

REGION XII EARLY MATH INITIATIVE

Report from Kids Play Math to FHI 360



Executive Summary

The Early Math Initiative was a partnership between Region XII T/TA project and the University of Denver's Kids Play Math (KPM) project that took place between August 2014 and November 2014. The goal was to *improve concept development and quality of feedback in early math in Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs.*

The Initiative consisted of four elements: (1) the four-week Kids Play Math online training course; (2) one day face-to-face training in use of the Early Mathematics Instruction and Learning Instrument (EMILI), that is designed to supplement the KPM online training course and to strengthen concept development and quality of feedback; (3) one day class observation and mentoring; and (4) two conference calls and supporting materials.

Professional Development Model and Completion rate

The participating MSHS programs volunteered for the project and used their funds to pay for the KPM online training course (FHI 360 paid for the EMILI training, the observations and conference calls). The combination of the online training course with the face-to-face EMILI training in the middle of the online course took advantage of the best features of each method and motivated the participating teachers to complete the course. The MSHS programs were invested in the project and made good use of what their teachers and coordinators learned. This resulted in a high completion rate. 82 teaching staff and coordinators from 5 MSHS programs enrolled in the course. 75 finished (91%), which is a very high completion rate.

Impacts and Satisfaction

It is known that one-day trainings by experts have minimal effect on changing teacher's classroom instruction. The KPM online training course is designed for the Head Start classroom. Each lesson has 3 or 4 research based math activities that teachers implement or adapt in the classrooms. This gives them time to absorb and internalize the new information. Direct classroom observations, discussion forums, and coordinator reports, indicate that most teachers implemented all of the research based classroom activities, and that this increased student engagement in mathematics in all areas of the classroom, which is ongoing. The course' survey results indicate that teachers were enthusiastic about what they learned and that they found the course to be effective, helpful, appropriately challenging and easy to navigate. Similarly, the EMILI's survey results indicate that the training was highly informative, useful and applicable. The conference calls indicate that EMILI is being used to develop lesson plans for the daily routine of the classroom.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This project has positively impacted 82 teachers and coordinators and 650 children. All project outcomes were met or exceeded. Teacher impacts were significant and are ongoing, and there is strong evidence that this integrated model is an effective vehicle for creating real and lasting change. Therefore, Kids Play Math recommends that this project be scaled up.