

Dare to Explore III: Auckland Libraries' Summer Reading Adventure Evaluation

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Dare to Explore III: Auckland Libraries' Summer Reading Adventure Evaluation

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Executive Summary

This report describes the results of an evaluation of Dare to Explore III: Auckland Libraries' Summer Reading Adventure. Dare to Explore was a summer reading programme for children aged 5 to 13 that involved a series of challenges that were designed to embed reading within fun. The iteration of Dare to Explore that is discussed in this report ran from 9 December 2013 to 19 January 2014.

In this report, we aim to answer a number of evaluation questions relating to how children and their families experienced Dare to Explore, including:

- Did Dare to Explore maintain or improve children's literacy?
- Did Dare to Explore encourage learning and discovery among children?
- Did children engage with the digital aspects of the programme?
- Did Dare to Explore encourage family engagement with each other and with the library?

We also seek to understand how Dare to Explore was experienced differently by children and families, such as:

- How was Dare to Explore experienced by those who did not complete the programme?
- How was Dare to Explore experienced by older children (9-13 years of age)?
- How was the experience of Dare to Explore different for children who started the programme with low reading confidence compared to those with high confidence?
- How appealing was Dare to Explore to Māori children and their whānau?
- Were the challenges, activities and party seen as age appropriate?

Finally, we provide analysis and suggestions relating to:

- How could Dare to Explore be improved in the future?
- What local library events do adults and children want to see more of next year?

This evaluation is based on three sources of evidence: registration data for the 8330 children who registered for the programme, and two surveys, one of parents/caregivers ($N = 607$) and one of children ($N = 315$) who participated in Dare to Explore. Overall, 3.9 per cent of all Auckland 4 to 14 year old children participated in Dare to Explore. For ages 5-10 – the group that had the highest participation rates – 6 per cent of all Auckland children participated in the programme.

Overall, Dare to Explore was very positively evaluated by both children and parents/caregivers. Most children (73%) rated it as 'awesome'; a smaller percentage rated it 'ok' (26%); while almost no children rated Dare to Explore 'boring'.

Dare to Explore appears to be an important programme through which Auckland Libraries attracts new members. At least 1203 children (14% of all participants) who signed up were not previously library members. The characteristics of new members were similar to the overall sample in terms of age, gender and ethnicity, indicating that Dare to Explore attracted new members from a range of backgrounds.

A summary of the key findings of the evaluation is provided below.

Dare to Explore improved children's literacy

Because Dare to Explore aimed to get children reading, a key indicator of success was whether the programme impacted children's literacy. We found significant evidence that Dare to Explore had a positive impact on children's literacy.

The parents'/caregivers' surveys indicated that:

- The majority (60%) felt that their children's reading ability either improved a little or a lot.
- Almost half of parents/caregivers (45%) reported an increase in their child's reading confidence.
- The majority (68%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that Dare to Explore had increased their child's enjoyment of reading. This finding is important given Dare to Explore's focus on embedding reading in fun.
- The vast majority of parents/caregivers (87%) reported that Dare to Explore encouraged their children to discover and learn new things, an increase in those who reported this in 2012/2013 (77%).

An important finding of the evaluation was that children who started the programme with lower confidence experienced the greatest gains in confidence over the summer, showing that Dare to Explore is an important programme for children who are less confident in their reading.

Almost all children themselves reported that Dare to Explore had helped their reading (42% reporting 'a lot' and 47% reporting 'a little bit').

Although it is outside the scope of this report to investigate the longer term implications of these impacts, it is important to note the important role of literacy in wider aspects of life, including future employment, well-being and health (e.g. Dewalt, Berkman, Sheridan, Lohr and Pignone, 2004).

The reports of adults and children are important for understanding how Dare to Explore impacted them, but self-reports are by their nature subjective. To complement the adult and child surveys, we looked at standardised reading assessment data collected by schools before and after the school holiday period. These school results provide some preliminary evidence that Dare to Explore had had a positive impact on standardised reading assessment scores, above and beyond other summer reading interventions. The testing was limited by a small sample, however, and Auckland Libraries would benefit from further investigation of this area.

We also attempted to understand *how* Dare to Explore led to increases in reading ability. Statistical modelling showed that increased learning and discovery, increased child confidence, increased enjoyment of learning and increased adult confidence were important predictors of increased reading ability.

Dare to Explore largely met the needs of those who did not complete the programme

Children starting but 'dropping out' of a programme such as Dare to Explore can be a sensitive issue for librarians. Librarians invest significant time and energy into helping children engage with the programme, and when children do not continue it can leave library staff wondering why. We therefore sought to better understand the experience of those families who did not complete the programme (i.e. completed three or fewer challenges).

We found that, compared to those who completed four or more challenges, non-completers:

- experienced a smaller increase in confidence over the summer period
- experienced lower increases in reading ability
- experienced lower enjoyment of the challenges they did complete
- experienced lower levels of discovery and learning
- experienced less of an increase in enjoyment of reading

Parents/caregivers of non-completers were also more likely to feel that the challenges were not appropriate for the age of their child.

Despite this, when parents/caregivers of children who did not complete the programme were asked whether Dare to Explore met their child's needs, more than half answered that the programme *had* met their child's needs. Most of these parents went on to say that the small number of challenges completed by their child reflected the fact that they had gone away or been busy with other things. Where Dare to Explore did not meet their child's needs, the most commonly reported reason was that the challenges were too difficult for young children.

It therefore appears that a lack of engagement with the programme is often due to other factors, such as conflicting holiday plans. Where children 'dropped out' because of the programme, a lack of age-appropriate content appeared to be the most common reason.

Dare to Explore encouraged family engagement as well as engagement with the library

Dare to Explore appeared to play an important role in facilitating positive family interactions. A number of parents/caregivers reported that they really liked how Dare to Explore gave them the opportunity to spend positive time with their children. The majority of parents/caregivers (60%) also felt that Dare to Explore made them feel more confident about helping their children learn new things, indicating that the impacts of Dare to Explore extended well beyond the children themselves.

An important aim of Dare to Explore was to strengthen the relationship between libraries and their visitors. The survey responses of both adults and children indicated that Dare to Explore was very successful at strengthening the library-visitor bond. Most children (88%) responded that that Dare to Explore made them like going to the library either a lot more or a little more, up from 80 per cent in 2012/2013. When asked about how Dare to Explore might have changed how frequently they visit the library, half of all parents/caregivers (51%) felt that because of the programme they and their children were likely to visit the library more often in the future than they have in the past. This percentage increased to 60 per cent when looking at the responses of those who only visited the library monthly or less frequently

Opportunities exist to make Dare to Explore more appealing to Māori whānau

We know that, across all of Auckland, the participation rate of Māori children in Dare to Explore was lower than the percentage of Māori children in the Auckland population (10% of Dare to Explore registrations versus 17% of all Auckland children). We therefore sought to understand where there were examples of particularly successful delivery of Dare to Explore that appealed to Māori children.

One way to understand how appealing Dare to Explore was to Māori children and their whānau is to compare, for each library, the percentage of Māori Dare to Explore registrations with the percentage of Māori children (5-14 year olds) in the library's catchment area. We would expect that if Dare to Explore was as appealing to Māori children as other children the percentage of Māori registrations would roughly match the percentage of children in the catchment area. If it were less appealing, the percentage of Māori registrations would be smaller than the catchment percentage, and if it were more appealing the percentage of Māori registrations would be more than the catchment percentage.

Although this analysis cannot tell us *why* libraries might differ in their Māori participation rate, it is a good starting point for further discussions. A total of 10 libraries had a percentage of Māori Dare to Explore registrations that was higher than the percentage of Māori children in their catchment area. For example, 43 per cent of Otara Library Dare to Explore participants were Māori, which was almost double the population percentage of Māori children in the Library's catchment area (22%). The five libraries with high levels of Māori enrolment in Dare to Explore compared to the surrounding population were Otara Library, Northcote Library, Manukau Library, Clendon Te Matariki Library, and Leys Institute Library Ponsonby.

One important finding is that libraries where the Māori Dare to Explore participation percentage was equal to or greater than the underlying catchment population tended to have larger underlying populations of Māori children, whereas those with the greatest negative deviation away from the catchment population percentage tended to have smaller Māori populations in the library catchment areas. One explanation for this pattern of results is that libraries with larger Māori populations have adopted approaches to visitor engagement that are more appealing to Māori whānau generally (i.e. beyond Dare to Explore). Although there may be other reasons for the relative 'success' of these libraries at appealing to Māori children, the findings provide a starting point for further conversations around how individual libraries might increase their appeal to their Māori communities.

Families want to see more local library events next year

Children and their families enjoyed the events held at libraries. When asked what they would like to see more of next year, the most frequently mentioned activity involved reading and storytelling. Parents/caregivers expressed a desire for children to have more opportunities to read together or for children to be read to. Others wrote about the potential to have more activities/challenges that involved reading.

A number of parents/caregivers called for more arts and crafts activities, however few gave any details of what kinds of arts and crafts activities they would like.

Thirty-one parents/caregivers stated that they would like more activities suitable for children of different ages, indicating that libraries might both offer a greater range of activities and provide better 'sign-posting' of the age appropriateness of the activities that they offer.

A range of other suggestions were offered, including: simply having more activities; treasure or scavenger hunts; activities relating to specific subjects like science, geography, history and maths; and activities that encourage children to get to know the library better.

Children who engaged with the digital aspects of the programme enjoyed them

The Dare to Explore web pages were used by approximately half (56%) of all participants. Of the parents/caregivers who reported that they and their children used the web pages, 90 per cent found the

content easy to find. Similarly, 99 per cent of children who used the digital aspects of Dare to Explore liked them either a lot (50%) or a little bit (49%).

Parents/caregivers reported liking a range of things about Dare to Explore online. Many people mentioned that they liked how the website was easy to access and use. A high number of parents/caregivers explicitly mentioned the Around the World quest, and a number mentioned the book lists.

Reasons for non-use of the Dare to Explore web pages was varied. Many parents/caregivers did not know about the online aspects of the programme, whereas others forgot about the web pages or just did not get around to using them. Other parents/caregivers were satisfied with the print resources provided or made a conscious decision to avoid using the computer during the holiday period. Only a small number mentioned specific issues with the website itself.

Programming for younger children could be improved

Although the majority of parents/caregivers (82%) saw the challenges, activities and party as being appropriate for the age of their child, the need for more content that is appropriate for younger children was identified by a small but meaningful number of parents/caregivers. Parents/caregivers of younger children – aged five and below – were more likely than parents/caregivers of older children to report that the programme was not age appropriate. Adults' open-ended comments also reflected the difficulty that some young children had participating in the programme. It was not clear from the comments whether the issue was one of a lack of appropriate content, or an inability to find content appropriate for their children. A significant opportunity therefore exists to improve future programmes for younger children.

How could Dare to Explore be improved in the future?

A number of suggestions for improving future summer reading adventures are discussed in Section 15.11:

- Provide more challenges and activities for younger children
- Strengthen different ways of recruiting children and their families, particularly through schools
- Expand the number and frequency of local library events and activities in line with parents'/caregivers' suggestions
- Improve the book lists and the availability of suggested books in libraries
- Increase the impact of future summer reading adventures on children's literacy
- Ensure that all librarians are familiar with the summer reading adventure
- Build upon the success of Dare to Explore online, and
- Consider using key evaluation findings in recruitment material to encourage children and their families to sign up.

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1.0 Introduction

This report describes the results of an evaluation of Dare to Explore: Auckland Libraries' Summer Reading Adventure, run between 9 December 2013 and 19 January 2014. Dare to Explore was a summer reading programme run by Auckland Libraries for children aged 5 to 13 that aimed to get children reading every day by encouraging them to complete a series of fun challenges.

This report aims to answer the following primary evaluation questions:

- Did Dare to Explore maintain or improve children's literacy?
- How was Dare to Explore experienced by those who did not complete the programme?
- Did Dare to Explore encourage family engagement with each other and with the library?
- How could Dare to Explore be improved in the future?

The report also addresses a number of secondary evaluation questions:

- Did Dare to Explore encourage learning and discovery among children?
- How responsive were libraries to their Māori communities?
- How was Dare to Explore experienced by older children (9-13 years of age)?
- How was the experience of Dare to Explore different for children who started the programme with low reading confidence compared to those with high confidence?
- What local library events do adults and children want to see more of next year?
- Did children engage with the digital aspects of the programme?
- Were the challenges, activities and party seen as age appropriate?

1.1 Background

Dare to Explore was born in 2011, when a working group identified and agreed upon the following outcomes for the programme:

- children have fun, enjoy the programme, find it easy and flexible
- children increase their love of books, reading and the library
- children maintain and improve their reading ability and are comfortable and confident library users
- children and their families want to continue their relationship with the library beyond the programme and recommend libraries to others

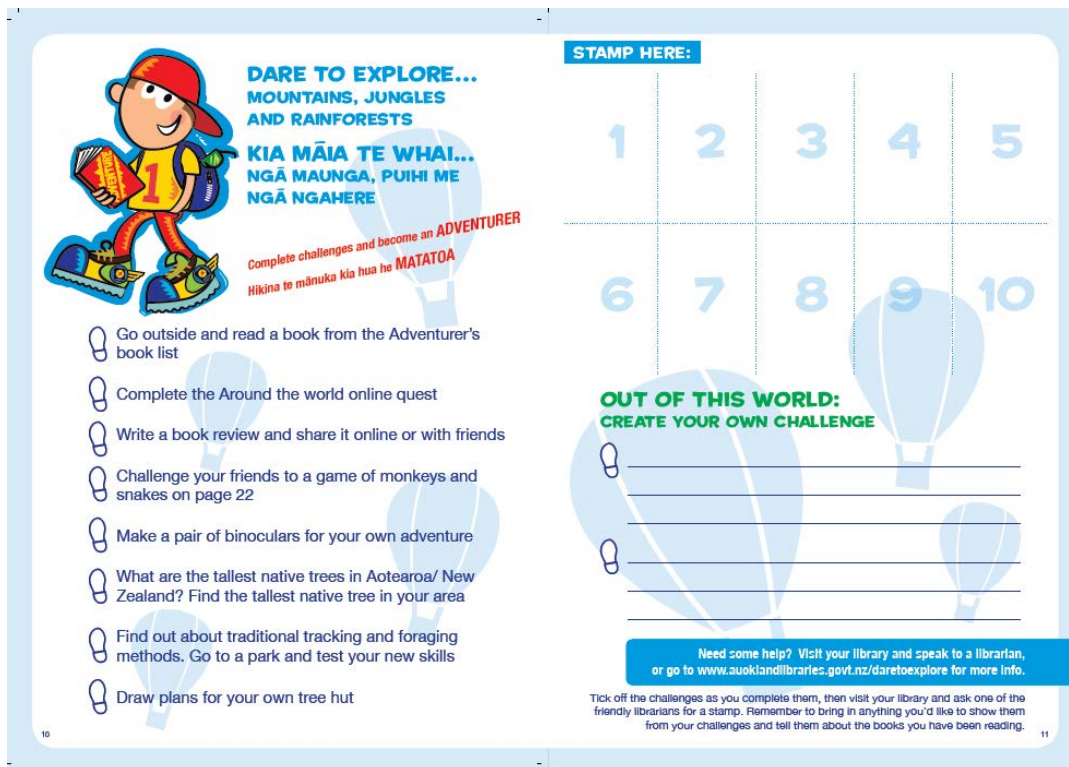
The following key points of delivery were agreed upon to achieve these outcomes:

- the programme will not be capped
- the programme needs to be flexible, mobile and consistent across all the Auckland Libraries
- there needs to be strong staff buy-in and commitment to the success of this programme
- there need to be celebratory events
- it was to cater for all ages between 5 and 13
- it was to be as easy as possible for the libraries to manage and deliver
- it had the potential to be used in the future

1.2 About Dare to Explore

Dare to Explore was run across all 55 Auckland Libraries, allowing children to 'check in' at any library in Auckland. This evaluation is of the third iteration of Dare to Explore.

Figure 3: Mountains, Jungles and Rainforests challenge set



Children could get a stamp in the passport from a librarian for each challenge they completed. When they had completed four challenges within a set they could get a sticker from a librarian at the back of their passport.

Once a child had completed four challenges they were also invited to the party.

Figure 4: Excerpt from passport



Events and activities were hosted at the libraries throughout the summer and included arts and crafts, library tours, scavenger hunts, museum visits and guest entertainers. Finale parties were held for the children at the end of January either at individual branches or with two or more libraries joining together and having a larger event.

Dare to Explore had an associated website that included:

- lists of recommended books for each challenge set
- calendars of library events
- a 'quest' challenge
- a facility for children to write book reviews and receive feedback from librarians on their reviews
- photos of children participating in the programme, and
- 'Little Dude's Adventure Diary' in which the Dare to Explore character wrote of his holiday travels around Auckland

The marketing and promotion programme for Dare to Explore III involved:

- media releases to suburban newspapers and radio featuring information about the Dare to Explore programme, the importance of children's literacy, etc.
- media releases using social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and the Auckland Libraries blogs
- information on the Auckland Libraries website
- story in Auckland Council publications
- posters on trains, buses, ferries
- visits to schools, kohanga reo and kura kaupapa
- visits to other community groups, e.g. YMCA, Plunkett, churches, pre-schools, etc.
- promotion through local businesses, e.g. bank display screen for community events
- information on community notice boards

1.3 The evaluation method

Parents/caregivers and children were asked to give their feedback on Dare to Explore through a questionnaire. Two questionnaires – one for children and one for parents/caregivers – were prepared by the authors of this report in collaboration with library staff. Parents were asked on the registration forms whether they would be happy to be contacted as part of an evaluation of Dare to Explore. A total of 5,419 out of 8,330 registrants were happy to be contacted. However, because parents / caregivers provided their email address in relation to multiple children, invitations were sent out to a total of 3,654 unique email addresses. Emails contained invitations and links to complete both adult and child surveys. In addition to email invitations, hard-copy surveys were sent out to 177 parents/caregivers (who had 225 children between them) who indicated that they were happy to be contacted but did not provide an email address.

The 2013/2014 evaluation reflects an improvement on last year's evaluation in the following ways:

- In the previous evaluation, librarians asked children and their parents / caregivers to fill out surveys at the end of the programme and during the party. This method of collecting data is unlikely to have captured the experiences of those who did not engage with the programme. This year, survey respondents were recruited independent of libraries (via registration data), and are therefore more likely to be representative of all Dare to Explore participants
- more adults and children completed the surveys, allowing more robust statistical tests, and
- standardised reading data collected by schools have been analysed to further understand the impact of Dare to Explore on children's literacy levels.

A total of 607 parents/caregivers, and 315 children filled out questionnaires. Almost all were filled out online with only 22 parents/caregivers and 26 children completing hard-copy questionnaires. As with all surveys of this nature, participation was voluntary and respondents self-selected to complete the survey. For this reason, it is possible the samples are not fully representative of all Dare to Explore participants. With this in mind, some caution should be taken when generalising the findings of these surveys to all participants. Responses were analysed using SPSS, a software package used for statistical analysis. Open-ended questions were analysed by categorising according to common themes.

2.0 Who took part and why?

In this section we investigate who took part in Dare to Explore in 2013/2014, as well as how they heard about the programme and their reasons for participating. Three sources of data provide an insight into who took part and why: information from registration forms, information that parents/caregivers offered about their children when filling out their feedback questionnaire, and information that children offered about themselves when filling out their own questionnaire.

It should be noted that although 8,330 children registered for Dare to Explore, the majority of findings presented in this report are from the 607 questionnaires received from parents/caregivers and the 315 questionnaires received from children.

2.1 Registration information

Every child who participated in Dare to Explore was required to fill out a registration form or have one filled out for them. While only a small amount of information was collected on registration forms, they provide the most complete snapshot of who participated in the programme. The registration forms showed that:

- 8,330 children registered, a 5.4 per cent increase from 2012/13
- Of the registrants, 55 per cent were girls and 45 per cent were boys, the same ratio as in 2012/2013
- The age groups with the most participants were 6, 7 and 8 year olds, with 1,269, 1,237 and 1,278 participating children, respectively.
- At 51 per cent, the largest percentage of registrants identified themselves as having at least some¹ New Zealand European ethnicity; 10 per cent of registrants had at least some Indian ethnicity; 11 per cent Chinese; 10 per cent Māori, 6 per cent Samoan, and 3 per cent Cook Island Māori.
- Two libraries had over 300 registrations, Māngere Town Centre Library (425 registrations) and Botany Library (305 registrations)
- 1,203 children who signed up (14% of all participants) were not previously library members before signing up. The characteristics the children who signed up as a result of Dare to Explore were similar to the overall sample in terms of age, gender and ethnicity, indicating that Dare to Explore is a valuable 'flagship' programme through which Auckland Libraries attracts new members.

2.1.1 Were participants representative of children across Auckland?

2.1.1.1 Age

The 8,330 children who signed up to Dare to Explore represented approximately 3.9 per cent of all Auckland children aged 4 to 14. However, because Dare to Explore was more popular with children between 5 and 10 years of age, the total 'share' of all Auckland children was greater for these age groups. Consequently, approximately 6 per cent of all Auckland children aged 5-10 participated in Dare to Explore, with progressively fewer children participating at younger and older ages (Table 1). Close to 7 per cent of all Auckland children aged 8 years participated in Dare to Explore in 2013/2014.

¹ People were free to select more than one ethnicity.

Table 1: Registration data compared with Auckland population.

Age	# Auckland population (2013 census)	# Dare registrations	% of total Auckland population
3	20,472	17	0.1%
4	20,412	120	0.6%
5	20,823	1,091	5.2%
6	19,926	1,269	6.4%
7	19,113	1,237	6.5%
8	19,050	1,278	6.7%
9	18,684	1,147	6.1%
10	18,756	1,009	5.4%
11	18,687	655	3.5%
12	19,839	330	1.7%
13	19,767	127	0.6%
14	19,353	14	0.1%
15	19,926	3	0.0%

2.1.1.2 Ethnicity

In terms of children's ethnicity, a comparison with the ethnicity breakdown of 5-14 year olds from the 2013 census shows that the 51 per cent of Dare to Explore participants who identified as New Zealand European/Pākehā was equivalent to the Auckland-wide percentage of 52 per cent.

There was less balanced representation of Indian, Chinese, Māori and Samoan children, however. The percentages of both Indian (10%) and Chinese (11%) children in Dare to Explore were higher than for the Auckland region as a whole (8% Indian, 7% Chinese), with a greater difference observed for Chinese.

In contrast, Māori and Samoan children were underrepresented in Dare to Explore. Although approximately 17 per cent of all children across Auckland identify as Māori, only 10 per cent of Dare to Explore participants were Māori. Similarly, while approximately 12 per cent of all Auckland children identify as Samoan, only 6 per cent of Dare to Explore participants were Samoan. Cook Island Māori participation was also slightly lower than the Auckland-wide percentage (3% of Dare to Explore children versus 5% across Auckland). The percentage of Tongan children was broadly representative of the overall Auckland population (4% of both Dare to Explore registrations and the Auckland population).

