

# SPARK<sup>Plus</sup>

*An Even Start program funded through the  
Virginia Department of Education*

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## **Year One Local Evaluation**



**Prepared for: Accomack County Public Schools**

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**Award #: VA-ES – Accomack – YR1**

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# Introduction

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THE SPARK <sup>PLUS</sup> EVEN START PROGRAM received initial funding in July 2003 from the Virginia Department of Education. This report describes the project design, explains the local evaluation activities undertaken, presents first-year evaluation results, and offers recommendations in the spirit of continuous program improvement. In preparing this report, we avoided duplicating information submitted by the program on interim reports to the Virginia Department of Education. Our emphasis in Year One has been primarily to provide a thorough rich description of both the program in action and the families that participated. We sought to identify successes and challenges *unique* to the program – knowledge that is not easily conveyed on the standard reporting forms.

To enrich our own understanding of how families experience the SPARK <sup>Plus</sup> Even Start Program, we randomly selected six mothers to follow closely throughout the year. Profiles of their participation were developed from program records, interviews with staff, and direct observation. Because of the language barrier, we did not conduct interviews with these individuals, nor did we systematically follow their other family members enrolled in Even Start. In future years, we hope to expand the profiling in these ways. Nevertheless, the profiles provide insight into the reasons why these women participate or not in the program, the challenges they encounter both in the program and in their lives generally, and their accomplishments during the year.

# Overview of the Local Evaluation

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THE LOCAL EVALUATION has been underway since the project's inception. In this first year, we focused on understanding how the program was being implemented by pursuing questions such as, "To what extent is the overall program working as it was designed? What is working especially well? What challenges have staff members faced in implementing the program?" We also took a close look at how different families participated in the program and how they were learning and changing as a result. The local evaluation effort included two multi-day visits to the Eastern Shore during the program year to meet with staff and see the program in action, to interact with stakeholders and collaborators, and to facilitate a day-long staff retreat in which we examined program data with staff members and talked with them about the program's strengths and appropriate future plans. Specifically, data for the Year One Local Evaluation came primarily from these six sources:

- 1) Program records including enrollment forms, home visit reports, attendance records for each component, as well as pre- and post-test scores (PAAT; BEST; PALS).
- 2) A group interview with a representative sample of five parents.
- 3) Two annual group interviews with key program staff (11/03 and 5/04) and one electronic interview with each staff member (1/04).
- 4) Direct Observation of one Family Night event; three adult ESL classes with one of those classes focusing on parenting education; and one early childhood class.
- 5) Regular telephone and E-mail correspondence with program staff focusing on "critical incidents" occurring during the program year as well as usual program routines.
- 6) Review of 25 project documents and other artifacts comprising 87 pages of text.

Qualitative data, such as observation notes, interview transcripts, email correspondence, home visit narratives, and so on were entered in to the qualitative data analysis program Atlas.ti and coded thematically. Quantitative data such as pre and post PAAT scores, pre and post BEST+ test scores, hours of program attendance, and so on, were entered for analysis into both Excel and SPSS v. 11.

# The SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> Program Design

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THE SPARK<sup>PLUS</sup> EVEN START PROGRAM EVOLVED from an early childhood and parenting education program that had been previously developed by local educators on Virginia's Eastern Shore. SPARK focused on making learning fun for both parents and children through an environmentally-focused curriculum. For four years before Even Start funding was awarded, it served primarily low-income African-American children and their families. SPARK proved to be a good match with Even Start as it was able to fulfill two of four required program components: parent and child together time (PACT) and parenting education, as well as an additional home visitation component. SPARK<sup>Plus</sup>, as the new program became known, continues as a successful collaboration between Eastern Shore Community College (ESCC) and Accomack County Public Schools (ACPS) and now targets the rapidly growing Hispanic population on the Eastern Shore. An ESOL program offered through ESCC and a Hispanic early childhood education program offered through ACPS represent the two additional required Even Start components.

## Program Components

The program offers 80 hours of **adult education** each month through a combination of morning and evening ESOL classes. The morning class, which has been attended primarily by homemakers, takes place in a church classroom in the rural community of Parksley. On-



site child care has been provided during English class for mothers with small children. The evening class has been held in one of the science classrooms at Metompkin Elementary School, also located in Parksley. This class was typically attended by husbands or couples. A small number of SPARK Plus families acquired their ESOL hours by attending classes offered at Eastern Shore Community College or in classes offered in the neighboring communities of Onancock and Arcadia. These programs provided a convenience for some

adult students but they did not offer the number of ESOL instructional hours that Even Start requires.

For most of the year, ESOL classes were taught by one staff member according to a split shift – 2 ½ hours in the morning and then 2 ½ hours in the evening, Monday through Thursday. No classes were offered on Friday. Another staff member who was fluent in Spanish was assigned ½ time to the ESOL component wherein she functioned as a classroom aide, and ½ time to the parent component. She proved vital to both components providing much-needed translation services.

One goal of the program is for Hispanic adults with limited English skills to increase their English language ability by participating in at least 15 hours per week of ESOL instruction. Classroom instruction is provided using individualized, group, and computerized instruction (Rosetta Stone). Additionally, parents can borrow video and audiotapes for home study and tutors from the local literacy council have been made available for students who needed extra assistance or who had difficulty getting to class. Adult participants are assessed during the first 12 hours of instruction using the BEST+ test. They can be post-tested after 60 hours in the program.

Observations were conducted of the ESOL classes as part of the local evaluation in November and then again in May. The instructional quality improved notably during this time period. In November, the theme of the lesson observed was “office technology” although students in the class were all homemakers. The evaluator made several disturbing observations such as the instructor communicating almost exclusively with one or two students seated closest to her; an excessive use of Spanish in the class; students confused about what they should be doing; lack of performance feedback provided to students by the instructor; and lack of structure and coherence to the lesson itself. This instructor resigned her position in May 2004 shortly before the second observation. The staff member who had previously been a classroom aid took over the teaching responsibilities for the remainder of the school year and into the summer. When the ESOL class was observed for a second time in May, the environment had changed remarkably. According to observation notes, laughter characterized the classroom on this visit; the lesson content appeared to be highly relevant to students and to be generating great interest and enthusiasm among them; learning objectives for the lesson were clear and students were given immediate feedback on their performance by the instructor; there was a high degree of interaction among the students and between the students and the teacher. Improving the quality of ESOL instruction had been the Program Director’s goal through much of the year, and it appears this goal was achieved.

A second component of the program is **Parent and Child Together (PACT) time**. Families can accumulate 23-36 PACT hours each month through the following activities:

Saturday Story Hour at the Public Library	4 hours/month
Family Night	1 ½ hours/month
Family Learning Family Fun Days	3 hours/month
School Visits	1-8 hours/month
SPARK Weekly Curriculum Packets	14-20 hours/month

*Story Hour* is a collaboration with the public library and brings together SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> and “regular” SPARK families. (Program staff members commonly refer to the original SPARK program that continues to serve Eastern Shore families through weekly curriculum packets and Family Learning Family Fun Days as “regular SPARK.”) *Story Hour* was not well-attended by the Hispanic families in the first year of the program, in spite of great lengths that staff went to, to facilitate their participation. During a site visit, the evaluator was impressed by the fact that the Parent Learning Instructor traveled several miles to briefly appear at one of the ESOL classes, in order to personally remind parents about the Saturday Story Hour. Additionally, two staff members offered to meet families in the parking lot of an elementary school on Saturday morning and then accompany them to the Story Hour in case they were intimidated about attending on their own. On that particular Saturday, no parents showed up for Story Hour, in spite of the efforts staff made to encourage them.

*Family Night* occurs once each month and provides an opportunity for all families in the program to come together at one of the local elementary schools where dinner is provided. After dinner, adults attend a parenting workshop while children engage in a fun learning activity led by staff or volunteers. On the following page, Grace Cormons provides a portrait of the December 12, 2003 Family Night.

*Family Learning Family Fun Days* (FLFF) have been repeated on two Saturdays and one Sunday each month, in order to maximize the opportunity for participation. FLFF days, like story hour, bring SPARK Plus and “regular SPARK” families together. FLFF days usually involve an excursion to one of the Eastern Shore’s natural settings. Program staff members lead parents and children through activities designed to “spark” curiosity about the environment and appreciation for it (thus the program’s name), while they also reinforce learning of pre-K skills introduced in the weekly curriculum packets. Staff model behaviors for parents such as responding positively to children when an opportunity for teaching and learning arises, and stimulating further learning by asking questions, etc.



