Family Literacy in Ontario

A Guide to Best Practices

OLC Action for Family Literacy Ontario
Family Literacy in Ontario
A Guide to Best Practices
Acknowledgements

Action for Family Literacy Ontario (AFLO) was fortunate to have Kim Sutherland as the researcher/writer for this project. Kim is an experienced and passionate leader of family literacy and was able to bring her vast knowledge, sensitivity, and creativity to this project.

This resource was developed under the guidance of the members of Action for Family Literacy Ontario through the project committee, led by Lorri Sauve. Lorri took on the leadership of this project with great dedication, alongside the other members of AFLO who contributed countless volunteer hours providing information and support, as well as reviewing and editing to bring this resource to completion.

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Our special thanks to all the family literacy practitioners and administrators, librarians, Early Years specialists, adult literacy practitioners and administrators, and individuals across Ontario who completed the questionnaire and took the time to share their ideas and experiences. Their contribution to this project is immeasurable. It is our earnest hope that this guide speaks to the reality of programs, and will contribute to building the capacity of this field to deliver high quality family literacy programs in Ontario.

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For more information on family literacy visit us at www.aflo.on.literacy.ca.

All requests to reproduce parts of this resource must be sent to the OLC identifying the material to be reproduced and the intended use of this material.
Who or What is Action for Family Literacy Ontario (AFLO)?

The Ontario Literacy Coalition (OLC), established in 1986, works to ensure that people who have literacy challenges live full lives — at home, at work and in their communities — by their advocacy and strong voice for literacy, public education, research and resource development, communication and coordination, and professional development. Action for Family Literacy Ontario (AFLO) is a provincial working group of the OLC. It is made up of OLC staff and a small, diverse and dedicated group of volunteers, all passionate about family literacy. This group was formed as a result of a symposium, *Family Literacy Matters*, hosted by the OLC in 2002. With a group of advisors, AFLO has been working with family literacy stakeholders to lay the foundation needed to move the field forward in Ontario.

The first steps for AFLO were to develop a mission, vision, and definition of family literacy. In 2004, they offered a face-to-face foundational training institute in family literacy. In 2005, AFLO undertook an environmental scan to study sustainability and identify professional development needs of family literacy practitioners. That was followed up with a Position Paper with a vision for the potential of family literacy in Ontario. AFLO’s goal, through this publication and other initiatives, is to continue to provide opportunities for supporting the family literacy community.

The National Literacy Secretariat (NLS) provided three-year funding to the OLC so they could take on the leadership role entrusted to them by the family literacy field. The OLC continues to seek funding to maintain the valuable work of AFLO. AFLO has been active in the areas of advocacy, communication and research.

For more up-to-date information about AFLO’s current activities, and about family literacy programs, research, training and resources in Ontario, visit AFLO’s website at: [http://www.aflo.on.literacy.ca/](http://www.aflo.on.literacy.ca/)
Hopes and Dreams for this Guide to Best Practices

In 2002, the Ontario Literacy Coalition (OLC) hosted a symposium, *Family Literacy Matters*, with delegates representing many different fields as well as regions of Ontario. The purpose of this symposium was to network, share ideas, and lay the groundwork for a family literacy strategy for Ontario. As a result of this symposium, the OLC was charged with the mandate of creating a working group to take family literacy in Ontario to the next step. Action for Family Literacy Ontario (AFLO) was created and has been taking concrete steps towards fulfilling its mandate since that time.

AFLO approached the idea of this guide based on feedback from practitioners in the family literacy field that indicated the need for a made-in-Ontario approach to best practices for family literacy. The National Literacy Secretariat (NLS) provided the funding to produce such a resource. This best practices document was researched and written in order to provide specific information to Ontario family literacy practitioners. Because family literacy in Ontario is an emerging field nestled within early childhood education and adult literacy, family literacy practitioners have a need for shared information. This is one of the baby steps that AFLO has taken in order to inform practitioners and link them to AFLO. This guide is intended to be a starting point for practitioners to examine their programs and determine how to improve upon their current practices and to recognize the good work they are already doing.

It is our hope that this guide to best practices will be a starting point for AFLO and other family literacy practitioners. It is our intention that this guide will be a living document. In other words, the practitioners reading and using this guide will use the information to shape their programs into more of what they envision their programs to be.

This is our gift to you.

*Enjoy.*

Action for Family Literacy Ontario Members
# Table of Contents

1. **About this Guide** ................................................................. 1  
   Is this guide for you? ......................................................... 1  
   How can you use this guide? ............................................... 1  
   What are the best practice statements? .................................. 2  

2. **What are the Best Practice Statements for Family Literacy in Ontario?** ................ 3  

3. **A Personal Checklist for Individual Practitioners** ................................. 7  

4. **What is Family Literacy?** ................................................... 9  
   Definitions ................................................................. 9  
   Examples of family literacy .............................................. 10  
   Family literacy programs ............................................... 11  
   Values in family literacy ................................................. 11  

5. **Background to the Guide** ................................................... 13  
   Why was this guide developed? ........................................... 13  
   How was the research done? ............................................. 13  

6. **Best Practices in Family Literacy in Ontario** ..................................... 15  
   Philosophy ................................................................. 15  
   Needs assessment and program planning ................................ 18  
   Policies and procedures .................................................. 21  
   Program models ............................................................ 23  
   Program content ........................................................... 26  
   Resources, materials and facilities ...................................... 29  
   Staff development .......................................................... 32  
   Volunteers ................................................................. 37  
   Promotion and recruitment ................................................ 40  
   Access, participation and retention ...................................... 43  
   Supporting families’ diversities and differences ...................... 46  
   Funding and sustainability ................................................ 61  
   Community involvement and partnerships ............................. 64  
   Assessment and evaluation ................................................. 68
7. Appendices ................................................................. 73

Appendix A: Research Background .................................... 73
   i. List of best practice documents ................................. 73
   ii. Questionnaire ..................................................... 75
   iii. Research summary .............................................. 77

Appendix B: Worksheets ................................................. 78
   i. Action plan worksheet for agencies ............................ 78
   ii. Budgeting for a family literacy program ..................... 84

Appendix C: Family literacy information ............................... 87
   i. Program models .................................................. 87
   ii. Family literacy manuals and materials ....................... 94
   iii. Staff development and training opportunities .............. 98
   iv. Funding information for family literacy programs .......... 102
   v. Safety issues in family literacy programs .................... 104
   vi. Family literacy web links ..................................... 106

Appendix D: General information ....................................... 110
   i. Plain language pointers ....................................... 110
   ii. Multiple intelligences and learning styles .................. 112

8. Bibliography ............................................................... 115
About this Guide

Is this guide for you?

This guide is for anyone who is involved or interested in family literacy.

Family literacy practitioners and managers, and community partners may use this guide to improve upon their family literacy programs. Family literacy practitioners may include: librarians, early literacy specialists, teachers, family resource program workers, adult literacy instructors, home visitors, public health workers and anyone else who is involved in providing programming and direct support to families.

Family service agencies, who are thinking of starting up a family literacy program, or getting involved as a partner in family literacy work, will find this guide a very useful place to start. It will help direct their thinking and avoid some pitfalls.

Anyone wanting to know about family literacy in Ontario, including funders, policymakers, and prospective volunteers, will find something of interest in this guide.

How can you use this guide?

► Use it to guide your program planning and development.
► Skip straight to specific parts of it for quick reference.
► Use the statements as benchmarks for program evaluation.
► Photocopy and use the Action plan worksheet for agencies found in Appendix B, section i. Go through each section of the guide with staff and program partners to see how current practices and working partnerships could be improved. Encourage critical reflection and discussion. Make this an annual program evaluation activity.
► Look to the recommended resources located at the end of each section and the appendices for more information on specific topics and issues.
► Read it cover to cover to get an overview of family literacy programming and gain perspective on where your own work fits into the big picture.
► Use it to help write compelling family literacy funding proposals.
Use it to help recruit well-qualified staff and volunteers.

Share the statements in presentations with community stakeholders to raise awareness about family literacy and to develop partnerships and networks.

What are the best practice statements?

Best practice statements outline key elements of effective, high-quality family literacy programs. They describe ideals and serve as guidelines with goals to work towards. They are not exhaustive. Best practice statements connect theory to practical application, and cover principles, material prerequisites and human factors involved in family literacy programming. They are intended primarily for use as a framework for effective program design, development and evaluation.
What are the Best Practice Statements for Family Literacy in Ontario?

These are the best practice statements for family literacy in Ontario. For more information on each topic area and a checklist for your agency, go directly to the pages indicated.

Philosophy ................................................................. page 15
A quality family literacy program has a clearly written mission statement that is built on carefully considered values and beliefs. This philosophy is communicated to everyone involved with the program and is reviewed regularly.

