

Reading Recovery® is an early literacy intervention for the lowest-achieving first graders. It is an important part of a school's comprehensive literacy plan. Reading Recovery's design includes: an instructional program for children, training and on-going staff development, an implementation plan, and monitoring and evaluating student achievement. Students receive 30 minutes of daily, one-on-one instruction from highly skilled Reading Recovery teachers for 12-20 weeks. This instruction enables students to make accelerated gains in reading and writing. They reach average literacy levels for their age group and continue learning in their classrooms.

“Success in the early grades does not guarantee success throughout the school years and beyond, but failure in the early grades does virtually guarantee failure in later schooling. If there is a chance to prevent the negative spiral that begins with the early reading failure from the start, then it seems necessary to do so”

Slavin, R. E., Karweit, N. L., & Wasik, B. A. (1992/93). "Preventing early school failure: What works?" *Educational Leadership*, 50 (4), 10-18.

## PROGRAM HISTORY

Reading Recovery is a research-based collaborative effort between schools and universities. Designed by Marie M. Clay of New Zealand, Reading Recovery has proven effective in reversing the cycle of failure of low-achieving first-graders in a relatively short time. There are two positive outcomes: 1) successfully completing the program, thereby preventing literacy failure and 2) identifying those children who truly need further assessment and long-term service. By training Teacher Leaders, a school system builds staff development capacity to train Reading Recovery teachers from system schools. In addition to tutoring Reading Recovery children, these highly skilled teachers become a resource for collaborative literacy team work in their schools.

In a scientifically-based, empirical study funded by the MacArthur Foundation, researchers (Pinnell et al., 1992) attributed Reading Recovery's success to three interacting factors: one-on-one instruction, a unique model of professional development, and a research-based set of instructional tasks and procedures.

A government-sponsored program in New Zealand, Reading Recovery has expanded to the United States, Canada, the UK, and Australia. The program has also been redeveloped in Spanish and French. By 2001 more than one million children had been served in the United States. In 2001-02, almost 200,000 more students were served across 3,300 school districts and 10,500 schools nation-wide. There were 42 university faculty trainers and over 700 teacher leaders in 570 Reading Recovery Sites. Detailed documentation of the past ten years of Reading Recovery in the metropolitan area can be found in the NYU Reading Recovery Project publication (2001) *“Investing in Children, Investing in Teachers: More than a Decade of Success in Reading Recovery”*.

Pinnell, G.S., Lyons, C.A., DeFord, D.E., Byrk, A. & Seltzer, M. (1992). "Comparing instructional models for the literacy education of high risk first graders." *Reading Research Quarterly*, 29, 8-39.

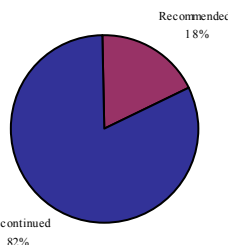
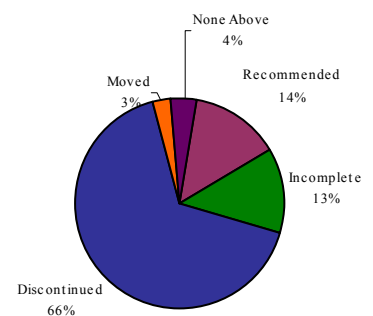
## RECENT RESULTS IN NEW JERSEY 2001-2002

New York University serves as the University Training Center for New Jersey. It provides training, on-going professional development, data analysis, and other technical assistance for school systems implementing Reading Recovery.

Since 1992-93 when Reading Recovery started in New Jersey, Reading Recovery has served 21,231 students. In 2001-02, the NYU Training Center served 259 schools in 94 districts. Thirteen teacher leaders provided training and on-going staff development for 477 teachers (70 in their training year). These teachers served 3,943 students.

Currently there are nine Reading Recovery sites affiliated with the NYU University Training Center in Atlantic City, Bridgeton, Bridgewater-Raritan, Evesham, Haddonfield, Jersey City, Lawrence Township, Newark, and Plumsted Township. A new site will be opening in the city of Elizabeth in 2003-04.

Reading Recovery reports on the achievement of all first graders served, even those served for only one lesson for discontinued Reading Recovery service, 2,628 students or 66% met the stringent criteria within 20 weeks, and 14% were recommended for further assessment and other support. At year-end, 13% were still being tutored with insufficient time to complete a 20 week program.



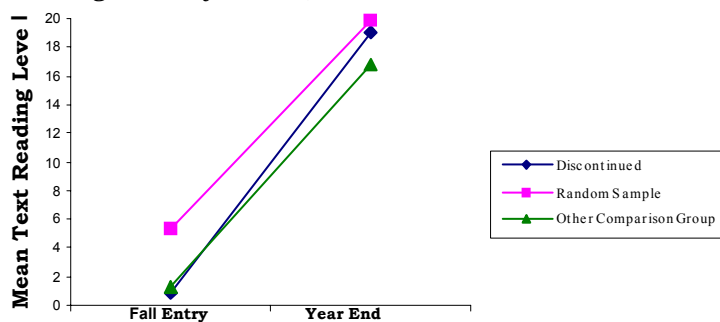
The effects of Reading Recovery can best be understood by looking at data from children who had a full series of lessons, in other words, those who received a complete program. Eighty-two percent of these students successfully completed the program.

