

LITERACY NEWS



FLORIDA LITERACY COALITION, INC.

Number 122

FLORIDA'S NEWSLETTER FOR LITERACY TUTORS,
TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPPORTERS

WINTER 2009

REGISTER NOW!

**O P E N
B O O K S
O P E N
M I N D S**

2009

Florida Literacy Conference,

May 6-8, 2009

Clearwater

See page 4 for more information.

New Release of State and County Adult Literacy Estimates

More than 2.6 million adults in Florida— or 20 percent of those 16 and older, lack basic English literacy skills, according to estimates recently released by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Florida, with its large immigrant population, has the third lowest adult literacy level of all the states, behind California and New York. The state experienced a 33% increase over ten years in the percentage of people who fall in the lowest literacy skill level, with rates ranging from a low of 7 percent in St. John's County to 52 percent in Miami-Dade.

The findings come from the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL), a

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Just in Time Volunteer Tutor Training; Research on a New Training Approach

Have you ever wondered how much your volunteer tutor training is accomplishing? Have you ever wondered how closely the way you train your volunteers actually matches the way they work with learners? Have you ever wished you could give better support to them? When I was a volunteer tutor coordinator and tutor trainer, I often asked myself these questions. Mostly I wondered if volunteer tutors, despite their best intentions, were giving our students as good as they could get. When I had the opportunity to design a research study on a topic of my choosing, I was happy to have a way to answer some of these questions.

I began by identifying 4 programs that were diverse in their approach to tutor training in both content and delivery. I observed their training, interviewed staff, and collected training materials. Next, I randomly selected three student-tutor pairs who had been working together at least 3 months. After agreeing to participate, I asked them to tape record 3 consecutive tutoring sessions. After transcribing these tapes, I interviewed each student and tutor to learn about their experiences and ask them questions about what I had heard.

I found that no matter the program, there was a poor match between training and what tutors and students actually did together. Volunteers drew on many resources, but rarely upon training materials or what they had been taught in training. Tutors could not always use and did not always remember the training. Sometimes what they had been taught did not fit well with the needs of their learners. Some topics that would fit were neglected or omitted while a great deal of time was spent on topics that were irrelevant.

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Just in Time Volunteer Tutor Training Research on a New Training Approach

(Continued from cover)

I found these results discouraging, but used them as an opportunity to think about alternatives. Although it seemed possible that more training might help, it also seemed unrealistic to expect more of volunteers and programs. I began to question the typical training format which provides a great deal of information (most of which gets lost) “pre-service” and in the abstract. I thought a better way might be to do less training before the match and then provide more training later which is tailored the specific needs of the tutor and the student. I call this approach (borrowed from business and industry) “Just in Time Training”. The model I have developed has 3 components:

- A 3 hour orientation focusing on concepts from trainings which did seem to “stick” (general principles of adult learning), how to get started with a student (goal setting, lesson planning, strategies for selecting texts and reading together followed by the match)
- 12 hours of tutor-student instructional time
- Feedback from staff person or experienced volunteer based on audio recording of a session (after approximately 12 hours)

This model utilizes expertise within the program and gives volunteers support that is tailored to specific needs—just when it is needed—once students and tutors have established a working relationship and began to identify specific needs and interests.

Practitioners in Pennsylvania where I live helped me develop the 3 hour orientation, and a checklist to aide in analyzing the recording. Programs around the state who are piloting the process to evaluate whether it helps learners achieve better outcomes are enthusiastic about shortening training. An administrator reported that there is no significant difference between those who have the short JIT orientation, and those who get traditional training. Another noted that as a result of listening to the tape of a session she was able to provide more specific feedback than had ever been possible before.

Although the results of the pilot are not yet in, programs from around the country are enthusiastically getting behind the idea of JIT Training.

Join Ms. Belzer for her workshop on Just in Time Training at the Florida Literacy Conference in May.

Workplace Literacy at Continuing Care Facilities A winning Model for Residents and Employees

Recruiting enough volunteers to tutor adult learners is always a challenge. Ask a program coordinator what the toughest part of the job is, and many will tell you about the difficulty of getting tutors and adult learners to the same place at the same time to enjoy productive lessons. The Collier County Public Library Literacy Program faced just such a challenge when attempting to start a workplace literacy program at Moorings Park, a continuing care residence in North Naples.