Needs assessment and planning ................................... page 18
A quality family literacy program lays a solid foundation for itself by conducting ongoing community needs assessments for family literacy, identifying target groups, and exploring potential partnerships and the availability of resources.

Policies and procedures ............................................. page 21
A quality family literacy program has policies and procedures to ensure everyone involved in the program is supported in meaningful ways, and that a safe and welcoming learning environment is established.

Program models ......................................................... page 23
A quality family literacy program is built on a well-researched model that emphasizes the strengths of families, affirms the influence of parents on their children’s learning, and empowers all generations to learn.

Program content ....................................................... page 26
A quality family literacy program supports the learning efforts of all family members by using a wide variety of instructional methods, strategies and materials. While a program model may be followed, modifications are made continually to meet the needs, interests and capabilities of program participants.
Resources, materials and facilities ........................................ page 29
A quality family literacy program uses a variety of learner-centered, age-appropriate and authentic learning materials, and provides accessible facilities where families feel safe and comfortable learning.

Staff development ................................................................. page 32
A quality family literacy program has well-trained staff who can meet the diverse learning needs of participating family members. The staff understand the theory and research underlying family literacy, bring practical skills to program delivery, and keep up-to-date through professional development.

Volunteers ............................................................................... page 37
A quality family literacy program may recruit, train and support volunteers to contribute in meaningful ways.

Promotion and recruitment .................................................... page 40
A quality family literacy program uses a variety of methods and outreach materials to promote the program effectively in the community and to recruit families who have the most to gain from the program.

Access, participation and retention ........................................ page 43
A quality family literacy program offers the program in a central and safe location with relevant resources and supports. Sensitive staff create a learning environment where participants of all ages attend for as long as it takes to reach their goals.

Supporting families’ diversities and differences ....................... page 46
A quality family literacy program celebrates and supports the range of diversity in its community by providing a variety of relevant resources and modifying program content as appropriate. Self-aware staff communicate effectively with families of all backgrounds and abilities, practicing anti-bias strategies and using language that is clear and inclusive.

Funding and sustainability ..................................................... page 61
A quality family literacy program takes steps to become sustainable by exploring various long-term funding sources at local, provincial and national levels. The program also recognizes great value in short-term funding opportunities and community collaborations.
Community involvement and partnerships .......................... page 64
A quality family literacy program views itself as a vital part of a community, able to meet the learning needs of families most effectively when working closely within a network of family support agencies with similar values and goals.

Assessment and evaluation ................................................. page 68
A quality family literacy program uses a participatory method to assess and document progress and to evaluate the effectiveness of different aspects of the program in helping participants meet their learning goals.
A Personal Checklist for Individual Practitioners

How might your own personal beliefs and values affect your ability to develop and deliver a quality family literacy program? Here is a chance for you to think about where you stand before discussing the following statements with colleagues in your agency and community partners.

Read each statement and ask yourself, “What do I think about this?” Take your time. You may wish to journalize your personal responses or discuss some of them with another colleague. Consider how your feelings and beliefs may affect your work with families.

Statements:

- Literacy is a basic human right.
- Families are complex and their literacy needs are all different.
- Parents are their children’s first teachers and their most important resource for developing literacy.
- All family members are capable learners who bring a wealth of knowledge to contribute to programs.
- Family members are continually developing the literacy skills and practices they each need to get things done every day.
- Individual family members who improve their own literacy help develop the whole family’s literacy.
- Family activities that involve reading, writing and talking help develop everyone’s literacy skills and interest in learning.
- When families do enjoyable literacy activities together, they are also strengthening family relationships.
- The social, cultural, economic and political context of families’ everyday lives affects their existing knowledge, perspectives and abilities.
- All languages are equally valuable, and everyone should have the right to be literate in the language of their choice.
- The various languages used by participants in their homes should also be used, validated and honoured in programs.
- Families who face economic, social or educational challenges have much to contribute to a family literacy program.
Everyone involved in programs should be involved in developing definitions and statements that they believe to be true and important concerning families and literacy in their own communities.

Programs are most successful when families continue the activities learned when they go home.

Programs that support parents in their quest to help their children are family literacy programs.

Family literacy program practitioners and administrators should continually examine and reflect upon their attitudes, values and practices to ensure that the mission, vision and goals are still valid.

The whole community should be involved in supporting family literacy.

There is a place for my agency to be involved in family literacy in our community.

As one person, there is much I can do promote and increase family literacy in my community.
What is Family Literacy?

Definitions

We know there are many definitions of family literacy and even more descriptions of family literacy programs! AFLO has created the following definitions of common terms for use by family literacy practitioners in Ontario. It is a good idea, though, for each program to work with its program participants to create definitions that are meaningful to everyone involved.

Family
A family is a group of people who define themselves as family.

Literacy
Literacy is much more than being able to read and write. Literacy allows people to read the world rather than just the word. It involves using the different forms of communication, which gives us further opportunities in our society — for our families, our communities and ourselves. Literacy helps us understand the world we live in. It also helps us understand ourselves and express our identity, our ideas and our cultures.

Emergent literacy
Emergent literacy is about how children learn about reading and writing right from birth. Parents play an important role supporting emergent literacy by turning everyday, natural events into literacy and language learning opportunities.

Family literacy
Family literacy is about the ways families use literacy and language in their daily lives. It is about how families:

- learn
- use literacy to do everyday tasks
- help children develop their emergent literacy

1. The information and definitions in this section are from AFLO’s website — www.aflo.on.literacy.ca
What is Family Literacy?

- use literacy to maintain relationships with each other and with the community
- interact with organizations and institutions

**Numeracy (Math Literacy)**

Numeracy helps us understand the world we live in. It is about using numbers to get things done.

**Examples of family literacy**

There are many different literacy practices used by families. Some are reading and writing activities, while others help build literacy in other ways. Here are a few examples:

**Learning**

A father and child walk upstairs counting each step together, then share a library book about numbers.

**Doing everyday tasks**

A mother involves a child in writing a grocery list, then finding the items together at the store.

**Helping children develop literacy**

On a bus ride, a teenager plays word games with his younger sister and points out signs.

**Maintaining relationships**

A family reads together and talks about how what they read has meaning and relevance in their everyday life.

**Interacting with institutions**

A parent and child discuss the child’s report card with the teacher.

Every family uses literacy to do different things every day. This includes families with an oral tradition as well as families that use print often.
Family literacy programs

Family literacy programs provide meaningful opportunities for children, their parents, other family members and caregivers to learn and grow together. Family literacy programs:

► help build self-esteem
► address individual and family needs by building on strengths
► recognize adult family members’ skills, knowledge and attitudes as powerful influences on children’s emergent literacy and success in school.
► promote the development of closer, stronger relationships within families
► value families’ use of first languages and diverse cultural practices
► provide resources that increase adults’ and children’s motivation to learn
► help prepare children for school
► help families understand the school system and their roles in it
► include as many as possible of the following components:
  • early childhood education
  • parenting support
  • interactive parent-child learning activities
  • adult literacy instruction or support
  • information about community supports and help in accessing them
  • health and nutrition information relating to learning

Family literacy programs promote community collaboration to provide a seamless, flexible and accessible system of services and supports for families with children.

Values in family literacy

It is important for every agency involved in family literacy to develop a set of values upon which to build an effective program. This is the list of values that guides AFLO:

1 We believe in lifelong learning.

2 Parents and other family members play a vital and natural role as their children’s first and most important teachers. Family literacy programs support family members in this vital role to the benefit of families and communities.
3 Literacy- and numeracy-building activities between parents and their children better prepare children for success in school. In teaching their children, adults also learn.

4 Health agencies, parent resource centres, early childhood education centres, libraries, schools, and adult literacy agencies, as well as storytellers, musicians and many other people and groups in society enhance lifelong learning within the family.

5 Communities benefit when service providers work together to offer comprehensive and integrated family literacy programming. This may include responding to local needs such as adult literacy, first and second-language literacy, pre-school groups, families of school-age children, challenged learners, and at-risk and vulnerable families.

6 Access to appropriate services for diverse communities is critical.

7 Training and support for family literacy providers is essential.

8 The process of evaluation improves the quality and effectiveness of programs. Evaluation results add to the body of information about the field of family literacy.

9 Lifelong learning requires sustainable funding to ensure positive, long-term outcomes for families.
Background to the Guide

Why was this guide developed?

There is a widespread, long-held need across the literacy field for basic shared information about the key elements of best practices in family literacy in Ontario. In response to this, AFLO hired a researcher/writer to develop this guide. It is intended to provide a basic reference tool for agencies to deal with issues of program design, development and implementation, and to be used in family literacy training opportunities.

Several other provinces in Canada, as a result of critical reflection and questioning specific practices in order to improve program quality, have developed best practice statements. Although different approaches were taken, a common set of themes emerged. The standards and recommendations made by these other provinces were carefully considered in terms of how they might apply to Ontario. The best practice statements in this guide have also been informed and shaped by the experiences, values and dreams of practitioners working in a wide range of programs across Ontario.

