

Literacy Boost works with parents, teachers and children to promote literacy in the classroom, in after school reading clubs and in community training sessions. Josephine and her family are involved in the Literacy Boost programme in Gicumbi district. Josephine attends community trainings that teach parents how to promote literacy in the home and her seven year old son Sammy benefits from these home activities, regular participation in an after school reading club, and a classroom where the teacher has been trained by Save the Children’s Literacy Boost team.

JOSEPHINE NYIRANDINABO - MOTHER



Josephine and her son Sammy reading a book together at home

Below Josephine tells us how Literacy Boost has changed the way she interacts with her children’s learning.

“My name is Josephine Nyirandinabo; I have three children, Betty who is in Primary class 5 (P5), Leoncie who is in P3 and Samuel (also known as Sammy) who is in P1.”

Josephine told us that she learned a great deal from the parenting sessions to promote children’s literacy provided by Umuhuza, the local partner working with Save the Children to deliver community literacy activities:

“We learned a lot of things, and one that touched me the most is the lesson where they taught us that we have to teach our children to speak. I used to think that if you give birth to a baby, the baby will start to speak naturally, but they told us that we can talk to little babies. I thought that it was ridiculous! How can I talk to a baby who can’t hear me? But we learned that it develops a child’s ability to listen and to speak back. I’m grateful I learned this.

as a result they finish school at a good age and achieve more in their lives. That also reduces the school dropout level. Even for us parents, it keeps us alert about our literacy; we don't leave everything in the teachers' hands as we used to do before."

Josephine plans to continue to make more materials for her children as they progress through school, which will continue to improve their literacy in the future:

"For Sammy, I am sure I will make more materials according to his level, as he goes in higher grades. So he will be more updated which will make his learning easier and successful."

SAMMY- STUDENT AND JOSEPHINE'S SON



Sammy holds up the alphabet that his mother made for him at his home

Sammy, seven, is Josephine's son. He is benefitting from Literacy Boost through the community training sessions his mother attends, an afterschool reading club that he attends, and in his classroom – where his teacher has participated in Save the Children's Literacy Boost training. Sammy tells us what he likes about reading with his mum and his favourite books:

"We do homework together, and when we are reading together, she tells me to read louder and when I say something wrong, she says it properly and tells me to repeat it."

"When I come from school, my mum checks my notebooks and she corrects what I did wrong, and then we also read together, and when I get back to school I read in classroom too."

Sammy tells us about his favourite storybook: "I love Keza na Murigo (the characters), I love the way they do their homework in the book."

“When they are not doing their homework they play football. When they are not playing football, they look at books. When they are not looking at books, they do the dishes. When they are not doing the dishes they wash their shorts and skirts. When they are not washing their shorts and skirts, they play with other kids who live in the house close to theirs. When they come back from playing and they yawn, their mother tells them to wash their hands and their whole body and she gives them their evening meal. When they finish eating their evening meal, they brush their teeth, after brushing their teeth; their mother sends them to bed and covers them properly!”

Sammy in his class listening as his teacher reads a book aloud to the students



Sammy tells us about school that day, and explains that his teacher narrated a Kinyarwanda story where the character loses his first teeth; and that his teacher used stones to teach the class the shapes of letters in the alphabet:

“Today we were learning the letter P. So we make a line with the stones, and then make a circle on top. Our teacher tells us to come to school with the stones, and when we are on the way to school we pick them up and bring them to school.”

In Sammy’s classroom there are alphabets and numbers decorating the wall, which Sammy reads out to us: “they put them there so that we can read them”, he tells us.

Translated from Kinyarwanda by Natasha Nishimwe