The decision was made to train the able and willing residents of the facility. The tutor workshop was organized in partnership with the resident activities director. The typical 12-hour tutor training was divided into six two-hour sessions to recognize the needs of the elderly participants. Handouts were carefully re-printed to offer large text and easy to read lesson plans. An employee interested in receiving instruction prepared a site-specific picture dictionary by photographing her work surroundings. The activities director had copies printed up for all of the adult learners signed up to be matched with tutors.

The keys to the success of this project were the clear contracts laying out the expectations of the employer and the literacy program, the employer-specific lesson plans, and the enthusiasm of the tutors. Tutors were assigned to tutor their own care-givers and other employees whom they encountered daily in the dining rooms and common areas. This brought about a closer connection between the residents and the care-givers, who in the past had struggled to communicate effectively. Residents were offered a constructive, engaging way to contribute to their community. The same model has enjoyed success at other residences including Bentley Village and The Carlisle in North Naples.

For more details about starting a similar workplace literacy program, contact Roberta Reiss, Literacy Program Coordinator, at the Collier County Public Library (literacy@collier-lib.org).

Submit Your News!

Has your organization received funding or planned a major public event? Do you know something that would benefit other adult and family literacy practitioners?

FLC invites you to submit short articles and other news items related to funding, events, staff, hot topics, research and more. Contact Yari Payne at payney@floridaliteracy.org.

Course Dates and Locations:

(participants must commit to attend all 3 sessions)

May 5, 2009

10:00 am-6:00 pm, Belleview

Biltmore Resort in Clearwater. Pre-conference event at the Florida Literacy Conference.

May 14, 2009

6:00 pm-7:30 pm via conference call

May 29, 2009

1:00 pm-5:00 pm in Orlando

May 30, 2009

8:30 am-3:00 pm in Orlando

Application Deadline: Friday, March 20, 2009. Space is limited, so apply today. Additional information and applications are available at www.floridaliteracy.org. Travel assistance is available.

Train the Trainer Course Does your program need tutor trainers?

This three session course, aligned with ProLiteracy America trainer certification standards, will focus on competencies needed to be a good tutor trainer, providing curriculum and resources to offer a tutor training workshop.

Course content will include:

- A) Tutor training competencies.
- B) Tutor training content knowledge in both adult basic literacy and ESOL.
- C) Curriculum modules.
- D) Presentations by participants reviewed by instructor and peers.
- E) Discussion of ProLiteracy Trainer Certification system.

The format will include classroom and small group work, practice presentations and distance learning instruction.

This course will benefit the following participants:

- New Trainers
- Trainers working on updating their tutor training workshops
- Trainers seeking ProLiteracy Trainer Certification
- Trainers interested in improving their skills, but not pursuing certification
- Program Managers

Sponsored by Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center, a program of the Florida Literacy Coalition. This initiative is made possible through the generous support of the Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Education.

Community Based Literacy Organizations Hard at Work in Florida Results of the 2008 FLC & ProLiteracy program survey

Number of organizations responding	46
Number of students provided instruction annually	10,197
Number of tutors	3,742
Number of other volunteers	1,096
Volunteer hours contributed	238,651
Value of volunteer hours	\$4,656,081

FLC Staff Update



FLC is pleased to welcome the following addition to our staff:

Jordana Frost (Health Literacy Program Coordinator). Jordana will be coordinating the Health Literacy Grants Program funded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida. Previously, she coordinated the development of FLC's Staying Healthy curriculum for ESOL learners. Her prior work experience includes nonprofit management, as well as serving as a Small Enterprise Development Agent in the Peace Corps in West Africa (Mauritania '04-'06). She is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Health at the University of South Florida, while raising two bilingual (English/Italian) children under the age of two, with the help of her husband, Aaron.

25th Annual Florida Literacy Conference May 6-8, 2009 at the Belleview Biltmore Resort in Clearwater, FL

Join hundreds of adult and family literacy practitioners, volunteers and adult learners this May to network, develop new skills and share promising practices during the 2009 Florida Literacy Conference. This premier literacy event offers a wide range of sessions presented by local, state and national educators.