The under-representation of Māori children has improved slightly compared to 2012/2013, with Māori participants increasing from 9 per cent in 2012/2013 to 10 per cent in 2013/2014 (reflecting a total increase of Māori participants from 704 in 2012/2013 to 823 this year). The under-representation of Samoan children worsened, however, with Samoan participants decreasing from 8 per cent in 2012/2013 to 6 per cent in 2013/2014. The change in Samoan percentages reflected a decrease in both relative (%) and total participation, with 104 fewer Samoan children participating this year (632 children in 2012/2013 and 526 in 2013/2014).

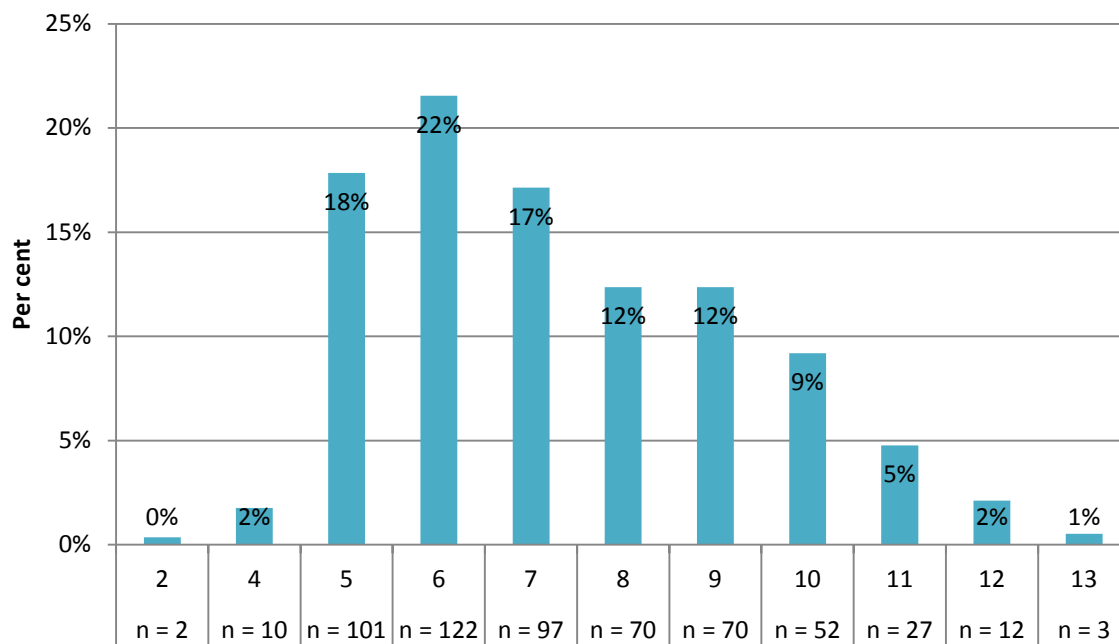
2.2 Parent/caregivers' survey responses

Parents and caregivers were asked to indicate the age, gender, and ethnicity of their child,² as well as the language that their family speaks at home, how they found out about Dare to Explore, and why they wanted their children to participate in Dare to Explore.

2.2.1 Age

Approximately 22 per cent of parents/caregivers who completed a survey answered the 'Your Child' section about their six-year-old child, followed by parents/caregivers answering about their five-year-old (18% of adults) and their seven-year-olds (17%). The weighting toward younger children in adult survey responses is in contrast with the relative balance seen in registration data, where the percentage of registrants in each age year between five and 10 sits between 12 per cent and 15 per cent. It is possible, therefore, that adult survey responses are somewhat more representative of the experience of younger children aged 5-7 than of older children. However, as we show in Section 13.0, the experience of younger and older children is broadly similar, and therefore this bias is unlikely to have serious implications for the results reported.

Figure 5: Age of participating children – parent/caregivers' survey responses.³



2.2.2 Gender

Fifty six per cent of survey respondents' children were female. This number was equivalent to the total percentage of girls registered in Dare to Explore (55%), indicating that the responses of adults are likely to be representative in terms of gender.

² If parents/caregivers had more than one child participating in Dare to Explore they were asked to provide the details of either their child that participated most in Dare to Explore or their child that participated least. Parents were randomly assigned to one of these two options.

³ Note, the number of responses for questions related to parents'/caregivers' children is less than the total number of parents/caregivers responding because a reasonable number of parents did not answer this question.

Table 2: Gender of participating children - parent/caregivers' survey responses.

Gender	N	%
Male	247	44.2
Female	312	55.8

2.2.3 Ethnicity

Parents were asked to indicate the ethnicity of their child that participated in Dare to Explore (or one of their children if more than one participated). Parents were able to select and/or write more than one ethnicity. The most common ethnicity of parents/caregivers who selected 'Other' was 'Sri Lankan' ($n = 8$). The breakdown of ethnicity indicates that the adult survey responses are likely over-representative of New Zealand Europeans / Pākehā. The implication of this finding is that the results from the adults' survey are likely to be more reflective of the experience of NZ European / Pākehā children than of others. The ethnicities most under-represented in the adult survey responses are Samoan, Tongan and Cook Island Māori.

Table 3: Ethnicity of participating children - parent/caregivers' survey responses.

Ethnicity	N	%
NZ European / Pākehā	387	67.3%
Indian	56	9.7%
Māori	52	9.0%
Other	50	8.7%
Chinese	40	7.0%
Other European	27	4.7%
Other Asian	23	4.0%
British or Irish	21	3.7%
Samoan	16	2.8%
Fijian	6	1.0%
Other Pacific Peoples	6	1.0%
Korean	5	0.9%
Cook Island Māori	4	0.7%
Tongan	2	0.3%

2.2.4 Main language at home

The majority (85%) of respondents spoke English at home. The remaining 15 per cent was spread fairly evenly across a number of other languages, including northern Chinese, Hindi, Gujarati, Korean, Tamil and Yue. Only two parents/caregivers reported speaking Māori as the main language at home.

Table 4: Main language spoken at home.

Language	N	%
English	494	85%
Northern Chinese	13	2%
Hindi	10	2%
Gujarati	6	1%
Korean	5	1%
Tamil	4	1%
Yue	4	1%
Other	42	7%

2.2.5 How did parents/caregivers find out about Dare to Explore?

Parents/caregivers were asked where/how they heard or saw information about Dare to Explore (with the option to choose more than one reason).

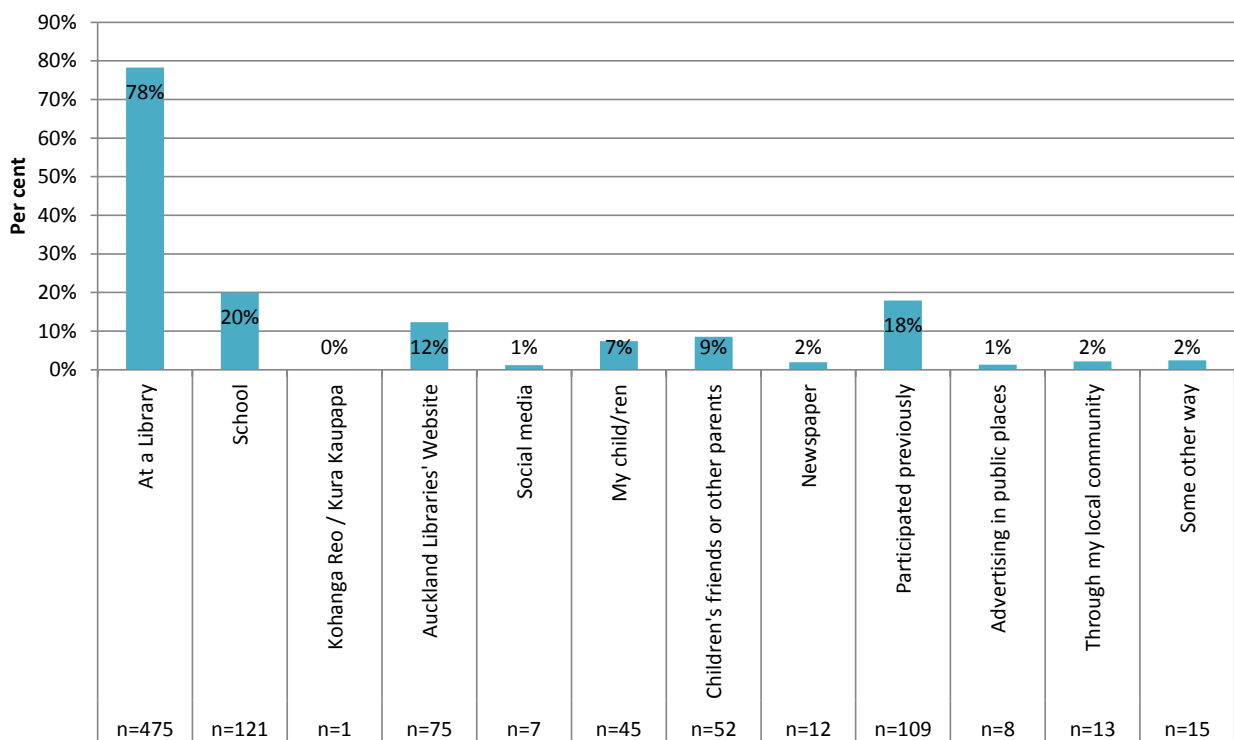
The majority (78%) of parents/caregivers heard about Dare to Explore directly from Auckland Libraries. Twelve per cent of parents/caregivers heard about Dare to Explore from the Auckland Libraries website (up from 8% in 2012/2013).

A reasonable percentage (20%) of parents/caregivers heard about Dare to Explore through their child's school (up from 18% in 2012/2013). Only 18 per cent of parents/caregivers selected the option that their children participated in a library summer reading programme before (down from 29% in 2012/2013), indicating that a number of children participated for the first time in 2013/2014.

The remaining means of communication were much less prevalent.

An attempt was made this year to inform parents/caregivers and children about Dare to Explore through community channels and via kohanga reo and kura kaupapa. A total of 14 parents (2%) indicated that they heard or saw information about Dare to Explore from these sources.

Figure 6: How did you find out about Dare to Explore?



When asked how Dare to Explore could be improved, seven parents/caregivers mentioned that they thought the programme could have been better advertised:

I don't know how much it was announced at our school, but if it came from the teacher the child may have been more enthused about it

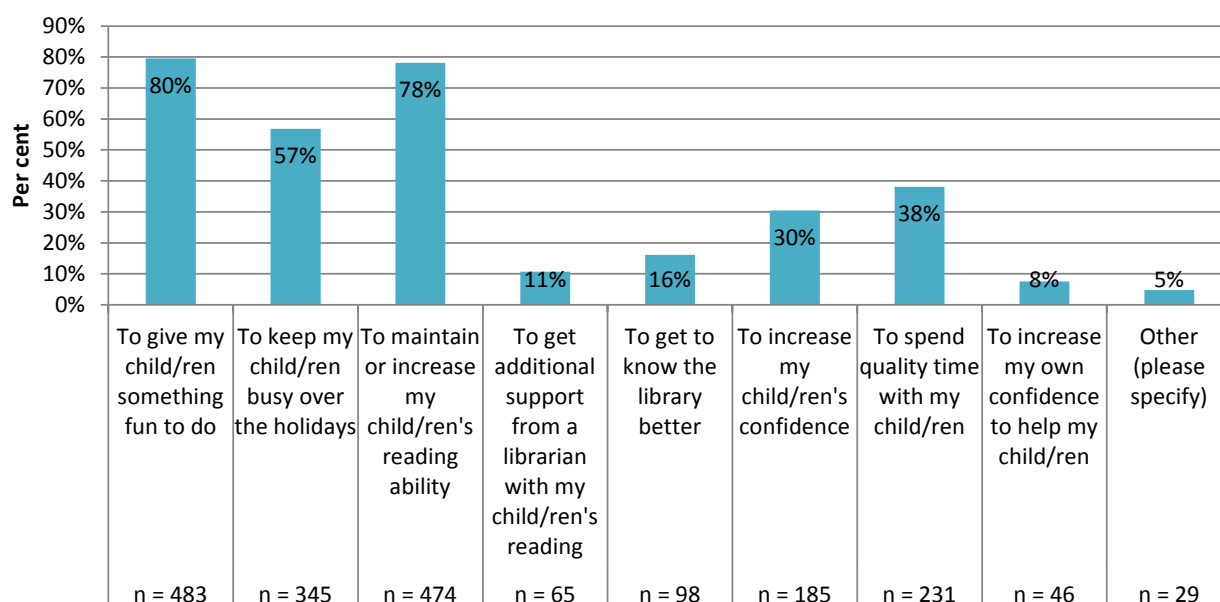
Advertise it a bit earlier as we missed a lot of the initial activities.

We heard about the program at the library, but we only started after the 3rd week or so. It might have been a really good idea to 'market' the program at the local schools, because in that case we would have known earlier and did many more challenges.

2.2.6 Why did parents/caregivers want their children to participate?

The survey showed that parents/caregivers wanted their children to participate in Dare to Explore for a variety of reasons. The majority of parents/caregivers wanted their children to participate to give their child/ren something fun to do (80%) and/or maintain or increase their children's reading ability (78%). A large proportion of parents/caregivers (57%) wanted their children to participate to keep them busy over the holidays. A reasonable percentage of parents/caregivers wanted to participate in order to spend quality time with their children (38%) or to increase their child/ren's confidence (30%). Interestingly, eight per cent of parents/caregivers encouraged their children to participate in order to increase their own confidence.

Figure 7: Why did you want your child/children to participate in Dare to Explore?



As in 2012/2013, a number of parents/caregivers appeared to be dually motivated by a desire to develop their children's reading ability as well as keep them entertained. The programme was described as fun by 89 parents/caregivers in their open-ended feedback:

the way it made reading fun and exciting for my children

Made it fun and gave some challenges to my child's reading over the holidays. Gave her a reason to read (other than just us asking her to)

Encouraged children to read, to take responsibility for their reading and learning and to see that reading is FUN!

A few parents/caregivers suggested that the right balance between reading and entertainment had not been achieved for them, but they were a small minority:

Less time on challenges and more on reading rewards. Stickers for certain amount of books finished.

I would like a little more focus on the reading side, maybe to extend their reading more.

More prominence to reading, many activities did not require reading or even engagement with books.

There was no real incentive for the children to read more

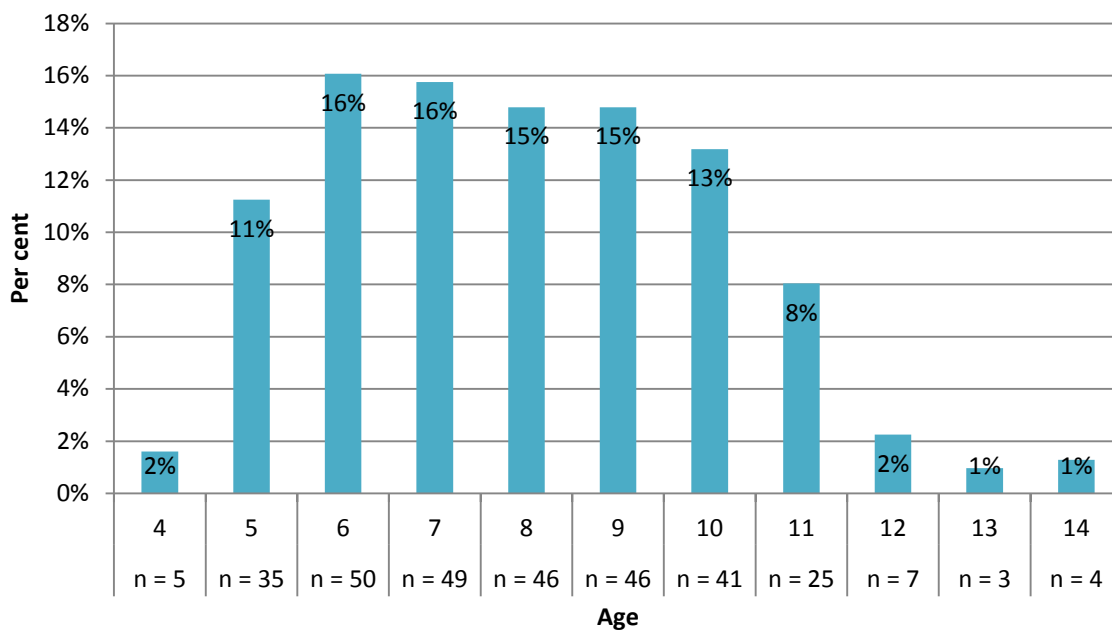
2.3 Children’s survey responses

Children were asked their age, how they heard about Dare to Explore and why they wanted to join.

2.3.1 Age

Surveys were completed by range of differently aged children, with a reasonable percentage of children between five and 11 years of age completing the survey. Consistent with the lower number of registrations at these ages, children aged 4, 12, 13 and 14 were much less likely to complete the survey.

Figure 8: Age of participating children - children's survey



2.3.2 Gender

More girls than boys filled out the children’s survey, with girls representing 58 per cent of respondents. This percentage was similar to the 55 per cent of registrations that were girls.

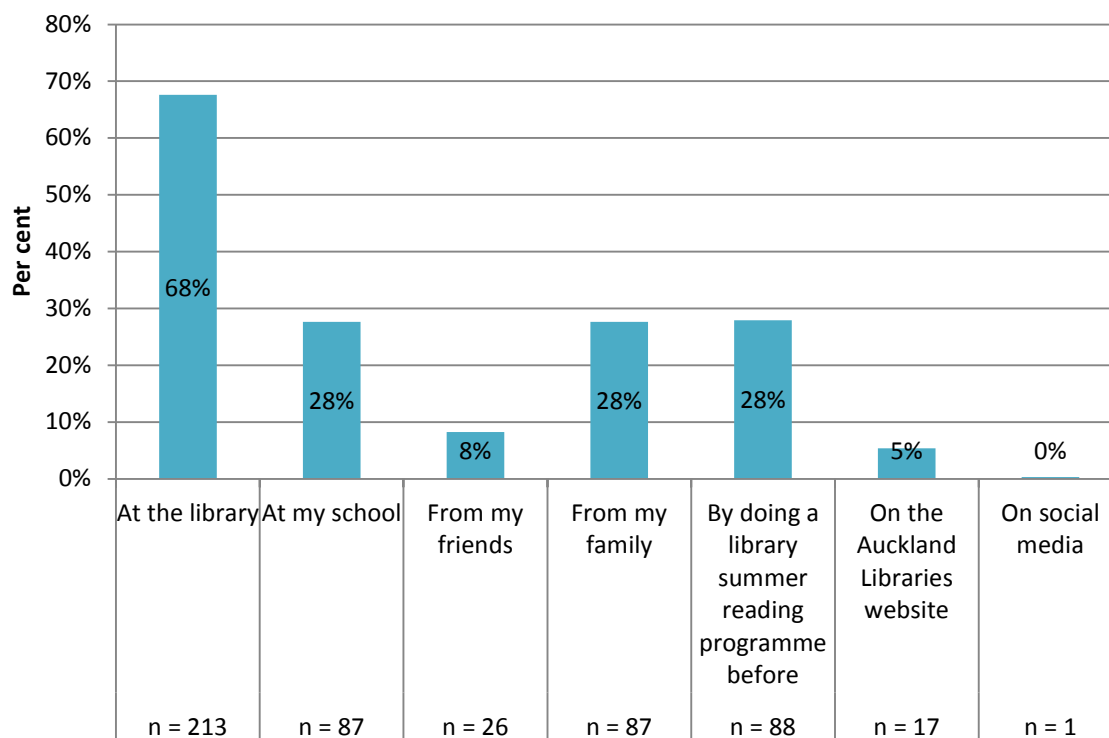
Table 5: Gender of participating children – children’s survey responses.

Gender	N	%
Boy	129	41.7
Girl	180	58.3

2.3.3 How did children hear about Dare to Explore?

As in the parent/caregiver survey, the majority (68%) of children heard about Dare to Explore directly from Auckland Libraries. Relatively large proportions had also heard about Dare to Explore because they had participated in a previous summer reading programme (28%), through their school (28%) and from their family (28%).

Figure 9: How did you hear about Dare to Explore?



2.3.4 Why did children join Dare to Explore?

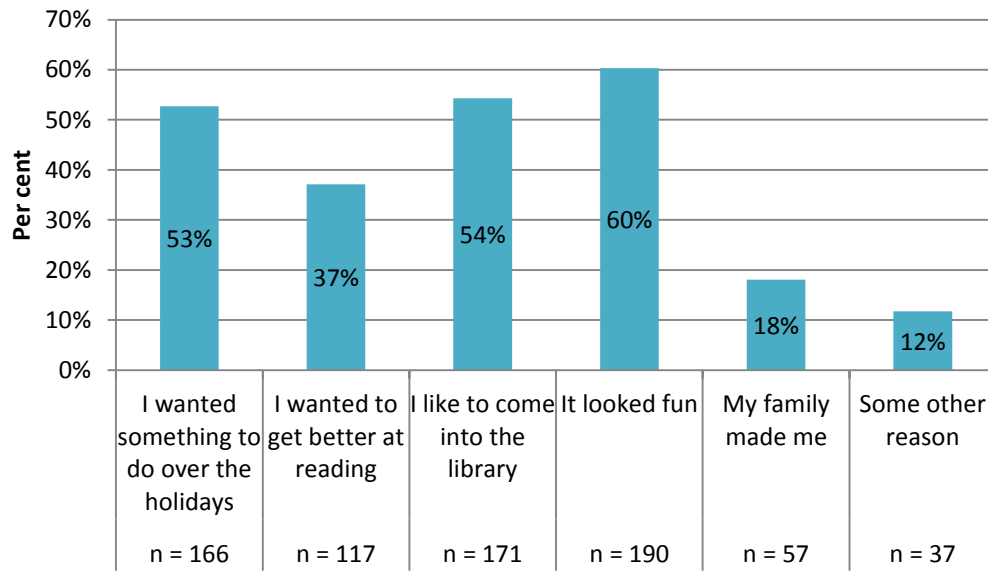
The primary motivation of the children was entertainment ('it looked like fun', 'I wanted something to do over the holidays', and 'I like to come into the library').

While the primary motivation appeared to be fun, a meaningful proportion of children (37%) were also motivated to participate in Dare to Explore in order to get better at reading.

A smaller percentage (17%) stated that their family made them participate in Dare to Explore.⁴ However, most of these children also stated at least one of the other reasons for participating. The number of children who reported participating *only* because their family made them was considerably smaller (5% of all respondents).

⁴ Interestingly, although these children rated Dare to Explore highly (with a mean of 2.51 out of 3, where 2 was ok and 3 was awesome), they were significantly less positive about the programme than those who were not explicitly made to participate by their family (who had a mean rating of 2.77 out of 3), $t(70.88) = -3.25, p < .05$.

Figure 10: Why did you join Dare to Explore?



