

# Family Literacy Around the World

**Literacy** - the ability to use language, numbers, images, computers, and other basic means to understand, communicate, gain useful knowledge and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture.

## **Levels of literacy:**

- ✓ **basic literacy**
- ✓ **functional literacy**
- ✓ **multiple literacy** - the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts





# ***Defining Family Literacy***

- ▶ a wide range of programs involving family members and literacy activities
- ▶ learning activities involving both children and their parents.
- ▶ services provided to participants on a voluntary basis that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family (United State Congress)

The term family literacy is used in several ways:

- ▶ (1) to describe the study of literacy in the family,
- ▶ (2) to describe a set of interventions related to literacy development of young children, and
- ▶ (3) to refer to a set of programs designed to enhance the literacy skills of more than one family member .

# Family Literacy / Family Reading

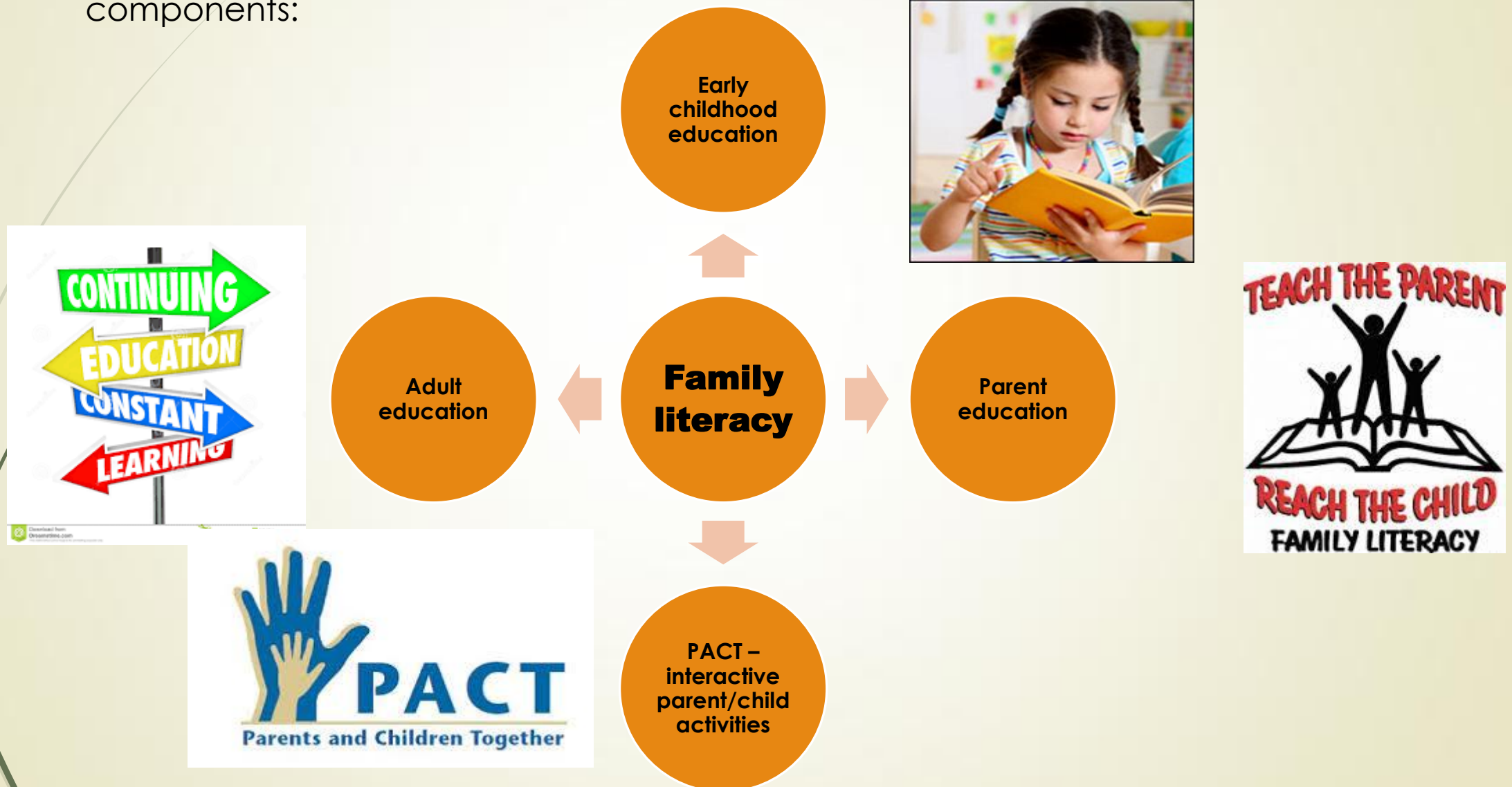
**Family literacy**

**Family reading**

e.g. family story hours,  
book distribution  
projects, book  
discussion groups

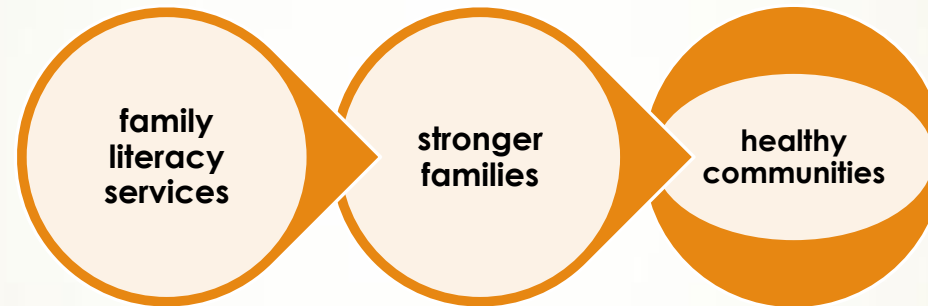


**Family literacy** refers to programs where agencies and organizations partner together to provide coordinated services to both parents and their children through the following four components:



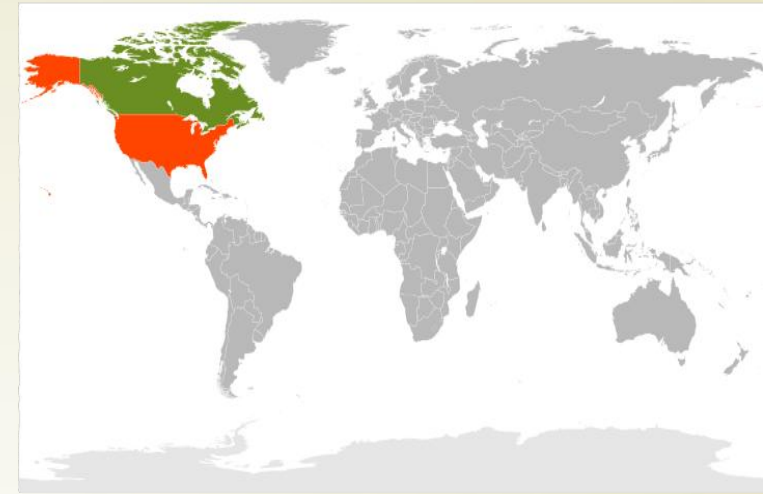
## ***Intergenerational or multigenerational literacy programs***

- ❖ include more than two members within a single family (typically a parents and a young child) around a set of teaching and learning approaches
- ❖ focus on the family as a unit





## ***Beginnings and pioneering The United States of America***



***Even Start*** (1988) - a federal funded project  
***NCFL - National Center for Families*** - the first to pioneer and test the four-component family literacy model

### ***USA programs:***

***READ ALOUD AMERICA – RAR*** (1995) – coordinated by a NGO and hosted in schools is the largest and the most effective family literacy program in America

***Reach Out and Read – ROR*** - program carried out with the help of volunteering pediatricians and pediatric nurses

***The Family and Child Education – FACE*** - sponsored by the Office of Indian Education Programs



## Canada

**Centre for Family Literacy** (Alberta) has developed successful projects such as:

- ❖ **B.O.O.K.S. - Books Offer Our Kids' Success**
- ❖ **C.O.W. -Classrooms on Wheels**
- ❖ **Learning Together**

all of them delivered by trained facilitators

**78 Parenting and Family Literacy Centers** network located in elementary schools (in Toronto) - free, school-based programs for parents and caregivers with children from birth to age six

