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RMC Research Corporation

Evaluation of Mother Goose Cares About Math and Science Developing a Research Base

Mother Goose Cares About Math and Science was developed by the Vermont Center for the Book to introduce childcare providers to the language of mathematics, science, and literacy and to help them incorporate activities into their curriculum that will help young children learn math and science process skills related to content standards. A series of training sessions using a standardized curriculum was provided during the spring and fall of 2001 and the spring and fall of 2002 to providers throughout the state of Vermont and in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

RMC Research is conducting a multi-method evaluation of the project to determine:

- the degree to which providers acquired expected knowledge and skills,
- reactions to the training sessions, including indications of what providers believed was easiest and hardest to implement and facilitators/barriers to implementation;
- transfer of knowledge and skills learned in the training sessions into practice; and
- influence on the knowledge and skills of four-year-old children under the care of the providers who attended the workshops compared to children under the care of providers who did not attend.

Methodologies employed for this evaluation included analysis of quickwrites written by workshop participants after each training session, provider surveys, observation of classrooms of a sample of those who received training, child assessments, and staff interviews. Samples of providers from each training cohort, starting in the spring 2001 through the fall 2002, were asked to respond to various types of evaluation measures.

Results of this study show the Vermont Center for the Book made progress toward meeting each of its goals and objectives and attained most of its desired outcomes. The following goals each showed excellent progress:

- Increase the preschool science and mathematics literacy, confidence, and competence of childcare providers.
- Expand the ability of childcare providers to incorporate science process skills, mathematics concepts, and science and mathematics activities into daily interactions with children.

The following goals each showed Very Good progress:

- Increase childcare providers' ability to understand and incorporate NCTM standards into their teaching and into their communication with parents and kindergarten teachers
- Create and/or enhance collaborative relationships among childcare providers, local libraries, and science museums.
- Give childcare centers the ability to train providers through an integrated video, books, and materials course.

This evaluation will continue for three more cohorts from spring 2003, fall 2003, and spring 2004. Key findings will be provided to Vermont Center for the Book for inclusion in its final report.