3.0 How appealing was Dare to Explore to Māori children?

One way to understand how appealing Dare to Explore was to Māori children and their whānau is to compare, for each library, the percentage of Māori Dare to Explore registrations with the percentage of Māori children (5-14 year olds) in the library's catchment area.⁵ We would expect that if Dare to Explore was as appealing to Māori children as other children the percentage of Māori registrations would roughly match the percentage of children in the catchment area. If it were less appealing the percentage of Māori registrations would be smaller than the catchment percentage, and if it were more appealing the percentage of Māori registrations would be greater than the catchment percentage.

It is important to note that this approach is relatively 'coarse', and should be treated as a conversation starter, rather than evidence for or against the effectiveness of individual libraries at appealing to Māori whānau in their catchment area. Caution is needed during interpretation because we cannot identify the *reason* why a given library's Dare to Explore registrations are above or below the percentage of Māori children in its catchment area. For example, in addition to the appeal of the programme, other factors are likely to have influenced whether Māori children participated in Dare to Explore, such as ease of physical access to the library, time and ability of parents / caregivers to take their children to visit the library, whether families' holiday activities enabled them to participate (e.g. travel out of the region), as well as the possibility that whānau primarily used a library other than their local library (as is encouraged in Dare to Explore). Additionally, because percentage figures are by their nature relative, we cannot know without further investigation whether differences in percentages are due to the programme being more or less appealing to Māori whānau, or more or less appealing to other children, against which Māori registrations are being compared. Furthermore, the reasons for deviation away from the catchment percentage may be different for each library.

With these caveats in mind, there do appear to be some patterns in the data that may be important for understanding how to make future content more appealing to Māori children. The first is that the majority of libraries (44 out of 54) had Dare to Explore registrations that were below the percentage of Māori children (ages 5-14) in their primary catchment area. This is consistent with the finding that the participation rate of Māori children across Auckland as a whole was lower than the Auckland population (10% Dare to Explore registrations vs 17% of all Auckland children). We cannot know without further research whether this is due to lower appeal of the programme or other socio-economic or cultural factors that are impacting on library engagement more generally, however it is important to keep this broader context in mind when looking at individual libraries.

Not all libraries had lower participation than their local catchment, however. A total of 10 libraries (listed at the top of Table 6) had a percentage of Māori Dare to Explore registrations that was higher than the percentage of Māori children in their catchment area. For example, 43 per cent of Otara Library Dare to Explore participants were Māori, which was almost double the population percentage of Māori children in the Library's catchment area (22%). The five libraries with high levels of Māori enrolment in Dare to Explore compared to the surrounding population were Otara Library, Northcote Library, Manukau Library, Clendon Te Matariki Library, and Leys Institute Library Ponsonby.

⁵ A previous analysis of the catchment area of each library was used to determine each library's local 'community'. The primary catchment areas from this previous analysis were mapped and demographic information (for Māori children ages 5-14) was updated for these areas using the 2013 census.

It is notable that libraries where the Māori Dare to Explore participation percentage was equal to or greater than the underlying catchment population tended to have larger underlying populations of Māori children, whereas those with the greatest negative deviation away from the catchment population percentage tended to have smaller Māori populations. One explanation for this pattern of results is that libraries with larger Māori populations have adopted approaches to visitor engagement that are more appealing to Māori whānau generally. It is possible that libraries with lower Māori populations in their catchments may not have not faced the same need to appeal directly to Māori families in their everyday programming because use of the library by non-Māori may be otherwise high. Another possible explanation is that Māori whānau are more comfortable at libraries where there are a greater percentage of other Māori library users and use such libraries, even if they have to travel further to reach that library.

Whatever the reason, the findings provide a starting point for further conversations around how individual libraries might increase their appeal to their Māori communities.

Table 6. How appealing was Dare to Explore to Māori children?

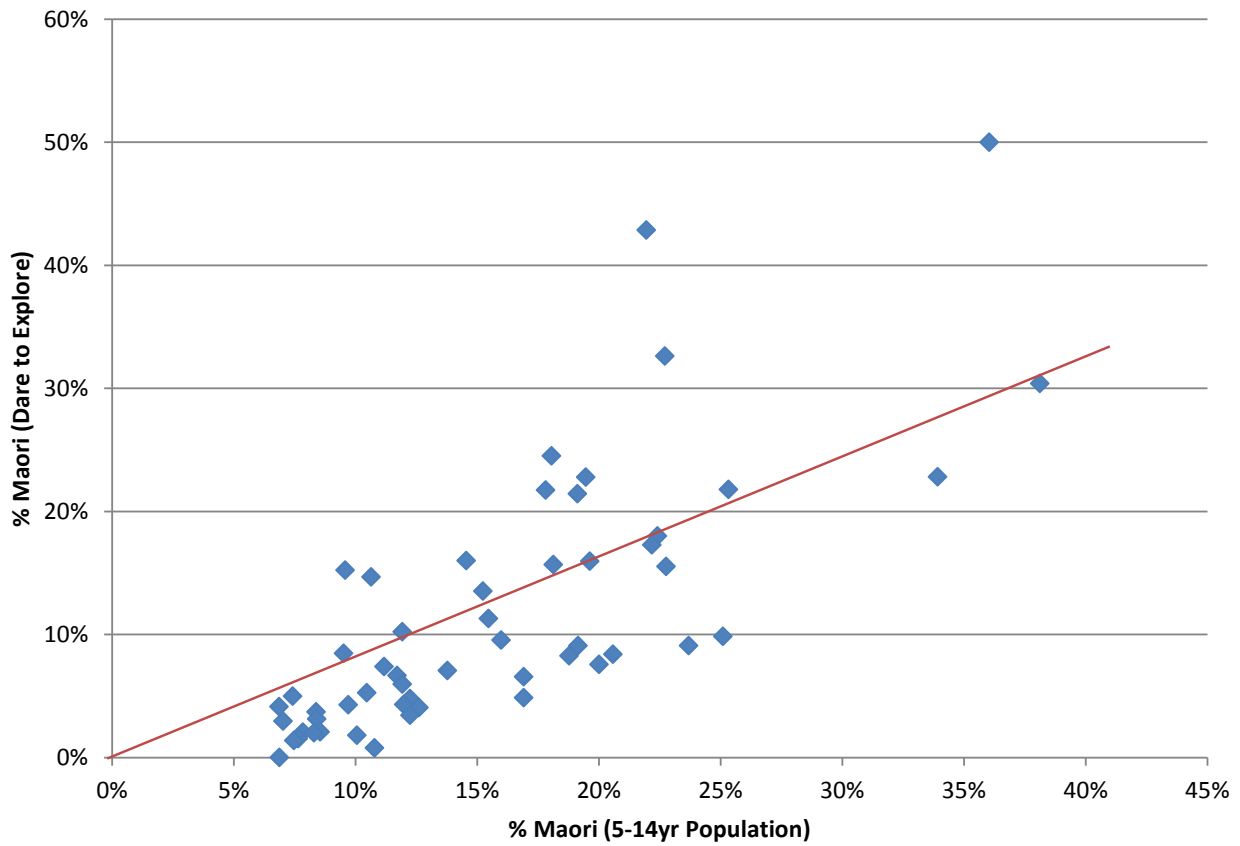
Library	Census % of 5-14yr-old population identifying as Māori	% of Dare to Explore participants identifying as Māori	Difference between registrations and population	Relative difference between registrations and population
Otara Library	22%	43%	21%	95%
Northcote Library	10%	15%	6%	59%
Manukau Library	23%	33%	10%	44%
Clendon Te Matariki Library	36%	50%	14%	39%
Leys Institute Library Ponsonby	11%	15%	4%	38%
Wellsford War Memorial Library	18%	25%	6%	36%
Mangere East Library	18%	22%	4%	22%
Otahuhu Library	19%	23%	3%	17%
Tupu Youth Library	19%	21%	2%	12%
Glen Innes Library	15%	16%	1%	10%
Central City Library	10%	8%	-1%	-11%
Mahurangi East Library	15%	14%	-2%	-11%
Glen Eden Library	18%	16%	-2%	-13%
Waiuku Library	25%	22%	-4%	-14%
Onehunga Library	12%	10%	-2%	-14%
Panmure Library	20%	16%	-4%	-19%
Mangere Bridge Library	22%	18%	-4%	-20%
Papakura Sir Edmund Hillary Library	38%	30%	-8%	-20%

Table 6 (cont.) How appealing was Dare to Explore to Māori children?

Library	Census % of 5-14yr-old population identifying as Māori	% of Dare to Explore participants identifying as Māori	Difference between registrations and population	Relative difference between registrations and population
Ranui Library	22%	17%	-5%	-22%
New Lynn War Memorial Library	15%	11%	-4%	-27%
Massey Library	23%	16%	-7%	-32%
Remuera Library	7%	5%	-2%	-33%
Manurewa Library	34%	23%	-11%	-33%
Glenfield Library	11%	7%	-4%	-34%
Howick Library	7%	4%	-3%	-40%
Birkenhead Library	16%	10%	-6%	-40%
Pt Chevalier Library	12%	7%	-5%	-43%
Avondale Library	14%	7%	-7%	-49%
Kumeu Library	10%	5%	-5%	-50%
Pakuranga Library	12%	6%	-6%	-50%
Papatoetoe Library	19%	9%	-10%	-53%
Devonport Library	8%	4%	-5%	-56%
Mt Albert Library	10%	4%	-5%	-56%
Mangere Town Centre Library	19%	8%	-10%	-56%
Albany Village Library	7%	3%	-4%	-58%
Waitakere Central Library	21%	8%	-12%	-59%
Grey Lynn Library	12%	5%	-7%	-61%
Te Atatu Peninsula Library	25%	10%	-15%	-61%
Helensville Library	17%	7%	-10%	-61%
Pukekohe Library	24%	9%	-15%	-62%
Waiheke Library	20%	8%	-12%	-62%
Botany Library	8%	3%	-5%	-63%
Whangaparaoa Library	12%	4%	-8%	-64%
Titirangi Library	13%	4%	-9%	-68%
Warkworth Library	17%	5%	-12%	-71%
Orewa Library	12%	3%	-9%	-72%
Mt Roskill Library	8%	2%	-6%	-74%
Highland Park Library	9%	2%	-6%	-76%
St Heliers Library	8%	2%	-6%	-76%
East Coast Bays Library	8%	2%	-6%	-80%
Takapuna Library	7%	1%	-6%	-81%
Parnell Library	10%	2%	-8%	-82%
Blockhouse Bay Library	11%	1%	-10%	-93%
Epsom Library	7%	0%	-7%	-100%

An alternative way of viewing the data can be seen in Figure 11. The red line represents an approximate 1:1 increase – the level of participation we would expect if Dare to Explore registrations matched the underlying catchment percentage (it is not a line of best fit). The dots represent individual libraries.

Figure 11. How appealing was Dare to Explore to Māori children?



Note. The red line represents an approximate 1:1 increase – the level of participation we would expect if Dare to Explore registrations matched the underlying catchment percentage.

4.0 Where and how did children do Dare to Explore?

4.1 What libraries did families use to do Dare to Explore?

Information on the libraries used by Dare to Explore participants is available from two sources – registration data and parents/caregivers’ responses to a survey question about the main library used.

Participants were asked when registering to indicate which library they planned to use most to do Dare to Explore.

Table 7: Registration data – participation by library.

Library	N	%
Mangere Town Centre Library	425	5%
Botany Library	305	4%
Highland Park Library	295	4%
Mt Roskill Library	291	3%
Mangere East Library	286	3%
Papakura Sir Edmund Hillary Library	277	3%
East Coast Bays Library	263	3%
Blockhouse Bay Library	260	3%
Massey Library	221	3%
Onehunga Library	219	3%
Pakuranga Library	218	3%
Takapuna Library	217	3%
Papatoetoe Library	210	3%
St Heliers Library	201	2%
Howick Library	193	2%
New Lynn War Memorial Library	190	2%
Titirangi Library	172	2%
Albany Village Library	170	2%
Remuera Library	166	2%
Panmure Library	164	2%
Whangaparaoa Library	162	2%
Birkenhead Library	160	2%
Waitakere Central Library	156	2%
Glen Eden Library	153	2%
Mangere Bridge Library	150	2%
Glenfield Library	149	2%
Warkworth Library	144	2%
Mt Albert Library	140	2%
Northcote Library	138	2%
Waiheke Library	135	2%
Mahurangi East Library	133	2%
Clendon Te Matariki Library	132	2%

Epsom Library	132	2%
Grey Lynn Library	130	2%
Orewa Library	128	2%
Manurewa Library	115	1%
Wellsford War Memorial Library	102	1%
Kumeu Library	96	1%
Manukau Library	95	1%
Pukekohe Library	88	1%
Avondale Library	85	1%
Tupu Youth Library	84	1%
Ranui Library	83	1%
Otahuhu Library	79	1%
Waiuku Library	78	1%
Leys Institute Library Ponsonby	77	1%
Pt Chevalier Library	76	1%
Otara Library	70	1%
Helensville Library	63	1%
Te Atatu Peninsula Library	62	1%
Central City Library	59	1%
Parnell Library	55	1%
Glen Innes Library	50	1%
Devonport Library	28	0%
Total	8330	100%

In the survey, parents/caregivers were also asked what the main library was that they and their children used for Dare to Explore. It is important to note that this list should be read primarily as a reflection of which libraries had participants that were most willing to complete the surveys.

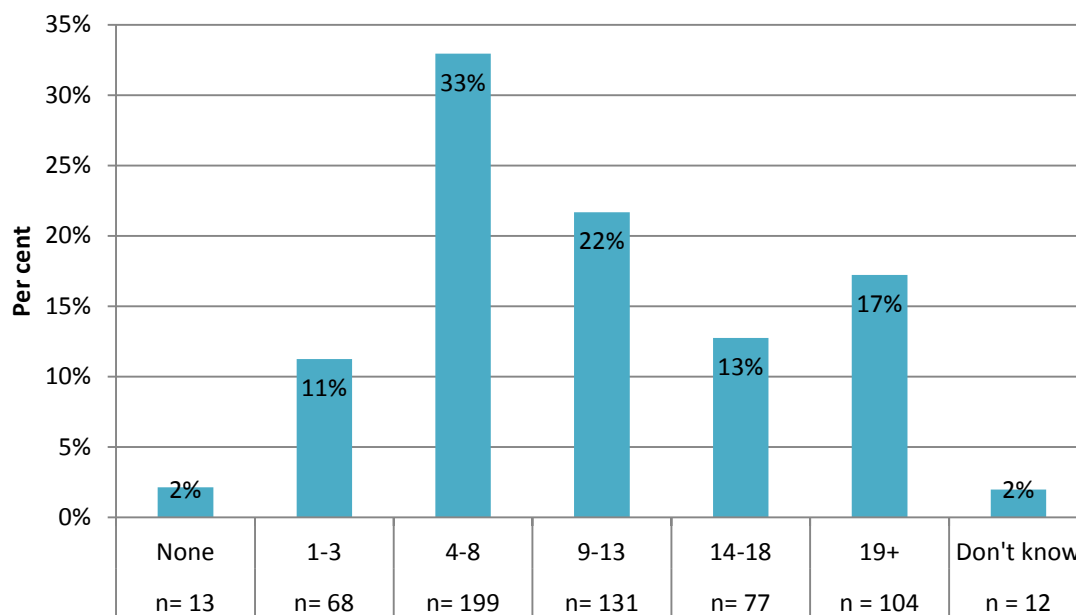
Table 8: Main library - parent/caregivers' survey responses.

Library	N	%
Highland Park Library	31	5%
Takapuna Library	27	4%
Titirangi Library	27	4%
East Coast Bays Library	26	4%
Howick Library	26	4%
Sir Edmund Hillary Library	22	4%
Botany Library	20	3%
Mt Roskill Library	18	3%
Birkenhead Library	17	3%
Blockhouse Bay Library	17	3%
Glenfield Library	17	3%
New Lynn War Memorial Library	17	3%
Whangaparaoa Library	17	3%
Massey Library	16	3%
Onehunga Library	16	3%
Glen Eden Library	14	2%
Mt Albert Library	14	2%
Pakuranga Library	14	2%
Mahurangi East Library	13	2%
Mangere Bridge Library	13	2%
Panmure Library	13	2%
Manurewa Library	12	2%
Warkworth Library	12	2%
Albany Village Library	11	2%
Orewa Library	11	2%
Papatoetoe Library	11	2%
St Heliers Library	11	2%
Waitakere Central Library	11	2%
Avondale Library	9	1%
Epsom Library	9	1%
Remuera Library	9	1%
Te Atatu Peninsula Library	9	1%
Waiheke Library	9	1%
Leys Institute Library Ponsonby	8	1%
Pt Chevalier Library	8	1%
Pukekohe Library	8	1%
Ranui Library	8	1%
Wellsford War Memorial Library	8	1%
Kumeu Library	5	1%
Central City Library Tamaki Pataka Korero	4	1%
Glen Innes Library	4	1%
Helensville Library	4	1%
Northcote Library	4	1%
Te Matariki Clendon Library	4	1%
Waiuku Library	4	1%
Devonport Library	3	0%
Grey Lynn Library	3	0%
Parnell Library	3	0%
Manukau Library and Research Centre	2	0%
Otahuhu Library	2	0%
Tupu Youth Library	2	0%
Mangere East Library	1	0%
Mangere Town Centre Library	1	0%

4.2 How many challenges did children complete?

Parents/caregivers were asked how many challenges their children completed. One third (33%) of parents/caregivers reported that their children completed between four and eight challenges. The majority of adults reported their child completing nine or more challenges (52%), with 17 per cent of all adults reported that their child completed 19 or more challenges. Thirteen per cent of adults who answered the survey reported their child completing 3 or fewer challenges.

Figure 12: How many of the challenge sets did your child complete during Dare to Explore?



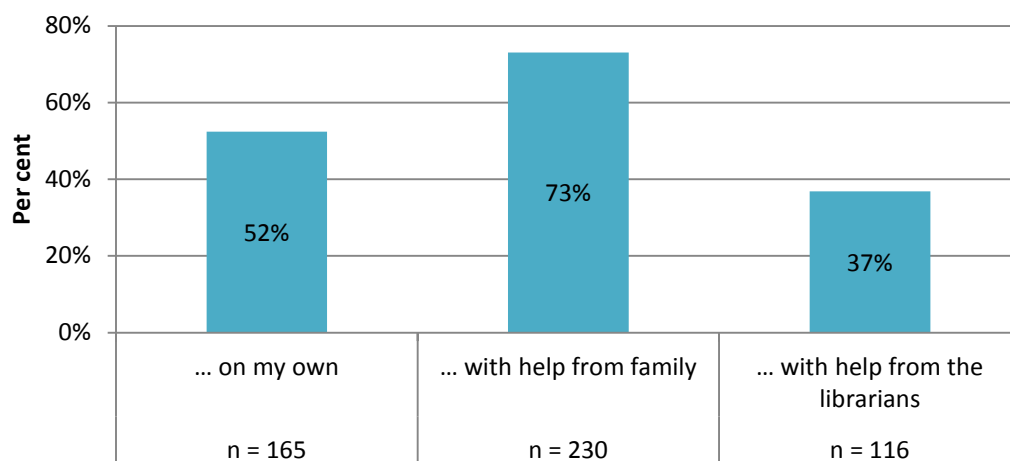
4.3 How were children helped to do Dare to Explore?

Children were asked if they did Dare to Explore on their own, with help from family, or with help from the librarians (with the option to choose more than one answer).

The majority were helped by their family (73%), down from 82 per cent reported in 2012/2013.

Approximately half of all children (52%) reported doing at least some of Dare to Explore on their own, up slightly from 49 per cent in 2012/2013. Overall, 20 per cent of Dare to Explore participants did the programme with help from neither their family nor from the librarians. This was up from 13 per cent of all children in 2012/2013 who reported doing Dare to Explore on their own only. It appears that, compared to the 2012/2103 Dare to Explore, there was a shift in this year's programme away from children being helped by their families to doing the programme on their own.

Figure 13: I did Dare to Explore...on my own/with help from family/librarians.



5.0 Did Dare to Explore maintain or improve children's literacy?

Literacy is the ability to read and write. Because the primary aim of Dare to Explore was to increase children's engagement with reading, we were interested in understanding what impact the programme had on children's reading ability. In this section, we look at two outcomes that are related to children's ability to read: parents'/caregivers' estimates of changes in their children's reading ability; and confidence and enjoyment of reading. In Section 5.5, we also look at whether Dare to Explore impacted on children's standardised reading assessment data that is collected routinely by their schools.

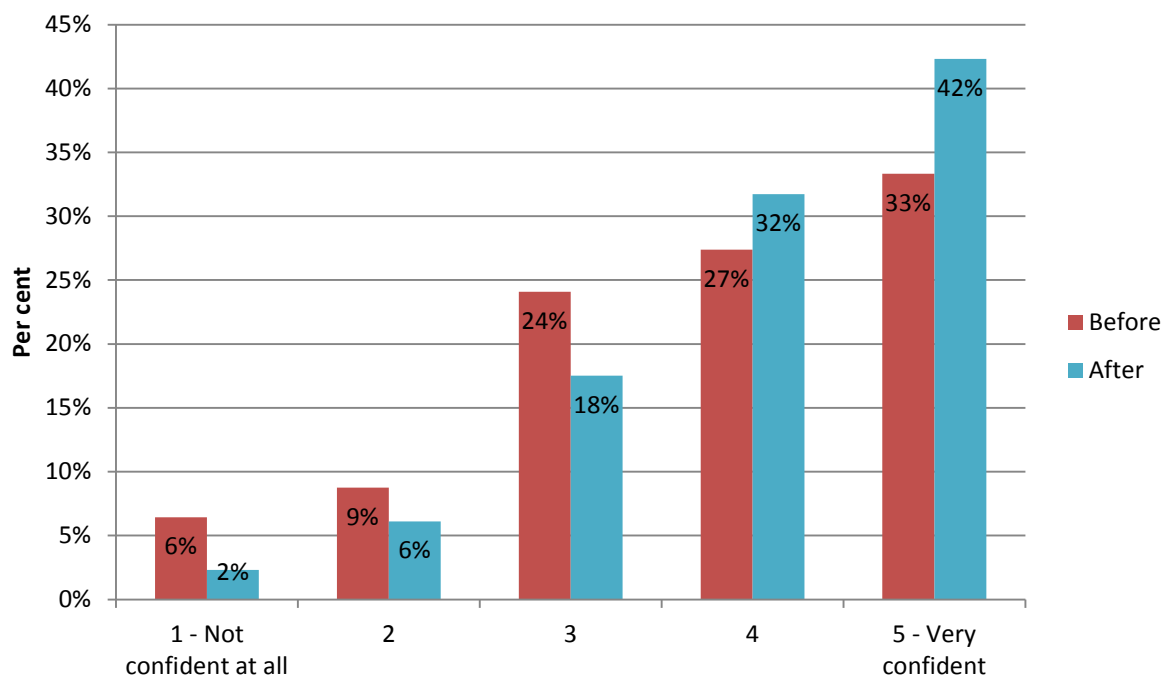
5.1 Did Dare to Explore increase children's reading confidence?

Parents and caregivers were asked how confident their child was with reading both before and after Dare to Explore. The findings show that a significant percentage of parents/caregivers felt that their child's confidence had increased over the summer period.