How was the research done?

- Key best practice documents already developed by other Canadian provinces and American states were compiled and reviewed. (See Appendix A.i. for a list of these documents and where to find them.)
- Other key pieces of research around family literacy theory, issues and practice were collected and reviewed. (See the bibliography for a complete list of documents used for this research.)
- The family literacy programs and initiatives in Ontario were reviewed to determine the kind of information and documents that would be most useful to practitioners at this time.
- A questionnaire was developed and circulated to over 850 family literacy practitioners and others involved in the field. Approximately ten percent responded, sharing a wealth of information. (See Appendix A.ii. to see what we asked in the questionnaire, and what practitioners said they wanted.)
- Telephone interviews were conducted with questionnaire respondents who offered to share more of their expertise with others.
Experts and well-known researchers in the wider field were consulted by email, telephone and through online discussion groups.

Important information was gained from another AFLO project researcher who was simultaneously conducting an environmental scan of the family literacy field in Ontario. Kim Falcigno, Coordinator of the Alternative and Innovative Enterprises division of the Department of Lifelong Learning, Faculty of Education, Lakehead University, produced the document, “Environmental Scan: Research into the State and Strategic Planning of Family Literacy Programs in Ontario. Full Report 2005”. (See AFLO’s website www.aflo.on.literacy.ca for information about this research.) Through this research we were able to compare our findings as a way of validating our research.

All of the information and relevant research findings were analyzed and organized into a format that would serve as a practical reference tool for practitioners in Ontario. This resulted in a series of statements on best practices, followed by a number of important points for individual practitioners and agencies to consider as they design, plan, implement and evaluate their family literacy programming.
Best Practices in Family Literacy in Ontario

Go to the People
Live with them,
Learn from them,
Love them.
Start with what they know,
Build with what they have,
But of the best leaders,
When the work is done,
The task accomplished,
The people will all say,
“We have done this ourselves.”

— Lao Tsu, China, 700 B.C. —

Philosophy

A quality family literacy program has a clearly written mission statement that is built on carefully considered values and beliefs. This philosophy is communicated to everyone involved with the program and is reviewed regularly.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our family literacy program/agency ...

1 has developed a clearly written statement describing our mission and vision.

2 has a related list of values/principles that guides our practice, and is reviewed regularly by participants, staff, advisors, and the Board of Directors.²

3 expects staff and volunteers to explore their personal beliefs about family literacy, and how these affect their ability to deliver the program.³

² See page 11 for the list of values developed by AFLO (“Values in Family Literacy”).
³ See “A Personal Checklist for Individual Practitioners” on page 7 of this guide.
4 respects the strengths and skills found within all families. Does not try to “fix” families, but works to effect change by building on literacy behaviours that are already present in homes, and on positive shared experiences.

5 recognizes the rich diversity of the families that the program serves, respects their backgrounds, and encourages use of participants’ first languages.

6 develops curricula that are relevant to the lives of participants and effective in meeting their particular learning needs.

7 provides a literacy-rich learning environment that is comfortable for all ages. Practitioners use a variety of approaches and instructional methods, and program materials follow the principles of clear language and design.

8 recruits well-qualified staff and volunteers who receive clear job descriptions, training, professional development opportunities and ongoing support.

9 collaborates and partners with other agencies to provide a seamless web of family support services in our community.

10 conducts regular assessments to ensure the needs and priorities of participants are being met, and to meet short and long term program goals and objectives.

Recommended Resources


http://www.childtrends.org/Files/FamilyStrengths.pdf

This research briefly defines and discusses the concept of family strengths, and suggests some next steps to take to expand our understanding.


Various articles in these collections will help to inform your perspective as your agency or program works to develop and articulate a philosophical position on family literacy.

**Literacy Listserv Discussion Groups**

For information about how to join various online discussion groups, see “Literacy Listserv Discussion Groups” in the *Family Literacy Links* section at the end of this guide.

**Charity Village**  [www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com)

This Internet resource provides information on a range of topics relevant to the non-profit sector in Canada. For articles concerning the development and articulation of a philosophy, mission and vision, go to Main Street (home page) and click on Library, then Research Section, then the A-Z Subject Index. Look, for example, under “S” for Strategic Planning. Relevant articles include:

“What’s the Benefit of a Mission or Vision Statement?” by Ron Robinson

“What is a Strategic Plan?” by Ron Robinson
Needs assessment and program planning

A quality family literacy program lays a solid foundation for itself by conducting ongoing community needs assessments for family literacy, identifying target groups, and exploring potential partnerships and the availability of resources.

Ask yourself how these statements on needs assessment apply to your program.

Our family literacy program/agency …

1 conducted an initial community assessment before starting a program to gain a broad overview of the need for family literacy and to identify the area and people most in need of family literacy services.

2 continues to conduct needs assessments regularly as part of an ongoing process to ensure our program continues to meet the changing needs in the community.

3 reviews information collected by other agencies to look for gaps in services in the community that family literacy programming could address, avoiding duplication of existing services.

4 interviews key people in other agencies (by phone or in person) to learn about starting up, or developing and expanding a successful family literacy program.

5 uses the information collected to identify and attract potential collaborators and partners that are essential to providing comprehensive family literacy services.

6 obtains detailed, accurate, up-to-date information and statistics from reliable sources about demographics (specifically about children and families).

7 uses the documentation to seek funding and other kinds of support for the program from local, provincial and national sources.

8 considers the educational and non-educational needs of families in the community, to better understand the specific issues in their lives that affect their ability or motivation to attend the program.
9 has developed a “Strategic Action Plan” that evolves to meet the changing needs of families in the community, while taking into account our agency’s capabilities.

**Ask yourself how these statements on program planning apply to your program.**

**Our family literacy program/agency…**

1 explores creative, flexible approaches to the design of family literacy program structure and its delivery.

2 involves staff, advisors, volunteers and families in planning the program, in the process of setting general program goals, and in regularly reviewing the goals.

3 meets with members of each participating family to identify their individual and collective learning priorities, and discuss how this program can help them as a family.

4 works with adult participants to establish realistic program outcomes for them, honouring their goals while expanding the view of those who feel their potential is limited.

5 plans to provide age-appropriate programming for children according to the identified needs in the community, again building on the strengths of the families.

6 plans to offer the program for enough regular hours and over a long enough period for there to be sustainable changes in families and measurable outcomes for the program (if possible).

7 recognizes that only careful, well-organized planning, with committed teamwork, will ensure the smooth delivery of services that will address the goals of the families and the goals of the program.

8 ensures the future of the program by planning for its continued effectiveness (through staff development, productive collaborations, recruitment and retention, building public awareness and community support, and conducting evaluations).
Recommended Resources

AlphaPlus Centre

Anyone planning to begin or improve upon an existing a family literacy program should explore the various excellent print, audio-visual and Web-based resources at AlphaPlus Centre. Located in Toronto, AlphaPlus Centre serves practitioners and organizations that work in the Deaf, Native, Francophone, and Anglophone literacy communities in Ontario and has numerous resources related to family literacy. Their trained staff can help users find relevant resources and information to enrich the learning of adults in literacy programs. AlphaPlus Centre’s Website provides access to a wide variety of literacy-related initiatives, including AlphaCom, a free discussion system, the Directory of Literacy Services, AlphaCat, AlphaPlus’s online library catalogue, the Index to Web resources, and AlphaRoute, an online learning environment. Persons and agencies in the not-for-profit or public sector in Ontario who are affiliated with adult and family literacy service delivery or research can borrow resources free of charge by registering for a borrower’s card. Visit: www.alphaplus.ca.


This guide outlines the basic steps to take in planning, starting and maintaining a comprehensive (four component) family literacy program. Now in its third printing, it includes many sample lists, questions to ask and “do’s and don’ts”, based on experienced practitioners’ insights and research. The National Center for Family Literacy in Kentucky also offers a workshop based on this book and delivered by its authors called, “An Administrator’s Path to Quality Family Literacy Programs”. See http://www.famlit.org


This research report was developed as a discussion tool and guide for the planning of family literacy programs, and may serve as a springboard for discussion on community partnerships and family literacy awareness building. Various models of family literacy programs being delivered in the Haliburton area are described.

www.charityvillage.com

This Internet resource provides information on a range of topics relevant to the non-profit sector in Canada. For articles about needs assessment, planning and policy development go to Main Street (home page) and click on Library, then Research Section, then the A-Z Subject Index. Look under “S”, for example, for a list of articles around the subject of Strategic Planning, including:

“Best practices in Strategic Planning” by Ron Robinson

“Making Competitive Analysis Part of Your Strategic Plan” by Ron Robinson
Polices and procedures

A quality family literacy program has policies and procedures to ensure everyone involved in the program is supported in meaningful ways, and that a safe and welcoming learning environment is established.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our family literacy program/agency...

