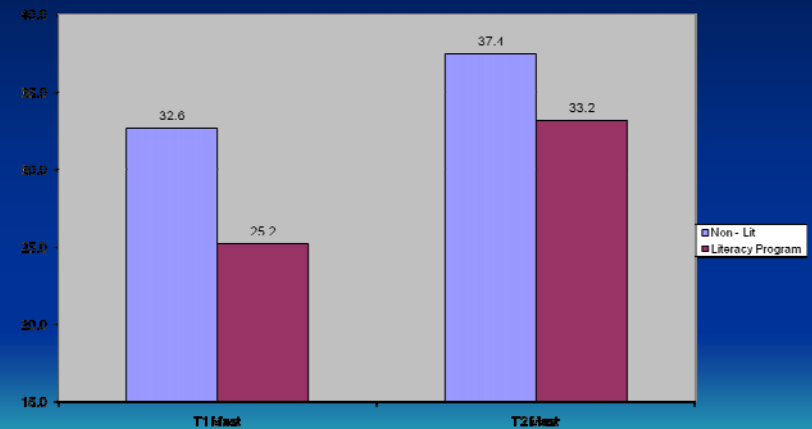
Project Progress: Literacy Strengthening

- As evidenced on the next slides, students not enrolled in the literacy strengthening began the year well ahead of those enrolled by the schools
- By the end of the school year, however, this difference was reduced and, in some instances, cut in half

Literacy Group vs. Non-Literacy CBM Reading



Literacy Group vs. Non-Literacy Group-MAST Reading Comprehension



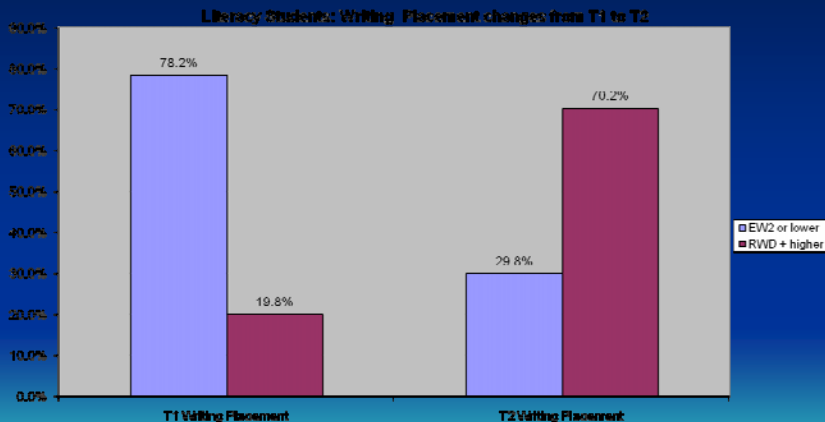
Literacy Improvement: Writing Performance

- We are in the process of scoring all writing samples based on a complex rubric that looks at both quantity and quality of writing
 - Scoring is not complete
- However, we have examined the change in writing placement of students from the beginning to the end of the school year

Literacy Improvement: Writing Performance

- In viewing the next slide, at the beginning of the school year, those in literacy strengthening were primarily in Expressive Writing (78%)
 - Which focuses on writing basics (e.g., capitalization, sentence structure)
- By the end of the school year, these students had moved to Reasoning and Writing (70%)
 - A more complex focus on the logic and analysis of writing.

Writing Placement Change of Literacy Students



FAMILY STRENGTHENING INTERVENTION

- As of the end of Year 4, 97 Indigenous families have been enrolled in the family strengthening component of the project
- Families are randomly assigned to either our family strengthening intervention or usual care services offered within the community
- This assignment is necessary in order to provide the community with strong conclusions on whether our culturally-adapted program is actually working to strengthen families
- Though we will not examine the effect of our family strengthening intervention until the study is completed, family reports indicate that the program has helped their families to become closer and communicate more effectively relative to the risks that surround their adolescent

FAMILY INTERVENTION COMPONENTS

The family session topics in our intervention are culturally adapted from the evidence-based program “Staying Connected with Your Teen” (Hawkins & Catalano, 2000)

Across ten to twelve sessions, families and counsellors explore topics such as:

- Identifying family’s hopes and fears
- Learning traditional parenting information
- Deciding what family goals are important to all family members
- Communication skills: listening compassionately, speaking wisely when annoyed or angry, managing your anger
- How to plan and have a Family Circle or Meeting

FAMILY INTERVENTION COMPONENTS cont.

- Decision-making and problem-solving, letting everyone have a voice
- The value of a teen’s contributions in the family; praising and encouraging one another
- Making Family Policies that reduce risk factors and keep everyone safe
- Teaching teens and pre-teens valuable “refusal skills”
- Using good supervision strategies
- HIV-AIDS information
- Journaling and self-care exercises

Connecting Literacy and Social Responsibility with Aboriginal Legends

By Kim Soo Goodtrack

Many Aboriginal legends have components of the Social Responsibility curriculum, be it bullying, greed vs. sharing, problem solving, creation, kindness or making the world a better place! With this in mind one can read or listen to legends and hear the underlying message. Often legends are taken too literally and too verbatim. One should read between the lines to receive the traditional teaching.

When some of the oral legends were written down they were left to the interpreter to interpret and they were condensed. Character development and settings were not described and explored even though sometimes olden day legends took hours and even days to tell! When YOU read a legend try to find the deeper meaning. If there are gruesome parts, they can always be reworded so as not to dwell on them!

Try to be a storyteller, without the book! Of course use it as a reference, and read it aloud a few times before you try without the book! Once you have said a legend four times, it is said that you will remember it the rest of your life! Choose one that is meaningful to you!

There are usually a few legends in a school library, or utilize the storytellers in your area. Always honour your storyteller with a gift and a monetary honourarium! There are also over 1 500 (condensed) legends available on www.firstpeople.us. Legends are for the PEOPLE and that does include ALL people!

Extended Activities:

- Part two is always a good way to start. Have the children think of an underlying message they want to convey.
- Illustrate the legend, or create a play!
- Make up your own legend by using Legend Story starters
- How the Bear Received His Strength (with bullying being the underlying message)
- Beetle calls a Truce (Solving conflict)
- The Moose Calls a Meeting (Recognizing inappropriate behaviors)
- A Frightened Little Beaver (Being respectful of differences)
- The Boy with a Crooked leg (Overcoming adversity)

Recommended Legends:

“How The Mouse Got Brown Teeth” by Freda Ahenakew

“Enduring Wisdom” by Virginia Driving Hawks Sneve

“Tales of Nokomis” by Patronella Johnston

“Salmon Boy” by Donna Joe

“How the Robin Got its Red Breast” by Charlie Craigan

For more information please contact wichapiwi@kimsogoodtrack.com or kgoodtrack@vsb.bc.ca