Sessions are designed to share new ideas and hands-on strategies that you can put to work for your program and students.

Full Conference Registration Includes:

- Admission to general sessions
- Your choice of sessions within 12 tracks
- Opening reception
- Continental breakfast on Thursday
- Closing luncheon Friday and daily refreshments
- Social and networking events
- Admission to literacy product exhibition
- Conference tote bag, program and resource materials

Conference Tracks:

- Adult Learner
- Corrections Literacy
- ESOL
- Family Literacy
- Health Literacy
- Learning Disabilities
- Library Literacy
- Program Management
- Reading
- Technology
- Volunteers in Literacy
- Workforce Education

For more information, call the Florida Literacy Coalition at (407) 246-7110 or visit our website, www.floridaliteracy.org, for updates, registration information and a complete list of concurrent sessions times and descriptions.

Adult Learner Day, Wednesday, May 6

Adult education, literacy and ESOL students are encouraged to attend the Conference as our guests for a full day of activities. This year's offerings were coordinated by a committee of adult learners. Session topics will address areas such as learner leadership, involvement and skills development.

For registration information go to www.floridaliteracy.org.

Don't Miss the Florida Literacy Awards and Banquet, Thursday, May 7

This promises to be an enjoyable and inspiring evening as we recognize the outstanding achievements of an adult learner, volunteer, literacy practitioner, program, business and media partner.

Conference Scholarships Available:

Are you having a difficult time finding resources to attend the Florida Literacy Conference? A limited number of registration and travel scholarships are available to practitioners and volunteers working in adult and family literacy programs. Visit www.floridaliteracy.org for application information.

Hotel Information:

Wednesday, April 15 is the last day to reserve a room for overnight accommodations for May 1 thru May 12 at the group rate of \$110 plus tax. To reserve a room, call the Belleview Biltmore Resort at (727) 373-3000. Ample free parking is available onsite.

Keynote Speakers:



Toni Cordell

Toni Cordell's life story is one of "stumbling blocks being turned into stepping stones." She has faced numerous challenges because of her poor education compounded by dyslexia. It is not a surprise that her lack

of education created problems in dealing with the medical system. Toni, a nationally known health literacy advocate, shares her personal story and discusses the important role adult educators can play in working with health care professionals to address low health literacy.

Lenn Millbower

Best selling author and professional Learnertainer Lenn Millbower has helped more than one million trainers, educators, and speakers deliver learning events that adult learners love.

Lenn's published works include *Show Biz Training* and *Training with a Beat*. A popular professional speaker, Lenn will share his proven Learnertainment techniques for keeping learners awake and engaged so the knowledge can sink in for good.



Pre-Conference Events, Tuesday, May 5:

A Peek at the Orton-Gillingham Approach for Teaching Reading to Students with Reading Difficulties or Dyslexia

9:00 AM-5:00 PM

\$10 (lunch included)

Facilitators: Betsy Gauss and Rochelle Kenyon

This workshop is for teachers/tutors who are interested in the Orton-Gillingham approach to use in teaching those with poor reading skills or dyslexia. The workshop will include background information on learning disabilities establishing the benefits of direct and explicit instruction using a multisensory approach.

The session will include; 1) an explanation of the principles of the Orton-Gillingham approach, 2) an outline of the structure and phonemes of our language, 3) organizational strategies for learning the O-G way, and 4) practice with specific multisensory activities to use on a regular basis when teaching. Take home specific activities to begin using with your students. You won't want to miss this opportunity to learn about the Orton-Gillingham approach to teaching reading.

Train the Trainer Course

10:00 AM-6:00 PM

\$25.00 (lunch included)

Facilitators: Ellen Lauricella & Roberta Reiss

For full description, see page 3 of this newsletter.

Selecting State-Approved Tests for Adult Education Programs

1:00 PM-4:00 PM

Facilitator: Phil Anderson

Department of Education staff will provide materials for ABE, Pre-GED and ESOL coordinators & administrators on methods to use in selecting state-approved tests for their program. A step-by-step formula will guide participants on selecting the test that will work best for their student population and meet their program needs. The use of appropriate tests means greater student retention, higher transition rates, and higher rates of passing from one level to the next.

