

Casting light on parent engagement with adolescent reading.

Parents' Engagement with their children's education can play a critical role in promoting student learning. While many parents want to be engaged and explore avenues to do so, they may find it increasingly difficult to maintain engagement once their children progress through middle childhood and into adolescence. During adolescence reading demands of the curriculum increase and it is a crucial time for students to have a community of support. However, the field of adolescent reading is under-researched with limited knowledge available about how parents might contribute to such a community. This presentation reports on the engagement with their children's reading for a group of parents who connected with the GriffLinC Reading Partners Project for middle years students.

We investigate the following questions

- What did parents know about learning to read?
- How did they support their child's reading development?
- How did parents engage with schools about reading?
- What did parents want to know about supporting their child's reading?
- How did they feel about engagement with their child's reading?

Methodology

Building on the literature on parent engagement we analysed data from a socio-cultural perspective. Data included parent comments collected in the GriffLinC project, including application forms, interviews after each 5-month round, feedback meetings about reading assessments, and emails to the researchers.

Emerging Insights

- The parents had varied experiences.
- Some parents invested heavily in their child's reading- including time, money, resources and ideas.
- Parents reported a range of emotions, often intense. Parents did not all share the same emotions.
- Parents' interactions with schools were quite diverse.

Significance

Information about parents' current knowledge and practice can shed light on ways to empower parents. This knowledge and awareness can help build partnerships to support students as they progress towards independent reading.

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