On one FLFF day each semester, a photographer joins the group to take photos of families learning together. Program staff write a simple story to accompany the photos that

SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> Family Night  
Friday, December 12, 2003  
6:30-9:00

*Most families arrived between 6:15 and 6:30, each bringing a dish for our pot-luck supper. A great deal of food was brought, almost all home made. There were several different kinds of tamales (delicious!), tacos, chicken, cakes, fancy Jell-O, and much more. We had some door prizes again, including the Christmas table decorations. Everyone seemed to be happily socializing and enjoying the good food. After dinner, Debbie organized many different craft projects for the kids. She divided them into different groups according to age, and had volunteers working with each different group.*

*I took the adults to the media center. My workshop theme was "Children Learn by Playing". In their SPARK packet for the week they had been given the Family Connections discussing this theme as well as my list of suggested presents for pre-scholars. Mara was there, of course, to translate. I talked briefly about the Family Connections article. Then I asked them to pair up for a short activity. Mara had sketched, on separate pieces of paper, most of the items suggested in my list of presents for pre-schoolers (see-saw, swings, books, puzzles, large cardboard boxes, doctor's kit, clothes for dress-up, toy cars and trucks, etc.). I gave each pair of students one picture and asked them to discuss and then share with the group their ideas about how children might learn from playing with the item in their picture. This kind of activity was new to them, I'm sure, and they were a little hesitant. Each pair did give at least one idea about learning while playing with the object. Most of their ideas were concrete ones. For example, children would learn what things a doctor uses to examine you, how a dump truck works, etc. This, of course, is fine, but leaves out some of the other possible dimensions for learning. As they shared their ideas, I added a few of my own to expand the concept of how children can learn by playing. I suggested things like learning new words, using imagination, etc.*

*Finally, I said a little about my favorite theme- we all learn best if we are having fun as we learn. To illustrate this, we played a game in which they were asked to practice English vocabulary they had learned that week. I had borrowed colored bean bags from Lynn Blake's class. First we did the same game she plays with the kids. You may have seen this. She holds up a bean bag and throws it to the first person to name the color of the bag. The person getting the most bags wins. This was really too easy for them, but a good warm up.*

*Now we played a more difficult game, using just one bean bag. The person with the bag is asked, in English, to throw it to someone with a certain item of clothing (e.g. red hat, scarf, blue sweater, etc.-all words they had learned recently). The person who has just thrown the bag is the one to tell the one who caught the bag, to whom to throw it next.*

*This game seemed to be very successful. They really got into it with lots of laughter and joking. It was also nice that they automatically threw it first to the ones who knew more English, giving the others a chance to see how it was working and be prepared. It was their idea to be sure that everyone had at least one turn, so we stayed longer than I had intended (the child-care people were wondering when we were going to finish), but I was delighted they were so enthusiastic. I hope they really got my point about fun and learning. I will ask them about it this Friday, and also elaborate on how they could play something similar with their children.*

reinforces concepts and skills learned during the excursion. The photos and story are compiled into a SPARK Kid's Book (depicted p.7). FLFF day themes explored in Year

One are displayed in Table 1, and on the following page, Grace Cormons provides a vivid snapshot of the January FLFF day when SPARK Plus families and “regular SPARK” participants visited Assateague and Chincoteague.

### Family Learning Family Fun Day Themes

Month	Themes
October	The Marsh
November	The Woods
December	Christmas Party
January	Assateague/Chincoteague
March	Rainbows and Light
April	The Farm
May	Spark Kids at the Park (Photo shoot for book) and Watershed Festival
June	Graduation Exercises

**Table 1**

*School Visits*, which the staff strongly encouraged, are another way parents accumulate PACT time. One family night workshop featured this topic, and the staff made frequent mention of it during classes and home visits. The workshop introduced parents to some of the things they might do for PACT time in the schools: visit their child’s class to play with their child; help the teacher or read a story to the class; have breakfast or lunch at school with their child; attend a concert, PTA meeting or special event such as “Boys Night Out.” One of the workshop’s components was a “walk” through the school sign-in process: the principal gave her evening to meet with the families right in the school office to explain the procedure, and one of the teachers talked enthusiastically with the parents about how welcome they would be in their child’s classroom.

*SPARK curriculum packets* are, in many respects, a centerpiece of the SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> program because they are used as an instructional tool in each of the four Even Start components (Parent Education, PACT Time, Adult Education, and Early Childhood Education). The SPARK curriculum includes 12 weekly activity packets for fall and 12 weekly activity packets for spring. Four new packets were developed this year for winter. Packets, which highlight plant and animal life on Virginia’s Eastern Shore, include art projects, songs, games, and other learning experiences that parents and children can work on together. The curriculum covers concepts and skills generally considered necessary for children to succeed in kindergarten such as colors, numbers, letters and shapes; visual discrimination; rhyme and pattern; use of scissors, glue, and crayons; and reading from left to right.

*Report on FLFF days Jan.17 and 18, 2004*

*Saturday was cold, but sunny. As we rode on the bus over the frozen marshlands, the biggest excitement was seeing the ice. The kids were all very excited. I think none had ever seen a large body of water frozen. It was beautiful; it looked like photos of the arctic. They all talked about getting out to go ice skating.*

*They were also excited about seeing the houses in Chincoteague. This surprised me, as the houses they were looking at seemed to me very ordinary. To them, they seemed unusual and appealing. "That's my house." "No, that's my house. No, that one's bigger. It's my house." I include this only because it illustrates how close to home most of these kids stay and how little it takes to show them something entirely new.*

*After meeting briefly in the lecture hall at the center, we divided into English and Spanish speaking groups. Usually we do not do this on FLFF days, but there were too many people for one group, so it seemed like a logical division. The naturalist took the English speakers; Mara and I the Spanish speakers. A few SPARK instructors were with each group.*

*Before families started out to see the exhibits, I had everyone taste a tiny bit of salt water, then some fresh water. I did this because the exhibits are centered on the 4 main habitats at Assateague: the forest, the beach, the fresh water and salt water marsh. I wanted everyone to really appreciate the difference between salt and fresh water and realize that it is an important difference; some plants and animals can only live in fresh water, others only in salt.*

*Everyone was amazed by the museum-type exhibits, and the children took a long time looking at everything. There are several electronic matching activities that the older children enjoyed. For most, it was all new and overwhelming.*

*Half the group watched a video about Assateague while the others had a snack and did an activity I had prepared about animal tracks. Then we changed places. After this, we all got back into the bus and cars and drove a few miles around Assateague. We saw lots of ducks, swans, a disappointing number of snow geese, Canada geese, and one Chincoteague pony. We stopped by the ocean and I asked if anyone wanted to get out and go down to the water's edge. It was quite cold and I thought everyone would say, "No," but instead they all rushed out. Everyone seemed delighted to go across the sand to the water's edge; some were carrying babies, but didn't seem to mind. I think for almost everyone it was their first look at the Atlantic Ocean. We left for home about 4pm. The bus ride up had been active with everyone talking about what they were seeing. Going home, lots of kids fell asleep and the parents were talking about what a nice day they had had and how they wanted to do more things like this.*

*On Sunday only 2 families came. One (a SPARK Plus family) met me at MES and followed me up; the other met us up there. It was a very rainy and windy day. Although everyone had been told that we would be inside at the center, it wasn't the kind of day anyone really would want to go anywhere. Those who came had a great time. Of course everyone had more individual attention, and I had more chance to get to know the children.*

Early in the program, staff members were challenged with getting SPARK curriculum packets into parents' hands each week. (In "regular SPARK" parents came into elementary schools to pick up their packets from a project team member who was available to go over the contents with them.) Staff decided that distributing the packets in ESOL class would make the most sense in SPARK <sup>Plus</sup>. At least one staff member observed an unanticipated outcome from this practice. "Integrating the weekly distribution of SPARK packets into the routine of the adult ESOL classes has been positive," she explained, "giving students a sense of how the team functions together as a whole." Parents report that they spend about an hour on the packets each week, some up to two hours on the packet itself and related activities.