Florida Ready to Work

1:00 PM-4:00 PM

Facilitator: Eli Rodriguez

Florida Ready to Work is a free, new workforce education tool sponsored by the State of Florida. The centerpiece of the program is the Florida Ready to Work Credential, a career readiness certificate that certifies that a Florida student or adult jobseeker has the communication, reasoning and problem-solving skills necessary to compete for most jobs today from entry-level to professional.

Workshop participants will learn how to help their students improve their literacy skills and prepare for work. Hands-on training will be provided on all program components including how to enroll a student/jobseeker, and how to navigate the Courseware.

Sponsored by Regional Training Council IV.

STAYING HEALTHY: Health Literacy Curriculum and Resources for ESOL

1:00 - 5:00 PM

Facilitator: Jordana Frost

Come learn about how to successfully integrate health literacy into high beginning and low intermediate level Adult ESOL instruction. Increase health literacy awareness among your students and encourage them to make healthy choices in relation to nutrition, preventative health care, accessing health services, and other related issues.

This 3-hour session includes an overview of the freely available Staying Healthy curriculum, lots of hands-on activities/resources and time for discussion and idea sharing. Each participant will receive a copy of the Staying Healthy Student and Teacher's Resource Guide.

Sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida.

25 YEARS
1984 - 2009

Special Thanks to our Conference Sponsors:

- Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Education
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida
- Dollar General
- Florida TechNet
- Orlando Magic



Literacy Ambassador Program Prepares Adult Learners to Share their Stories

Twenty-one adult learners successfully completed the Florida Literacy Coalition's annual Literacy Ambassador's training in November, 2008. This workshop, for adult learners and their program administrators, prepares adult learners to become effective advocates and spokespeople for adult literacy and for their educational organizations.

Lis Garcia, an ESOL student, attended the program with her tutor, Kristen Przelomiec, and shared her powerful story while developing her public speaking skills.

According to Lis, finding Literacy Volunteers of Lee County and her tutor a little over a year ago, has changed her life! When she first arrived in America three years ago at age twenty-one with her parents and three siblings, her excitement over relocating and finding new opportunities was quickly replaced by fear and the difficulties she faced because she couldn't read, write or speak English.

Just a short time after she started working with her tutor, Lis's abilities and confidence quickly began to grow. As she continues to make steady progress, she feels that her new skills and abilities to speak, read and write in English are preparing her to enroll in a nursing program next year at Edison College. She credits her success to the dedication and patience of her tutor, Kristen, who allowed Lis to study at her own pace and who took the time to explain everything as many times as needed.



This year's graduating Literacy Ambassador Class. (Seated left to right) Leila St. Jean, Lis Garcia, Dorothy Miracle, Ensie Wilson, Lola Reed, Maria De La Rocha, Sandra Piano, Paz Regina Ortiz, Hortensia Romanis, Paola Aria, Carol Emile, John Oakley, Martin Rivers, Magda Dubrowsky, Jeremy Hawthorne, Monica Cho, Martha Tucker, Clara Velez, Lesbi Meis

Lis is very grateful for the opportunity to change her life and find a new career, but mostly, she is grateful that she can now take her new language and skills home to help her family. Lis looks forward to sharing her story with others who may learn from her experiences.

The Literacy Ambassador Program was made possible through the support of the Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Education.

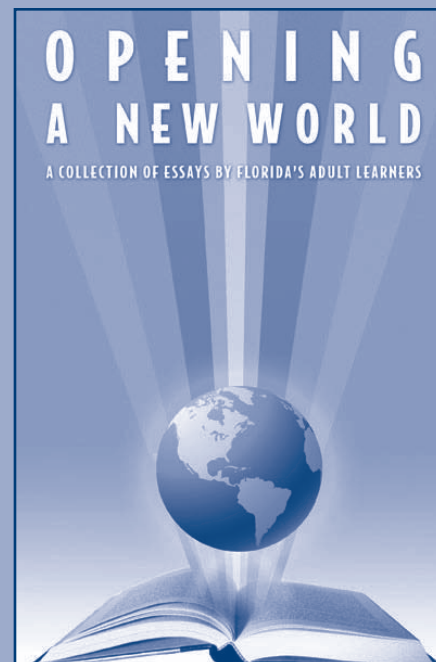
Essays Wanted for Adult Learner Writing Campaign

Adult learners throughout Florida are invited to submit original short stories, poems, or autobiographical narratives to be included in a published book that will debut at the 2009 Florida Literacy Conference this May in Clearwater.