1. has defined administrative and personnel policies for staff, board members, advisors, and volunteers so that everyone’s role is clear and all aspects of the program may run smoothly.

2. develops appropriate new policies as required when introducing a new program, (such as about the maintenance of toys or not allowing peanut products on site).

3. has developed policies about the participatory process of involving program participants from the program planning stage through delivery to the evaluation.

4. has developed clear policies around charging any fees, and asking for payment for lost or damaged materials.

5. specifies qualifications that are appropriate for all staff positions, and provides written job descriptions, contracts or agreements, and fair wages.

6. requires commitments from all volunteers in the form of written contracts that are discussed, signed and reviewed.

7. is committed to providing ongoing support and professional development opportunities to both staff and volunteers.

8. keeps abreast of any relevant government policies and regulations (including the Child Care Act and Occupational Health and Safety) and regularly reviews them to ensure that everyone understands how these policies affect our program.

9. ensures that all staff and volunteers involved have undergone police checks and understand issues and responsibilities around witnessing and reporting abuse.
10 provides realistic time frames and appropriate tools or materials for data collection, record keeping and overall program management.

11 ensures that all financial records are kept up-to-date and accurate.

12 has a policy assuring program participants that all records regarding their personal lives, assessments and progress are kept confidential, and uses signed consent forms to establish an atmosphere of safety, trust and respect.

13 provides regular reports to participants, volunteers, the board and funders.

14 carries adequate liability insurance.

Recommended Resources


Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) has developed a very practical guide for agencies needing to develop a range of policies relevant to their daily needs, including policies for pursuing alternative funding, volunteer recruitment, screening and recognition, program evaluation, program service and delivery, agency conduct, and managing liability and risk. The guide also includes sample policy statements and a policy-drafting template.

Charity Village [www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com)

This Internet resource provides information on a range of topics relevant to the non-profit sector in Canada. For articles about policies and procedures go to Main Street (home page) and click on Library, then Research Section. Scan the lists of articles under the different subject areas for articles of interest, such as *Policies and Procedures for Volunteer Programs* by Monica Penner.
Program models

A quality family literacy program is built on a model that emphasizes the strengths of families, affirms the influence of parents on their children’s learning, and empowers all generations to learn.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our family literacy program/agency...

1. has conducted an initial community needs assessment that gave us the background information we needed to be able to consider a variety of family literacy program models and choose the best one for this community.

2. has made informed decisions by researching the various family literacy program models currently practised in Ontario (categorized according to who participates in the program and the nature of their participation), as follows:
   - Intergenerational
   - Children and Parents Together
   - Focus on Parents
   - Distribution of Family Literacy Resources
   - Activities for the General Public

3. has talked to practitioners and administrators at agencies that implement the programs that interest us, noted the highlights and challenges, and read their reports to gain further insight into specific delivery issues.

4. has met with everyone at our agency who would be involved in offering a family literacy program to carefully evaluate our own capabilities with regard to specific program models. We considered:
   - how the different models would fit with our agency’s mission.
   - our staff’s prior knowledge, training and experience, their available time and their levels of interest in the various program models.
   - the support our volunteers might be able to provide.
   - whether we have appropriate space and resources for the requirements of the different program models.
   - how we could budget or raise the funds we would need, to be able to afford to offer the family literacy program model of our choice.

See Appendix C.i. for information on family literacy prototype models.
5 has met with representative families who might participate in a family literacy program to discuss aspects of different program models that we are considering and get their opinions about our plans. We did this by:

- meeting informally with parents who attend other programs.
- conducting focus groups to get oral feedback on specific issues.
- asking them to complete a written survey (with assistance if required).

6 has introduced family literacy gradually, prior to starting up an entirely new program based on a particular model. We did this by:

- developing family literacy components in the existing programs we offer.
- offering workshops on topics of interest to families.
- raising more public awareness about family literacy by holding special events for the community, such as on Family Literacy Day.
- partnering with other existing programs.

7 has identified factors that affect our ability to offer a program over a long enough time period and with enough intensity to achieve measurable participant outcomes (if that is a realistic goal for our agency).4

8 has approached potential collaborative partners to discuss working together to deliver different components of a program model that we could not offer on our own.

9 has developed our vision of the ideal program we would like to be able to offer families in our community.

Recommended Resources


This review looks critically at intergenerational family literacy programs that work with the whole family rather than on the child or adult separately. The guiding principles they suggest are examined in light of three different programs in which they are implemented.


4. Sustainable funding is a serious concern for many agencies seeking to deliver a program over a long period. See “Funding and sustainability” on page 61 of this guide for information about funding family literacy programs.

These two resources are the result of a partnership project of Ontario Literacy Coalition and Kingston Literacy. They researched and piloted six family literacy program models currently being used in Canada. Through interviews with the practitioners and program participants, valuable insights are shared about the challenges and critical factors of delivering each program.


This excellent report reviews and synthesizes reports about a wide range of family literacy programs and practices, focusing on outcomes for adult learners. Resources available in the ERIC database from 1990 to 2002 are emphasized.

National Adult Literacy Database [www.nald.ca/FamLit/common/intro](http://www.nald.ca/FamLit/common/intro)

To find a particular program in Canada, visit the National Adult Literacy Database Canadian Family Literacy Directory at the website listed above.
**Program content**

A quality family literacy program supports the learning efforts of all family members by using a wide variety of instructional methods, strategies and materials. While a program model may be followed, adaptations are made continually to meet the needs, interests and capabilities of program participants.

**Ask yourself how these statements apply to your family literacy program.** Be sure to discuss the statements with your community partners and collaborators who provide program components you cannot offer.

**The content of our family literacy program ...**

1. supports the literacy needs, interests and goals as identified by participating families, and is consistent with our mission statement.

2. includes only those components of a comprehensive family literacy program that we are currently prepared to deliver well:
   - adult literacy upgrading ❑ Yes ❑ No
   - early childhood education ❑ Yes ❑ No
   - parents and children together time ❑ Yes ❑ No
   - parenting education and support ❑ Yes ❑ No

Which other agencies might be/are able to provide components that we cannot?

3. supports the educational and non-educational needs of adults by providing:
   - individual and/or group literacy instruction
   - interdisciplinary curriculum
   - work preparation and job training
   - communication skills development
   - creative and critical thinking capacity-building

4. supports young children developing their emergent literacy by providing experiences in the following key areas:
   - talking and listening
   - singing songs and saying rhymes
   - developing phonemic awareness
   - telling and listening to stories
• reading and looking at books
• drawing and writing using a variety of materials
• playing with sounds and words found in the environment

5 promotes developing positive attitudes toward learning in general, so that parents become more motivated to learn and to help their children learn.

6 emphasizes increased and improved interaction and communication between parents and their children, with information on parenting and child development.

7 includes activities that are shaped by the participating families’ knowledge and interests, and involves hands-on, participatory learning experiences.

8 supports home-based literacy practices, promoting ways for families to continue to do literacy-building activities learned at the program when they return home.

9 is adaptable and culturally appropriate for use with diverse groups of families in a variety of settings.

10 includes activities and information that are presented in ways that will effectively engage participants with different learning styles.5

11 ensures a comfortable, non-threatening learning atmosphere that includes trust and understanding in relationships among staff and participants.

12 uses instructional methods and activities that are respectful of participants of all ages and capabilities, and emphasizes modelling appropriate learning behaviours and practices.

13 offers theme-based literacy programs for special interest groups (such as those involved in basketball, dance or swimming) at locations where families gather, when possible.

14 offers program content to meet the special needs identified by marginalized groups, or those who do not feel comfortable in other family literacy programs (such as seniors with grandchildren, homeless families, teenaged parents, families who need the content interpreted and translated into other languages, families who are not easily able or ready to leave their own homes).

5. For more information about three basic learning styles see Appendix D.ii.: “Multiple intelligences and learning styles”.
15 offers some other specialized components that support literacy for families to enjoy together (such as music, gardening, cooking, scrap-booking, photography), when possible.

**Recommended Resources**


This is a very readable, well-researched book geared for family literacy practitioners, teachers and parents. It is based on a major report of the National Research Council (NRC) entitled *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, prepared by the Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children. Both books may be read online or ordered from [www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu).


This internationally renowned educator and children’s author presents a very opinionated, yet compelling argument for reading regularly to children.


This joint position statement of the IRA and the NAEYC, adopted in 1998, is another must-read for family literacy practitioners. They emphasize the responsibility of teachers of young children to promote children’s literacy development based on the most current professional knowledge and research. A continuum of reading and writing development is presented as a useful tool in establishing goals and expectations for children’s achievement that are age-appropriate and measurable.