**Parent Education** is offered through several existing program mechanisms. For instance, the Family Learning Instructor visits the ESOL classes each week and offers 30-60 minutes of instruction in how to teach children using the SPARK curriculum materials. During a May site visit, the evaluator observed the Family Learning Instructor skillfully combining ESOL instruction and parenting education as described below:

*Three students sit around a folding table in the science classroom -- a couple and an elderly woman. It is the elderly woman's first time to the class. She appears to be a beginning ESL learner. It's possible she knows no English at all. Mara is doing a lot of translating. Grace checks the SPARK homework that the mother has brought in and puts new Sparky stickers on the child's notebook. Then, Grace takes a box turtle out of a container and puts it on the table. The box turtle is a subject in this week's SPARK curriculum packet.*

*Grace uses the SPARK materials with the adults to engage them in a language learning and grammar exercise. She has made a pile in the center of the table with cutouts of some coastal creatures. "Olivia, give me a needlefish." Olivia identifies the creature and asks the next student to give her something from the pile. (At this point, two more men join the class.) Grace begins asking number questions. "How many flowers are in this picture?" How many turtles are in this picture?"*

*Next Grace says, "Okay, let's see what else is in the packet here." She gives SPARK curriculum packets to everyone in the group. She goes through a memo to parents that is written in Spanish to be sure that everyone gets the message. Then, she has them translate the memo into English, line by line.*

*I didn't realize, until now, how much language the parents need to learn in order to work with the SPARK packets with their children. Grace is going through the packet, page by page, teaching the adults about the content of the packets and modeling questions that they can ask their children.*

Evaluator Observation Notes, May 2004

Program staff also provide parent education during monthly home visits. Home visits provide an additional opportunity for staff to review contents of the curriculum packets and demonstrate ways to interact with children around the materials. Fifty-percent of the time parents spend at Family Learning Family Fun Days is also allocated to parent education. In this setting, parents learn through modeling how to respond positively to children’s curiosity. The December FLFF, for example, included a half-hour parent workshop on reading Richard Carry’s Watch Your Step Mr. Rabbit. Each child received a gift-wrapped copy of this book from Santa. A mother later shared with a staff member that her son began reading with that book. During March’s FLFF, parents attended a camera project workshop. And, in June, the FLFF included the camera project photo discussion for parents. More parent education occurs on Family Night when parents participate in a short workshop. Themes for the Family Night workshops offered during Year One are displayed in Table 2.

### Family Night Parent Education Topics

Month	Topics
November	Getting to Know Each Other and the SPARK <sup>Plus</sup> Program. PAAT Pre-test. (Pizza Party)
December	Children Learn by Playing (Pot Luck Supper)
January	Visiting Your Child’s School (Soup and Subs.)
February	The “Keep Book” Series
March	Information about the Telamon Program (Pizza Party)
April	Games to Play with Children and Letting Children Make Some Choices on Their Own (Favorite Food Pot Luck)
May	Administered Post-PAAT test discussed summer class schedule and summer activities

**Table 2**

Accomack County Public Schools provides the **early childhood education** component for the SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> Even Start Program with a developmentally appropriate curriculum rich in early literacy. On a single visit to the early childhood classroom in November 2003, the evaluator observed children learning letters, numbers, months of the year, days of the week, and colors through activities that involved singing, movement, repetition, and imagination. The early childhood teacher had a colorful detailed schedule posted on the wall showing how each increment of time throughout the day would be spent. The environment was both stimulating and welcoming to children and adults alike.

# Family Participants

THE PROGRAM STAFF BEGAN ACTIVELY RECRUITING families to participate in the SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> program as soon as notice of the grant award became official. One immediate challenge was to develop recruitment flyers in Spanish that could be distributed within the Hispanic community. Staff attended local events such as an annual Hispanic fair to promote the program. They also recruited during open houses at the local elementary schools and solicited referrals for eligible families from agencies such as Head Start, the Eastern Shore Literacy Council, Eastern Shore Rural Health Systems, and private health providers. Staff also conducted home visits to local Hispanic families, encouraging them to register for the program. Recruitment efforts were ongoing throughout the year. In April, notices written in Spanish were put in the paychecks of employees working at Perdue to inform them about the program. Efforts were also made to encourage “regular” SPARK families to expand their participation to SPARK<sup>Plus</sup>.

Enrollment forms on which adults report how they heard about the program point toward word of mouth as the most effective recruitment tool (Figure 1). Promoting the program at elementary school open houses was the second most fruitful strategy employed by the staff for recruiting families to participate.

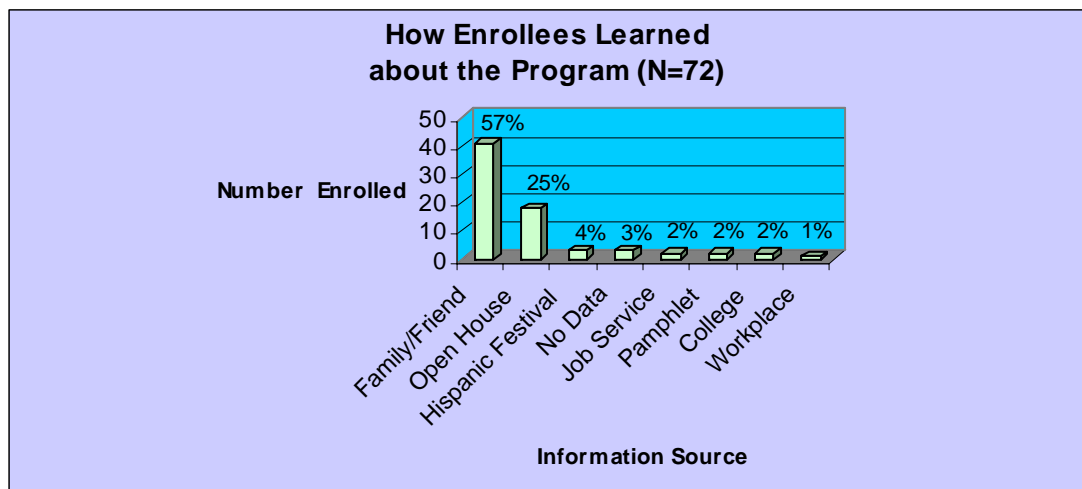


Figure 1

Between October 2003 and June 2004, 44 families enrolled and received services through the program. Within the 44 families enrolled, SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> served 76<sup>1</sup> adults and 43 children for a total of 119 participants. Thirteen (13) of the children were enrolled in the pre-school program and the remaining children attended elementary school. The typical adult participant in the program's first year was a married, female between 25 and 45 years old with one or two children in the program (Figure 2 and 3).