## **Europe – general overview**

- ❖ significant family literacy-related policy development (Turkey, UK, Netherlands, Malta)
- ❖ little coherent policy at national or local level (Germany, Czech Republic, Norway)
- ❖ a near or complete policy vacuum in this field (Cyprus, Romania)
  
- ❖ a wide variety of literacy programs
- ❖ the implementing organizations are either from the public or NGO sector
- ❖ targeted towards disadvantaged groups

### **Romania**

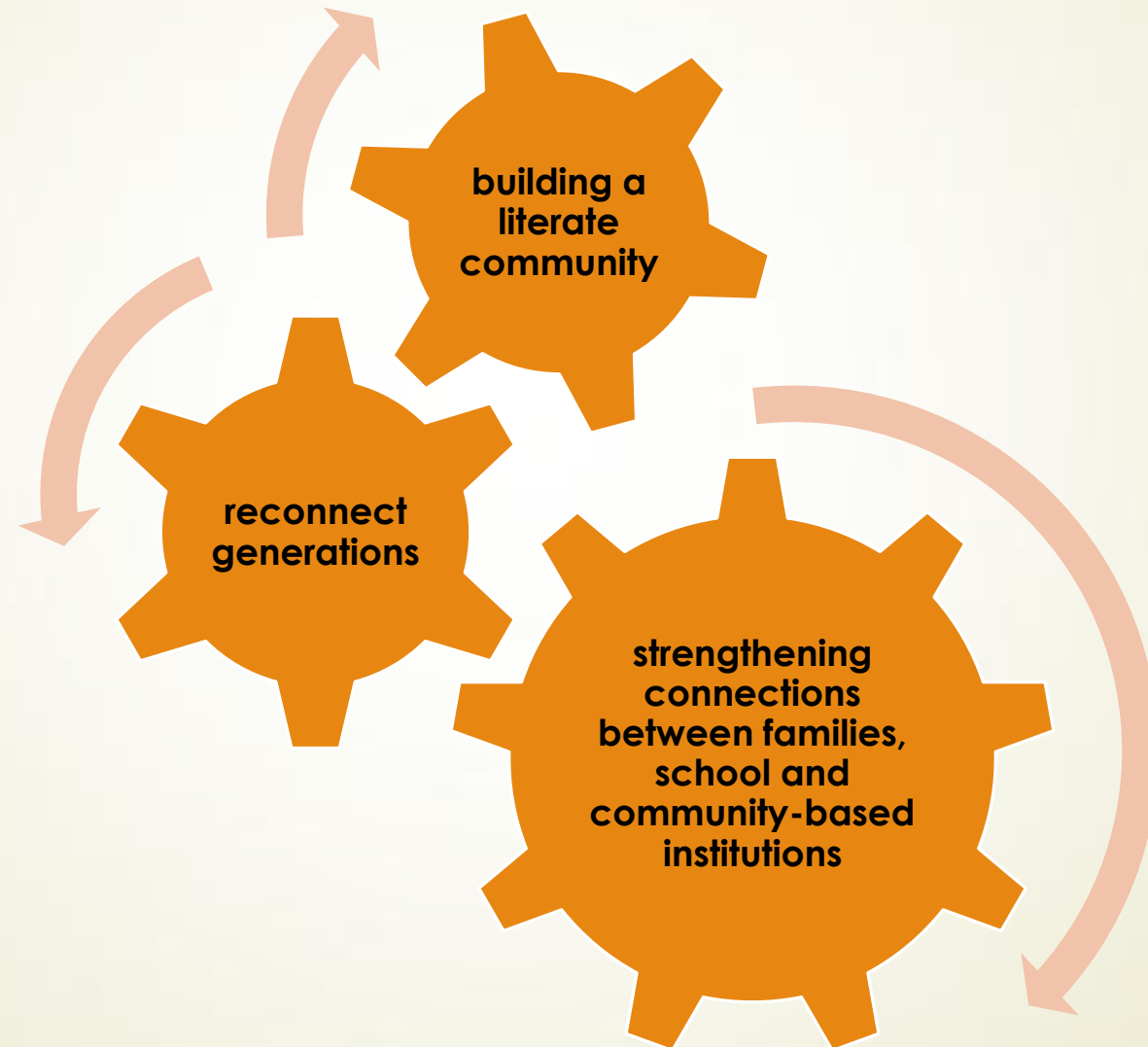
- ❖ ongoing attempts by non-governmental policy actors to develop family literacy programs
- ❖ no coherent strategy at a national / regional level – policy vacuum