This up-to-date resource has several sections with many articles worth reading carefully for information on relevant program content, especially:

- II Children and early childhood education within family literacy programs
- III Parenting and parent education
- IV Adult education
- V The home environment and home services
Resources, materials and facilities

A quality family literacy program uses a variety of learner-centred, age-appropriate and authentic learning materials, and provides accessible facilities where families feel safe and comfortable learning.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our family literacy program uses …

1. good quality authentic materials and resources\(^6\) with up-to-date, research-based information and instructional strategies.

2. free or inexpensive materials, found in the everyday environment and familiar to families, to emphasize that learning does not require expensive materials.

3. good quality books and other printed materials either purchased or borrowed from the local library.

4. materials solicited from individuals, groups or other agencies in the community to loan or give families to keep, to help them create more literacy-rich home environments.

5. age-appropriate and well-maintained equipment and supplies for children to use to learn through all their senses and to develop their gross and fine motor skills.

6. a variety of carefully selected materials and activities to challenge participants’ multiple intelligences.\(^7\)

7. special guests to share their skills and knowledge with program participants, such as professional storytellers and musicians.

8. inviting program space that is accessible by everyone, including families with strollers and participants with special needs.

9. a location accessible by public transportation, in a safe neighbourhood, with enough parking spaces for participants and staff.

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6. See Recommended Resources, pages 30-31, for information about high quality, authentic and age-appropriate materials.

7. See Appendix D.ii. for information about multiple intelligences and different learning styles.
10 rooms generally well-suited for child-care needs, well-lit and ventilated, clean, close to washrooms and water for easy clean-up, with child-sized chairs and tables for snacks and crafts, and close to where parents may meet separately.

11 rooms suitably equipped for separate adult program components with comfortable seating, tables for writing and hands-on activities, a board or flipchart, and good lighting.

12 well-designed display areas with easily accessible information for families about family literacy and related family service resources available through our community collaborators.

13 various methods to get constant feedback from program participants about how the resources, materials and facilities are meeting their literacy needs.

Recommended Resources

AlphaPlus Centre

Anyone planning to begin or improve upon an existing a family literacy program should check out the various excellent print, audio-visual and Web-based resources at AlphaPlus Centre. Located in Toronto, AlphaPlus Centre serves practitioners and organizations that work in the Deaf, Native, Francophone, and Anglophone literacy communities in Ontario and has numerous resources related to family literacy. Their trained staff can help users find relevant resources and information to enrich the learning of adults in literacy programs. AlphaPlus Centre’s Website provides access to a wide variety of literacy-related initiatives, including AlphaCom, a free discussion system, a directory of literacy services, AlphaCat—AlphaPlus’ online library catalogue- the Index to Web resources, and AlphaRoute, an online learning environment. Persons and agencies in the not-for profit or public sector in Ontario who are affiliated with adult and family literacy service delivery or research can borrow resources free of charge by registering for a borrower’s card. Visit: www.alphaplus.ca.


This well researched online article provides a good discussion of issues concerning age-appropriate equipment and associated risks.

This online article provides an excellent definition and discussion of the use and value of authentic materials.


This list of family literacy resources includes Internet and parenting resources. Many of the materials are contained in the circulating library collection of the Literacy Partners of Manitoba Resource Centre. It is also available online at: www.mb.literacy.ca/family/resour/cover


This resource discusses how computers may be used in family literacy programs to provide exceptional support for the literacy development of both parents and their children.


This resource is full of great ideas for building the literacy component of programs through a range of fun activities based on well-known and loved children’s books.
Staff development

A quality family literacy program has well-trained staff who can meet the diverse learning needs of participating family members. The staff understand the theory and research underlying family literacy, bring practical skills to program delivery, and keep up-to-date through professional development.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our family literacy program staff …

1. are well qualified for their particular positions, with appropriate educational credentials and knowledge of family literacy programming, according to our agency’s policy.

2. as a team, bring expertise and years of practical experience from a variety of backgrounds including adult literacy, early childhood education, elementary and community education, social work and educational administration.

3. have received intensive training in the theories and research that underlie family literacy and in effective instructional practices, prior to starting this family literacy program.

4. receive regular, high-quality professional development opportunities to broaden their knowledge of specific areas of family literacy, and enable them to develop more practical skills.

5. have a good understanding of the following:
   - child development
   - emergent literacy and the reading process
   - adults as learners
   - the dynamics of working with families
   - differences in learning styles and abilities
   - involving reluctant readers
   - life skills support
   - diversity issues
   - power imbalances in society
   - community development
   - the socio-political context of literacy
   - participatory critical reflection
   - levels of expectation and accountability
are prepared to use a variety of instructional strategies and make modifications to meet the various literacy needs of participants of diverse backgrounds, different capabilities and different learning styles.

7 use age-appropriate instructional methods and materials that take into account participants’ initial assessments and goals, follow their progress, and build on their achievements.

8 encourage participants’ self-expression and critical thinking through group discussions and learner-centred program activities.

9 work as a team, conducting program self-studies and developing action plans to ensure their collaborative approach continues to be effective.

10 provide relevant documentation to show the effectiveness of various aspects of the program, and the progress made by participants towards learning outcomes.8

11 understand and appreciate the different ways that volunteers are able to contribute to the program, and use their assistance appropriately.

12 conduct themselves professionally in all situations, demonstrating a respectful sensitivity towards all participating families and their life circumstances.

13 consistently model positive behaviours and attitudes when interacting with children and adults, making everyone feel welcome and appreciated.

14 invite parents to involve themselves in the participatory processes of planning and evaluating this program, recognizing the value of their contributions.

15 are attentive to the needs of families, especially those that affect families’ ability to participate in this program, and are prepared to refer families to alternative services or programs.

16 feel supported by their colleagues and management through regular chances to provide feedback and discuss concerns, work under realistic conditions and expectations, and receive regular performance reviews.9

8. “Learning outcomes” are the identified achievements for families that a program plans to accomplish. “Anticipated outcomes” are specific short- and long-term goals families identify for themselves, with ways to reach those goals.

9. See Recommended Resources, pages 34-36, for sources of information about performance reviews.
17 have opportunities to share their insights and experiences with the broader community by presenting workshops and speaking at conferences.

18 keep up-to-date on issues in the field by reading relevant journals and publications, participating in online discussion groups, and attending networking opportunities.

**Recommended Resources**


The practitioners’ resource book that forms the basis of the Foundational Training in Family Literacy is probably the most comprehensive resource for staff development in family literacy currently available in Canada. It is not, however, available apart from the training. (See Appendix C.iii. for more information.)

Community Literacy Ontario (CLO) [http://www.nald.ca/volman.htm](http://www.nald.ca/volman.htm)

Visit the CLO website for information about online workshops, including:

“Volunteer Recruitment and Maintenance in the New Environment”

“Board and Staff Relationships and Responsibilities”


In this very interesting study of the PRINTS (Parents’ Roles Interacting with Teacher Support) program, offered in 26 sites, Fagan investigated the nature of the learning transfer that occurred from presenters of training workshops to facilitators, from facilitators to parents, from parents/caregivers to their children, and finally the children demonstrating their literacy learning.


This is a very helpful resource for practitioners with an adult literacy background who want to know how to help young children develop literacy. Key information is clearly presented with effective strategies for guiding children’s learning in various settings. Also included are case studies and practical ideas contributed by early childhood educators and primary teachers.

Family literacy practitioners who want to know more about how to work effectively with adults in their programs will find this a very readable book about the theory and practice of adult education. A world-renowned educator, Vella illustrates twelve key principles of learning and teaching through true stories.

Charity Village [www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com)

This Internet resource provides information on a range of topics relevant to the non-profit sector in Canada, including many aspects of staff development. For articles on performance reviews, for example, go to *Main Street* (home page) and click on *Library*, then *Resource Section*. Click on the green box, *Search Resource Library*, and type in “performance reviews”. A number of titles of articles will appear. Click on any of the titles to read the articles. Also be sure to read the articles listed under “Human Resources Management” in the “Organizational Management” category.

**Recommended U.S. Journals:**

*Connecting the World of Family Literacy* is the quarterly magazine for members of the Family Literacy Alliance. This organization speaks for practitioners and supporters of family literacy, seeking to promote, strengthen and connect the family literacy community. For information about the Family Literacy Alliance, visit: [http://www.famlit.org/ProgramsandInitiatives/FLA/index.cfm](http://www.famlit.org/ProgramsandInitiatives/FLA/index.cfm), and to subscribe, contact Deborah Nichols at Debbie Nichols.

*Family Literacy Forum* is a U.S. national peer-reviewed journal published twice a year by the National Even Start Association. Articles focus on practice, theory and research in family literacy education in the home, community and school-based settings. For subscription information, contact Claudia Ullman at cullman2@nyc.rr.com.

*Literacy Harvest* is an annual theme-based journal produced by New York’s Literacy Assistance Centre for practitioners and researchers in adult, youth and family literacy. Research-based articles focus on theory, practice and theory into practice in various areas affecting literacy. For subscription information, contact Jan Gallagher at jang@lasnyc.org.