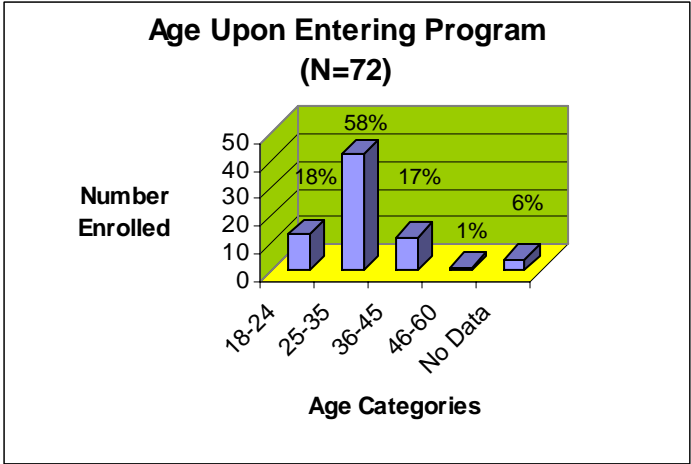


Figure 2

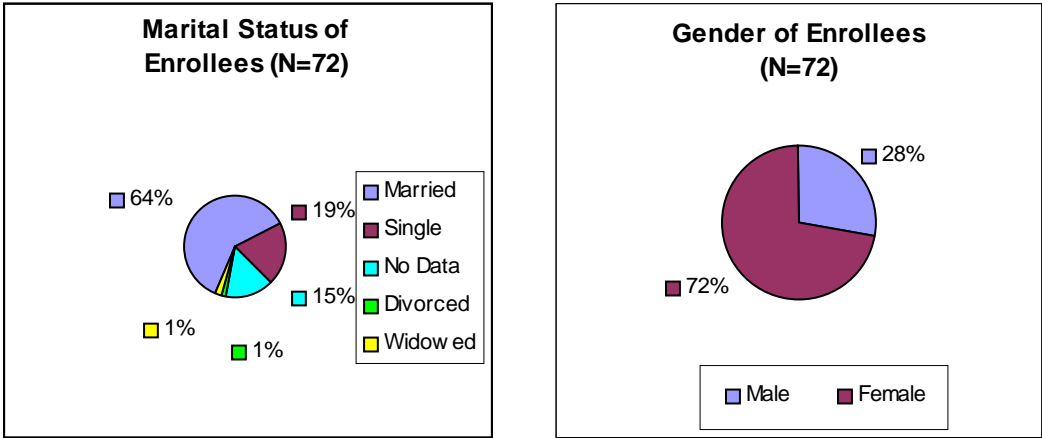
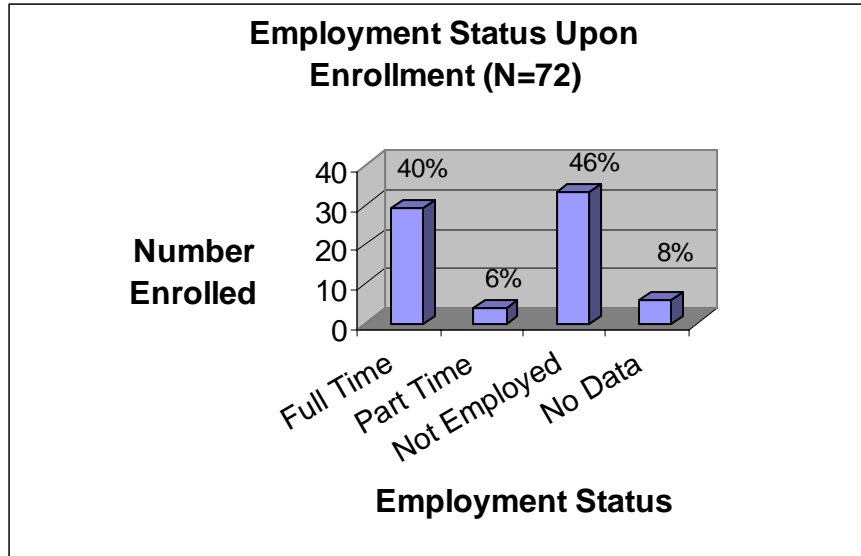


Figure 3

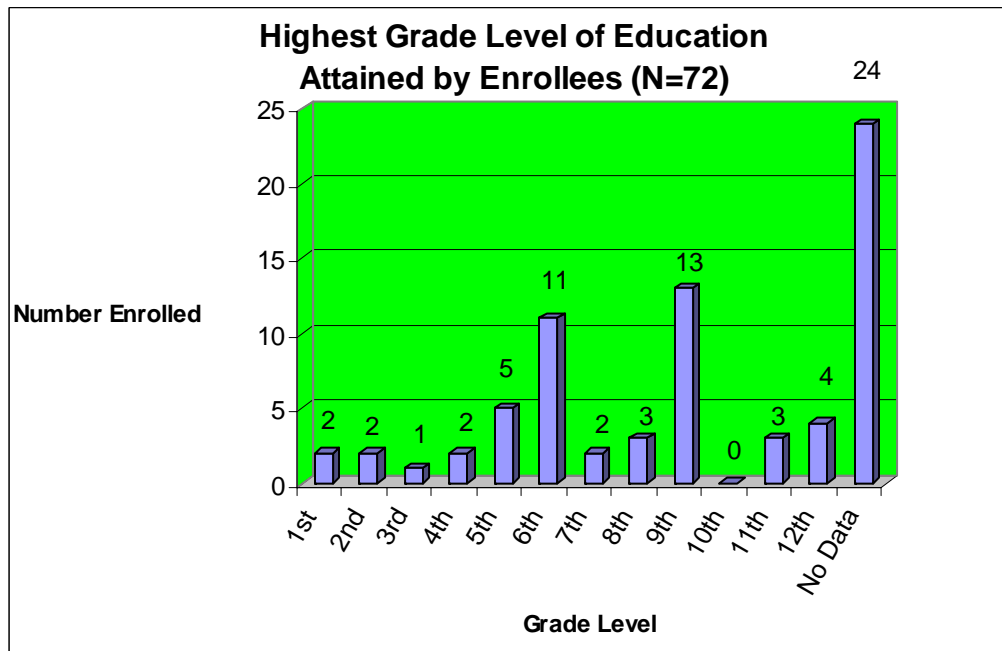
Only about half the adults were employed either full or part-time at enrollment. (Figure 4).

<sup>1</sup> Figures depicting demographic data are based on enrollment forms provided for the first 72 adults enrolled. The demographic data on four subsequent adult enrollees were not received by the evaluators in time for this report.



**Figure 4**

Data about prior schooling are missing from nearly one-third of enrollees. However, we know that among the remaining two-thirds, 17% completed fifth grade or less. Twenty-two percent (22%) completed either the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Another 28% report that they completed at least some years of high school (Figure 5).



**Figure 5**

# Outcomes for Families

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Quite understandably, tracking each family's participation in the four program components and recording this information in a reliable data base has been a challenge for program staff in this first year. Staff made great strides, however, toward developing an efficient system for data collection, storage, retrieval, and analysis. For example, a number of reporting forms were put into use including a Home Visit Log, a Calendar (on which families record their activities related to the program), Sign-In Sheets for Family Night and FLFF Days, and Classroom Attendance Records. Data from these primary sources is entered by program staff into one of several Excel spread sheets. Currently, a master spread sheet displays ESOL participation by family throughout the entire year. Separate monthly spreadsheets capture each family's participation in the various PACT activities and parent education activities. A third spreadsheet displays demographic data for each family. Staff is now attempting to combine the data from all three spread sheets so that family participation can be viewed holistically; demographic data, participation data, and outcome data can be correlated.

The most reliable data currently available are those depicting ESOL participation and outcomes. Figure 6 shows the number of families attending ESOL class each month in relation to the average hours attended by those families.

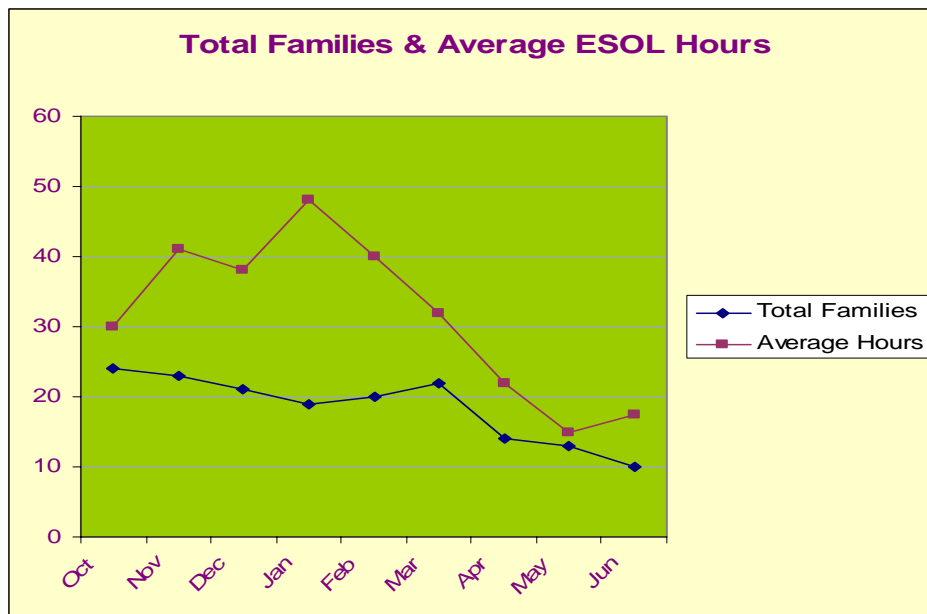


Figure 6

A valuable exercise will be for staff to examine Figure 7 and reflect on key events or conditions that could explain the following patterns:

- \* The average number of families attending ESOL classes in any given month between October 2003 and June 2004 was 18. (There are months when families participated in Even Start components besides ESOL, so this average may appear low. As the data base is currently designed, there is no way to efficiently view a family's entire participation record.)
- \* Except for a slight increase in ESOL attendance in February and March, the attendance in ESOL dropped steadily from the beginning to the end of the year.
- \* On the other hand, the average hours that families devoted to ESOL instruction increased steadily during the first four months of the program (October through January) but then, beginning in February, dropped precipitously over the remaining months. Staff have previously attributed the initial drop-off to winter weather, and then to the onset of the growing season when most returned to the fields for work.
- \* Although a small number of families were participating in ESOL in June, these families increased their average number of hours in class over prior months.