# **Comparative analysis of intergenerational literacy programs**

## **Aims and objectives**



# Comparative analysis of intergenerational literacy programs

## Target groups

- all age groups (pre-school children, adults and elders) at the same time
- members of the same family usually in difficulty
  - illiterate or low literate parents
  - low income families
  - immigrants and refugees who need to master the national language
  - families from isolated areas
  - single parent families
  - teenage parents
  - foster parents / caregivers
  - incarcerated parents
  - ethnic, religious and racial minority families
  - adults with disabilities
  - maternal victims of domestic violence



# Comparative analysis of intergenerational literacy programs

## **Providers & locations**

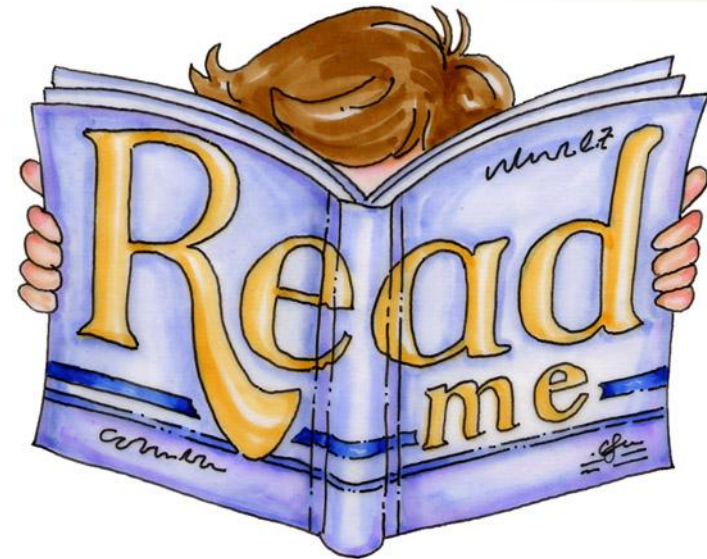
- non-governmental organizations
- public organizations
- kindergartens
- schools
- prisons
- churches
- libraries
- private agencies
- community centers

## **Financing**

- public and private sector

## **Design** takes into account:

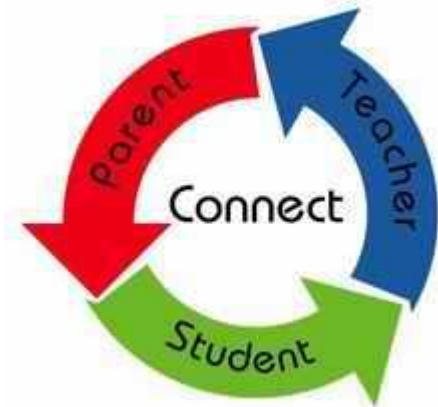
- the characteristics of the participants targeted
- appropriate activities for working with these learners



# Comparative analysis of intergenerational literacy programs

## Literacy activities

- joint reading
- literacy classes
- letter or words recognition through sounds and images
- recognition of colors and shapes
- discussions, debates, presentations
- Interactive sessions involving visuals, audios, clips and DVDs
- crafts creation
- writing letters to pen-friends / pen pals
- newsletters writing
- home visits
- art: role plays, drama, songs and dance
- story-telling
- composing poems / rhymes
- board games / sports
- creating online library



# Comparative analysis of intergenerational literacy programs

## Facilities and facilitators

### Facilities:

- discussion forums
- hand-over reading materials
- book clubs
- distance learning websites
- e-classrooms
- chat on Web Board platform
- learner-generated content

### Facilitators:

- trained facilitators
- parents
- librarians
- school teachers
- adult and parent trainers
- social-workers
- tutors
- volunteers





***Thank you very much!***

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