The goal of this book is to allow adult learners the opportunity to build confidence while also improving their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Organizational representatives can use this book as a way to promote the positive influence their programs are having within their communities.

Please visit www.floridaliteracy.org and click on *Submit Essays for Adult Learner Writing Campaign* for access to an online submission form as well as many links to teaching tips and exercises for adult learners.

The deadline for submissions is March 15, 2009.



GED MATH - MATH CALCULATIONS

When: February 25, 2009

4:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Where: Hillsborough County Adult and Community Education Center (On the campus of Gary Adult High School)

Multi-Purpose Room
5103 N. 40th Street
Tampa, FL

For more information, contact Barbara Phillips at BPhillip@coedu.usf.edu.

FREE ONLINE WEBINAR

When: February 25, 2009

6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

For full description, see page 9 of this newsletter.

18TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FAMILY LITERACY

When: March 1-3, 2009

Where: Orlando, FL

For more information, visit
http://www.familit.org/site/c.gtjWJdMQIsE/b.1574477/k.A99/National_Conference_on_Family_Literacy.htm.



GED MATH - GRAPHS AND TABLES

When: March 19, 2009

4:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Where: Hillsborough County Adult and Community Education Center (On the campus of Gary Adult High School)
Multi-Purpose Room
5103 N 40th Street
Tampa, FL

For more information, contact Barbara Phillips at BPhillip@coedu.usf.edu.

TUTOR TRAINING

When: March 21, 2009

9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Where: West Tampa Branch Library
Tampa, FL

Attend a training at the West Tampa Library and become a volunteer tutor. Teach an adult student conversational English once or twice a week at your closest library.

Registration is \$30. Volunteers must be 18 years or older and have a high school diploma or GED. Knowledge of a second language is not required.

For more information, call 813-273-3650 or visit www.hillsboroughliteracy.org.

To submit events for upcoming issues of the Literacy News as well as the calendar at www.floridaliteracy.org, please forward information about your event to Samantha Sparks at sparkss@floridaliteracy.org.

Tutor Tips

WHO AM I?

Purpose: To review family vocabulary

Preparation time: None

Materials: Paper and pencils

Procedure:

1. Individually, learners write on a sheet of paper all of the words they can think of that refer to their identity. Example: mother, daughter, student, Mexican, sister, aunt, wife, etc.
2. Collect all of the lists.

3. Ask for a volunteer reader and give the reader one of the lists. That person reads the list aloud. When he has finished, the other learners guess who wrote the list.

4. Continue, choosing a new reader for each list.

SEEING RED

Some students appear to be able to perceive and retain words written in red ink on yellow paper more easily than when reading the traditional

black print on white paper. Try using a red marker when making sight word cards, writing language experience stories, or preparing activities for your reading student. Legal pads provide a good and easy supply of yellow paper.

Some students lose their places when reading and have difficulty following the line of print. Encourage the student to use a colored index card (or a white index card with a heavy black line drawn on the top) as a marker when they read.

Encouraging Participation in Financial Education

Now more than ever, basic financial literacy is critical in helping people to manage their money effectively, to make informed financial decisions, and to protect themselves from predatory practices. The more financially literate a person is, the more rational his/her economic decisions will be.

Since financial issues are a sensitive area, adult learners may feel uncomfortable with traditional methods of instruction and lectures. Unlike children, they have already had many years of life experiences with money and may feel inadequate, defensive or ashamed when attending sessions on financial literacy. To disarm these negative feelings, trainers and tutors have successfully used the Learning Circle method to minimize discomfort and encourage participation.

After being seated in a circle the group is given a financial question or topic on which to reflect. The group leader, usually the instructor, begins with a story or experience on the topic, then each person in the circle shares a story or experience. It may be helpful for learners to pass a small object around, which they hold while they are speaking, then pass on. This helps the speaker to focus and creates a sharing environment. The leader may need to remind participants to keep their sharing within the allotted time limits, and to reassure them of the value of their experiences to the group. It may also be helpful to emphasize that differences in the group are useful and okay.