## Gains in Language Proficiency

Twenty-nine (29) adults (38% of those that ever enrolled) received at least 60 hours of ESOL instruction during Year One and were therefore *eligible* to be post-tested on the BEST test. Twenty (20) or 69% of eligible adults had *actually* been post-tested at the time of this report. Of these 20 adults, 17 (85%) improved their English language proficiency by at least one level on the BEST test, exceeding the targeted benchmark of 50%. These additional facts about student participation are revealed through an examination of the program data bases:

- \* Only two adults who began ESOL class during the first month that classes were offered (October) were still attending classes at the end of the program year (June).
- \* No adult student logged hours in all 9 months between October and June.
- \* Half of all adults who enrolled in the program in Year One persisted for 4-6 months.
- \* Adults persist in ESOL class on average for 3.9 months.

### ESOL Family Persistence Patterns (N=75)

Percent of students that dropped out in the first month	20%
Percent of students that attended 2-3 months of class	20%
Percent of students that attended 4-6 months of class	<b>50%</b>
Percent of students that attended 7 - 8 months of class	10%

**Table 3**

## Gains from Parenting Education

As a way to measure changes related to parenting – specifically, how parents perceive themselves as teachers, and what parents expect of their children – we administered the Parent as Teacher Inventory (PAAT). The PAAT is a 50-item survey developed by child learning specialist, Dr. Robert D. Strom, and distributed by the Scholastic Testing Service. Content for the PAAT was drawn from literature and research on parental influence and school learning in the early and middle years. Individual items represent statements on what parents expect of their children, how they react to specific child behavior, and how they interact with the child. Each item represents one of five constructs related to parenting. Authors of the inventory describe each construct as follows:

1. Creativity: Parental acceptance of the child’s creativity and willingness to encourage its development.
2. Frustration: Parental frustration with the child and focus of the frustration.
3. Control: Parental feelings about the need to control the child’s behavior.
4. Play: Parental understanding of play and its influence on child development.
5. Teaching/Learning: Parental views about child development and their ability to provide a supportive home environment.

When selecting a survey instrument to measure the effect of parenting education on parents in the SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> program, staff recognized congruence between constructs measured on the PAAT and concepts included in the program’s parenting curriculum. However, staff were concerned that the PAAT, in its current form was too long, and would therefore be too onerous and time consuming for program participants. They chose to abbreviate the PAAT by reducing it to 25 items (five items selected from each construct) that most closely correlated with the program’s parenting curriculum. Additionally, they translated the inventory into Spanish.

The PAAT was administered to all parents in attendance at the first Family Night in November 2003 (n=29). We considered this set of parents to be the “control” group as they had not participated in parent education provided by the program. We administered the PAAT again approximately 5 months later to a group of parents that had actively been involved in the program (n=16), although the intensity of their participation varied considerably. Parents responded to each statement on the PAAT by recording the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with it. (1 = “Strongly Agrees”; 4 = “Strongly Disagrees”). Interpreting the PAAT involves translating the numeric responses into one of four possibilities: 4 = Highly Favorable, 3 = Somewhat Favorable, 2 = Somewhat Unfavorable, and 1 = Highly Unfavorable.

After entering responses for both groups into the statistical analysis program SPSS, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the control group and the participating group’s mean scores for each test item. Table 4 displays the results.

**Parenting Differences Between Individuals Who  
Participated in the Program and Those Who Had Not Participated  
As Measured by the PAAT**

	Non-Participants		Participants		t (43)
	M	SD	M	SD	
<b>Creativity</b>					
1. Encourages child to ask questions	3.0	.598	3.125	.500	-.710
6. Likes the child to make up stories	3.276	.455	3.187	.544	.582
11. Expresses uncertainty in front of the child	2.034	.421	1.937	.443	.726
18. Urges child to learn self-evaluation	2.310	.806	2.5	.516	-.847
<b>Frustration</b>					
2. Allows noise during the child's playtime	3.310	.541	3.06	.250	2.094*
12. Permits child to get dirty while at play	2.965	.325	3.125	.619	-1.138
15. Tolerates child interruption during play	2.862	.441	2.875	.342	-.101
<b>Control</b>					
3. Allows child to disagree	2.586	.628	2.625	.500	-.212
7. Wants child to talk more than the parent	2.621	.622	2.312	.479	1.718
17. Provides opportunities for decision-making	3.0	.463	3.0	.516	.000
<b>Play</b>					
4. Recognizes child's need to play with parent	3.172	.468	3.25	.577	-.490
9. Shows confidence in choosing new toys	2.897	.489	2.812	.544	.531
10. Realizes play improves behavior of child	3.172	.468	3.125	.612	.290
13. Introduces vocabulary during pretending	3.103	.310	3.062	.442	.363
16. Knows praise is unnecessary during play	2.0	.463	2.0	.000	.000
19. Regards peer play as a helpful influence	3.207	.491	3.187	.544	.122
<b>Teaching/Learning</b>					
5. Understands importance of early learning	3.172	.602	2.875	.619	1.571
8. Knows how to tell if child learns lesson	2.724	.649	2.812	.544	-.462
14. Expresses confidence in teaching at home	2.690	.604	2.812	.655	-.634
20. Recognizes play and learning go together	2.414	.568	2.937	.574	-2.941*

\*p<.05

**Table 4**

On 23 of the 25 survey items there were no significant differences between those who participated in the program and those who had not in terms of how they responded to the parenting statements. One item within the “Frustration” construct, however, *Allows Noise During Play*, produced a statistically significant *unfavorable* difference for participants ( $M=3.06$ ,  $SD=.25$ ) and non-participants ( $M=3.31$ ,  $SD=.54$ );  $t(43)=2.094$ ,  $p=.042$ ). The magnitude of the difference in means was moderate (eta squared = .09) In practical terms, we can say that 9% of the variance in scores on this item can be explained by parenting education in the program. This outcome is difficult for program staff to understand, however, since the program encourages lively play among parents and children.

One item within the Teaching/Learning construct, *Recognizes play and learning go together*, produced a statistically significant *favorable* difference for participants ( $M=2.93$ ,  $SD=.57$ )

and non-participants ( $M=2.41$ ,  $SD=.57$ );  $t(43)=-2.94$ ,  $p=.005$ ). The magnitude of the difference is quite large ( $\eta^2=.167$ ). We can say, therefore, that 17% of the variance in scores on this item can be explained by the program. This outcome is particularly meaningful since advancing the idea that play and learning go together is a hallmark of the program.

## Progress of Pre-School Children

Pre-school children enrolled in SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> were pre- and post-tested in the Fall and Spring using the PALS Pre-K. The test measures emergent literacy skills that, according to reading research, are predictive of reading success in later years. Scores collected on the 13 pre-schoolers enrolled in SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> are displayed in Table 5. Although the program staff and evaluators had not, at the time of this report, been provided school-wide or district-wide comparison data, we are able to determine by eye-balling the data that all children progressed as a result of pre-k instruction, and moreover, that children who entered with the lowest PALS score in the Fall, recorded some of the greatest skill gains by the end of the school year.

### Gains Achieved in Emergent Literacy Skills by Pre-Schoolers

#### As Measured by PALS Pre-K

Child's I.D.	Fall PALS Score	Spring PALS Score	Percent Improvement	Gain Score
1.	58	89	53%	31
2.	55	89	62%	34
3.	19	30	58%	11
4.	22	41	86%	19
5.	87	90	03%	03
6.	61	96	57%	35
7.	37	63	70%	26
8.	52	65	25%	13
9.	61	81	33%	20
10.	50	73	46%	23
11.	63	88	40%	25
12.	46	64	39%	18
13.	25	52	108%	27
<b>Totals</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>921</b>		<b>285</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>22</b>

**Table 5**

## Participation Profiles

THE PROFILES OF THE SIX RANDOMLY SELECTED PARTICIPANTS that follow provide greater insight into the range of ways families participate in SPARK<sup>Plus</sup>.

