

Evaluation of the Story Mentors Pilot Marketing Campaign in Mississippi

Client: Barbara Bush Foundation

Overview

Insight partnered with the Barbara Bush Foundation to conduct an evaluation of its Story Mentors program pilot in the state of Mississippi. Story Mentors is a free online product consisting of digital books and guides that assist emerging readers in the first grade and readers in the second grade who could use supplemental assistance. The product currently consists of 25 free books that can be accessed digitally or downloaded, supplemental activities and resources for readers, and accompanying support materials for each of the targeted stakeholder groups. As part of the marketing campaign, teachers received informational materials describing the product and encouraging them to download and use the Story Mentor and publicize the materials to parents. The primary aim of the marketing materials was to drive teachers to the StoryMentors.org website to access the free Story Mentors materials, download the materials, then share those materials with parents or mentors.

Insight's evaluation was designed to assess the effectiveness of the marketing materials and gather information on the impressions and use of these materials with the goal of identifying improvements prior to disseminating the Story Mentor product to other states. Insight designed a mixed methods study with an embedded randomized study design. Insight randomly assigned all first-grade educators across over 500 schools in the State of Mississippi to three groups: (1) educators who received Story Mentors marketing materials via email and mail (Group A), (2) educators who received the marketing



materials via email only (Group B), or (3) educators who received no marketing materials (Control Group). Educators in groups A and B then received Story Mentor marketing materials accordingly from the foundation. Insight then fielded a web-based survey of educators in each group to determine take-up rates and participation levels in groups A and B as compared with group C. Insight also conducted virtual focus groups with teachers and parents who had used the Story Mentors product to assess the materials, including how the materials and product could be improved.

Insight's final report and briefing included both findings and recommendations for the national rollout of the product, ideas for broadening the marketing and dissemination process, suggested changes to the marketing materials and email messages, timing of the national rollout, and further piloting of the product with teachers.

Products

Final report; briefing