*Momentum* is a free quarterly newsletter distributed by the [U.S.] National Center for Family Literacy to practitioners, administrators and community leaders. Updates are provided on issues and practices in the family literacy field, as well as on the latest research on language and literacy development,
teaching strategies, and professional development opportunities and resources. Past issues are available to read online at: http://www.famlit.org/Publications/Momentum. To receive Momentum by email, contact momentum@famlit.org.
Volunteers

A quality family literacy program may recruit, train and support volunteers to contribute in meaningful ways.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our family literacy program has volunteers who...

1. are recruited in a variety of ways, including from our former program participants, fostering a sense of community involvement.

2. complete an application form, are screened and given a police check.

3. are interviewed by program staff to ensure they have appropriate skills, experience, attitudes and beliefs to bring to a family literacy program, and to clarify their own interests and reasons for wanting to volunteer.

4. receive an orientation to the agency, its mission and policies, and written volunteer job descriptions clearly describing their tasks and responsibilities.

5. are asked to make a commitment to volunteer in a certain role for a particular time period, after which they may have opportunities to move into other appropriate positions.

6. receive training in family literacy so they are prepared to use their skills, attitudes and beliefs most effectively for the work they do.

7. are provided with the materials and resources they need to do their jobs effectively, and are repaid for any program expenses authorized in advance.

8. enjoy healthy relationships with staff. They get ongoing support with constructive feedback, and professional development opportunities as appropriate.

9. are asked to contribute their ideas and suggestions for improving the program, based on their own involvement.

10. work only with groups of participants and are never left alone with an individual child (to ensure the safety of children and reduce the risk of any liability).
are able to contribute in meaningful ways whether or not they are able to read and write well themselves.

are assured their hours are accurately recorded and that they may ask for and receive letters of reference or support based on their work in the program.

are never expected to undertake the roles and responsibilities of our paid, qualified, professional staff.

have opportunities to interact with other volunteers on a regular basis such as quarterly or semi-annually.

are recognized by the agency for their contributions in appropriate ways that are meaningful to them.

**Recommended Resources**

Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) [http://www.nald.ca/volman.htm](http://www.nald.ca/volman.htm)

[http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/vomaregu/cover.htm](http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/vomaregu/cover.htm)

CLO is a volunteer management resource centre. Visit their website for a wealth of information, for online training opportunities, and to order materials specifically relevant to volunteers in Ontario.

Verizon Literacy University (VLU) [www.vluonline.org](http://www.vluonline.org)

VLU offers free high-quality short online courses including training for volunteers in literacy programs. These courses are developed and taught by highly qualified professionals associated with the National Center for Family Literacy. To enroll in courses visit: [http://www.vluonline.org/course/index.asp](http://www.vluonline.org/course/index.asp).

Charity Village [www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com)

This Internet resource provides information on a range of topics relevant to the non-profit sector in Canada, including volunteers. For a lengthy list of articles about volunteer recruitment, relations and management, go to Main Street (home page) and click on Library, then Research Section, then the heading, Philanthropy and Volunteerism. Look for these particularly relevant articles:

“Best practices in Staff and Volunteer Relations” by Louise Chatterton Luchuk

“Volunteer Placement, Orientation and Training” by Monica Penner
“Marketing and Recruiting Volunteers” by Monica Penner
“The Wide Gray Lines—Managing Volunteer Boundaries” by Jim Campbell
“How to Monitor Volunteer Assignments” by Bruce Raymond
“Seven Steps to Achieve Effective Volunteer Support” by Canadian FundRaiser
“Elements of an Effective Rewards and Recognition Program” by Canadian FundRaiser
“How to Get Better Results Recruiting Volunteers” by Canadian FundRaiser
“New Canadians as Volunteers—Experiencing Canada and Community” by L.C. Luchuk

Volunteer Canada www.volunteer.ca

Visit Volunteer Canada’s site for more information, and download a copy of the “Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement”.
Promotion and recruitment

A quality family literacy program uses a variety of methods and outreach materials to promote the program effectively in the community, and to recruit families who have the most to gain from the program.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

The following statements describe ideal yet optional activities depending on the community. Volunteers and agency staff other than family literacy program staff could also be involved in this work.

Our agency promotes our family literacy program and recruits participants by...

1 always describing our program positively as a safe place where families can have fun learning together.

2 planning carefully, to use staff and volunteer time and skills effectively and to make sure there are resources in the budget to be able to produce relevant promotional materials.

3 preparing agency staff to speak knowledgeably about this program to other people they know or meet, and to potential participants when they call.

4 preparing informative printed materials for other agencies and professionals, describing the program and how it addresses the specific literacy needs that were identified by the community.

5 reaching out to all the other agencies and professionals who serve families in our community to inform them about the program and ask for their help in recruiting potential participants. These include:
   • public health services
   • legal aid and individual lawyers
   • doctors and specialists
   • housing
   • social services
   • home visiting
   • employment
   • child care centres
• family resource centres
• schools, libraries
• adult literacy programs
• food banks
• religious institutions

6. Developing outreach materials (flyer, brochure, poster) to attract and recruit participants. These materials:
• follow the principles of clear language and design\(^\text{10}\)
• explain where and when the program is offered
• are colourful, with lots of photos and graphics
• indicate if the program is free, or what the costs will be
• describe anything else that may be free (such as child care, snacks, bus tickets, books and toys to borrow)
• outline any criteria (such as for a specific age or linguistic group or target group e.g. Ontario Works clients, Mexican Mennonites)
• address reasons why people may not have entered other programs and appeal to personal goals they might have
• give a person’s name and a phone number to call for more information
• are translated into the languages of the community

There are many ways to get information out to the community. Our agency could:

- post flyers and leave brochures all over the community (including in the offices of all the agencies listed above, in stores, community centres, public swimming pools, laundromats and bus shelters).
- return every few weeks to remove or replace flyers, ensuring the information is up-to-date and the flyers always look fresh and appealing.
- drop flyers in the mailboxes of homes in so-called “high need” areas of the community.
- visit established programs in the community to talk to the participants about this program and invite them to come with their family members and friends.
- make presentations at schools in high-need areas to inform teachers and other staff about literacy needs in the community and ask them to send flyers home with students.
- speak at school meetings and special events, participate in parades, and set up a display at community events to inform the general public about the program.

\(^{10}\) For information about plain/clear language and design, see Appendix D.i.
place ads in local papers.

- contact journalists who write about social issues to tell them about the program and ask them to cover special events such as Family Literacy Day.

- write articles about family literacy and the wonderful results of our program and submit them to appropriate magazines and newspapers.

- send broadcast journalists information about the program, and ask for an opportunity to participate on local radio station talk shows.

- hold a regular advertised “Open House” offering free food and donated books, for potential participant families, other community stakeholders and the general public to come and learn more about the program.

Recommended Resources


This report on recruitment and retention issues in literacy and basic skills programs is a useful comparative reference for agencies looking to recruit and retain participants with low-literacy skills for family literacy programs. The research project explored reasons adults enroll in LBS programs in the first place, factors that affect whether or not learners complete programs and what discourages their participation, what learners are doing six months after enrolling and how their expectations may have changed.

Charity Village [www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com)

This Internet resource provides information on a range of topics relevant to the non-profit sector in Canada. For articles about promotion and recruitment go to *Main Street* (home page) and click on *Library*, then *Research Section*, then the *Marketing and Communications* section. Look for these particularly relevant articles:

- “Non-Profit Marketing Savvy: What Does it Take to Get Noticed?” by L.C. Luchuk
- “Hunches are Not Enough—Why it Pays to Poll” by Bob Penner
- “Make Friends with the Media” by Sue Richards
- “Interviews—Live or Taped” by Al Rothstein
- “Getting Your Articles Published—Practical Techniques” by Canadian FundRaiser

Verizon Literacy University (VLU) [www.vluonline.org](http://www.vluonline.org)

VLU offers free high-quality short online courses on a range of topics relevant to family literacy (including, for example, “Reaching Out to Homeless and Migrant Families”). These courses are developed and taught by highly qualified professionals associated with the National Center for Family Literacy. For more information, to browse through their resource center, and to enroll in courses visit: [http://www.vluonline.org/course/index.asp](http://www.vluonline.org/course/index.asp).
Access, participation and retention

A quality family literacy program offers the program in central and safe locations that have all relevant resources and supports. Sensitive staff create a learning environment where participants of all ages attend for as long as it takes to reach their goals.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our family literacy program…

1 may be offered in several different locations that are accessible to families with different needs, interests and capabilities. These locations may include:

• warm, inviting places with a comfortable, welcoming atmosphere where families look forward to coming
• places that families themselves have identified to staff
• rooms in agencies where families already come to receive other service
• rooms in places of worship that are centrally located and close to the homes of families for whom the program has been designed
• shelters where homeless or abused families may be housed
• community meeting rooms in high-rise apartment buildings
• sheltered areas in a park during the summer, where families already go
• libraries and schools to work with families who want to help their school-aged children
• childcare centres where parents already bring their very young children
• family resource centres that may not have the trained staff or funds to provide a program themselves, but can provide space and some materials
• community centres with public swimming pools and basketball courts where parents with young children wait for older children to have lessons or free play time
• malls or grocery stores where families normally shop
• places where families with toddlers and strollers can comfortably access on foot, without having to take buses or subways or drive
• places with lots of parking for those who drive
• places that are accessible to participants in wheelchairs or with other physical disabilities
• places that offer both indoor and outdoor spaces where young children can move freely to play and learn
• places with facilities that would allow the program to expand and evolve to include other activities that support literacy (such as cooking)
2 always consults with potential participant groups about the suitability and accessibility of a proposed location before setting up a program there.