Overall, 70 per cent of adults felt that their child's confidence with reading had stayed the same over the summer period, 27 per cent felt that their child's confidence had increased one point on the scale used (e.g., increased from 1 to 2, 2 to 3, 3 to 4, etc.), and 3 per cent reported that their child increased two points on the scale. Only one parent reported that their child decreased (one point) in confidence. One parent reported an increase of three points.

Although the majority of parents / caregivers reported that their children's reading confidence did not change over the summer, close to half of these parents / caregivers (33% of all adult survey respondents) rated their child's confidence five-out-of-five on the scale provided, and therefore un-increasable over the summer break. When we exclude answers from parents whose children had very high reading confidence prior to participating in Dare to Explore (i.e., they couldn't be rated as any more confident on the scale used), 45 per cent of parents reported an increase in confidence in their children of at least one scale point.

Figure 14. Children's reading confidence before and after Dare to Explore - Parent/caregiver survey.



5.2 Did Dare to Explore increase children's reading ability?

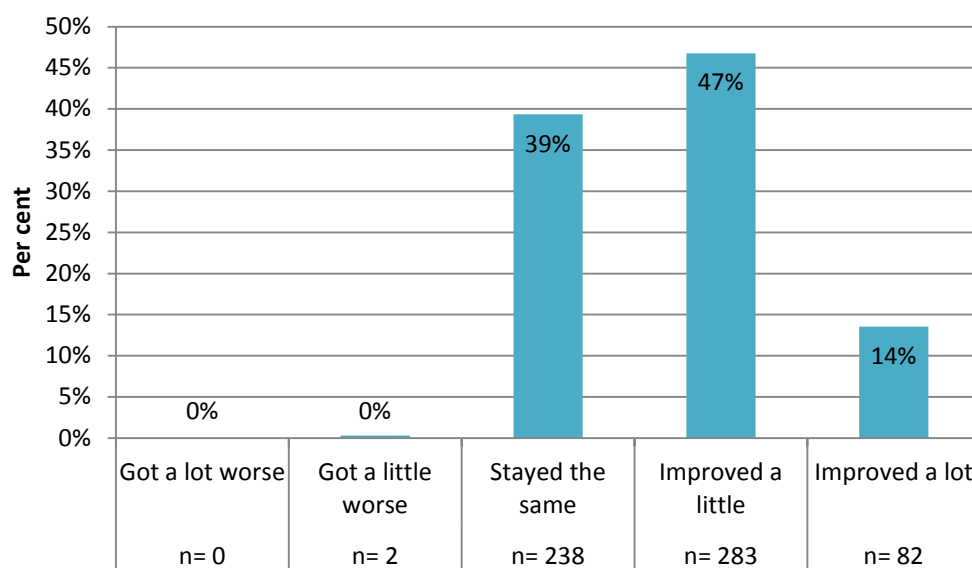
Parents/caregivers were asked how their children's reading ability changed during Dare to Explore. The majority (60%) felt that their children's reading ability either improved a little or a lot (up from 57% in 2012/2013), while 39 per cent felt their children's reading ability did not change during Dare to Explore.

Only two adults felt that their children's reading ability got a little worse during Dare to Explore.

While these figures reflect the subjective judgements of parents, the findings are nevertheless important when seen in the light of the summer learning effect (Entwisle, Alexander, and Olson, 1997). The summer learning effect is the widely studied loss of literacy over the summer holiday break. Seen in this light, not only is a reported increase in reading ability in 60 per cent of children impressive, but the maintenance of reading ability in 39 per cent of children may also reflect a meaningful improvement on what may otherwise have been a loss of reading ability if the children had not participated in Dare to Explore.

While the percentage of adults reporting an increase in reading ability of their children increased from 2012/2013, the balance between the degree of improvement appears to have changed. In 2013/2014, 47 per cent of adults reported that their children improved a little, an increase from the 39 per cent reporting this degree of change in 2012/2013. In contrast, whereas 18 per cent of adults reported that their child improved a lot in 2012/2013, only 14 per cent of adults reported that this year. Thus in 2013/2014 a greater percentage of adults reported that their child's reading improved a little but a smaller percentage reported that their child's ability improved a lot.

Figure 15: How has your child's reading ability changed during Dare to Explore?



Children were also asked whether they thought Dare to Explore helped with their reading over the summer. The answers provided by children support the observations of parents, where nine out of 10 children felt that Dare to Explore helped their reading either a little bit or a lot. Overall, 47 per cent of children reported that Dare to Explore helped their reading 'a little bit'; 42 per cent of children reported that Dare to Explore helped their reading 'a lot', and 10 per cent felt that Dare to Explore hadn't helped their reading at all. It is interesting to note the difference between the estimates of adults and children. Because children were asked about how much Dare to Explore 'helped with their reading', it is likely that the responses of children reflect more than just pure reading ability, such as enjoyment, confidence and enthusiasm.

As with the estimates of adults, the balance between the degree of improvement appears to have changed between 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, such that a greater percentage of children reported Dare to Explore helping 'a little' and a smaller percentage reported it helping 'a lot'. In 2012/2013 39 per cent of children reported that Dare to Explore helped their reading 'a little bit' and 55 per cent reported it helped 'a lot'.

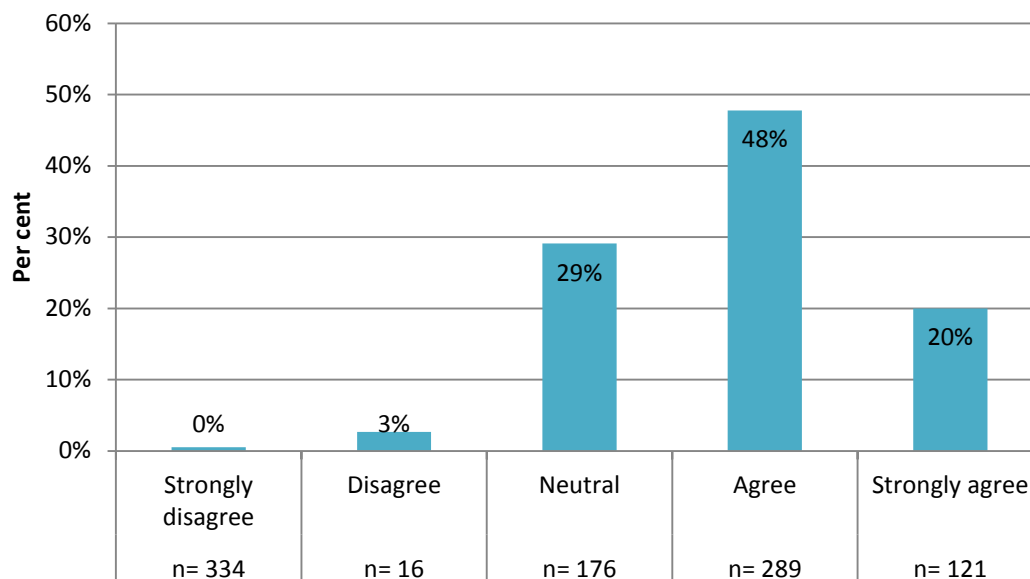
It is unclear whether the changes in the estimates of adults and children are a result of a change in the impact of Dare to Explore on reading ability or is reflective of the fact that children and their families were recruited independently of library staff (and therefore more likely to have measured the experience of families who did not engage with the programme). Therefore, while the shift might be reflective of a recruitment methodology that reduced the likelihood of results being biased toward those who were most positively impacted by the programme, it is also possible that the shift is reflective of the nature of the challenges this year. It is possible that the challenges this year struck a different balance between pure reading and fun activities that had aspects of reading. If this is the case, then it may show that such an approach leads to more children being impacted, but each to a lesser degree.

5.3 Did Dare to Explore increase enjoyment of reading?

Parents/caregivers were asked how much they agreed with the statement that Dare to Explore increased their child's enjoyment of reading. The majority (68%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, while the remaining gave a neutral response. This finding is important given Dare to Explore's focus on embedding reading in fun.

Only three per cent of parents/caregivers disagreed that Dare to Explore decreased their child's enjoyment of reading.

Figure 16: Dare to Explore has increased my child's enjoyment of reading.



5.4 What factors best predict increases in reading ability?

In the 2012/2013 evaluation of Dare to Explore (Allpress and Gilbertson, 2013) we developed a statistical model to understand what the strongest predictors of increased reading ability in children were. That analysis showed that there were three important ways through which Dare to Explore increased reading ability: children discover and learn new things, increased parent confidence and increased enjoyment of reading.

We have conducted a similar analysis this year to test the model developed last year. As noted last year, this sort of analysis is important for two reasons. Firstly, it helps us understand the mechanisms through which Dare to Explore improved reading ability. Secondly, it highlights areas of focus for future programme improvement that are likely to have the greatest effect on reading ability.

The model was developed in two stages. The first stage involved investigating the relationship between adults' estimates of changes in their children's reading ability and a wide range of variables (as measured in the adults' survey), in order to investigate which variables were the strongest predictors of changes in reading ability. The second stage involved a more detailed investigation of the relationships amongst the variables identified as being important in stage one.

The following factors were identified in stage one as being significant predictors of changes in reading ability. Together these four factors explained 40 per cent of the variance in changes in reading ability, $R^2 = .40$, $F(4, 599) = 101.43$, $p^6 < .001$:

- whether children discovered and learned new things (referred to as *discovery*)
- whether parents/caregivers had increased confidence in their ability to help their children learn new things (referred to as *parent confidence*)
- whether children had increased reading confidence (referred to as *child confidence*)
- whether children's enjoyment of reading increased (referred to as *enjoyment of reading*)

⁶ Probability values, or *p* values, tell us the probability of the relationship occurring simply by chance. That is, a *p* value of .05 tells us that there is a 5% chance that the observed relationship is not real and has simply occurred by chance.

The following factors were found to be unrelated to changes in reading ability (i.e., they were non-significant predictors):

- child age
- child gender
- number of challenges completed
- how much children enjoyed the challenges they completed
- whether the library was friendly and welcoming
- whether the librarians had time and were willing to help
- Whether children used the Dare to Explore website
- Whether the challenges, activities and party were seen as appropriate for the age of the child.

The stage two analysis took the four significant predictors of changes in reading ability and investigated the interrelationships among them.

The model showed that, on their own, discovery, child confidence, parent confidence and enjoyment were all significant, direct predictors of increased reading ability (i.e., higher scores on each of these factors were associated with greater improvements in reading ability).

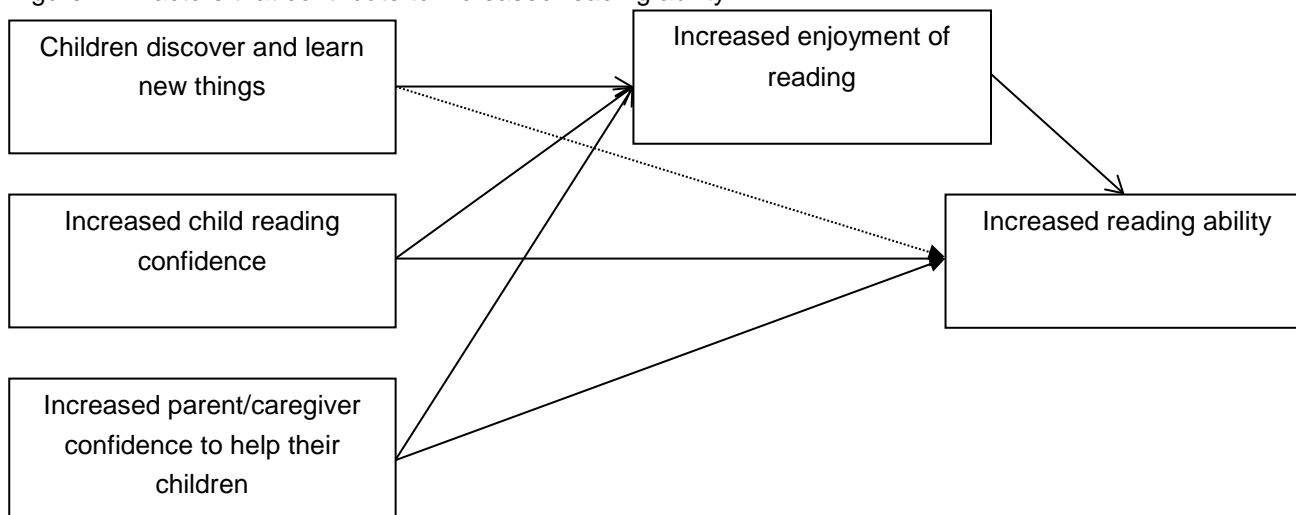
We wondered, however, whether increased enjoyment might be a by-product of increases in discovery, child confidence and parent confidence, and might act as an intermediary between these three factors and increased reading ability. We therefore tested whether enjoyment of reading might explain (i.e., statistically mediate) the relationship between these two factors and increased reading ability.

The analysis showed that increased enjoyment of reading was a significant mediator of all three relationships. This means that enjoyment of reading explained, at least in part, *why* discovery, child confidence and parent confidence were positively related to increased reading ability. The relationship between discovery and increased reading ability was fully explained by increased enjoyment (as represented by the dotted arrow in Figure 17). The relationships between child and parent confidence and increased reading ability was only partially explained by increased enjoyment, indicating that there are additional reasons for why confidence contributes positively to increases in reading ability, beyond increases in enjoyment.

Note, a number of statistical tests, such as Sobel tests of mediation were significant, but are not reported here for simplicity.

This analysis is, of course, not an exhaustive list of how and why Dare to Explore impacted children's reading. It is likely that, at the very least, there is an additional list of other 'environmental' factors that influenced how Dare to Explore impacted children. These factors likely include socioeconomic status, family expectations, and facilitation provided by librarians.

Figure 17: Factors that contribute to increased reading ability.



The results of this analysis almost exactly replicate the findings from modelling done last year. The only difference between the two models is the inclusion of child confidence as a significant predictor, which was not measured last year. The replication of these relationships over two years provides strong evidence for the model of how Dare to Explore impacts on children’s reading ability.

5.5 Standardised reading assessment

The reports of parents/caregivers, while providing an important and valuable insight into the impact of Dare to Explore on children’s reading ability, are limited by their subjectivity. To complement the reports of parents/caregivers, we attempted to further understand the impact of Dare to Explore by making use of standardised reading assessment data collected by schools before and after the school holidays.

Because of the difficulty collecting student achievement data from schools, secondary data were used from a summer literacy/numeracy intervention conducted by researchers at the University of Auckland. Names from Dare to Explore registrations were matched to names of students who participated in the University of Auckland study.

A total of 15 students who enrolled in Dare to Explore were identified as also being involved in the University of Auckland study. These students were compared to 15 students who participated in the University of Auckland study but not Dare to Explore. The 15 comparison students were matched on the basis of initial reading level and school. By comparing these two groups of students, we tested whether participation in Dare to Explore had an impact on students’ reading levels over and above the impact of the University of Auckland intervention.

All 30 students were in school Years 3 or 4 (aged 7-9 years) and attended schools in the Auckland Council Manukau ward.

We attempted to assess the impact of Dare to Explore by investigating the change in students’ STAR reading assessment scale scores over the summer holiday period. A comparison of the two groups showed that students that enrolled in Dare to Explore and participated in the University of Auckland programme had a slightly greater increase in reading scores (with a mean increase of 11.3 scale points) than students who only participated in the University of Auckland programme (who had a mean increase of 8.8 scale points).

Despite not being statistically significant ($p > .05$)⁷, this difference between groups is indicative of additional value added by Dare to Explore, above and beyond the programme being delivered by the University of Auckland. This is important in light of the fact that the students in the University of Auckland study were already making larger than expected gains in reading scores (compared to the national expected average improvement of 4.5 scale points).

Although limited by a small sample, these findings do indicate that further investigation into the impact of future Auckland Libraries summer reading programmes on children's literacy is called for.

Future analyses should broaden the use of student achievement data. A stronger test of the impact of future summer reading adventures should utilise standardised reading assessment data to compare changes in reading scores of summer reading programme participants with non-participants. A larger sample of students is necessary to ensure that there is statistical power to detect differences between groups.

5.6 Do parents'/caregivers' and children's reasons for wanting to participate impact on changes in reading ability?

Earlier sections showed that 78 per cent of parents wanted their children to participate in Dare to Explore in order to maintain or increase their child's reading ability, and that 37 per cent of children wanted to participate for the same reason.

Two analyses were conducted to test whether these motivations impacted on subsequent changes in children's reading ability. The first, using data from the parents' survey, looked at the effect of parents' motivation for Dare to Explore to maintain or increase their children's reading ability on subsequent increases in reading ability (as estimated by parents themselves). The second, using data from the children's survey, looked at children's self-reported motivation to increase their reading ability on their own estimates of how their reading changed during Dare to Explore.

5.6.1 The effect of parents'/caregivers' motivations

We tested (using a t -test⁸) whether there was any difference in ratings of children's reading improvements between parents who did versus did not state they wanted their children to participate in Dare to Explore in order to help maintain or increase their child's reading ability.

The results show that parents who wanted their child to participate in Dare to Explore in order to maintain or increase their children's reading ability felt that their child's reading ($Mean = 3.80$ out of 5) increased significantly more than parents who did not state this motivation ($Mean = 3.52$ out of 5), $t(603) = -4.22$, $p < .001$. This pattern was found also in 2012/2013.

This finding is important for two reasons:

1. It shows that parents/caregivers who wished to maintain or improve their children's reading ability did indeed see greater increases in their child's reading ability over the summer than those who were not explicitly motivated to participate in Dare to Explore for this reason. This may be because parents/caregivers with explicit reading ability motives may have encouraged their children to interact differently with the Dare to Explore materials than those parents/caregivers without such a motivation, perhaps emphasising the pure reading challenges over the less-reading-focused challenges.

⁷ Because statistical significance is strongly influenced by sample size (where a larger sample size is more likely to be significant), we might expect a difference of the same magnitude to be significant at a larger sample size.

⁸ A t -test is a statistical test of differences between (mean scores of) two groups.

2. Although there was a significant difference observed between those with and without an explicit reading ability motivation, even parents/caregivers without this motivation observed increases in their children's reading ability. This is important because it indicates that even if reading ability was not seen as a priority, Dare to Explore had a positive effect on maintaining and improving children's reading levels.

5.6.2 The effect of children's own motivations

A comparison (using a *t*-test) of perceived increases in reading ability for children who did versus did not state they wanted to participate in Dare to Explore because they wanted to get better at reading.

The results show that children who wanted to get better at reading reported that Dare to Explore helped more with their reading over the summer (*Mean* score of 2.56 out of 3) than children who did not report wanting to get better at reading (*Mean* score of 2.19 out of 3), $t(310) = -5.01, p < .001$.

This shows that when children wanted to participate in Dare to Explore to get better at reading they were more likely to feel that the programme had helped their reading. One explanation for this is that the prior motivation of children resulted in them approaching Dare to Explore with an intention to improve their reading ability. If this is the case, it would demonstrate the importance of children being internally motivated to improve their reading ability. In contrast, it is also possible that children who were motivated to improve their reading saw the programme as being more helpful, simply as a result of their initial motivation (i.e. a form of confirmation bias), or that those children who felt Dare to Explore helped more with their reading were more likely to report having such a motivation.

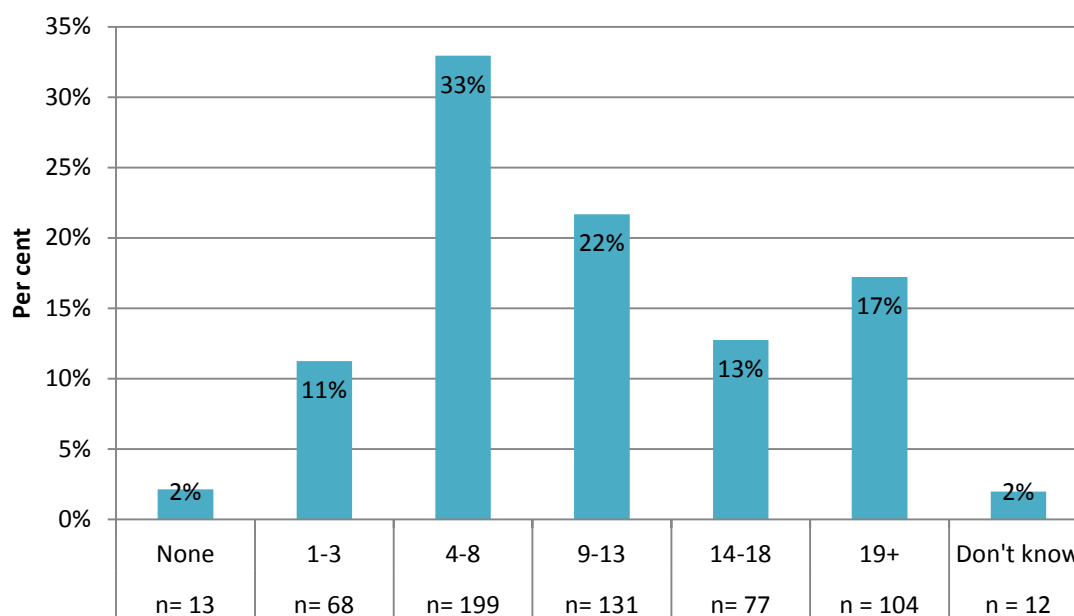
6.0 Experience of children who did not complete the programme

Dare to Explore was designed so that children could choose which and how many challenges to complete, however in order to get their first sticker and to be invited to the end-of-programme party, children needed to complete at least four challenges. For this reason, completion of four challenges was implicitly considered by library staff as the threshold that children needed to pass in order to have 'completed' the programme. This section investigates the characteristics and experience of those who did not complete the programme (i.e., who completed 3 or fewer challenges).

6.1 Percentage of children who did not complete the programme

As reported earlier, the number of challenges completed by children varied. While the majority of children completed four or more challenges, a reasonable number of children did not complete the programme. Eleven per cent completed between one and three challenges, and 2 per cent completed none.

Figure 18: How many of the challenge sets did your child complete during Dare to Explore?



6.2 Characteristics of children who did not complete the programme

Comparing children who did not complete the programme with those who did showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the groups with regard to age or gender, (all p values $> .17$).

6.3 How did children who did not complete the programme find Dare to Explore?

Children who did not complete the programme were compared to those who did with regard to:

- reading confidence before and after the programme
- changes in reading ability over the summer period
- enjoyment of challenges that they completed

- whether children were encouraged to discover and learn new things
- whether Dare to Explore increased children's enjoyment of reading, and
- whether parents considered the challenges to be age appropriate

The two groups did not differ significantly on prior reading confidence. However, the two groups did appear to diverge in confidence over the summer period, with confidence increasing 0.35 points amongst those who did complete the programme but only increasing 0.23 amongst those who did not. In a statistical sense, this difference was marginally significant, $p = .09$, but does suggest that there may be a relationship between successful completion of challenges and increases in confidence.