**I**rina is a 28 year old married woman of Hispanic background. She learned about the SPARK<sup>Plus</sup> program from a friend whose children had been in SPARK and who had recruited a number of other families into the program. At the time she enrolled in the program Irina was not employed. On her enrollment form she said that she wanted to learn English. She did not provide information about her prior years of schooling. Irina has at least two daughters. One of whom attends Accomack Elementary School. Although her husband did not attend classes, he accompanied the family at story hour and family night.

Program records indicate that Irina attended Story Hour in October, and she attended Family Night in November. In November, she submitted two SPARK packets, and reported ten hours of parent and child time. Records show that in March, Irina turned in one SPARK packet, and reported five hours of parent and child time. No participation of any kind was recorded in April, May or June. She reported a total of 30 hours of parent and child time throughout the program overall.

Irina attended 129.5 hours of ESOL classes from October through February. She did not attend ESOL class from March through June, however. Staff learned through another participant that she was having trouble with her pregnancy, and was confined to bed. “I think she was called a few times on the phone and we offered to bring materials to her house. My understanding is that she was feeling too ill to want visitors or homework.” Soon, staff learned that Irina had experienced a miscarriage.

Although Irina did attend classes again briefly after she recovered from the miscarriage, she began working long hours at a tile-making shop. Her friend informed staff that as far as she knew Irina wanted to continue in the program, but could not while she was working. A staff member reflected, “I think the miscarriage was, of course, a tough blow to her desire and eagerness to continue with the program. I'm pretty sure that starting her job in late winter/early spring helped distract her from her personal losses, but, since she had been attending the AM class, also kept her from returning to ESOL classes and other activities.”

Irina's score on the BEST pre-test put her at a level of zero. She was not post-tested.

Irina took the PAAT pre-test, but was not post-tested on it either. Her favorable responses totaled 70%, and none of those were considered “Highly Favorable” responses. She had a total of 30% unfavorable responses, but none of them were “Highly Unfavorable” responses. (See Appendix)

**L**inda, who is married, has had 11 years of prior schooling. She is 28 years old and has an Hispanic background. She indicated on her enrollment form that she was not employed, but did not state her learning goals. She was recruited for the program at the Pre-K Open House at Metompkin Elementary School.

Linda has a son and daughter, and her son attends Metompkin Elementary School. Linda and her family attended Family Night in November, December, January, and February. She turned in a total of seven SPARK packets, and went to her child’s class for one hour in March. She had visited the school to talk with her son’s teacher several times in the fall. The family learning instructor also contacted the teacher on Linda’s behalf and some things were clarified. She also reported 70 hours of parent and child time over the academic year.

Linda attended ESOL classes from October through March for a total of 187.5 hours. Her BEST test pre-test score placed her at level one. Her post-test score placed her at level seven. Because Linda’s language skills have become so strong over the course of the year, she often serves as an interpreter/translator for other members of her community.

Linda only took the PAAT pre test. Her favorable responses totaled 80% with 30% of them being Highly Favorable. She had a total of 20% unfavorable responses and 10% of those were Highly Unfavorable responses. (See Appendix)

The data reflecting her involvement in the program reveal that she was actively involved from October through March, but that she was not at all involved from April through June. The drop-off in April would coincide with the time of year that seasonal fieldwork typically picks up.

Indeed, according to one staff member, she has been employed in the field since March. Another staff member felt that there were some inaccuracies in her attendance data, and added, “I’m almost positive that she did attend a few PM classes in April. . . . She switched to the PM class when the intensive field work began.”

An ESOL instructor reported in February that attendance in the morning ESOL was “up and down,” but better than it had been in January. She reported that the pattern with the morning class’ attendance was that, “Either they all come or all don’t come because they all

ride together. Not everybody drives. The driver is sort of a community activist. Linda is the driver.”

Staff made a home visit in November and another in May. They also stopped at the camp where she lives several times over the spring to drop off materials, but only had direct contact with another participant who was, at the time, the only one not doing fieldwork.

**E**dith, like the other women in the program, is of Hispanic background. She did not indicate her age, prior education, marital status, her employment status nor her learning goals on her enrollment form. One staff member remembers speaking with Edith’s housemate at the Pre-K Open House at Metompkin Elementary School, and suspects that she learned of the program through her housemate. They both attended a cookout and program held in September 2003 at Eastern Shore Community College where the program was described, in English and Spanish.

Edith’s daughter attends Metompkin Elementary School, where the family attended the pre-K graduation in June. They attended Family Night in November and April as well as the April Family Fun Day. Edith also attended workshops in October, February, and April. She reported 56 hours of parent and child time over the academic year.

Edith was unable to come to ESOL classes because she had no transportation. She made clear at the September cookout that transportation would be a problem, but was encouraged by staff to sign up anyway. Staff had believed at that time that the local STARTRANSIT would be available to assist in getting such students to the classes. Ultimately, however, that arrangement did not work out. She has clearly indicated to staff that she does want to attend classes.

Edith had a baby this spring. According to one staff member, “I spoke with her at several pre-K workshops ... about coming to class, Family Fun Day events, and Family Nights. Along with transportation issues, she was also concerned about taking a young infant out to a classroom environment. [Her housemate] was also very sick this spring, so I did not want to push them to do more than they could.”

Another member of the staff contributed the following about Edith and her housemate, “Their children have received the SPARK materials sent home from school (at the parents’ request). Although I haven’t seen much of their returned work, my conversations with them and with their children indicate that they have been doing the packets.”

Despite the transportation problems, she did take the PAAT pre-test. Her favorable responses totaled 60% with none of those being “Highly Favorable” responses. She had a total of 40% unfavorable responses, but none of those were “Highly Unfavorable” responses. (See Appendix) She did not take the BEST test.

**M**arta is a 31 year old married Hispanic woman who was not employed when the program began. She learned of the program through a friend, and her goal is to learn English. She chose not to report her years of prior schooling when she enrolled in SPARK <sup>Plus</sup>.

Marta's son is enrolled and attends Accomack Elementary School. She also has another son and a daughter. They attended one Family Night in November. Records indicate that she turned in one SPARK packet and reported five hours of parent and child time in November. She turned in another four SPARK packets in the spring and attended the SPARK graduation in June along with her husband and other children, as well.

Marta's BEST pre-test score put her at level at zero. Her post-test score advanced her to a level one. She attended a total of 87.5 hours of ESOL classes. She participated in the program at the beginning and at the end, but did not participate from January through April. According to staff as well as staff meeting notes, she went back to work after Christmas. This coincides with the period when she stopped attending for four months.

One staff member noted, "I don't have the date she returned to our classes in the spring, but it was shortly after I had seen [her] at the Accomack School registration. We talked a little there and I made clear she could come to class when she had time. I think we all know that it helps to be where our families may see us so we can keep in touch. Often their phones don't work, or they don't answer."

Marta took both the PAAT pre-test and post-test. She had neither "Highly Favorable" nor any "Highly Unfavorable" responses on either her pre-test or her post-test. She did increase the number of favorable responses 10% on her post-test, however, for a total of 80% favorable responses. (See Appendix)

**L**ola is a 28 year old Hispanic woman who is married with 8 years of prior schooling. She learned about the program through her family, and, according to the staff, was recruited at the pre-K Open House. Her goal was to learn English at the program's outset.

Lola has two sons enrolled in the program, and both attend Metompkin Elementary School. The family attended one Family Night and two Family Fun Days. She reported three hours of classroom attendance at her sons' class, and reported 63.5 hours of parent and child time over the academic year.

In a conversation with the evaluator in May, she indicated that her English was too good for the ESOL classes. She began to attend the classes in April, however, and a put in 23.5 hours. She BEST tested at level five. She also told the evaluator that she had taken the TABE test, but that she never went back to the ABE classes. According to one staff

member, “Initially, yes, she felt her English was too good for the class and yet the TABE test scared her. Unfortunately, at the time, none of us had a chance to follow through with her. However, we didn’t forget her and were able to get back in touch with her. It worked out well for her to do some child care for us so that I could do SPARK packets with her, and, when others didn’t come to class, do some basic skills work with her.”