Based on year-end progress, children are placed in one of five status categories:

- **Discontinued** : Successfully meets or exceeds average grade level targets
- **Recommended** : Requires further assessment after a 20 week program
- **Incomplete** : Unable to complete 20 weeks of lessons due to end of year
- **Moved** : Leaves school during program
- **None of the above** : Withdrawn before completion of program (rarely used)

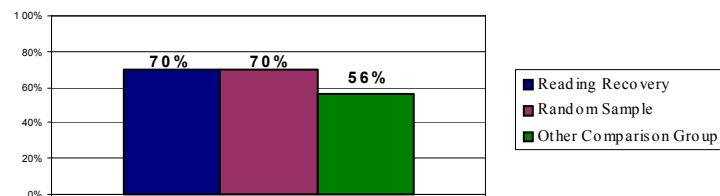
## CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

In 2001-02 In New Jersey districts implementing Reading Recovery students are compared with a randomly selected group and another group that qualified for service but did not receive it (other comparison group). Making accelerated gains, successful Reading Recovery students closed the achievement gap between them and their peers in the random sample. The average range (mean  $\pm$  .5 SD) of the random sample students was between Text Level 16 and 24, equivalent to Grade Level 1-2 to Grade Level 3-2). At year-end Reading Recovery children who were the lowest achieving students at the beginning of the year, scored within this range. They also scored above the other comparison group who needed Reading Recovery service, but did not receive it.



Examining the actual percent of children falling in the average range, 70% of the Reading Recovery students and 70% of the random sample were in this band. Only 56% of the other comparison group scored comparably.

Percent of NJ Students Reaching Average Range in Text Reading



## ADDRESSING STUDENT DIVERSITY

In 2001-02 there were 755 English language learners (ELL) who participated in Reading Recovery, approximately 20% of the total population. ELL students who had a full series of lessons have the same success rate, 82%, within the same time frame, as their native English-speaking peers in Reading Recovery. On average, successful native and non-native speakers achieved the same reading levels at the end of grade two.

Although Reading Recovery students were the lowest achieving readers when they entered Grade 1, only 4% of them who received a full series of lessons was referred for special education placement, while only 1% were actually placed in special education. Moreover, in 2001-02 only 173 out of 3,006 Reading Recovery students with a full program were retained in first grade. These retentions were made primarily for reasons other than literacy.

## SUMMARY

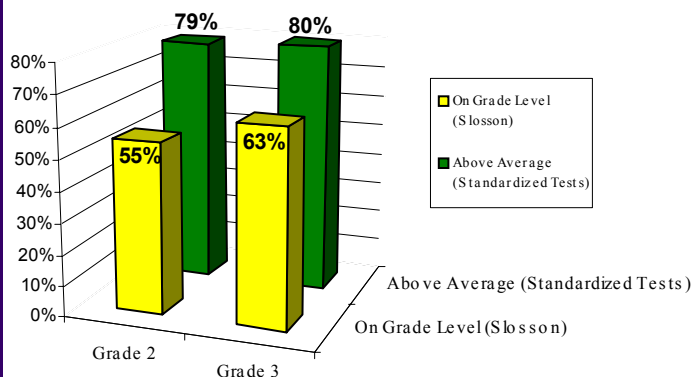
In New Jersey, Reading Recovery has a successful 11 year track record closing the gap in first grade literacy achievement. The 2001-02 data show that along with sound, classroom literacy instruction Reading Recovery is highly effective with the lowest achieving students. Because the program reduces special education placements, lowers retention rates, and supports literacy achievement of diverse learners, it is also cost-effective. With the support of educators who understand the need for systemic change over time, Reading Recovery continues to set the standard for early literacy intervention and the training of excellent early literacy professionals.

## DO CHILDREN MAINTAIN THEIR GAINS?

NYU provides technical assistance to support site follow-up studies of successful Reading Recovery students in order to monitor their progress in literacy.

The 20 districts in the **Bridgewater-Raritan** site used different standardized tests to assess successful Reading Recovery students in subsequent years. In spring of 2002 the scores of 666 Reading Recovery graduates were collected on one of the following tests: the California School Test-5, the Metropolitan School Test 8, the Stanford Achievement Test 9, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the Comprehensive Testing Program 4, and the Terra Nova School Test Series. Fifty-five percent in second grade and 63% in third grade of successful Reading Recovery students scored above the test average. In addition the Slosson Oral Reading Test was administered to 977 students in the same area. Four out of 5 Reading Recovery graduates (79% in second grade and 80% in third grade) scored at grade level as defined by the national norming sample for this test.

### Bridgewater-Raritan Follow-up Performance



Similar results were obtained by the **Jersey City** district for the Reading Recovery students in fourth grade, on the reading portion of the statewide Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA). In 2000-01 test administration, for 55 Reading Recovery graduates mean scale score was 196.3, close to the district average of 204.5. Subsequent ESPA administration in 01-02 revealed increase of the district average to 209.5, which was closely followed on by the mean of 199.5 for 68 Reading Recovery students. The pattern of these results suggests that successful Reading Recovery students continue to perform well and maintain reading proficiency, even three years after the initial tutoring intervention on a state standardized test. These results also demonstrate the crucial roles that Reading Recovery teachers play in a comprehensive literacy plan. They not only taught the lowest achieving first graders, but also supported classroom literacy instruction during the other part of their work day to achieve results such as those noted above.