There were significant differences between the two groups of children on all remaining comparisons, all $ps < .001$. Non-completers had lower increases in reading ability over the summer (3.46 vs. 3.78), lower enjoyment of the challenges they did complete (3.42 vs. 4.37), lower levels of discovery and learning (3.73 vs. 4.24), and lower increases in enjoyment of reading (3.49 vs. 3.89). Parents of non-completers were also more likely to feel that the challenges were not appropriate for the age of their child.

It is of course hard to understand the causality behind these differences. Did non-completers experience lower levels of the outcomes above because they happened to (possibly for some external reason) not engage with the Dare to Explore challenges, or did they not complete the programme because they did not find Dare to Explore as rewarding? In an attempt to give some insight into the experience of non-completers, parents/caregivers were asked, if their child completed three or fewer challenges, whether Dare to Explore met their child's needs. The results are presented in Section 6.4.

6.4 Did Dare to Explore meet the needs of those who did not complete the programme?

Parents of children who completed three or fewer challenges were asked whether Dare to Explore met their child's needs. More than half the parents/caregivers who answered this question said the programme had met their child's needs. Most of these parents went on to say that the small number of challenges completed by their child reflected the fact that they had gone away or been busy with other things.

It did not engage him as much, but I feel it is not through any deficiency in the programme, but that it was competing with other things for his attention --- holiday programmes, social activities with friends, and our own daily reading habit. We used the challenge to look at what resources/topics we could explore, and what activities were on offer at the library, and then we participated/used those materials or topics when it suited his interests and our schedule.

Yes, however we didn't have a chance to sign up before Christmas as school didn't finish until 19 December, and then we were out of town until 5 January. So there were only 2 weeks available to us to participate.

Yes, family life and work just meant that I didn't get to the challenges as much as I would have liked.

I'm confident that if we made time to complete the challenges (Xmas holidays) she would have improved her reading, vocab and focus (which she was already confident and fluent with). We joined her to give her other activities to do throughout the holidays, but ended up not having time. GREAT SERVICE which is beneficial to our kids and community.

Eight parents/caregivers stated that their children had chosen to focus on the reading instead of the challenges. For most of these parents, the programme had met their needs in other ways.

We concentrated on maintaining the goal of "reading for 10 minutes each day"

My daughter loved Dare to Explore last year. This year her reading is much better, and she seemed to prefer to just sit and read rather than look at the challenges or fill out the titles etc of books she had read.

Yes, he was a bit young to do some of the challenges but he loved meeting his own daily reading goal he came up with on his own!

Thirteen parents/caregivers stated that the challenges were too difficult or complicated for their young children:

No it did not meet my child's needs as he is a reluctant beginning reader. The activities were too advanced for him, plus personally they did not excite him. We did do the online adventure, but as he could not read it and it was very advanced for him with no graphics to keep him interested I completed it as I was interested!

The programme, even though having easy things like drawing or doing simple tasks, alot of it was over the head of my 5 and 7yr olds. Needed alot of help on the computer or to write things down

Planted a seed. Maybe have a booklet for new readers as son found it overwhelming with so much writing in it and hence was discouraged sometimes.

Just. Was too complicated and time consuming. Couldn't be done solo

Eight parents/caregivers stated that the activities/challenges did not appeal to them.

No. Liked the treasure hunt in the library but did not like the colouring (to school like he said)

Not really, our kids are encouraged to be outdoors and there weren't enough challenges outdoors. and that could be completed without props and materials that could be expensive.

She did not find the challenges interesting

I enrolled 3 kids in the programme, but my 10 yr old boy and 12 yr old girl thought the syllabus was too much like school work, and elected to 'just read books' instead.

7.0 Family engagement with each other and the library

In this section we investigate the impact of Dare to Explore on both the relationships between family members and the relationships families have with the library. The development of these relationships is important because Dare to Explore aimed not only to strengthen the relationship between libraries and their visitors, but also contribute to the strengthening of relationships within families.

7.1 Dare to Explore as a way for family to spend time with one another

Eighteen parents/caregivers reported that something they liked most about Dare to Explore was the opportunity it gave them to spend time with their child.

I thought it was a great vehicle for doing and learning new things together with my child - we had some really lovely quality time as I helped her with the challenges.

Learning about new things as a family.

Sitting down and learning alongside my children. Greater variety of books and topics. Exposure to new topics. Gave me new ideas of things to do with my children

The events in the libraries which brought together the children and parents.

I like time I have with my child and see library how they help for as when we need them.

that we worked together as a family team to complete questions and tasks

The more time i got to spend with my boy

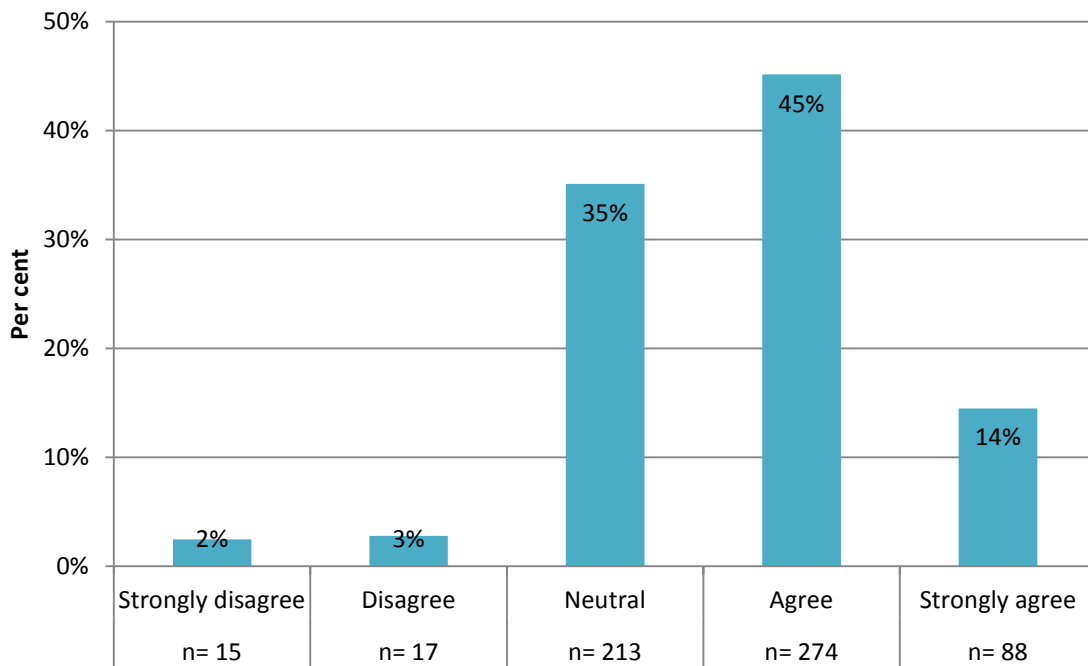
spending time with my children and doing stuff together

7.2 Did parents/caregivers become more confident about helping their children to learn new things?

Parents/caregivers were asked whether participating in Dare to Explore had made them feel more confident about helping their children learn new things.

The majority of adults agreed (45%) or strongly agreed (14%) that it had. Thirty five per cent responded neutrally and only 5 per cent disagreed. The modelling reported in Section 5.4 shows that increased parent confidence has an important impact on children's enjoyment of reading and subsequent increases in reading ability.

Figure 19. Did Dare to Explore make parents/caregivers feel more confident about helping their children? - Parents/caregivers survey.



7.3 Did children like going to the library more as a result of Dare to Explore?

Children were asked whether Dare to Explore made them like going to the library more. Most children (88%) responded that that they like going to the library either a lot more or a little more, up from 80 per cent in 2012/2013.

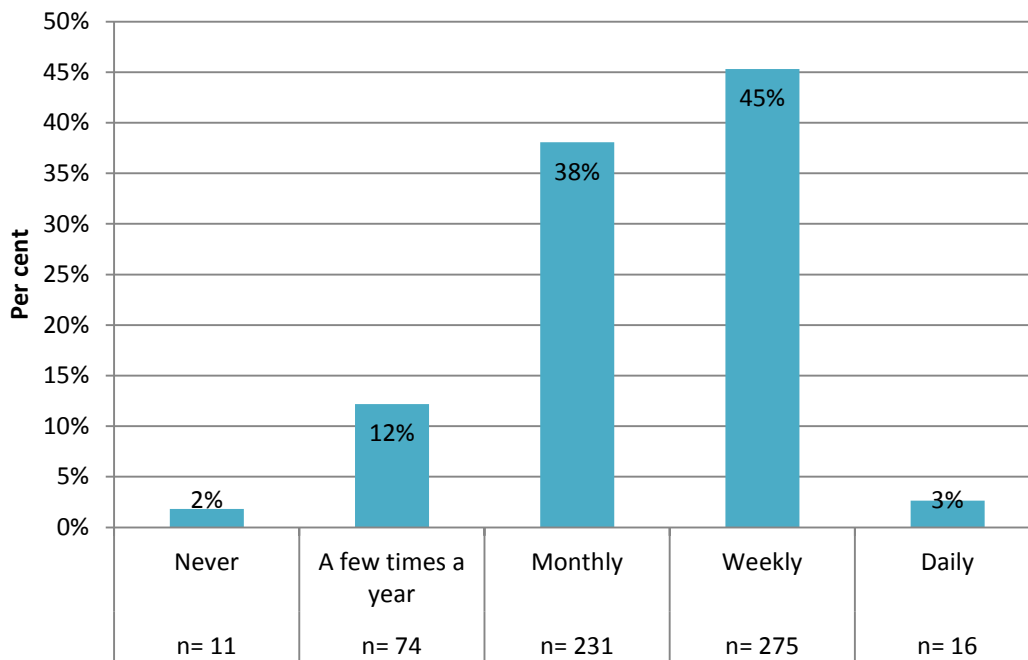
Table 9: Has Dare to Explore made you like going to the library more?

	N	%
No	37	11.9
I like going about the same	134	42.9
Yes, a little bit more	141	45.2

7.4 Were families likely to visit the library more often as a result of Dare to Explore?

Parents/caregivers were asked how often they visited the library before Dare to Explore. Almost half (48%) of adults reported already visiting the library weekly or daily prior to Dare to Explore, with most of these individuals visiting weekly.

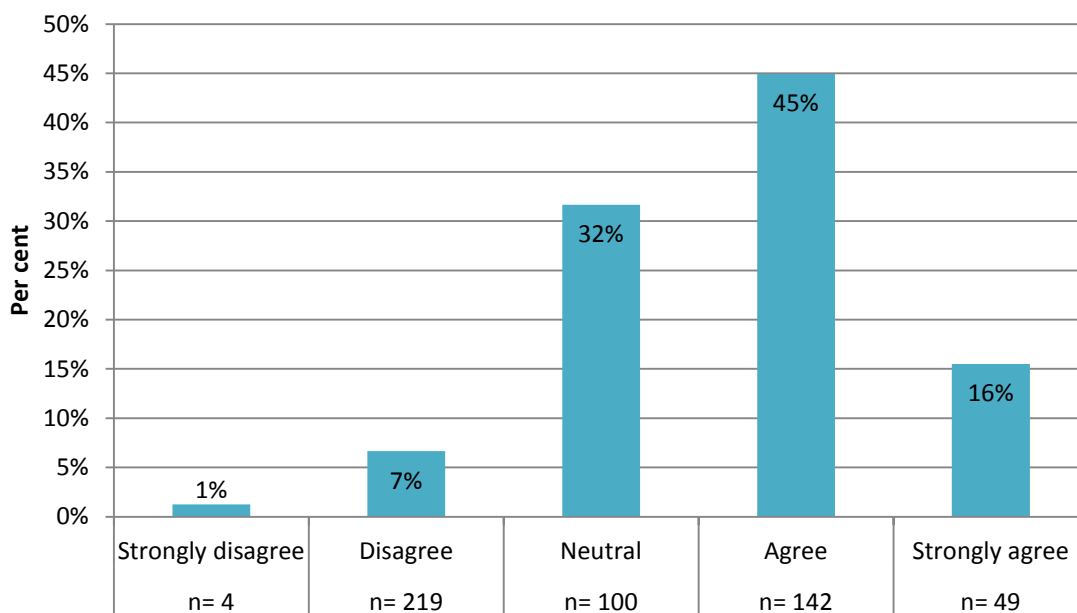
Figure 20: How frequently families visited the library before this year's Dare to Explore – parents/caregivers survey.



Adults were also asked whether Dare to Explore had made them want to visit the library more. Approximately one half of parents/caregivers agreed (36%) or strongly agreed (14%) that, because of Dare to Explore, they and their children were likely to visit the library more often in the future than they have in the past. An additional 39 per cent responded neutrally and a smaller percentage disagreed (9%) or strongly disagreed (2%).

When looking at only those who visit the library monthly or less frequently, the percentage that agreed that Dare to Explore has increased the likelihood of them visiting the library more increased. The responses of the less-frequent visitors can be seen in Figure 21.

Figure 21: Because of Dare to Explore, my child/ren and I are likely to visit the library more often than we have in the past – parent/guardian survey, excluding those who already visit the library daily or weekly.



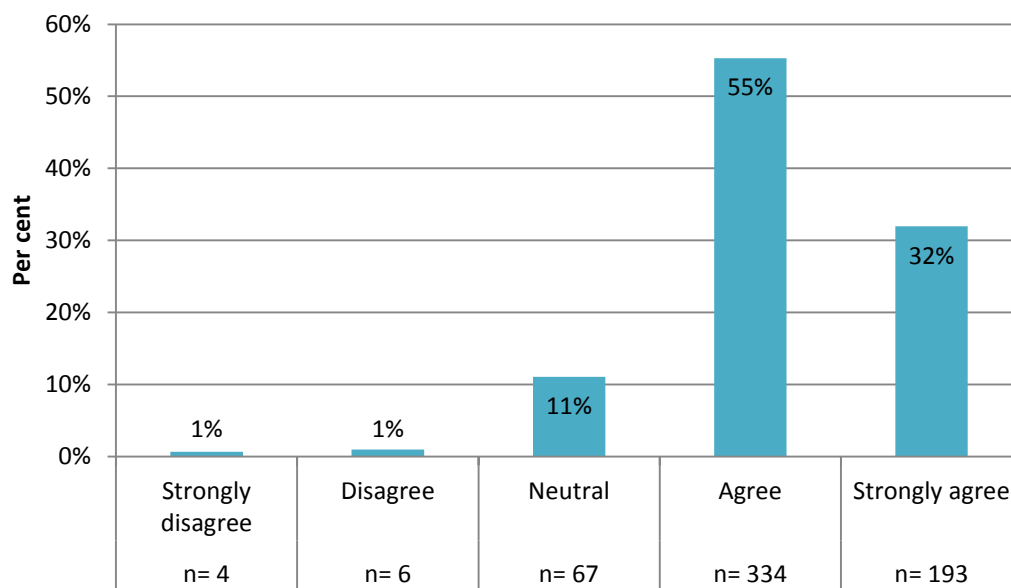
8.0 Learning and discovery

8.1 Did Dare to Explore encourage children to discover and learn new things?

The vast majority of parents/caregivers agreed (55%) or strongly agreed (32%) that Dare to explore encouraged their children to discover and learn new things. This reflects an increase in those who agreed or strongly agreed (87% vs 77% in 2012/2013) with the statement.

Eleven per cent of respondents were neutral and two per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Figure 22: Dare to Explore encouraged my child to discover and learn new things.

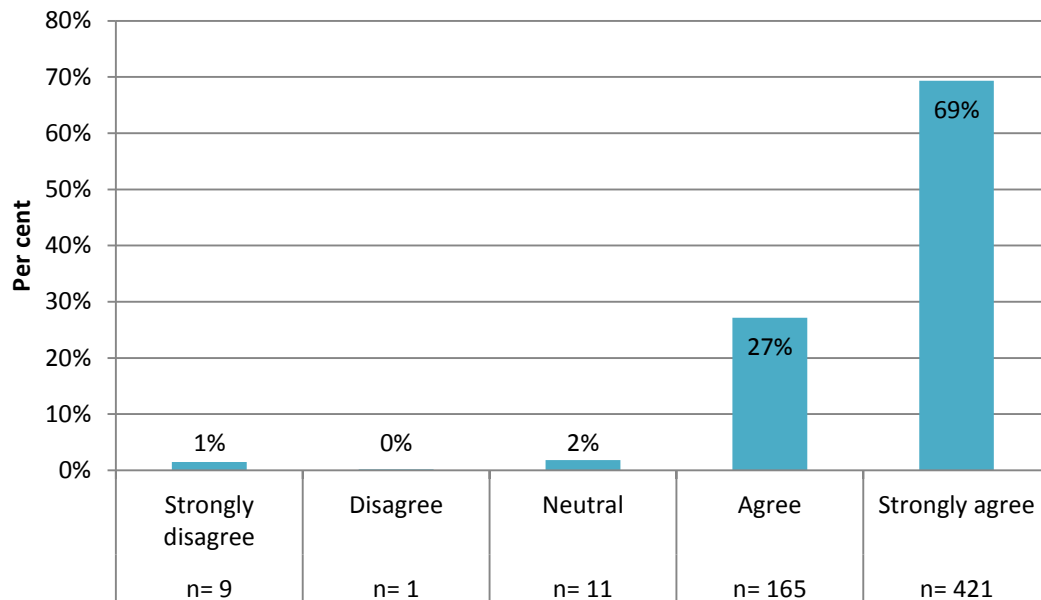


9.0 The library and librarians

9.1 How friendly and welcoming were the libraries?

A striking 97 per cent of parents/caregivers agreed or strongly agreed that their main library was friendly and welcoming. Two per cent of respondents were neutral and one per cent strongly disagreed.

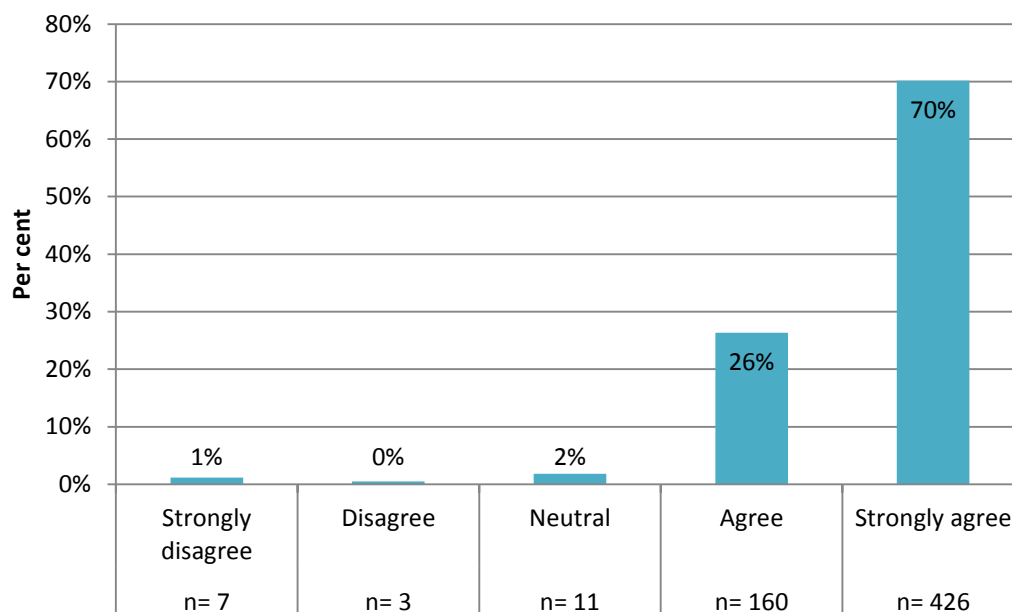
Figure 23. Library is friendly and welcoming.



9.2 Were librarians seen as having the time and being willing to help?

Almost all parents/caregivers (97%) also agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the librarians had time for them and were willing to help. Again, two per cent of respondents were neutral and one per cent strongly disagreed.

Figure 24: The librarians at this library had time for us and were willing to help.



9.3 What comments did people make about the librarians?

Library staff featured in 105 responses to the question about what parents and caregivers liked most about Dare to Explore.

Friendly librarians which my son now knows quite well at our local branch.

The great thing that I liked about Dare to Explore was the enthusiasm showed by all the staff members and their commitment and their patience when dealing with kids and adults to understand this DARE TO EXPLORE concept. This has been super successful thanks to the extremely dedicated staff.

The time that the Librarian spent with my daughter's explaining the program and getting them enthused.

Very few negative statements about librarians were made. Most of this feedback focused on the perception that some librarians were not as informed about or engaged with the programme as others:

Our library staff could have been better informed. We were repeatedly given conflicting pieces of information

Training other librarians in case the Dare to Explore person is not available or busy. Others didn't appear to know much about how the passport worked.

We went to [a] library to show the challenge my son had completed, but the lady was not that keen (or may be was tired?) to hear about it. I felt this was a bit disappointing as my son had practiced how to tell her the story he read and show her all the stuff.

Some parents mentioned librarians when writing about what library activities they would like more of.

A lot more communication between the staff at our library would be better. We often went in on a Saturday, we were always met with '[the children's librarian] isn't here today'. We were helped by other staff but they often didn't know the answers to questions. I strongly feel that other staff members should be able to help when the children's librarian is absent.

10.0 Website

10.1 How many people used the website?

Parents/caregivers were asked whether they and their child/ren used the Dare to Explore web pages on the Auckland Libraries website. Overall, 56 per cent of parents/caregivers reported that they did use the web pages, and 44 per cent reported that they did not make use of the web pages.

Those who did use the web pages were asked if the online content was easy to find and what they liked best about Dare to Explore online. Those who did not use the web pages were asked why they and their child/ren did not use them.

Children were also asked whether they used the Dare to Explore web pages, with 59 per cent answering that they did. When children that used the web pages were asked how much they liked them, 50 per cent of children reported liking them a lot, 49 per cent a little bit and 1 per cent did not like them.

10.2 Was the online content easy to find?

Of those who reported using the Dare to Explore web pages, 90 per cent felt that the online content was easy to find.

10.3 What did parents/caregivers like about Dare to Explore online?

Those who did use Dare to Explore's online content were asked what they liked best. The most frequently mentioned aspect of the online material was the Around the World Quest, mentioned by 65 parents/caregivers.

The round the world was fun and the kids just about believed they were on a boat travelling around the world!

The world quest was in a format she was familiar with, she enjoyed discovering facts about countries featured.

The round the world challenge as it was something my hubby did with our daughter so even though he was working and couldn't come to the library he got to do something with her at home.

Fifty-six parents/caregivers stated that they liked how easy to access and use the website is.

We accessed the online book review and online quest, we also read the Adventure Diary. I liked the way it was all easily linked through the visual link on the main library page.

Lots of information and easy to find and read

Well organized, linked to tons of useful information, easy accessible

We could use it wherever! At the beach, on the train or going walkabout in the city.

Thirty-one parents/caregivers mentioned the book lists as something they liked about the online content.

10.4 Why did not parents/caregivers use the website?

Those who did not use the Dare to Explore web pages on the Auckland Libraries website were asked why. Many parents reported that they did not know about the online content (59) or forgot about it, or simply did not get round to using it (59). Other parents/caregivers stated that they did not need the online resources, in many cases because they were satisfied with the other resources. A lack of access to a computer or internet was another common response, especially for those who were away from home for the holidays.