Trainers and tutors report that results of using the Learning Circle include:

- Adults are more willing to learn from you after they tell you their own experiences.
- Adults find it safer to challenge their old money habits after group reflection.
- Sharing of experiences creates group member bonding and peer support networking.
- It promotes dialogue versus a tuned-out, passive, compliant lecture format.
- It creates leveling and an equality atmosphere, which minimizes money shame.
- After initial anxiety, leaders get energized by remarkable stories and break from lead role.

Source: The Four Cornerstones of Financial Literacy Curriculum, developed by Darryl Dahlheimer through a federal grant awarded to the Office of Economic Opportunity, Minnesota Department of Human Services

Free Tax Return Preparation

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program offers free tax help to people who need assistance in preparing their tax returns. Certified volunteers sponsored by various organizations receive training to help prepare basic tax returns in communities across the country. VITA sites are generally located at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations. Most locations also offer free electronic filing.

To locate the nearest VITA site, call 1-800-829-1040 or visit www.irs.gov

New Release of State and County Adult Literacy Estimates

(Continued from cover)

survey of more than 19,000 Americans ages 16 and older. The 2003 survey is a follow-up to a similar one in 1992.

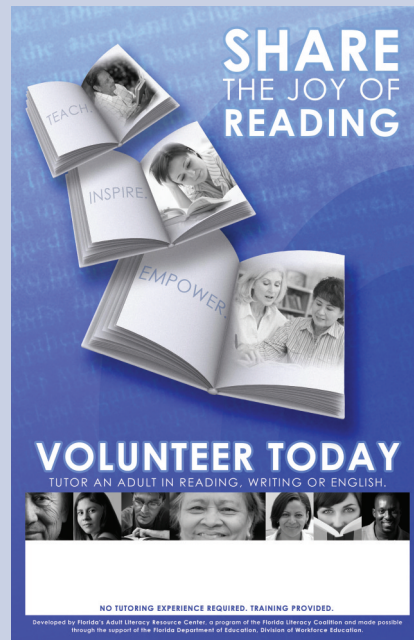
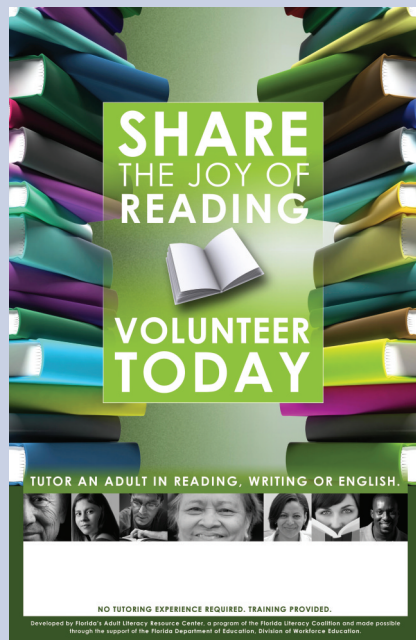
Nationally about 14.5 percent, or 32 million adults older than age 16, lack what the report calls “basic prose literacy” or the ability to read, in English, materials arranged in sentences and paragraphs. While these individuals may be able to do very simplistic activities such as signing a form, they are not able to perform many everyday tasks such as understanding a doctor’s written instructions or using a television guide to find a specific program.

NCES engaged in a complex analysis that took into account NAAL data results as well as U.S. Census data in areas such as income, immigration, ethnicity and educational attainment. Users of the results need to be aware that the margins of error associated with these model-based estimates of adults lacking basic prose literacy are significant. Literacy practitioners should also note that the previously released 1992 NALS level 1 county/city data classified literacy levels in a different way. One cannot meaningfully compare the recently released data to those figures, which is why NCES reconstituted the 1992 data.

To access the study, go to <http://nces.ed.gov/naal/estimates/overview.aspx>. This site provides estimates for all states and counties in the continental United States and allows users to compare adult literacy rates by state or county and trace adult literacy rates over time.

Recruitment Posters Available

Florida's Adult Literacy Resource Center is proud to announce the availability of two new volunteer recruitment posters that can be customized to include local program names and contact information. These images will also be freely available in electronic form to be used as flyers.



To order contact Quizaira Recio at 407-246-7110 X 201 or via email at recioq@floridaliteracy.org.