February’s staff meeting notes indicate that while Lola had attended Family Fun Day events, she had not made a commitment to class. She told a staff member that she was really interested in finding a job. According the meeting notes, she “. . .is worried about being deported.” Staff thought that this might be a reason why she was not coming – “. . .she is afraid.” Staff made two visits to her home, one in October and one in June.

The staff member who visited her in October acknowledged that “. . .she did seem apprehensive about the classes.” This staff member went on to say that, “Nevertheless, we actually did many things to accommodate our program to her schedule (and that of her sister). Mainly changing some of our Family Fun Days to be on Sundays when they were not attending church. This summer I have been working with her on advanced conversation and a typing program (Mavis Beacon) to which she had shown great interest. Her goals are to take classes at the college, with a focus on child-care, computer processing or possibly nursing.”

Lola and her family participated in the SPARK program the year before, and they have done the SPARK packets all year. Lola remarked to the evaluator that her whole family is now appreciating the natural environment. “We had walked in the woods before, but we had never noticed the leaves, the ants, and other things.” She also told the evaluator that the program had improved her parenting skills.

On the PAAT pre-test her highest percentage of responses was in the “Highly Favorable” category. Interestingly, on the post-test her highest percentage had dropped to the “Slightly Favorable” category. Nevertheless, her pre-test responses that were favorable came to 70%, and on the post-test they totaled 75%. Her pre-test unfavorable responses totaled 30% with 25% of those being “Highly Unfavorable.” On the post-test, however, the percentage of unfavorable responses dropped to 20%, and none of her responses were “Highly Unfavorable” ones. (See Appendix)

**Yolanda** is a 26 year old woman of Hispanic background who had nine years of prior schooling before joining SPARK <sup>Plus</sup>. She is married and not employed. On her enrollment form, she did not state learning goals. She learned about the program during an open house at a school where staff was recruiting.

Yolanda has two sons. One of her sons was on the waiting list all year to get into the pre-K program, but never got in. He is registered for kindergarten for fall of 2004.

Yolanda attended two Family Nights and three Family Fun Days during her first year in the program. Four SPARK packets were turned in and a total of 75 hours of parent and child time were reported.

On the BEST pre-test, Yolanda scored on the lowest level (0). Subsequently, she logged hours in ESOL class every month of the school year save one – January. The fact that she attended class in eight of the nine months in which classes were offered set her in a category that includes only one other student in the program. (Most students in the program attended 6 or fewer months. No student attended class in all nine months.) Yolanda logged a total of 126.50 classroom hours and her husband logged an additional 110 hours. When post-tested on the BEST test, both Yolanda and her husband had advanced one level.

Yolanda took the PAAT, both the pre-test and the post-test. On the pre-test her highest percentage of responses was in the “Highly Favorable” category. On the post-test her highest percentage was in the “Slightly Favorable” category. Her pre-test responses that were favorable came to 85%, but on the post-test they totaled 90%. Her pre-test unfavorable responses totaled 15%, but none of them were “Highly Unfavorable” responses. On the post-test this percentage dropped to 10%, and she still had no “Highly Unfavorable” responses. (See Appendix)

The family received two home visits in November. During one, staff provided them with an application for Head Start. The family reported that they had been watching videos in English, but they had been missing some program-associated activities because the weather had been too cold for the baby. November’s second home visit involved the daffodil planting activity. One of the staff members reported that, “It was a positive visit, with [the child] and his mom was very happy with the activity. I went over the current SPARK packets with them.” This staff member reported at the end of the academic year, “Although I have not seen many completed SPARK packets from the family, I think they are probably doing most of them.”

Staff visited the family in February taking a tape recorder with bilingual books on tape and January’s SPARK packets in tow. The Home Visit log indicates that the staff members inquired about the family continuing with the class. She told the staff that they would return with the baby was feeling better.

When staff visited this home at the end of March they brought Alphabet packets A-H, one of March’s SPARK packets, “Snowy Day” on tape with bilingual books, the SPARK Kids On the Farm book, and a camera for the camera project. During this visit staff discussed having a home tutor in which Yolanda showed considerable interest. They also discussed school registration and visiting the farm.

In mid-April a staff member brought the tutor to Yolanda's home along with SPARK packets. After introductions, they set up a time for tutoring and the tutor began working with her in "Ready to Go." Meanwhile the other staff member stayed with Yolanda's child and they looked at SPARK packets, colored and read a book together. According to staff, the tutor continued to work with her, but has recently stopped for the summer as Yolanda is caring for seven other children. The tutor encouraged Yolanda to call her and practice English. The tutor reports that Yolanda has, in fact, done so.

One staff member commented,

*Personally, I feel we have kept in good touch with this family, that they feel much more comfortable dealing with the schools than they would have, and that they will continue to be as much a part of our program as possible. When I was at Accomack School in May recruiting for our program when families were signing their children up for pre-K and K, Yolanda was there with her husband and children to sign [their son] up. They came over to speak with me, I played with [their son] while they filled out forms, and everyone was happy. Later [our staff] made some calls to the school on their behalf because last year they had been told [their son] would attend Metompkin, which is closer to their home. Apparently they are on the borderline and he will go to Accomack, but they know we are there to help them out.*

A staff member also made a brief home visit in May, and reported that the whole family was planting a vegetable garden. She said, "I stopped [by] to give them information about upcoming SPARK events, talk about materials, and show [their son] a box turtle I had with me. They seemed very happy to see me."

# Recommendations

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## **Program Services**

- \* Based on focus group interviews with families, staff may want to consider further strategies to directly address obstacles families face participating in the program. For example, at least two mothers requested assistance studying to take the drivers' exam.
- \* Similar to the recommendation above, establish specific family goals in parents' own words with respect to parenting, language skills, adult education, and so on.
- \* Consider the pros and cons of offering some classes in locations where large numbers of eligible families reside.
- \* Provide incentives to trusted Hispanic community members who can help recruit and retain eligible families in the program.
- \* Develop specific strategies to decrease the percent of students who drop out in the first three months (currently 40%) and other specific strategies to increase the percent that attend most all months of the school year (currently only 10%).
- \* Strive to develop a stronger rapport with all, but especially male, participants prior to pre-testing. (Staff feels that pre-test BEST scores among males often misrepresent their actual language ability as males can be hesitant to reveal how much English they, in fact, understand. When trust is greater among male students and teachers at the time of post-testing, then test scores more accurately reflect ability.)

## **Program Management**

- \* Consider the merits of keeping comprehensive family files where, in one place, staff could review enrollment forms, attendance records, home visit logs, test scores, goal sheets, etc.
- \* Document the parenting curriculum.
- \* Seek technical assistance in combining the various data bases and in maximizing the capability of Excel to inform program decisions.
- \* Provide staff development to data manager in making the most of Excel.
- \* Provide Spanish language training to staff who would like to participate.