Others wanted to avoid the computer and internet over the holidays or they preferred to improve their familiarity with other resources, particularly books and the physical libraries:

I prefer to visit and engage with the staff at the library, as does my daughter

Didn't really take much note of the web pages, and it's just more time on the computer when I would prefer they were doing other non-technology activities.

The kids spend enough time on the internet, so this was a chance to do some good old fashioned reading.

too much time already spent at school using computers. keen to spend time learning by doing talking or reading books.

Very few of the reasons given by parents/caregivers related to issues with the website itself. Of those who did mention some website specific issues, a lack of usability was the most commonly reported issue:

Confusing site for kids

Because the one we tried to get onto wouldn't download so we gave up with it.

i absolutely hate the Auckland library website - can never find my way around it - always takes me places I don't want to go - even just renewing books etc.

10.5 Suggested improvements to the website

When asked what they liked best about Dare to Explore's online content, 11 out of 260 parents/ caregivers used this space to write about what they *did not* like.

I had trouble finding the extra pages of reading log. Went and see a librarian and confirmed link provided in booklet was not working.

It was actually quite 'wordy' for a child to navigate by themselves, but I acknowledge that you need to cater to a large age range.

I hate the whole Auckland library site. It needs a reference librarian to untangle your way through. Finding an e-book (that's not a romance novel...) is a particularly frustrating exercise). PLEASE PLEASE do go online and see some of the overseas library websites and how much easier they are to use. actually we found it quite hard to navigate. We wanted more pages for our reading log and couldn't find them anywhere

We found that information was different and not correct or up to date, confusing. Some times using books from the library is much easier. We learnt that you need to use the precise terms and topics to find the correct information.

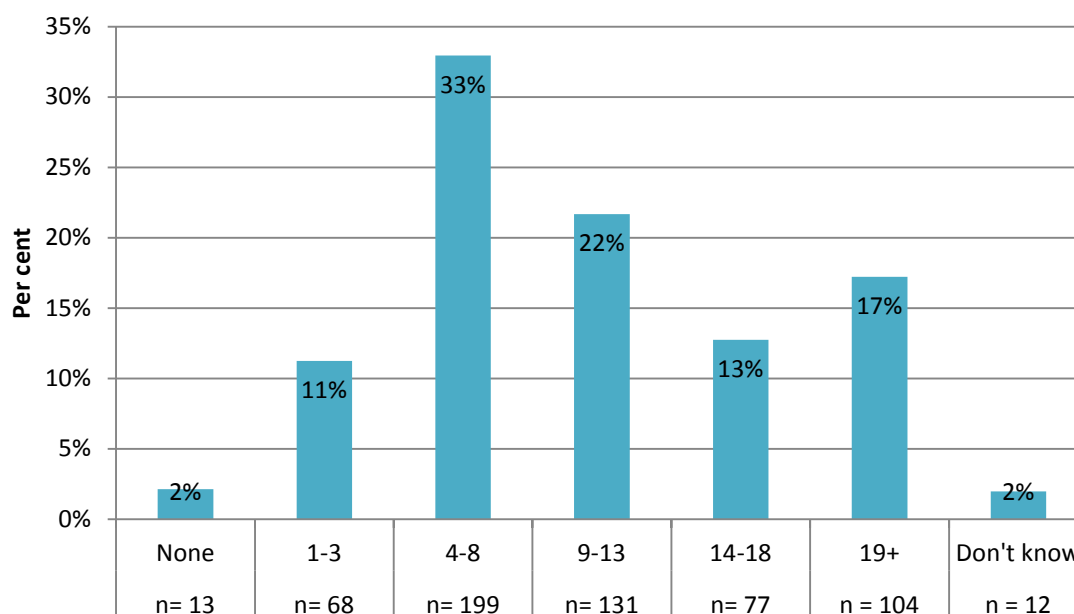
When asked what could be done to improve Dare to Explore, five parents/caregivers mentioned online material. One complained about children being encouraged to use the computer rather than reading, another called for a reduction in challenges that use the internet to get information, another wanted more challenges online, one wanted older children to be sent 'puzzles' by email and the final parent/caregiver complained that it was difficult to access the library event/activity calendars online.

11.0 Challenges, activities and party

11.1 How many challenges did children complete?

As reported in Section 4.2, the number of challenges that children completed varied greatly.

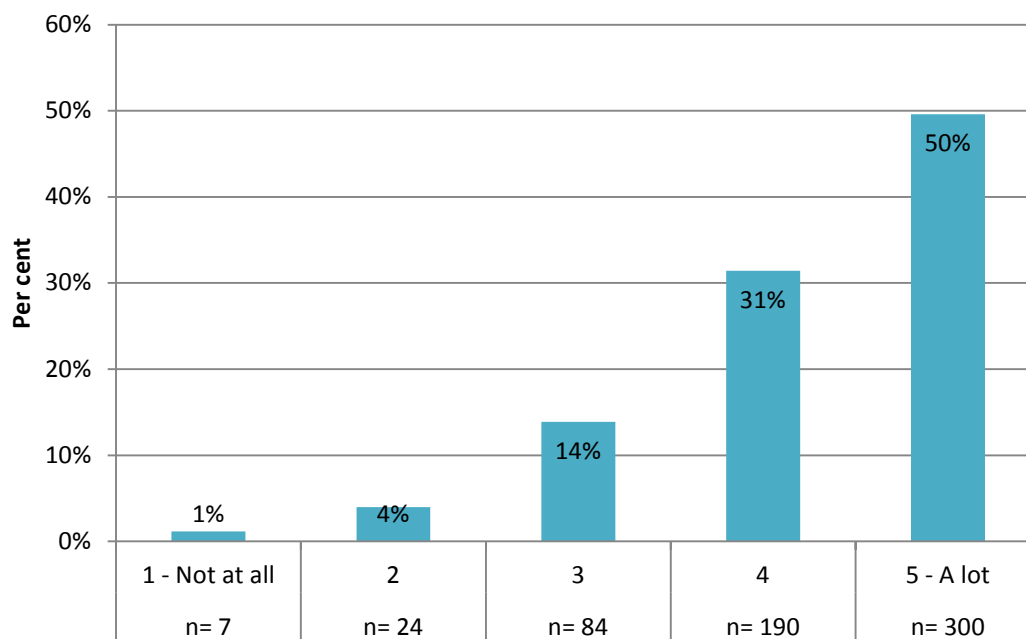
Figure 25: How many of the challenge sets did your child complete during Dare to Explore?



11.2 How much did children enjoy the challenges?

Parents/caregivers were asked how much their child enjoyed the challenges that they completed. The responses showed that the majority of children gained great enjoyment from the challenges they completed, with half (50%) of all parents/caregivers reporting that their child enjoyed them 'a lot'.

Figure 26: How many did children enjoy the challenges that they completed?



11.3 Were the challenges, activities and party age appropriate?

Parents/caregivers were asked whether the challenges, activities and party were appropriate for the age of their child. Eighty two per cent of adults thought that they were, while 18 per cent did not.

When comparing the frequency of 'no' responses to what we would expect based on the number of children in each age group, we find parents with children aged five years were more likely to feel that the challenges, activities and party were not age appropriate than we would expect. Parents with children aged 7-9 were less likely to feel that Dare to Explore was inappropriate for the age of their children. This indicates that any adjustment to the age appropriateness of Dare to Explore would be best focused on making the content and activities more accessible for younger children.

In terms of comments received from parents/caregivers, although age inappropriateness was the most common reason given for Dare to Explore not meeting children's needs, most parents/caregivers did state that the challenges/activities and party were age inappropriate.

Most parents/caregivers who said the programme was not age appropriate said the programme was too difficult or complicated for younger children (49) and could not be done alone by younger children (8).

The Challenges and party were but some of the books read during the activities went over her head and she lost interest easily but did enjoy the activities.

some were a bit tricky for a 4 year old - but the blank space to add your own challenges solved this problem as we could make up some of our own that were age appropriate

Some of the computer work was pretty tricky for a new 5 year old - not sure if he understood what he was doing in terms of challenges. The activities/party were fantastic.

The challenges were more appropriate to older children, a bit hard to my 6yo son. On the other hand, the librarians were very comprehensive with the partial completeness and always gave him a stamp and praised him.

Twenty parents/caregivers stated that the challenges, activities and/or party were better suited to younger children:

End of Party was fine however my 10 year old thought it was a bit kiddish.

Challenges too easy; we didn't bother to attend the activities as they seemed a bit young for my son. the party held his attention. The magician was great.

the party was geared up more for younger children.

While the challenges were excellent, some of the activities in the library seemed to be for younger children.

Party and activities seemed to be for younger children

At 13, he may be outgrowing it.

they viewed it as too young for them and too much like homework

11.4 What library activities would parents/caregivers like more of?

There was a wide range of responses to this question and many responses did not focus specifically on library-based activities. Sixty-one parents/ caregivers mentioned reading and storytelling in their responses. Parents/caregivers expressed a desire for children to have opportunities to read together or for children to be read to. Others wrote about the potential to have more activities/challenges that involved reading.

Story time with a someone who can read a story in an animated voice and manner

More chance to talk about the books they have read. Perhaps some more challenges related to writing/talking or sharing the books they have read. activities that improve their reading skills

Maybe some kind of reading or research treasure hunt that helps children locate books on certain topics and then locate information within the book.

Storytime for older children is something I would appreciate, as storytimes are almost always targeted at preschoolers and very young children. I think there is value in storytime for older children, perhaps combined with a creative writing workshop where they are encouraged to write their own short stories based on a theme.

For older kids you could follow a particular series - get the kids to read, say, Narnia or Harry Potter before they come along - then have something specifically based on the books?? "

Have some key dates during the holidays for children to bring in their books and get their rewards and have a reading session together or something like that.

May be kids should be encouraged to do some story telling. This will develop their confidence and improve their public speaking skills.

Maybe a scheduled reading time at the library where kids can come and read their books together. My daughter is 5 years old so this was her first year of Dare to Explore. It would have been neat for her to see older kids reading alongside her.

Forty-eight parents/caregivers called for more arts and crafts activities. Few gave any details of what kinds of arts and crafts activities they would like.

Events like the one where the kids did a range of different activities like kite making etc.

Would love other categories such as history of music, how things move/work...(can't afford MOTAT) and activities where the parent is allowed to get involved and make something also rather than just standing there watching or being the taxi driver. I think children can learn a lot from watching their parents skills and experience and may even amaze them!

for Christmas craft work and other cultural activities

The children seem to love library orientated craft e.g. design book covers, book marks etc

Thirty-one parents/caregivers stated that they would like more activities suitable for children of different ages.

get a stamp for attending an event at the library during holidays as some things were for older kids and my daughter was not interested.

More activities for younger kids to complete unassisted eg word finders, multi choice questions about books/series/non fiction topics

Maybe more activities for younger readers relating to the challenges.

I would like to see more age/ability appropriate reading material on the reading lists. My daughter was overwhelmed by the material yet has a reading age of 8/9 according to school. Story time for older kids would be good.

More events planned during each week at the library. more activities for the older kids 10-13.

Have the challenges a bit broader to enable younger ones to complete more....

More activities for children aged 8 and over, I thought many of the activities in the library were for younger children.

Have activities for older kids, too -- 10-13-year-olds, specifically

I think the wide variety of activities available in the book and on a daily basis was good. It was a shame that some of the activities such as the burma trail were only available for ages 9 and up. Parents are present so I think all the school age children should be able to do them and as happened parents had to bring all kids along to the activities out of necessity. Maybe have a program for the over 5's and a shorter or less harder version for the under 5's. My daughter could not unfortunately join as she was under 5, but the librarian was very nice to invite her to the party and involve her as much as possible.

Twenty-four parents/caregivers simply wrote that they would like more activities.

Different activities relating to the Dare to Explore. Our library only had one (probably space confines etc)

Maybe just a few more days where activities were on - as their weren't that many at the Orewa library.

Just to extend the challenges for an extra week maybe even two.

They were all good and just wanted more of it as my child loved it

more of the same, perhaps one or two more over the duration of the programme.

Just more of the same, loved the activities in the library, promotion of suitable books and ideas.

more activities in the booklet

Fifteen parents/caregivers mentioned a treasure hunt or scavenger hunt in their answers.

more "treasure hunts" around the library (maybe a different search each week to encourage more visits)

Maybe a set of clues 'treasure hunt' through the library bookshelves might be a logistical nightmare, but it sounds fun from this side :)

A scavenger hunt working with community parks or such, bringing in famous people to encourage reading

Rebecca & I enjoyed the treasure hunts this year plus the outdoor one last year & thought it would be good to use our local community & resources more eg, Train station, Police Station, Fire Station, Papakura Museum, Papakura Marae. Or even do a map of all the neighbourhood parks & playgrounds & do a challenge at each one.

Outside library activities for example: treasure hunts within Jubilee building and around the garden using treasure maps for pictures and interesting informations (Parnell Library).

Fourteen parents/caregivers called for more activities relating to specific subjects like science, geography, history and maths. Twelve parents/caregivers wrote about the timing of activities:

please plan the party on a Saturday afternoon like in year 2012 it was done. We missed out as both the parents (we) work full time and pay our tax money which go towards libraries as well and our kids missed out on the party as it was planned on Thursday morning! As a mum, I was annoyed.

more daytime activities.

Activities for during the day, and evenings. I work full time and are a solo parent, and can only come to the Library on Mondays or during the evening.

more activities after the new year week would be great.

We like doing activities in the evening at the library when no other patrons were around.

Ten parents/caregivers called for more activities that build familiarity with the library and a further ten expressed a desire for more online activities.

11.5 Who went to the party?

Children were asked whether they attended the party at the end of Dare to Explore, with 73 per cent indicating that they did. Children who went to the party were asked how much they liked it. Seventy nine per cent of children reported liking the party a lot, 17 per cent a little bit and 4 per cent did not like it.

12.0 The effect of prior confidence on children's experience of Dare to Explore

In order to understand how prior reading confidence affected the experience of Dare to Explore, we split children into high and low prior confidence groups, as rated by their parents/caregivers (see Section 5.1). High confidence was defined as having a rating of four or five on the five-point scale used. Low confidence was defined as 1-3 on the same scale.

Low and high confidence children were compared with regard to:

- age
- gender
- reading confidence before and after the programme
- changes in reading ability over the summer period
- enjoyment of challenges that were completed
- whether children were encouraged to discover and learn new things
- whether Dare to Explore increased children's enjoyment of reading
- the number of challenges completed, and
- whether parents considered the challenges to be age appropriate

Initial analyses showed that prior confidence was significantly associated with age, $p < .001$, but not with gender, $p > .05$. Children with low confidence were more likely to be younger (mean age = 7 years) than children with high prior confidence (mean age = 8 years).

Because prior confidence was related to age, it is possible that any subsequent differences between high and low confidence children are due to the effects of age, rather than confidence per se. To control for this possibility, the impact of age was statistically controlled in all subsequent tests (via inclusion as a covariate in all subsequent analysis of variance statistical tests).

The subsequent tests showed that children with low prior confidence differed significantly from children with high confidence on the following factors, all $ps < .05$:

- enjoyment of challenges that were completed
- whether children were encouraged to discover and learn new things
- the number of challenges completed, and
- changes in reading confidence over the summer

According to their parents, children with low prior confidence enjoyed the challenges that they completed less (with a mean score of 4.01 vs. 4.38), were less encouraged to discover and learn new things (4.05 vs. 4.24), and completed fewer challenges than children with high prior confidence. Although low confidence children still had lower overall confidence at the end of Dare to Explore (3.14 vs. 4.63), they did experience a significantly greater increase in confidence over the summer period (0.65 increase vs. .11). This indicates that Dare to Explore is particularly valuable for students who might be struggling in terms of their reading confidence.

In contrast to the above indicators, low confidence children did not differ significantly on the following factors all $ps > .05$:

- changes in reading ability over the summer period

- whether Dare to Explore increased children's enjoyment of reading
- whether parents considered the challenges to be age appropriate

The comparison between high and low confidence children therefore shows that (when controlling for the effect of age), low confidence children enjoyed Dare to Explore less, were not as encouraged to discover or learn new things and completed fewer challenges. Their prior confidence did not impact meaningfully on their changes in enjoyment of reading or their reading ability. Parents of low confidence children felt that Dare to Explore was equally age appropriate for their children. Encouragingly, children with lower confidence experienced greater increases in confidence over the summer period.

13.0 How was Dare to Explore experienced by older children (9-13 years of age)?

In order to understand how older children experienced Dare to Explore compared to younger children, we split children into 'young' (eight years and younger) and 'old' (nine years and older) groups.

Young and old children were compared with regard to:

- gender
- reading confidence before and after the programme
- changes in reading ability over the summer period
- enjoyment of challenges that were completed
- whether children were encouraged to discover and learn new things
- whether Dare to Explore increased children's enjoyment of reading
- the number of challenges completed, and
- whether parents considered the challenges to be age appropriate

Younger and older children differed significantly only with regard to three factors: gender, confidence and number of challenges completed, all p s < .05. Older children were more likely to be girls, whereas there was a greater concentration of boys within the younger age group. Unsurprisingly, younger children had lower levels of confidence both before (mean of 3.54 vs. 4.14) and after (3.88 vs. 4.43) Dare to Explore (but showed similar increases in confidence over the summer break). Older children completed slightly more challenges than younger children.

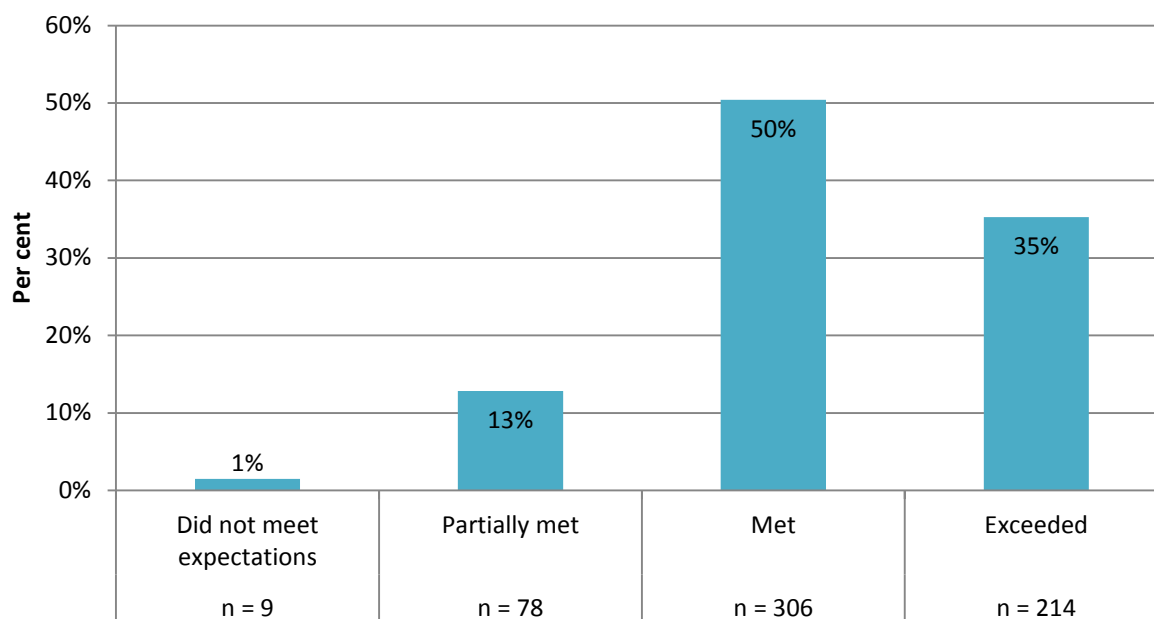
Children of different age groups did not differ significantly on any of the remaining outcomes (enjoyment, discovery, reading ability or age appropriateness). Note that there are some differences between these findings and those reported earlier (such as with regard to age appropriateness), likely due to the grouping together of children in different age groups.

14.0 Strengths and areas for improvement

14.1 Did Dare to Explore meet parents'/caregivers' expectations?

Parents/caregivers were asked whether Dare to Explore met their expectations. The majority felt that Dare to Explore had met (50%) or exceeded (35%) their expectations. Thirteen per cent reported that their expectations were partly met, and only one per cent felt that Dare to Explore did not meet their expectations.

Figure 27. Did Dare to Explore meet expectations - parents/caregivers survey.



14.2 Children's overall rating of Dare to Explore

Children were asked how many stars they would give Dare to Explore. Most (73%) rated it as 'awesome'; a smaller percentage rated it 'ok' (26%); almost no children ($n = 3$) rated Dare to Explore 'boring'.

Table 10: How many stars would you give Dare to Explore? – Children's survey.

	<i>N</i>	%
Boring (1 star)	3	1.0
Ok (2 stars)	81	25.9
Awesome (3 stars)	229	73.2

14.3 What did parents/caregivers like most about Dare to Explore?

Parents and caregivers were asked what they liked most about Dare to Explore. The most common themes of their responses were activities and challenges ($n =$ approx. 200),⁹ librarians ($n = 105$), and reading ($n = 104$). Comments on librarians are discussed in Section 9.3 and the remaining key themes are discussed below.

⁹ Some parents/caregivers mentioned both library activities and passport challenges so the sum of all three codes includes some double counting.

Parents/caregivers often failed to differentiate between challenges in the passport that they completed outside the library, and activities/events held within the library. The words activities and challenges were used fairly interchangeably. For this reason, three codes were used for responses that mentioned activities and challenges:

- Passport challenges
- Library activities
- Ambiguous challenges/activities

Although it seems likely that those who mentioned 'challenges' were referring to Passport challenges rather than library events, responses were coded as 'ambiguous challenges/activities' unless it was made clear whether these were Passport or library-based, because of the interchangeable use of these terms.

Of the approximately 200 parents/caregivers who mentioned activities and challenges in their responses to this question, 135 were coded as 'ambiguous challenges/activities', 50 were coded as 'library activities' and 17 were coded as 'passport challenges. Some examples of the 'ambiguous' responses are below:

The challenges and activities are well put together and good fun for the kids to complete.

Some of the tasks are engaging and enjoyable for both the child and the whanau

The challenges themselves were excellent with plenty of learnings for all! We liked the ability to select 2 of our own for each section.

My children found it really fun to complete the challenges. We participated last year also, and I found the programme more cohesive this year - the passport was a little more easy to follow and the whole concept is both exciting and challenging and a great way to get my children to engage in educational activities during the holidays.

Lots of activities that were easy for me to help with that didn't take a lot of time or money.

My daughter was self motivated. She always wanted to do another challenge, and made sure she made time to read each day. This has continued.

The following are examples of responses that were coded as 'library activities':

local libraries made special efforts to do different things that were fun

The events in the libraries which brought together the children and parents.

having activities at the library that helped achieve the goals in the passport

The planned activities were great and my children enjoyed interacting with others to complete the tasks. Also like that different libraries had different activities so we got to go to libraries in other areas.