3 helps with transportation by providing free bus tickets for families who could not attend otherwise, or by helping to arrange rides.

4 ensures that any snow or ice on walkways is cleared before families arrive for programs held during the winter months.

5 ensures there is secure space at the program site to leave a number of strollers, boots and wet coats.

6 provides free quality child-care during times of the program when adults need to meet separately.

7 is offered at times of the day and week that participants have identified as being best for them.

8 provides regular opportunities for participants to give feedback about how accessible the program is in terms of their particular needs.

9 provides incentives such as free nutritional snacks for participants.

10 provides relevant take-home materials for participants, as well as good quality books and educational toys to borrow.

11 uses creative retention strategies to encourage families to take ownership of different aspects of the program. For example, participants may:

• take turns bringing food to share that they have prepared themselves 11 (with expenses reimbursed by the agency if possible)
• share stories, songs and rhymes from their countries of origin or in their first languages
• network, make new friends or develop support groups.

11. Everyone involved in food preparation for the program should be informed about health regulations and policies. For example, a list of all ingredients used in food brought to a program should be provided, and peanuts and seafood should not be allowed on site to protect anyone with food allergies or restrictions.
12 encourages families to continue to attend by regularly meeting to discuss the progress they are making toward their goals, based on their needs assessments.

13 expects the staff to telephone families who register but do not attend, or whenever there may be a concern, to offer encouragement or support as needed.

14 does not attempt to meet all the needs of participants, but provides up-to-date information about relevant and local support services.

**Recommended Resources**


This useful electronic resource addresses the specific needs and challenges of providing education to homeless people. This particular volume presents a family literacy approach. Lots of practical ideas, sample lessons, handouts, other resources and bibliographies are included. This is available through AlphaPlus, or visit: [http://www.hudrivctr.org/documents/flincarc.pdf](http://www.hudrivctr.org/documents/flincarc.pdf)

National Center for Family Literacy. *Recruitment and Retention for Literacy Programs Kit.* Louisville, KY: NCFL, 2005

Practitioners working in the field share strategies for engaging students and keeping them motivated. A guidebook examines adult motivation, goal setting, tips for planning recruitment events, and much more. The kit includes posters, postcards and bookmarks. To order these resources, visit: [http://www.famlit.org/Publications/member-pubs.cfm](http://www.famlit.org/Publications/member-pubs.cfm)
Supporting families’ diversities and differences

A quality family literacy program celebrates and supports the range of diversity in its community by providing a variety of relevant resources, and modifying program content as appropriate. Self-aware, knowledgeable staff communicate effectively with families of all backgrounds and abilities, practicing anti-bias strategies and using language that is clear and inclusive.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our family literacy program …

1 recognizes and respects that everyone learns differently, and everyone is influenced by their unique experiences.

2 provides appropriate support to families who come to the program and have:
   • diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds
   • diverse first languages
   • non-traditional families
   • regional differences (urban and rural)
   • low-incomes or are homeless
   • negative prior educational experiences
   • low literacy levels
   • different ages
   • physical challenges
   • developmental challenges and learning disabilities
   • multiple intelligences and learning styles

3 has staff and volunteers who:
   • are trained in equity issues so they can empower all participants by validating and building on their unique experiences and perspectives
   • are trained and experienced in communicating effectively with people of all backgrounds and abilities
   • are representative of the cultures and minority groups in the community
   • speak the languages of the community
   • use language that is clear, inclusive and respectful

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12. See Appendix D.ii. for more information about multiple intelligence and learning styles theories.
• establish relationships with participating families and learn as much as they can about their cultural backgrounds and life circumstances
• model appropriate ways for participants to support people with physical and mental challenges
• know when to offer participants support and when to encourage self-reliance

4 provides learning materials and activities that represent and support a range of diversity including:
• materials showing visible minorities and people with physical disabilities in positive ways
• books with meaningful stories about diverse families and living conditions
• toys and play equipment from different parts of the world
• dolls and puppets representing people of various ethnic backgrounds and physical abilities
• music from around the world
• musical instruments from different cultures
• materials for open-ended storytelling
• posters with information translated into various languages
• materials at appropriate literacy levels for participants

5 checks with participants and communities regularly to confirm that materials, resources and activities used in the program are acceptable to all.

6 makes sure promotional printed materials are written in plain language.¹³

7 permits families to borrow program materials.¹⁴

8 continually adapts program content and delivery methods to build on families’ home experiences and the socio-historical realities of their communities.

9 acknowledges and builds on the diverse individual strengths and skills of participants, so they feel positive about what each brings to the program and can achieve by attending regularly.

10 acknowledges that literacy issues are closely connected to many societal imbalances, and encourages critical thinking and action towards positive change.

11 challenges and rejects all forms of discrimination, such as sexism and racism.

¹³. See Appendix D.i. “Plain language pointers”, for more information.
12 recognizes and honours the diverse teaching, learning and literacy practices found in participants’ homes.

13 partners with appropriate community agencies to develop programming geared for people with specific disabilities.

14 partners with agencies offering home visiting services to train their staff to deliver family literacy activities to isolated families of diverse backgrounds, and encourage eventual family literacy program participation.  

15 directs families to appropriate community agencies and programs providing support services, and invites providers into sites to offer services.

Family literacy practitioners and managers across Ontario have shared more information on effective practices they use when working with diverse families in their literacy programs. Think about how these ideas and strategies could help your agency meet the specific needs of participants in the family literacy programs you offer.

CULTURAL AND ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS

A quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1 acknowledges and honours the teaching and learning practices found in participants’ homes that originated in another school system or culture.

2 challenges and rejects any form of racism or prejudice in program discussions or materials.

3 respectfully calls all participants by the names they give.

4 has staff or volunteers who:
   • are representative of the cultures in the community
   • establish relationships with participants so information about cultural practices may be comfortably shared
   • are informed and respectful about the differences between religious and cultural issues relevant to participants
   • are informed about food and nutrition issues relevant to participants

14. See Appendix C.v. “Safety issues” for more information concerning safety issues around lending program materials.

15. Safety and security issues are especially important to consider when delivering programming off agency premises. Refer to the Personal Safety Handbook in the Recommended Resources section, page 57.
5. provides a variety of learning materials that represent a range of ethnicity and cultures. These include:
   • books with meaningful stories about diverse families
   • books showing pictures of families living in a variety of culturally diverse homes and environments
   • toys and play equipment enjoyed in various cultures
   • plastic foods representing diverse cultures in the play area
   • tapes or CDs of music
   • musical instruments from different countries for participants to use themselves
   • felt board materials for storytelling
   • dress-up clothes, dolls and puppets in cultural dress

6. encourages families to share traditional stories with the group.

7. holds potluck meals where everyone may bring a favourite dish.

8. notes when special celebrations from cultures around the world are held. Plans for and invites participants to do related activities for those special dates.

9. invites community elders to volunteer in the program.

10. advertises and markets to relevant local cross-cultural centres.

11. conducts special outreach using volunteers or staff who speak the languages of community groups.

12. informs newcomer families about cultural groups in the community.

**FIRST LANGUAGES**

**A quality family literacy program in Ontario:**

1. provides families with clear, research-based explanations about why it is important to speak and read in their first languages.

2. explains the various developmental and long-term benefits to children of learning their families’ first languages.

3. reassures parents that young children (who are developing normally), who learn their first language well, will gain the ability to learn other languages more quickly and easily in the future.
Section 6

Best Practices in Family Literacy in Ontario

4 encourages parents to tell stories, sing and read to their children in their first languages.

5 provides age-appropriate books and materials in the participants’ languages to share during the program or borrow to take home.

6 plays music and teaches songs in different languages.

7 invites families to share their stories or songs with the group.

8 provides translations of take-home information, tapes and flyers.

9 breaks the participants into small groups of people who speak the same language for discussions, then invites to share with the rest in the common language (normally English or French in Ontario).