A project of the Florida's Literacy Coalition and made possible through support from the Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Education.

Free Online Tutor/Teacher In-Service Webinar Training Using Authentic Materials in Adult Literacy Instruction

Date: February 25, 2009
Time: 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Description: This workshop will focus on how to use authentic materials to work on the skills students and teachers have prioritized for classroom instruction. Using real world materials, a range of skills can be addressed, from 'word attack' to meta-cognitive aspects of reading comprehension. After talking about the kinds of text that can serve as the basis for lesson planning, the presenter will provide a resource list of instructional techniques and work with participants to identify the approaches that would best serve the students they are working with.

How does it work? Participate from the comfort of your own home or office. All you need is a telephone and access to the Internet.

We will send you a toll free call in number and web address (URL) when you register.

On the evening of the workshop, you simply join the conference call and go to the web site which will allow you to access the slide show.

Presenter: Erik Jacobson is an Assistant Professor at Montclair State University in New Jersey and author of "Creating Authentic Materials & Activities". He has conducted research on adult literacy in the United States and Japan. He is very interested in the use of authentic materials, on-line support for professional development, and how education officials present research to practitioners.

To register for the online training visit:
www.floridaliteracy.org.

A collaborative learning event brought to you by the Florida Adult Literacy Resource Center, a program of the Florida Literacy Coalition. This workshop is made possible through the support of the Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Education.

Health Literacy Grant Announcement

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida and the Florida Literacy Coalition are pleased to announce the availability of mini-grants of up to \$5,000 to support health literacy.



BlueCross BlueShield of Florida

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Low health literacy costs an estimated \$73 billion a year in the form of longer hospital stays, emergency room visits, increased doctor visits and increased medication (National Academy on an Aging Society). Adults with low literacy levels often fail to engage in early detection and preventative health care. They also have significant difficulties in navigating the health care system and following their doctor's treatment plans.

The purpose of this grant is to provide training, resources and funding to Florida adult ESOL and family literacy programs, enabling them to help students gain the information and skills needed to make informed choices regarding their health and nutrition. Applicants must be nonprofit or government-based agencies providing adult ESOL and/or family literacy instruction in Florida. Services may be delivered via classes, small groups and one-to-one tutoring. Recipients will receive up to \$5,000 in 2009 and may be eligible to reapply for grants based on program outcomes and achievements.

The application and guidelines may be accessed through the Florida Literacy Coalition's website at www.floridaliteracy.org. Proposals must be received by no later than March 6, 2009. For questions, please contact Jordana Frost at (407) 246-7110 ext. 209 or via e-mail at frostj@floridaliteracy.org.

Special thanks to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida for making this opportunity possible.

Bowling for Dollars

Go bowling and support your organization! Do you want to raise money and have some fun? Follow this example from the Literacy Council of St. Petersburg's First Bowl-a-Thon.

Coordinators approached City Council members and the local Rotary Club to help get the word out and secure sponsorships. Several local businesses sponsored bowling lanes for \$100 each. In all, fifteen lanes were secured for the evening. In return for the \$100, companies were included in a PowerPoint presentation that ran on overhead monitors throughout the event. Local radio stations offered PSAs advertising the event as well as donated prizes for a raffle. For \$4 a ticket, participants bought a chance to win prizes such as tickets to Sea World, Adventure Island and a Neil Diamond concert.

Those who came to bowl got to do so for free due to a local business sponsorship. Bowlers included Literacy Council staff and members of the community. A total of \$3600 was raised and a good time was had by all.

Dollar General Literacy Foundation Grants

The Dollar General Literacy Grants Program is a national initiative providing funding to non-profit adult and family literacy programs in communities served by the company. For more information and to access the grant application go to www.dollargeneral.com/Community

Application deadline: March 4, 2009

Library Services and Technology Grants Now Available

Public, school, and nonprofit college and hospital libraries are eligible to apply for funds with the Library Services and Technology Grants. Libraries must be managed by a librarian with a Masters in Library Science. Libraries may apply for funds in partnership with local literacy providers. Grant funds may be used for a number of purposes including literacy programming and the acquisition of technology resources. This federal grant program is administered by the State Library and Archives of Florida. For more information on library literacy projects, contact Sandy Newell 850-245-6624 or snewell@dos.state.fl.us.