The amazing efforts and involvement of the librarians for different activities in library.

[The] library organised fantastic events in the library to help the kids achieve the challenges. These events really encouraged my daughter to keep going with the programme when she could meet other kids that were involved.

The activities schedule at [the] library was fantastic. This gave the children lots of opportunities to broaden their knowledge. The breakfast and games was great and the pyjama party in the evening was a real hit.

Liked the range of activities offered by our local libraries (Birkenhead/Northcote/Glenfield) - kids did activities at all three libraries during the programme.

And, finally, the following are examples of 'passport challenge' responses:

The books that had endless ideas about tasks and activities, cause I had run out of ideas. The system with the certificates and stickers, kids worked hard to try and achieve.

The Passports - they were well presented and thought out. The challenges were interesting and fun to do. It was colourful and attractive to children. They enjoyed having somewhere to record the things they did.

As mentioned above, just over one hundred parents mentioned reading in their comments on what they liked most about Dare to Explore III. Many wrote about the fact that Dare to Explore encouraged their child to read:

it was great in encouraging my daughter to read every day.

Encouraging the children to read and opening to them the wonder of books.

It really motivated my boy to keep reading over the holidays.

The enthusiasm of the librarians, the encouragement that it gave my child to read more over the holiday.

The motivation it gives my children to continue to read over the holidays, and the support given to them by the librarians

Many parents wrote of how the programme had made reading more fun and enjoyable for their children as discussed in Section 2.2.6 (Why did parents/caregivers want their children to participate?). A number of parents and caregivers liked that their children were encouraged to read every day and that the programme encouraged/enabled children to broaden their reading to include different topics, genres and authors.

Encourages them to read daily and be excited about doing so.

My children were motivated to read books from the reading list that they wouldn't ordinarily have selected and this broadened their reading style/vocabulary/etc.

It encouraged my son to read books he would not choose himself about topics he would not usually choose. He enjoyed these books

When writing about the reading, challenges and activities, and of the programme in general, parents and caregivers highlighted the following qualities most frequently: varied (n = 120), flexible (n = 44), fun (n = 86); encouraging and motivational (n = 56), interesting (n = 23), suitable for different ages (n = 23), easy and achievable (n = 20), and well-organised/thought out (n = 16).

Aspects of variety that were mentioned by parents included that the challenges and activities were suitable for children of different ages, with different interests, skills and learning styles, could be done in different locations, and required different resources.

wide variety of activities, suitable for both children.

Challenges were great - not just all about reading, but finding info and using it. Nice variety of challenges - internet, drawing, writing, reading etc

I loved that there were so many ideas for the activities. I loved the range of genre that the children were introduced to. I thought that the activities were varied and required/drew upon different types of learning skills

The interesting activities, the different topics in each "section", the variety of challenges and the ability to tailor the programme to each child's age and stage of development or to make it as challenging if they wish.

The variety of activities in the book meant all my children found things to do that interested them and it inspired them to find out more about various topics.

The variety of things they could do. The programme catered for different ages and different levels of ability. I have a 9 year old and a 6 year old and found things for both of them to do.

I thought that the wide variety and range of activities for the children to complete was excellent and I thought that the completion of tasks to earn stickers and the party invitation was a great motivation. I liked that you didn't make it too unachievable to earn the stickers and invitation. I liked that the activities weren't all reading related - some of them involved research, others creativity, etc. I liked the balance of things we could do at home and things we had to go to the library for in order to complete tasks. My children were motivated to read books from the reading list that they wouldn't ordinarily have selected and this broadened their reading style/vocabulary/etc.

Related to the theme of variety was that of choice and flexibility. A number of parents appreciated that their children could choose which and how many activities and challenges to do as well as which and how many books to read.

I loved the flexibility of it. As summer is a time when many families take a holiday, it was great to have something to take away that my daughter could work on - as well as fitting in some library visits. I loved the challenges too - there seemed to be a good range of challenges to suit different age groups.

The fact that there were loads of activities that the children could choose from. That it was not only reading activities but that art and craft were incorporated into the program.

That it catered for so many levels - my 7 and 9 yr olds could both do it. The both managed to fill their entire reading logs and got 4 stickers on the rear of the book for various activities. The activities offered a lot of choice and were interesting ways to discover new topics.

The fact that participants had choices about the challenges they wished to complete and the fact that in many instances there were multiple ways to complete a challenge.

The variety of topics, in particular the historical ones. The large number of options in each category meant that it had something for everyone.

Lots! The flexibility to do a small amount of the challenges or to do lots. The book and stickers ... my child loved them! The activities in the libraries.

the option to make up their own challenges was great as it gave my new entrant a chance to still achieve things if he couldn't read or write that well.

The children enjoy been able to pick and choose their activities, and then been able to work towards earning stickers.

The flexibility to be able to do it at other libraries while we were on holiday.

The variety of topic of readings. The websites link to research. The best things is that the child can choose what his interested and do the activities he likes.

Seventy-one parents/caregivers mentioned learning in their response to this question.

I also liked the fact that each theme lead to further exploration and discussions about topics. I thought it was great to be able to get my children to explore different research tools, ie: library, internet, atlas etc.

I like that it encourages to explore topics that they wouldn't necessarily choose themselves.

The challenges made my kids ask questions and got them inquiring and thinking using all forms of information

Ability for kids to believe library is a fun place and encouraging exploration and discovery through books and related activities

The idea of exploring different cultures were a great door to expanding my daughters learning.

Really inspired my daughter to find out about other topics (other than fairy fiction!). Other activities in the wider environment, stimulated conversations about our experiences and that of grandparents as well.

The interesting topic of travel. As I helped my child through activities I learnt information too which was great.

helped children learn the new thing.

learning new ideas by focusing on specific knowledge areas. rewards for learning - stickers/stamps for challenges completed

Forty parents/caregivers included the finale/party in their description of what they liked most about the programme.

The party was awesome. Such a great activity for kids - thanks heaps!

Fun for my daughter, flexible for me. End of programme party was great.

The idea of the party at the end of the programme was a fantastic incentive.

The Dare to Explore party was very well organised, we had a fun evening !

The incentives to complete a certain number of challenges to get rewards was excellent. When our children received the party invitation they were thrilled, then their first sticker... They loved receiving recognition for their work.

The invitation to the party. This was my 1st time attending it and I was surprised at such a wonderful job done by librarians. Boy oh boy was that a surprise.

we LOVED the party at the end for the children who achieved 4 activities. It made them feel so special!: :)

Other aspects of the programme mentioned by parents/caregivers included reading lists (n = 14), visiting different libraries (n = 11), rewards – certificates/stickers (n = 28); interacting with others participating in the programme (n = 10), the passport (n = 16), the whole pack of collateral given to children (n = 24), use of the computer and internet (n = 14); goal setting (n = 12); an increase in the child's confidence/sense of achievement (n = 12), and improving the child's attitude toward or familiarity with the library (n = 11).

14.4 What was the best part of Dare to Explore for children?

As with the parent/caregiver survey, children often failed to differentiate between challenges in the passport that they completed outside the library, and activities/events held within the library. Their responses were coded in the same way as parents'/caregivers' responses:

- Passport challenges
- Library activities
- Ambiguous challenges/activities

154 children's responses mentioned challenges or activities in some way or other. Of these, 99 were assigned the 'ambiguous challenges/ activities' code, 33 were assigned the 'passport challenges' code and 22 were assigned the 'library activities' code.

I liked making my own challenges, the lava monster, making paper boat and sailing it, and I also liked writing story about my sand castle character and also the party at the library. Taking my selfie was funny, because I was half covered with the book.

My other favourite bit was when you created your own challenge, that way I could find something that would suite me!"

Doing the challenges and making my own challenges like walking up Mangere Mountain.

Doing the challenges in the book especially the Egyptian ones

coming to the library to complete some challenges in a group and having a water fight at the end

Finding about the wonders of the world, Lego activity and the Archeology activity at the Onehunga library

making the piniata and hitting the piniata with a stick

Doing the scavenger hunt at the library.

Of the 154 challenge/activity responses, 38 mention art or craft. Challenges/activities that were particularly popular included making a volcano, a tree hut and a paper boat. Many children simply stated that they like 'making things'.

The activities I participated in i.e. making a boat and origami

I thought the best part of Dare to Explore was doing the puzzles in the book and creating new things.

Making a volcano!

making the paper boat from you tube and watching it float in the stream

Twenty-seven children mentioned the stamps and stickers they got as rewards for completing challenges.

"When you completed 4 challenges and got a sticker, it was really motivational!"

Completing all of the challenges and trying to finish them as fast as I can and trying to get all of the stickers

going to our local library getting the stamps and stickers when I have completed the challenges

The best part of dare to explore was having lots of fun and getting stamps and stickers for it.

Ninety-five children wrote about the party.

the tug of war in the party

The pyjama party and "Fun at the Fair" Finale at Lloyd Elsmore Park

My best time of Dare to Explore was the party because Bongo did great tricks and his performance was excellent.

the water slide at the party and the librarians joining in and playing with us.

when i was invited to the party

Fifty-two children wrote about reading.

"Discovering new books and authors like Geronimo Stilton

I quite liked the reading because I love reading.

The part that you can read and have fun at the same time

The books that the librarian picked out for me.

Learning lots of fun things and finding some very good books.

i read more than I usually do

As with the parent and caregiver surveys, 'fun' was mentioned frequently by children (n = 35).

14.5 What did parents/caregivers think could be improved?

Parents and caregivers were asked what could be done to improve Dare to Explore. The most common themes were activities and challenges (n = 118), cater better for children of different ages (n = 108), and nothing or unsure (n = 75).

Some examples of 'nothing' comments are provided below:

Just keep up the good work. Fantastic job. Keep it up. I was all raves about this and promise to come next year too

nothing - the librarians were really friendly, helpful and kind to my child. the programme was very professional and fun for kids.

Not sure there is anything! I was blown away by how keen the [...] library staff were to interact with the children, and really take time to ask questions about what the children had done or read, not just viewed the passport and stamped it and moved on. There was a real sense of community and achievement at the prizegiving.

This is our first experience of the program and we were completely happy with it.

Those responses that were given an 'activities/challenges code' include a diverse range of perspectives. Many comments about activities and challenges were about age appropriateness and are later in this section. A common theme within the activity/challenge code was the desire for more challenges to be reading-based:

Challenges which helped child to know how to use library/find things/discover more about what is available at library

Activities that require children to read books on different topics/subjects.

"include some more literacy as part of the tasks ie: read a book, choose a word you had a little difficulty with, learn to spell and write that word and explain what it means or use it in a sentence

More prominence to reading, many activities did not require reading or even engagement with books

Would like maybe two clauses in each section with an emphasis on reading - just one this year. Things like the Dewey Decimal challenges that were in previous years would be good to have again

Would have liked to see one or two more reading challenges in each category. My son happily worked through many challenges, but not many of them involved reading.

link activity challenges more to reading - many based on doing things rather than reading to complete the challenge

make it more reading specific - this year it seemed like too many non-reading activities diluted the focus

Many parents called for more challenges/activities while others thought there were already too many.

More activities on offer. Especially for children 6-8 years.

increase the number of programmes. maybe increase the artwork programmes and storytelling sessions

Less challenges. More time to do them. It seemed we had hardly recovered from Christmas/new year when the DTE finished - well before the kids went back to school.

I feel if there were less challenges may be 8 in each group, 7 listed and 1 make your own, so that instead of the kids rushing through the activities to complete all the challenges, that less may produce a better quality of learning for the children.

Maybe narrow down the number of topics a bit - there was a bit too much to try and do - we ended up focusing on one or two topics (areas) and didn't really get a chance to work through the whole range.

Some parents commented on the timing of activities:

Having activities at a range of different times to allow for parents who work during the holidays i.e. some activities after normal school hours would be great.

Hold some events in later afternoons (after 4 pm), evenings and/or weekends. A very large chunk of your potential audience/market will be attending holiday programs (as their parents work). We were unable to attend any of the events programmed at our local library, for this reason."

Others called for more clarity in the way challenges and activities were described. There appeared to be some confusion about how many challenges needed to be completed.

Bit more communication and structure around what was going on. I felt some of the activities were not communicated about at all, and it was a bit confusing as to what was going on and when.

Advise what is happening during the event a bit better and also either have the same activities in all libraries for the library party or advise what will be happening at the library party before it happens. My daughter went to one library and saw what they were doing for the party and expected the party at the library where we went for the party to have the same events but it didn't and she was very disappointed. She was also told that there would be games as well as a magic show and she was disappointed that there were no games.

Make instructions a little clearer. 4 challenges - to get invite, we thought it was all the activities within the different sections

the challenges were not very flexible in that kids had to choose a list and stick to it. Our kids wanted to do different challenges from different lists but were told they had to complete one list first. Next time allow this to happen.

Perhaps work on the wording of the instructions - it still wasn't clear exactly how many challenges were needed to earn a sticker - and the final party invitation.

Clearer instructions on how many tasks they should complete, we thought they needed to complete 4 in each category, not 4 total.

Parents/caregivers called for the programme to cater better for children of different ages. While some parents thought the programme was better suited to children under eight and unsuitable for older children, others reported that their younger children had found the programme too hard. However, on balance there were more comments about lack of suitability for younger children particularly beginner readers.

More challenges tailored for beginner and/or reluctant readers. Many/most simply not suitable for Mr just-turned-6's reading abilities.

Some of the construction activities did require a large amount of parent involvement for the younger children. Perhaps within an activity there could be different levels on construction so older children are not bored and the younger ones can accomplishment a bit more on their own.

Many of the activities are too hard for the younger children. I had to give my six year olds lots of help to complete 4 activities in order to get a sticker. We did come up with a few easier challenges of our own but some more age appropriate tasks would be good

For the Art and Craft to be split into 2 for younger and older kids, so the older kids have more challenging things to do.

Instead of common activities for all children, have more challenging ones for older kids 10 and above.

Some of the written challenges in the book were a bit tough for my 6 year old - however the local library [...] had easier challenges tailored for the younger kids

activities aimed at slightly older children (my daughter is 10 and she was a little too old for some activities)

My 9 year old absolutely loved the program but my 7 and 5 year old found it a bit overwhelming. The foot prints for reading each day would have been perfect for my 5 year old but somehow because it was all tied in with the other activities he was put off. Perhaps as for the reading lists there could be two levels of the program. One for older more confident readers and one for beginners.

I think there should be more age appropriate activities. They pack didn't really cater for beginner readers and as a parent it felt like I was the one doing all the reading of what was required in the activities and then reading the books.

I found the activities and after party seemed to be more focused on the 5,6,7 year old ago group. My children are nearly 8 & 10 and felt it was a little babyish.

Youngest has just started to read so some of the challenges were not appropriate. Maybe some younger challenges provided for this age group with pictures/puzzles maybe but still around the same subject matters eg: seven wonders.

More challenging activities for 11+ year olds - she found the Dare to Explore Party targeted way too young for her and her friends so they retired to the library half way through the party.

A number of parents commented on the book lists (n = 32) and the availability of books on the book lists (n = 28). Many of the book list comments described the same issues with age appropriateness described above. Others called for reading lists to be available in the library as well as online. Comments about the availability of bokos generally described the difficulty of getting books from the book lists as these were often already out of the library.

a lot of the books were not age appropriate- so some guidance on age suitability would have been helpful. We often got books from the reading lists that were not very interesting or suitable.

Have a group of books related to the program which are in library only so that we can come and check in to the dare to explore desk and be given a book to sit down with at the library and read whilst here and mark off the list. I found since my daughters school was the last to break for the holidays and get started on the program all the books on the list were already gone. Also the book lists needed to be broken down into ages/levels as so many of the books listed were beyond her year 1 reading level. I wasted a lot of time trying to review the book list online and find suitable reading material.

Maybe the list of books recommended should be wider and more specific to the reading level, like for example for the first level (beginner) in the list there were some book that no way my child was able to read them or understand the subject.

Print off the reading lists so we can hunt for books on the shelves more easily. There were very few not out each time we looked and we were relying on the library computers not portable devices so it made it very hard to remember and find anything.

Make reading lists available in hard copy in the library - possibly in a file that can be referred to when children visit the library.

Put reading level lists together for each section so it's easier for parents to find. We had to ask the librarian every time for help to find suitable reading level books and also they were out most of the time. So we had to choose other books from the same author.

The book list was hard to find (and the books even harder to source) - after all the main focus was on reading - this part should've been the easiest!!

It is often very difficult to get the books from the reading lists-of the books that sounded like they would engage my kids we could find only a couple actually in our library and then we went on line and requested others. But searching the physical library to find at least one book off each list took too much time and then it was more time to go online and request books that weren't there -which then meant I then had to make a special trip to collect the book (and there were quite a few books!!). Needs to be a better system.... Kids were very excited to get started but then had to wait for the books.

Either make the list of recommended reading larger or make available more copies. Within 2 weeks of starting the challenges most copies were out and didn't have a return date until after Dare to Explore was finished.

in regards to the books listed it was difficult to get a book as most were already taken out and then put on hold for someone else. my simple suggestion maybe to allow any book on that topic to be accepted from the library of course...for example books on climbing mt. everest. instead of the only the two books suggested allow the children to find any book on exploring mountains to be accepted.

Many parents made comments relating to reading that were not about the reading lists or the availability of books. These comments were generally focused on integrating activities and reading (i.e. reading required

for some activities and challenges) as discussed above. Other areas of suggested improvement for reading included increasing the focus on reading (and decreasing the focus on activities) in the programme (see section 2.2.6), increasing or modifying rewards for reading, and creating opportunities for children to read together or with a librarian.

The footprints for each day the children could read - there were more footprints than days available to read during the programme - my child was keen to fill in all the footprints but there weren't enough days.

A little more help at the library with reading. I found the kids liked going along to do different activities and would happily choose books to take home but still found actually getting them to read was the hard part! Perhaps if there were a couple of sessions where as well as doing an activity, the children could read to/with a librarian? Don't know how feasible this would be with the numbers who enrol.

They loved getting stickers. I think they would have loved it even more if they got stickers for the reading aspect as well as the challenges. They got excited every day when they had done some reading and could colour in a footprint! If they had the added bonus of a sticker for every ten footprints (for example) I would not have been able to stop them reading!

Rewards (e.g. special stickers) for reading and e.g. writing book reviews - to encourage more reading

Maybe have more reading interaction - therefore helping those who are having reading difficulty. It's so important to keep reading interesting so our children enjoy reading.

Could be more accountability for reading the amount of books that they said they would read. For a younger child it was more difficult for them to do all of the activities. Maybe include must read for 10 mins a day and have a type of calendar with a sticker reward??

There was no real incentive for the children to read more

More prompting of children to talk about the books they were reading.

Thirty-six parents/caregivers made comments about library events. Most of these comments simply called for more library activities. Examples of some of the other comments are provided below:

Activity table/ area permanently set up in each library for duration with support materials like quizzes etc.

I looked at the online event calendar for activities to do and get the children "explore" libraries they have never been to. It would be great if the different event database could be accessed per day as well. It was only accessible per library. For example, I would have loved to be able to select a day and have a selection of what to do on that day and which library has an activity planned.

A consolidated Dare to Explore events calendar, showing all events being run across Auckland would be very helpful - rather than accessing this information library by library.

I think the programme of activities are great, but sometimes the library [...] was a little under-resourced - only two rolls of sellotape for all the children participating in the activity. Not enough reference books/pictures on the given activity (Egypt and Mummies)

Thirty parents/caregivers called for clearer instructions and information.

Bit more communication and structure around what was going on. I felt some of the activities were not communicated about at all, and it was a bit confusing as to what was going on and when.

we want contents of passport simpler and easier to understand and achieve. There were so many suggestion and challenges but we did not know where to start. They looked so complicated and overwhelming to my daughter 6yrs old.

To be honest, we didn't continue with the programme because we found it to be too complicated to understand. There were a lot of parts to it, and my seven-year-old daughter found it to be too complex for her to understand, and lost interest. To improve the programme, I would suggest simplifying its format (so many different activities and areas made it confusing to figure out what really needed to be done); make the reward at the end clearer -- perhaps not a party, but a book token or something related to reading

It would have been helpful to know that we should be going into the library to talk to a particular librarian about the book reviews - we found that out by accident quite a long way into the programme.

Twenty-one parents/caregivers made comments about the party or finale. Many asked for the party to be held at a different time (e.g. not on a Friday before a long weekend) or for parties at different libraries to be spread across a range of times and dates to enable as many as possible to attend. Examples of other comments are provided

Maybe instead of a party at the end (we sadly couldn't attend) give a \$2 shop medal or certificate presented by the librarians on completion of certain amount achievable tasks. Maybe even a certificate sent to their school to be presented in front of their peers at assembly or their photo displayed at the library in a kind of hall of fame.

more activities for older kids to play with at the party....lots of older kids sitting around, not doing anything.

We accidentally missed the party at the end. My children were gutted. Maybe a reminder?

The end of Dare to Explore party was a bit of a let down, actually... The kids had been working towards going - it had been a big focus and goal to get there, but then the party itself was a bit of a non-event. Some of the Dare to Explore events held in the library in the lead up had been better organised and more exciting. If you are going to pitch the party as the main event at the end of the series, then it should be pretty spectacular rather than an anti-climax.

Make sure there are gluten free options at the finale party. This should be a given in this day and age. It's not hard anymore to find something gluten free. I have a friend whose boy needs to be gluten free and as soon as they saw the pizzas he knew he was excluded and wanted to leave straight away. It wasn't fair :(It would've been easy to order one gluten free pizza from dominos and had it delivered. I was very disappointed in this fact

The party/celebration at the end was a bit confusing across libraries - we had completed activities at different libraries but ended up missing the party as we got our invite at a different library to the one we had registered at initially.

Dare to Explore was indeed great but the party could have been better. It is appreciated and understood that this was all done free and also thanks to some volunteers but Parents could be asked to donate which might generate some revenue to spend on the Party.

Thirteen parents/caregivers wanted more opportunities to share with others particularly through group activities and sharing of work/reading done at home at the library.

when kids create stuff at home (like binoculars or a modern wonder) and bring it to the library they can showcase it and nominate the best one. Thus children will be more engaged and they will try to work really hard to create an item. Plus, they will get to know other children and make new friends according to their interests.

Maybe add in some kids group activities at the library

I think my son would have enjoyed doing challenges with other children and we could do those at set times and dates at the library.

have session to do the activities together to motivate children and parents

Buddy tutoring or reading together as an activity in the library, where old children on the program can read to or with younger students. Also older children could become junior librarians/tutors who help children complete the activities. My daughter stated she thought this was a good idea.

Have some book review discussions or gatherings with others, more talk of the challenges among the children doing it.

Nine parents/caregivers made comments about the passports or the whole pack of collateral provided to children:

The booklet is much better than last year but it would be great if it could have a few more blank pages that they could use to complete some of the tasks in.

we want contents of passport simpler and easier to understand and achieve.

Simplify the design of the passport -- contains too many items/details that are not necessary. Something with a simpler structure, where kids/families can add the specific challenges they choose, might be more practical. Print-your-own could be an option. :)

Have enough passports available.

