

Sifriyat Pijama - 2013-2014 School Year

Summary of Evaluation Report

"RAMA" (Ministry of Education the Research and Evaluation Division)

During the 2013-2014 school year Sifriyat Pijama operated in 7,100 preschools. The program distributed 8 different children's books to 218,000 children from 164 communities across Israel. 600 preschool teachers were surveyed by phone (teachers from 300 religious classrooms, and 300 from non-religious schools). Similarly, telephone interviews were conducted with 600 parents (one parent from each classroom; 300 religious and 300 non-religious).

The survey results indicate the following findings regarding Sifriyat Pijama:

- Encourages exposure to books and reading motivation;
- Provides a positive experience and enjoyment in receiving the books;
- Enriches and contributes to children's development: their world and language;
- Increases parents' awareness of the importance of books;
- Generates joint reading experiences for parents and children;
- Contributes to the home library (with striking impact on low-social-economic status homes).

Main findings:

• **Satisfaction with the program:** A high proportion of the teachers (**95% or more**) are very satisfied with the program, and want to continue to participate in it. Moreover, **96% of the teachers think it should be mandatory** in all preschools in Israel. A significant proportion estimate that discontinuation of the program will negatively impact children's reading experiences in the preschool (62%) and in the home (78%). **96% of parents reported that they were satisfied with the program**, and all parents of children remaining in preschool next year said that they want to continue participating in the program.

• **Satisfaction with the books:** 83% of the teachers and 88% of the parents expressed very high satisfaction from the books they received. 72% to 86% of the teachers and the parents gave high ratings of all aspects of the books: their content and illustrations (receiving the highest scores – 80% - 86%); suitability and relevance to the lifestyle of the families and the school communities; developmental appropriateness and relevance to the lives of young children.

• **Reading the books in the classroom and at home:** 94% of the teachers reported that they read all the books to the children in the classroom. Of these, about half read the books once or twice, and the rest - more (usually up to 4 times). 89% of parents reported that they have read most or all Sifriyat Pijama books distributed in the last year, often on two or more occasions. In addition, 31% reported that they frequently return to books distributed in past years.

• **Activities and discussion:** At least **90%** of the teachers carry out activities and discussions surrounding most or all the books. Moreover, **80%** reported conducting classroom discussions around values, heritage and dilemmas as reflected in most or all of the books. **About half of the parents** reported that they talked with their children about the books or about values, dilemmas, etc. following the reading of most or all books.

• **Parent suggestions:** **70%** of parents reported that they are aware of the activity and discussion guides at the back of the books. Of these, **60%** reported that they read the suggestions in most or all books, and **15%** said they carried out activities suggested in most/all of the books.

• **Books from previous years:** **98%** of the teachers reported that they have Sifriyat Pijama books from previous years in their classroom. **87%** of the teachers read books from previous years (occasionally or frequently) and **56%** carry out activities following the reading.

• **Changes over time in program implementation:** Teachers reported enhanced integration of the books in the classroom curriculum over the years (42%), and increased time spent on the program in the classroom (31%). At the same time, a significant proportion (58%) feel the program gets easier to implement from year to year.

Contribution to the home library: According to the study, 50% of children have up to 15 Sifriyat Pijama books at home, and another 50% have received more. This is significant, as 37% of the families reported owning fewer than 20 suitable children's books in total (including Sifriyat Pijama books and not counting lending library books) and 43% - between 20 to 50 books.

The scope of the program's impact:

A significant proportion of teachers and parents (between 80% to 90%) attributed a **variety of positive effects** to the program, including:

- ✓ 93% of the teachers and 90% of parents think that the classroom implementation of the program **contributes to children's love for books** and enjoyment from reading.
- ✓ The program contributes to **increased reading** in the classroom (84% of the teachers) and at home (83% of the teachers and 75% of parents).
- ✓ 88% and 81% of the teachers told parents that the program contributes to **enriched spoken language and vocabulary** of the children.
- ✓ 86% of the teachers and 87% of parents reported that the program **fosters cognitive skills, reading comprehension and values education**.
- ✓ 83% of the teachers reported that due to the program, **books are more central** in the everyday lives of the children.
- ✓ About 90% of the teachers believe that the program **increases children's desire to read** books.
- ✓ Nearly 90% of the teachers estimate that the program contributes to **children's familiarization with books and authors**.