Deadline: March 15, 2009

To access the LSTA application, please visit: http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/bld/grants/grants_docs/2009_LSTA_Application.doc.

Exploring Learners' Perspectives on Progress

Findings from a Canadian research study provides insight into the importance of understanding and valuing the perspective that adult learners have on their own progress. Exploring what constitutes progress in community-based literacy programs from the viewpoint of learners, researchers discovered numerous nonacademic outcomes critical to learners' progress which were associated with adult literacy programs. Learners realized very well what literacy can do for them and highly valued many nonacademic outcomes that they experience in various facets of their lives.

These outcomes included:

- Self-confidence
- Finding voice
- Opening up to learning
- Independence
- Building relationships; building community
- Wellness
- Taking risks / new challenges
- Public disclosure and asking for help
- Listening to enhance understanding
- Cultural awareness and tolerance

The first three were identified by almost

all participating learners and seemed central to their perspective on progress. Indications are that these outcomes improved the quality of students' lives and became part of their identity. Learners described their progress by referring to the real life activities they could now do in a wide variety of life contexts. Not only were these valued in their own right, they also appeared to provide important support to their learning process and contributed to the attainment of goals.

The study concludes that learners' perspectives on non-academic progress needs to be valued in literacy programs. Fully understanding and assessing this type of progress takes care given the fact that practitioners may not observe or even consider some of the successes in everyday life evident to learners.

The full study, *I've Opened Up: Exploring Learners' Perspectives on Progress*, is available free to download at www.nald.ca/library/research/openup/cover.htm. The study includes a tool to help learners and practitioners reflect on and document how learners' lives have been affected by their participation in a literacy program.

Technology Corner: Google Docs

Google is known worldwide as a search engine for the Internet. What many people may not know is that Google also offers applications like Google Docs for free.

CREATE AND SHARE YOUR WORK ONLINE:

- Upload from and save to your desktop
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- Pick who can access your documents
- Share changes in real time
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Google docs is a free application which allows users the ability to upload and edit documents, spreadsheets and powerpoint presentations.

The Documents aspect of the program allows users to create or upload a document, send it out to a group of editors and then collect that information relatively quickly and electronically. The Spreadsheet option gives users the ability to send out a spreadsheet for fill in by several

contributors and collect the information fast and simple. Lastly, all of these documents can then be published to the Internet, where Google assigns your document a specific URL for distribution for public viewing.

Visit www.google.com today and check it out!

Resources

Report Released on Developing Early Literacy

The much anticipated National Early Literacy Panel report *Developing Early Literacy* identifies research based literacy best practices, provides clues for unlocking life-long learning, and underscores the need for translational research to address the gap in our nation's understanding of literacy.

To access the report go to www.nifl.gov

The Change Agent

The Change Agent teaches basic skills in the context of socially relevant issues. (The March 09 issue focuses on health.) Each 56 page magazine includes short articles, students' writing, illustrations, cartoons, math lessons, and quizzes Perfect for a multi-level ABE and/or ESOL classroom. Classroom sets available.

SUBSCRIBE NOW: www.nelrc.org/changeagent or call 617-482-9485.

Technical Assistance Papers for Serving Adults with Learning Disabilities

The former Practitioner's Task Force on Adults with Learning Disabilities in partnership with the Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Education, created a series of three technical assistance papers for programs and practitioners.

The publications provide useful information on:

- Accommodations for Students with Learning Disabilities
- The Rights and Responsibilities of Adults with Learning Disabilities and Responsibilities of Service Providers
- Screening for Learning Disabilities

All three are available free online at www.fldoe.org/workforce/adult_ed.asp under Program Links- ALD - Adults with Learning Disabilities.

Minnesota ABE Learning Disabilities Website

This site contains information frequently requested by Minnesota's adult education instructors and is accessible by users with disabilities. The material helps equip ABE managers, teachers, volunteers and tutors to provide learning experiences and basic skills that improve the lives of students with disabilities. <http://www.mnabedisabilities.org>



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For more information, contact Samantha Sparks, Resource Specialist at sparkss@floridaliteracy.org
or visit www.floridaliteracy.org and click on Become a Member.