There wasn't much space in the passport books to write what books they had been reading. We went through a lot of books.

This feedback, however, should be interpreted in light of the numerous positive comments about the balance Dare to Explore struck between reading and fun.

14.6 What did children not like about Dare to Explore?

Children were asked if there was anything they did not like about Dare to Explore. A number of children left this question blank and a further 157 wrote that there was nothing they did not like. Nineteen children said they did not like some aspect of the activities or challenges.

Some of the challenges, would like to have more free choice challenges

The binoculars challenge

some challenges were very boring

the challenges were too easy

nobody saw things that i made

The activities didn't look kid-friendly

The activities were a bit baby

The activities in the library and at the after party were a bit too young for me.

How some challenges were more for younger kids e.g. (7 and younger)

I thought some of the challenges were boring and repetitive

i would have liked there to be harder challenges

Ten children said Dare to Explore was too hard and a further ten said the programme needed to cater better for children of different ages.

Some of the challenges were too complex and I couldn't do it.

I do not know how to do most of them

some of it was a bit hard

some of the challenges too difficult for me to complete

The activities in the library and at the after party were a bit too young for me.

Maybe you should make one for 9 and under and one for 10 and over

i felt like it was for younger kids - especially at the library events.

not enough big kid stuff

Seventeen children mentioned the reading or book lists as something they didn't like.

some of the books were too long to read so couldn't finish many

I couldn't read any of the books from the list because I am not a good enough reader

There were not that many picture books on the reading lists and I haven't really moved up to chapter books yet.

That you had to read every day

It felt like there were too many books to read in a short space of time.

waiting so long for requested books

I think you could improve on having more pages of reading logs as I had to keep asking for more pages each time I went to the library. I read over 60 books since the 20 December till now.

I didn't read on enough days to fill in all the footprints

Writing down the books I read

Eleven children wrote about the party in response to this question. Several of these children wrote that they had missed the party.

Yes, I went to the party last year, as a 10 year old and found the party a bit to much for little kids, maybe you could have a party for 4-8 years and one for 8-14.

The party was aimed at little children

The party at the end wasn't that good. It started late and all that happened was there was some certificates and food. My little sister went and she was last to go up for food and there was only pizza left which she is allergic too.

people were being pushy at the party

well the librarians forgot to give me the invite so I couldn't go to the party

15.0 Conclusions and recommendations

In this section we summarise the results of this evaluation in relation to the evaluation questions and outline our broad recommendations for how to improve future Auckland Libraries summer reading adventures.

15.1 Did Dare to Explore maintain or improve children's literacy?

A range of different analyses of data collected from children and their parents / caregivers indicate that Dare to Explore had a positive impact on children's literacy.

The responses of parents show that:

- The majority (60%) felt that their children's reading ability either improved a little or a lot (up from 57% in 2012/2013), while 39 per cent felt their children's reading ability did not change during Dare to Explore. Only two adults felt that their children's reading ability got a little worse during Dare to Explore.
- A sizeable percentage of parents (30%) felt that their child's reading confidence had increased over the summer period. Only one parent reported that their child decreased in confidence. When excluding answers from parents whose children had very high reading confidence prior to participating in Dare to Explore, 45 per cent of parents reported an increase in confidence in their children.
- The majority (68%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that Dare to Explore had increased their child's enjoyment of reading, while the remaining gave a neutral response. Only three per cent of parents/caregivers disagreed that Dare to Explore decreased their child's enjoyment of reading. This finding is important given Dare to Explore's focus on embedding reading in fun.

Statistical modelling showed that increased learning and discovery, increased child confidence, increased enjoyment of learning and increased adult confidence were important predictors of increased reading ability.

The children's survey showed that:

- Almost all children reported that Dare to Explore had improved their reading, with 42 per cent reporting Dare to Explore helped their reading 'a lot' and 47 per cent 'a little bit'.

Section 5.5 shows that standardised reading assessment data collected by schools before and after the school holiday period provides some preliminary evidence that Dare to Explore may have had a positive impact on standardised reading assessment scores, above and beyond other summer reading interventions. The testing was limited by a small sample, however, and further investigation is required.

15.2 How was Dare to Explore experienced by those who did not complete the programme?

Investigation into the experience of children who did not complete the programme (i.e., completed three or fewer challenges) showed that, compared to those who completed four or more challenges, non-completers:

- did not differ in terms of age or gender
- did not differ in terms of reading confidence prior to Dare to Explore
- experienced a smaller increase in confidence over the summer period
- experienced lower increases in reading ability
- experienced lower enjoyment of the challenges they did complete

- experienced lower levels of discovery and learning
- experienced less of an increase in enjoyment of reading

Parents/caregivers of non-completers were also more likely to feel that the challenges were not appropriate for the age of their child.

Despite this, when parents/caregivers of children who did not complete the programme were asked whether Dare to Explore met their child's needs, more than half answered that the programme had met their child's needs. Most of these parents went on to say that the small number of challenges completed by their child reflected the fact that they had gone away or been busy with other things. Where Dare to Explore did not meet their child's needs, the most commonly reported reason was that the challenges were too difficult for young children.

15.3 Did Dare to Explore encourage family engagement with each other and with the library?

The following factors suggest that Dare to Explore was successful in encouraging family engagement with each other and with the library:

- A number of parents/caregivers reported that something they liked most about Dare to Explore was the opportunity it gave them to spend time with their child.
- The majority (60%) of parents/caregivers felt that Dare to Explore had made them feel more confident about helping their children learn new things. Thirty five per cent of parents/caregivers did not know or were neutral and only 5 per cent disagreed that Dare to Explore helped them in this way.
- Most children (88%) responded that that Dare to Explore made them like going to the library either a lot more or a little more, up from 80 per cent in 2012/2013.
- Approximately half of all parents/caregivers (51%) felt that because of Dare to Explore they and their children were likely to visit the library more often in the future than they have in the past. This percentage increased to 60 per cent when looking at the responses of those who only visited the library monthly or less frequently.

15.4 Did Dare to Explore encourage learning and discovery among children?

The vast majority of parents/caregivers (87%) reported that Dare to Explore encouraged their children to discover and learn new things, reflecting an increase in those who reported this in 2012/2013 (77%). Eleven per cent of respondents were neutral and only two per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed.

15.5 What do Dare to Explore registrations tell us about local libraries' Māori responsiveness?

The percentage of Māori Dare to Explore registrations was compared to the percentage of Māori children living in each library's primary catchment. This comparison provides some indication of how 'responsive' each library was to its local Māori community, in the context of providing a Dare to Explore experience that was appealing and accessible to Māori children. A library was considered to be 'responsive' if their Māori Dare to Explore registrations were the same or higher than the percentage of Māori that live in the primary

catchment community. Where the percentage of Dare to Explore registrations was lower than the percentage of Māori in the catchment, the library was considered to be less responsive.

Overall, the analysis indicated that 10 out of 54 libraries were 'responsive'. The top five libraries with particularly high levels of Māori enrolment in Dare to Explore compared to the surrounding population were Otara Library, Northcote Library, Manukau Library, Clendon Te Matariki Library, and Leys Institute Library Ponsonby.

The remaining 44 libraries had levels of Māori Dare to Explore registrations that were at least 10 per cent less than the percentage of Māori in each of the libraries catchment areas. The five libraries that had the greatest deviation (in percentage terms) away from the surrounding population were Epsom Library, Blockhouse Bay Library, Parnell Library, Takapuna Library and East Coast Bays Library.

15.6 How was Dare to Explore experienced by older children?

Investigation into the experience of older children (aged 9+ years) showed that the outcomes experienced by older children did not differ greatly from those experienced by younger children. Older children:

- were more likely to be girls than boys
- had higher confidence both before and after Dare to Explore (but had similar increases in confidence over the summer break to younger children).
- completed more challenges than younger children.

There were no differences between older and younger children on the following outcomes:

- enjoyment of challenges that were completed
- whether Dare to Explore encouraged children to discover and learn new things
- whether Dare to Explore increased children's enjoyment of reading
- whether parents considered the challenges to be age appropriate

15.7 How was Dare to Explore experienced by children with low prior reading confidence?

Investigation into the experience of children who had low confidence with reading prior to participating in Dare to Explore showed that, compared to children with higher confidence, lower-confidence children:

- were more likely to be younger (the effects of which were controlled in subsequent comparisons)
- got less enjoyment from the challenges that they completed
- were less encouraged to discover and learn new things
- completed fewer challenges
- experienced a significantly greater increase in confidence over the summer period (although they still had lower overall confidence after Dare to Explore)

In contrast to the above indicators, low confidence children did not differ significantly from high confidence children on the following factors:

- gender
- changes in reading ability over the summer period
- whether Dare to Explore increased children's enjoyment of reading
- whether parents considered the challenges to be age appropriate

15.8 What local library events do adults and children want to see more of next year?

There was a wide range of responses to this question. The most frequently mentioned activity involved reading and storytelling. Parents/caregivers expressed a desire for children to have more opportunities to read together or for children to be read to. Others wrote about the potential to have more activities/challenges that involved reading.

A number of parents/caregivers called for more arts and crafts activities, however few gave any details of what kinds of arts and crafts activities they would like.

Thirty-one parents/caregivers stated that they would like more activities suitable for children of different ages, indicating that libraries might both offer a greater range of activities and provide better 'sign-posting' of the age appropriateness of the activities that they offer.

Twenty-four parents/caregivers simply wrote that they would like more activities.

Fifteen parents/caregivers mentioned a treasure hunt or scavenger hunt in their answers.

Fourteen parents/caregivers called for more activities relating to specific subjects like science, geography, history and maths.

Ten parents/caregivers called for more activities that build familiarity with the library and a further ten expressed a desire for more online activities.

15.9 Did children engage with the digital aspects of the programme?

The Dare to Explore web pages were used by approximately half (56%) of all participants. Of the parents/caregivers who reported that they and their children used the web pages, 90 per cent found the content easy to find. Similarly, 99 per cent of children that used the digital aspects of Dare to Explore liked them a lot (50%) or a little bit (49%).

Parents/caregivers reported liking a range of things about Dare to Explore online. Many people mentioned that they liked how the website was easy to access and use. A high number of parents/caregivers explicitly mentioned the Around the World quest, and a number mentioned the book lists.

Reasons for non-use of the Dare to Explore web pages was varied. Many parents/caregivers did not know about the online aspects of the programme, whereas others forgot about the web pages or just did not get around to using them. Other parents/caregivers were satisfied with the print resources provided or made a conscious decision to avoid using the computer during the holiday period. Only a small number mentioned specific issues with the website itself.

15.10 Were the challenges, activities and party seen as age appropriate?

The majority of parents/caregivers (82%) saw the challenges, activities and party as being appropriate for the age of their child. Further analysis showed that parents of younger children, aged five and below, were more

likely to report that the programme was not age appropriate. Comments from parents supported this analysis, with a high proportion of parents/caregivers who reported that the programme was not age appropriate identifying that the programme was too difficult for their younger children.

A smaller number of parents indicated that the programme content was better suited for younger children, highlighting the difficulty of designing content for such a wide range of ages.

15.11 How could Dare to Explore be improved in the future?

A number of suggestions are presented below for improving future summer reading adventures. The suggestions are based on patterns observed in the survey data, as well as feedback from children and their parents/caregivers regarding ways that they thought Dare to Explore could be improved.

15.11.1 Provide more challenges and activities for younger children

Although a number of parents/caregivers felt that the challenges and activities were suitable for children of different ages, with different interests, skills and learning styles, there were a number of parents/caregivers of younger children who felt that the Dare to Explore was not appropriate for the age of their children. This was identified as an issue for parents/caregivers last year also, indicating that improving the experience of younger children aged five years and under remains an area where future summer reading adventures could be improved.

Improving the programme for younger children may involve more content that is appropriate for younger participants, and/or better guidance for children and their family on the age appropriateness of challenges, activities and books.

15.11.2 Strengthen different ways of recruiting children and their families

Although Auckland Libraries attempted to widen the ways it recruited children and their families for Dare to Explore this year, reports from parents/caregivers show that direct contact from the library remains the primary way that families heard about Dare to Explore. There is therefore still significant opportunity to broaden programme recruitment outside of Auckland Libraries. Recruitment through schools is likely to offer the greatest potential. It is recommended that Auckland Libraries investigate entering into partnerships with schools where children are recruited by librarians visiting the school prior to the end-of-year holiday period, and where schools actively encourage children to sign up, perhaps by embedding one or more of the challenges in lessons prior to the school holidays. Activity packs could be provided for children to take home to their parents/caregivers. Anecdotal reports suggest that such relationships already exist between individual schools and libraries, and are working well.

School involvement may be encouraged by emphasising the evidence provided in this report that indicates that participation in an Auckland Libraries summer reading adventure is likely to lessen or reverse the summer learning effect – the widely studied drop in literacy over the summer period.

15.11.3 Expand the number and frequency of local library events and activities

Library activities featured strongly in feedback on what families enjoyed about Dare to Explore. Such activities represent a valuable way for Auckland Libraries to increase not only the success of future summer reading adventures, but also strengthen the relationship between families and their local library.

Parents/caregivers expressed a desire for more activities at their local library. Providing additional library activities is therefore likely to improve the success of the programme.

Due to the intensive nature of running such events, Auckland Libraries might consider providing additional centralised support for libraries in terms of activity ideas and resourcing.

Activities that parents/caregivers report wanting more include:

- activities that provide the opportunity for children to read together or for children to be read to
- arts and crafts activities
- treasure hunts or scavenger hunts
- activities relating to specific subjects like science, geography, history and maths

The activities that libraries put on should either have activities that are inclusive for a range of ages, or should include an indication of the age appropriateness of the activities.

To encourage families to participate at more than one library, it may be useful to provide a well-advertised, centralised list of activities at different libraries (searchable both by library and by date), so families can choose which activities most interest them across a range of libraries.

15.11.4 Improve the book lists and the availability of suggested books

A number of parents complained that it was difficult to find books on the suggested reading list as they were already checked out. This problem is likely to become more widespread as the number of participating children increases. We recommend that the suggested book list be increased, and Auckland Libraries consider reserving some of the suggested books for in-library use only.

Some parents also suggested that the book lists be made more accessible for in-library searching, perhaps by having hard copies pre-printed in each library.

15.11.5 Increase the impact of future summer reading adventures on children's literacy

The evidence presented in Section 5.2 appears to show that, compared to 2012/2013, this year's Dare to Explore impacted the reading ability of a higher percentage of children, but that the average impact per child was lower.

While it is not possible to identify whether this change was due to the contents of the programme or the different way children and their caregivers were recruited to complete the survey this year, it does highlight the potential to increase the level of impact of future programmes on children's literacy.

Findings from this evaluation provide some suggestions for increasing the impact of future summer reading adventures on children's reading ability:

- Increase incentives for children who wish to read independent of the challenges, thus allowing families that want to focus on reading over other activities to still use the programme to motivate their children. Some parents suggested that having a sticker or reward system connected to the reading footprints would have further encouraged their children to read, in addition to completing the activities and challenges.

- Make sure that any programme changes are likely to have a positive impact on the factors that have been shown to best predict increases in children's reading ability: encouragement of learning and discovery in children, increases in children's reading confidence, increases in parent/caregiver confidence to help their children, and increased children's enjoyment of reading.

Auckland Libraries may also consider drawing upon academic research on successful literacy interventions (e.g. McNaughton, Jesson, Kolose and Kerecher, 2012), particularly in relation to the summer reading effect, to enhance the impact of future summer reading adventures on children's reading ability.

Future summer reading programmes would also benefit from greater evaluative focus on the effect of the programme on children's literacy development. It is recommended that future evaluations continue to make use of standardised student achievement data to understand the impact of the programme, as well as investigate which aspects of the programme have the greatest impact on children's literacy.

15.11.6 Ensure that all librarians are familiar with the summer reading adventure.

Some parents/caregivers reported that some non-child librarians were unfamiliar with Dare to Explore and were unable to help their children. Others noted that the child librarian was overwhelmed by the number of children they needed to help and were not able to engage fully with each child. Although this was a relatively minor issue (i.e., it was identified by only a small number of parents/caregivers) it is important to address because librarians appear to play an influential role in encouraging children to participate in the programme and to use the library more generally. We therefore recommend that more librarians are familiarised with future summer reading adventure programmes, so that they can help and encourage children if a dedicated child librarian is not available. This is especially important as the summer reading adventures continue to grow.

15.11.7 Build upon the success of Dare to Explore online.

Approximately half of all families used the Dare to Explore web pages. Of those who used them, the majority found that they enhanced their Dare to Explore experience. Aspects of Dare to Explore online that were most enjoyed were the ease of access, book lists, and the Around the World Quest. Given the success of the online aspects of the programme there is potential to further develop and improve the content provided online, as well as increasing the percentage of families that make use of the web pages. Future programme improvements should ensure that expansion of the online presence does not come at the expense of the offline content, as many families are not able to use the online aspects of the programme (as a result of being on holiday away from a computer) or consciously choose to encourage their children not to use computers.

15.11.8 Consider using key evaluation findings in recruitment material to encourage children and parents to sign up.

This and last years' evaluations provide compelling evidence that Auckland Libraries summer reading adventures are valued by children and their families and have a wide range of impacts. Auckland Libraries might consider using these findings in future advertising to encourage families to participate. In particular, parents/caregivers might be further encouraged to participate by highlighting the wider benefits of participation, such as benefits for their own confidence, keeping their children busy over the summer break, and providing an opportunity to spend enjoyable time with their children.

16.0 References

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Appendix A Questionnaire for parents/caregivers



Parent/Caregiver Feedback

Thank you for your time and participation in Dare to Explore. In this survey we're keen to learn more about your experience of Dare to Explore.

Your comments will contribute to the continued improvement of the Auckland Libraries' Summer Reading Adventure programmes we offer.

With your permission, your survey will go in the draw to win a pile of books tailored to your child's reading preferences.

1. Where/how did you hear or see information about Dare to Explore? *(please tick all that apply)*

- At a Library
- School
- Kōhanga Reo / Kura Kaupapa
- Auckland Libraries website
- Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)
- My child/ren
- Children's friends or other parents
- Newspaper
- My child/ren participated in a library summer reading programme before
- Advertising in public places (e.g., buses, trains)
- Through my local community
- Other _____

2. Why did you want your child/ren to participate in Dare to Explore? *(please tick all that apply)*

- To give my child/ren something fun to do
- To keep my child/ren busy over the holidays
- To maintain or increase my child/ren's reading ability
- To get additional support from a librarian with my child/ren's reading
- To get to know the library better
- To increase my child/ren's confidence
- To spend quality time with my child/ren
- To increase my own confidence to help my child/ren
- Other _____

3. How much did Dare to Explore meet your expectations?

- Exceeded Met Partially met Did not meet expectations

4. What did you like most about Dare to Explore?

5. What could we do to improve Dare to Explore?

6. What activities would you like your local library to do more of for next year's Dare to Explore?

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:

7. As a result of participating in Dare to Explore, I feel more confident about helping my child/ren to learn new things.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your library

8. What was the main library you and your child/ren used for Dare to Explore?

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:

9. This library was friendly and welcoming.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. The librarians at this library had time for us and were willing to help.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. **Before** this year's Dare to Explore, how frequently did you typically visit the library?

- Never A few times a year Monthly Weekly Daily

12. Because of Dare to Explore, my child/ren and I are likely to visit the library more often than we have in the past.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your child

If you had more than one child participating in Dare to Explore, please answer questions 13 to 21 for the child who completed the **MOST/LEAST challenges.**

13. Please tell us the following information about your child:

Age Gender Ethnicity Main language at home

14. How confident with reading was your child **before** Dare to Explore?

Not confident at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very confident

15. How confident with reading is your child now, **after** Dare to Explore?

Not confident at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very confident

16. How has your child's reading ability changed during Dare to Explore?

Got a lot worse	Got a little worse	Stayed the same	Improved a little	Improved a lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. How much did your child enjoy the challenges that they completed?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 A lot

18. Do you think the challenges, activities and party were appropriate for the age of your child?

- Yes
- No → *If no, why not?* _____
- _____

19. Dare to Explore encouraged my child to discover and learn new things.

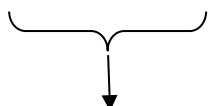
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. Dare to Explore increased my child's enjoyment of reading.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. How many challenges did your child complete?

- None 1-3 4-8 9-13 14-18 19+



We are really interested in understanding how children who completed three or fewer challenges found Dare to Explore. Did the programme meet your child's needs?

22. Did you and your child/ren use the Dare to Explore web pages on the Auckland Libraries website?

Yes

No

<p>Was the online content easy to find?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>What did you like best about Dare to Explore online?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Why did you and your child/ren not use the Dare to Explore web pages?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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Thank you for taking to time to tell us how you found Dare to Explore!

Turn to the next page if you would like to enter the prize draw...

Prize draw

Please provide your contact details below if you would like to enter the prize draw for a pile of books for your child/ren.

The information you provide will not be used for any other purpose and will be kept separately from your questionnaire responses.

Name: _____

Address: _____



Contact phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Thank you!

Please return this survey in the pre-paid envelope provided, or post to:

Private Bag 92300

Auckland 1142

Attn: Jesse Allpress

Appendix B Questionnaire for children



Children's Feedback (two pages)

1. I am _____ years old

2. I am ...

- A boy A girl

3. I heard about Dare to Explore ... *(tick as many as you like)*

- At the library
 At my school
 From my friends
 From my family
 By doing a library summer reading programme before
 On the Auckland Libraries' website
 On social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)

4. I joined Dare to Explore because ... *(tick as many as you like)*

- I wanted something to do over the holidays
 I wanted to get better at reading
 I like to come into the library
 It looked fun
 My family made me
 Some other reason – please write this here: _____

5. I did Dare to Explore ... *(tick as many as you like)*

- On my own
 With help from family
 With help from the librarians

6. I thought the BEST part of Dare to Explore was... _____

7. How many stars would you give Dare to Explore? *(circle one answer)*

- * 1 star is boring
- * * 2 stars means it's okay
- * * * 3 stars is awesome

8. Is there anything you DIDN'T like about Dare to Explore? _____

9. What was the main library you used for Dare to Explore? _____

10. Has Dare to Explore made you like going to the library more? *(circle one answer)*

Yes, a lot more OR **Yes, a little bit more** OR **No**

11. Do you think Dare to Explore helped with your reading over the summer? *(circle one answer)*

Yes, a lot OR **Yes, a little bit** OR **No**

12. Did you use the Dare to Explore web pages?

- Yes —————→ *If yes, how much did you like the web pages? (circle one answer)*
- No **A lot** OR **A little bit** OR **I didn't like them**

13. Did you go to the party at the end of Dare to Explore?

- Yes —————→ *If yes, how much did you like the party? (circle one answer)*
- No **A lot** OR **A little bit** OR **I didn't like it**

Thank you!

When you have finished, please post your survey back in the pre-paid envelope provided, return it to a librarian at your local library, or post to: Private Bag 92300, Auckland 1142, Attn: Jesse Allpress



► Find out more: phone 09 301 0101
email research@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz
or visit www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