# Appendices

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SPARK Plus  
Document List

Date	Description	Number of pages
10/19/03	Sparky's News	2
10/27/03	Noticias de "Sparky" [Sparky's News - Spanish]	1
	Noviembre 2003 [November 2003 Calendar of Events]	1
	Weekly Calendar Template	1
	3 Program Worksheets	3
	Announcement of January Family Learning Family Fun Days	1
	SPARK Plus Brochure [Spanish]	4
	SPARK Plus Flyer [Announcing Family Festival - Spanish]	1
	SPARK Flyer [Announcing Story Hour]	1
	Sparky's News	1
01/25/04	Noticias de "Sparky" [Sparky's News - Spanish]	1
	New Sparky Stickers	2
	January Program Calendar	1
	Curriculum Materials	33
01/18/04	Noticias de "Sparky" [Sparky's News - Spanish]	1
	Participants' Weekly Calendar Log of Activities and Time	24
12/15/03	Sparky's News	1
12/15/03	Noticias de "Sparky" [Sparky's News - Spanish]	1
	SPARK Plus Family Night [Attendance log]	1
	SPARK Plus FLFF [Attendance log]	1
	Volunteer/Home-based Log	1
	Student Enrollment Form	2
	SPARK Plus Home Visit Log	1
	Eastern Shore Community College Adult Education Teacher's Monthly Report	1
	Graduación de SPARK [SPARK Graduation Flyer - Spanish]	1
	Subtotal	87

SPARK Plus PAAT Results  
Pre Test  
Participant Pseudonym: IRINA

<b>Creativity</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
1. Encourages child to ask questions		X		
6. Likes the child to make up stories		X		
11. Expresses uncertainty in front of the child			X	
18. Urges child to learn self-evaluation			X	
<b>Frustration</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
2. Allows noise during the child's playtime		X		
12. Permits child to get dirty while at play		X		
15. Tolerates child interruption during play		X		
<b>Control</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
3. Allows child to disagree			X	
7. Wants child to talk more than the parent		X		
17. Provides opportunities for decision-making		X		
<b>Play</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
4. Recognizes child's need to play with parent		X		
9. Shows confidence in choosing new toys			X	
10. Realizes play improves behavior of child		X		
13. Introduces vocabulary during pretending		X		
16. Knows praise is unnecessary during play			X	
19. Regards peer play as a helpful influence		X		
<b>Teaching/Learning</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
5. Understands importance of early learning		X		
8. Knows how to tell if child learns lesson			X	
14. Expresses confidence in teaching at home		X		
20. Recognizes play and learning go together		X		

	HF	SF	SU	HU
PRE	0	14 (70%)	6 (30%)	0
POST	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

SPARK Plus PAAT Results  
Pre Test  
Participant Pseudonym: LINDA

<b>Creativity</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
1. Encourages child to ask questions		X		
6. Likes the child to make up stories	X			
11. Expresses uncertainty in front of the child				X
18. Urges child to learn self-evaluation				X
<b>Frustration</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
2. Allows noise during the child's playtime	X			
12. Permits child to get dirty while at play		X		
15. Tolerates child interruption during play		X		
<b>Control</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
3. Allows child to disagree			X	
7. Wants child to talk more than the parent		X		
17. Provides opportunities for decision-making		X		
<b>Play</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
4. Recognizes child's need to play with parent		X		
9. Shows confidence in choosing new toys		X		
10. Realizes play improves behavior of child		X		
13. Introduces vocabulary during pretending	X			
16. Knows praise is unnecessary during play			X	
19. Regards peer play as a helpful influence		X		
<b>Teaching/Learning</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
5. Understands importance of early learning	X			
8. Knows how to tell if child learns lesson	X			
14. Expresses confidence in teaching at home	X			
20. Recognizes play and learning go together		X		

	HF	SF	SU	HU
PRE	6 (30%)	10 (50%)	2 (10%)	2 (10%)
POST	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

SPARK Plus PAAT Results  
Pre Test  
Participant Pseudonym: EDITH

<b>Creativity</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
1. <i>Encourages child to ask questions</i>		X		
6. Likes the child to make up stories		X		
11. <i>Expresses uncertainty in front of the child</i>			X	
18. Urges child to learn self-evaluation			X	
<b>Frustration</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
2. Allows noise during the child's playtime		X		
12. Permits child to get dirty while at play		X		
15. Tolerates child interruption during play			X	
<b>Control</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
3. Allows child to disagree			X	
7. Wants child to talk more than the parent		X		
17. Provides opportunities for decision-making			X	
<b>Play</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
4. Recognizes child's need to play with parent			X	
9. Shows confidence in choosing new toys		X		
10. Realizes play improves behavior of child		X		
13. Introduces vocabulary during pretending		X		
16. <i>Knows praise is unnecessary during play</i>			X	
19. Regards peer play as a helpful influence		X		
<b>Teaching/Learning</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
5. Understands importance of early learning		X		
8. <i>Knows how to tell if child learns lesson</i>		X		
14. Expresses confidence in teaching at home		X		
20. <i>Recognizes play and learning go together</i>			X	

	HF	SF	SU	HU
PRE	0	12 (60%)	8 (40%)	0
POST	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

SPARK Plus PAAT Results  
Pre (X) and Post (0)Test  
Participant Pseudonym: MARTA

<b>Creativity</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
1. <i>Encourages child to ask questions</i>		XO		
6. Likes the child to make up stories		XO		
11. <i>Expresses uncertainty in front of the child</i>			XO	
18. Urges child to learn self-evaluation			XO	
<b>Frustration</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
2. Allows noise during the child's playtime		XO		
12. Permits child to get dirty while at play		XO		
15. Tolerates child interruption during play		O	X	
<b>Control</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
3. Allows child to disagree		XO		
7. Wants child to talk more than the parent			XO	
17. Provides opportunities for decision-making		XO		
<b>Play</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
4. Recognizes child's need to play with parent		XO		
9. Shows confidence in choosing new toys		XO		
10. Realizes play improves behavior of child		XO		
13. Introduces vocabulary during pretending		XO		
16. <i>Knows praise is unnecessary during play</i>			XO	
19. Regards peer play as a helpful influence		XO		
<b>Teaching/Learning</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
5. Understands importance of early learning		XO		
8. <i>Knows how to tell if child learns lesson</i>		XO		
14. Expresses confidence in teaching at home		XO		
20. <i>Recognizes play and learning go together</i>		O	X	

	HF	SF	SU	HU
PRE	0	14 (70%)	6 (30%)	0
POST	0	16 (80%)	4 (20%)	0

SPARK Plus PAAT Results  
Pre (X) and Post (0)Test  
Participant Pseudonym: LOLA

<b>Creativity</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
1. <i>Encourages child to ask questions</i>	X	O		
6. Likes the child to make up stories	X	O		
11. <i>Expresses uncertainty in front of the child</i>			O	X
18. Urges child to learn self-evaluation			O	X
<b>Frustration</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
2. Allows noise during the child's playtime	X	O		
12. Permits child to get dirty while at play	XO			
15. Tolerates child interruption during play	X	O		
<b>Control</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
3. Allows child to disagree		X	O	
7. Wants child to talk more than the parent	X	O		
17. Provides opportunities for decision-making	X	O		
<b>Play</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
4. Recognizes child's need to play with parent	O	X		
9. Shows confidence in choosing new toys		O	X	
10. Realizes play improves behavior of child	XO			
13. Introduces vocabulary during pretending		XO		
16. <i>Knows praise is unnecessary during play</i>			O	X
19. Regards peer play as a helpful influence	XO			
<b>Teaching/Learning</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
5. Understands importance of early learning	XO			
8. <i>Knows how to tell if child learns lesson</i>	X	O		
14. Expresses confidence in teaching at home		O		X
20. <i>Recognizes play and learning go together</i>		O		X

	HF	SF	SU	HU
PRE	11 (55%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	5 (25%)
POST	5 (25%)	11 (55%)	4 (20%)	0

SPARK Plus PAAT Results  
Pre (X) and Post (0)Test  
Participant Pseudonym: Yolanda

<b>Creativity</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
1. <i>Encourages child to ask questions</i>	X	O		
6. Likes the child to make up stories	X	O		
11. <i>Expresses uncertainty in front of the child</i>			XO	
18. Urges child to learn self-evaluation	X	O		
<b>Frustration</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
2. Allows noise during the child's playtime	X	O		
12. Permits child to get dirty while at play		XO		
15. Tolerates child interruption during play		O	X	
<b>Control</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
3. Allows child to disagree	X	O		
7. Wants child to talk more than the parent		XO		
17. Provides opportunities for decision-making		XO		
<b>Play</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
4. Recognizes child's need to play with parent	X	O		
9. Shows confidence in choosing new toys		XO		
10. Realizes play improves behavior of child	X	O		
13. Introduces vocabulary during pretending		XO		
16. <i>Knows praise is unnecessary during play</i>			XO	
19. Regards peer play as a helpful influence	X	O		
<b>Teaching/Learning</b>	<b>HF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>SU</b>	<b>HU</b>
5. Understands importance of early learning	X	O		
8. <i>Knows how to tell if child learns lesson</i>		XO		
14. Expresses confidence in teaching at home		XO		
20. <i>Recognizes play and learning go together</i>		XO		

	HF	SF	SU	HU
PRE	9 (45%)	8 (40%)	3 (15%)	0
POST	0	18 (90%)	2 (10%)	0