

# Making a Difference

## The Better Beginnings Family Literacy Program

Better Beginnings is a universal family literacy program aimed at children from birth to three years and their families. Better Beginnings is coordinated by the State Library of Western Australia and supported by the State Government of Western Australia, Rio Tinto and Western Australian local governments.

For more information: [www.better-beginnings.com.au](http://www.better-beginnings.com.au)





Edith Cowan University has conducted an independent evaluation of the Better Beginnings Family Literacy Program in four Western Australian communities from 2007 to 2009.

Here are some of the key findings:

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*“If I didn’t get the pack, he might not even own a book.”*

*“I always felt stupid reading to her. Now I know it’s the right thing to do.”*

*“I didn’t enjoy reading to him at the beginning because I always had trouble reading but he really enjoys it . . .it’s a bonding time.”*

*“You need to learn to read. It helps you with every other subject and, if you don’t read, you struggle with everything else in life.”*

*“The program has introduced us to rhymes and stories that we can do daily at either bath time or bedtime.”*

*“I believe that the time spent one on one reading a book is a special, important bonding experience that you can’t get any other time.”*

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Before receiving Better Beginnings kit	After receiving Better Beginnings kit
14% of parents in the study reported reading to their child.	85% of parents in the study reported reading to their child.
	79% of the parents reported that Better Beginnings had influenced their beliefs about the importance of sharing books with their child. Of these 96% now felt that sharing books with their child was very important.
56% of parents said their child was not at all or not very interested in books.	94% of parents indicated that their child was very or quite interested in sharing books.
	62% of parents reported that their confidence in sharing books with their child had increased after being involved in the Better Beginnings program.
Only 4% of parents had taken out library membership for their child.	23% of parents took out library membership for their child.
The average number of books suitable for reading to the child in the home was between 15 and 20.	The average number of books suitable for reading to the child in the home increased to 49.
	70% of parents reported that Better Beginnings had influenced how they communicate with their child, including reading and talking more and watching less television.
	94% of parents reported that since receiving Better Beginnings they or someone in their family had shared a book with their child in the past week.