10 uses volunteers (preferably previous program participants) for interpretation as needed.

11 recruits staff and volunteers who speak a variety of languages.

12 expects staff to check in with individual families, using interpreters if necessary, to make sure they understand everything that is being said or taking place during the program.

13 directs families to relevant programs in the community that are offered in their language.

NON-TRADITIONAL FAMILIES
(Include single parent mothers and fathers, blended families, same-sex partner parents, and grandparents or others who are primary caregivers)

A quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1 welcomes and includes any group of people who identify themselves as a family who would like to learn together through this program, emphasizing that all members have many strengths and abilities.

2 has staff trained in equity issues so they can empower all participants by validating and building on their unique experiences and perspectives.
3 provides books and resources showing non-traditional families in respectful ways.

4 provides resources for adults to use with children that deal with such topics as same-sex parents, separation, divorce and the death of a family member.

5 provides a selection of up-to-date, easy-to-read resources on parenting and other relevant topics for parents to borrow.

6 shows sensitivity around some common themes, such as Mother’s and Father’s Day.

7 offers the program at times convenient for participants.

8 provides phone call reminders for busy parents.

9 invites all the children in the family to attend, or provides on-site childcare, so that parents with several children of different ages are still able to participate.

10 offers bus fare or other assistance with transportation (for example, a volunteer could accompany a parent with several young children to the program).

11 encourages all parents to participate in discussions and to talk with trained staff about personal needs outside program hours.

12 shows sensitivity around personal issues or challenges of participants (such as exhaustion, lack of time for themselves, lack of acceptance by others in the community).

13 provides opportunities for participants to meet together to discuss challenges and share ideas and coping strategies.

14 visits agencies that support single or expectant mothers to
   • invite the families to the program
   • offer to deliver it at their location
   • invite the agencies to use our facilities so their clients become familiar with our site and staff, making it easier for them to attend our family literacy program

15 partners with agencies to reach isolated parents.
REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

In urban areas, a quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1. displays information about the program in malls and posts flyers on local public bulletin boards.

2. researches housing areas considered high need and does targeted outreach in these areas.

3. provides materials in the languages of different cultures in the target areas.

4. chooses convenient, safe and accessible locations for the program that are on, or close to, bus routes.

5. provides bus tickets.

6. offers summertime sessions in shady areas of parks that participants like.

7. uses books borrowed from local libraries and plans trips to encourage ongoing library use.

In rural areas, a quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1. does extensive outreach through, for example, school newsletters, local newspapers, public health units and word of mouth, one to two months before the program is scheduled to begin.

2. sends flyers to outlying communities with a name and number asking residents to call if they would like the program to be offered in their area.

3. arranges alternative sites in the areas where enough people show interest, for example, at farms where 4-H Club members already meet, or at a rural grocery store.

4. may be offered somewhat differently because of travel and time issues. (It may, for example, be shortened, or held as a series of workshops and at different locations over a longer period of time.)

5. may be offered using a mobile unit that goes to rural areas and delivers the program in schools and places of worship.

6. makes special arrangements with local libraries to borrow books to take to rural program locations.
7 partners with a library to equip a bookmobile with books relevant to the program and send it around the area where the program is offered.

8 uses materials with relevant themes for rural families including farming and agricultural safety.

LOW INCOME OR HOMELESS FAMILIES

A quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1 welcomes low-income and/or homeless families who may often feel like outsiders in community programs.

2 engages in critical reflection with them about the value of literacy and encourages their pursuit of learning.

3 provides nutritional snacks for the children, or hot breakfasts or lunches for families (recognizing that good food promotes participants’ ability to learn).

4 delivers the program in shelters for homeless or abused families, or invites them to the program.

5 tells stories and uses books that show families which are not wealthy.

6 trains staff and volunteers to go to places like food banks and soup kitchens to talk to families about the program.

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

A quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1 recognizes that some participants have had unhappy experiences of school, which have affected their self-esteem and attitude toward learning.

2 pays attention to how comfortable participants are with the language of schools and adapts vocabulary accordingly.

3 respects participants’ issues (such as lack of confidence), while encouraging them to enjoy the process of learning and to set attainable goals when appropriate.

4 includes participants in developing the program and ensures that anyone would feel comfortable attending.
LITERACY LEVELS

A quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1. keeps messages short and clear.

2. provides verbal direction and explanations, and encourages participants to ask questions and give feedback.

3. uses oral storytelling, songs and rhymes, then connects them to printed materials in meaningful ways.

4. encourages creative playful interaction to keep the learning fun.

5. uses pictures to stimulate discussion.

6. provides a variety of reading and writing materials suitable for a range of literacy levels.

7. encourages parents who do not read well to ask another family member, who does, to read to their young children.

8. provides relevant take-home materials and activities.

9. provides opportunities for adults to practice something they have learned in the program, before they try to do it with their child.

10. helps prepare adult participants with low literacy skills to feel ready to attend an adult literacy program.

11. refers adults to other agencies who may be able to provide literacy upgrading programs (or English as a Second Language), and their children to age-appropriate enrichment programs.

DIFFERENT AGES

A quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1. provides opportunities for different generations to learn together, recognizing that all family members have skills to share regardless of literacy level.

2. involves certain age groups together at one time, and provides for other family members if needed.
3 continually modifies the program to meet the changing needs of families.

4 provides a wide range of age-appropriate materials for children and adults.

5 invites participants of all generations to share their favourite songs, rhymes and stories with the group.

6 provides a variety of materials showing intergenerational situations in positive ways.

PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

A quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1 provides space and facilities (including washrooms and playground areas) that are accessible, safe and comfortable for participants with physical challenges.

2 speaks to program participants about issues facing people with physical challenges.

3 provides books and other resources that feature people with a range of physical challenges in positive ways, living normal lives.

4 has access to materials in a variety of formats (such as books in Braille and tapes or CDs for participants who are visually impaired).

5 partners with agencies that offer support services for people with physical challenges to ensure all families can access the program.

DEVELOPMENTALLY CHALLENGED AND LEARNING DISABLED

A quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1 has staff who
   • have a basic understanding of how developmental delays and challenges, emotional disturbances, and learning disabilities affect people’s ability to learn.
   • are knowledgeable about commonly found conditions (including Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders), and place importance on educating parents and the community about primary prevention.
• discuss concerns about individual children’s development with their parents, and refer them to specialists for assessment, if appropriate.

2 partners with or gains support from agencies with expertise in the above areas, when people in the community with these challenges want to participate in the family literacy program.

3 ensures the program is accessible to families with special needs requirements; makes arrangements to offer the program at different locations, if possible.

4 provides special materials to stimulate children with developmental challenges or learning disabilities, and includes all children in regular program activities.

5 encourages families to involve all of their children in family literacy activities, explaining that children who have learning disabilities may benefit from such experiences much more than it might appear.16

6 encourages adult participants with learning disabilities or developmental challenges to talk to staff about extra support that would help them reach their learning goals, or to better support their children’s learning.

7 recognizes that a child with learning disabilities and/or developmental challenges will affect the family dynamics. Parents may be encouraged to seek support or counselling beyond what this program can offer.

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES AND LEARNING STYLES

Staff of a quality family literacy program in Ontario:

1 understand and use multiple intelligence theory to observe competencies and support all participating family members.

2 use a variety of activities and strategies that develop participants’ multiple intelligences.

3 find appropriate ways to challenge and support children who demonstrate exceptional abilities and competencies.

4 present information to participants by using all three learning styles: visual (learning by seeing), auditory (learning by listening), and tactile/kinesthetic (learning by doing and through hands-on activities).

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16. See the article by Christopher Kliewer in the Recommended Resources, page 59.
5. Discuss learning styles and multiple intelligences with the participants in the program, helping to increase their self-awareness about how they learn best and to build on their strengths.

6. Teach parents to observe how their children respond to learning situations and to value their different abilities.

7. Model strategies for parents to support their children’s learning.

8. Encourage parents to follow their children’s lead in learning and to view everyday situations as meaningful opportunities for their children to develop their various intelligences.

Recommended Resources


This handbook provides a comprehensive description of issues and guidelines for developing personal safety strategies. Developed by Toronto Public Health for its own staff, it is full of practical information for anyone whose work may lead them into high-risk situations. Copies are available from the AlphaPlus Centre.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

The Education Resource Information Center (ERIC) database [http://www.eric.ed.gov/]

Practitioners in Ontario may be interested to read about studies that address curricular and instructional aspects of family literacy programs that were designed to serve families of particular cultural or ethnic groups in the U.S.A. The following list provides citations for these studies in the ERIC database:

- Bilingual/Multilingual: Paratore 1992; Thornburg 1993
- “Minority”: Morrow and Young 1996, 1997
- Southeast Asian: Puchner 1997; Quintero 1999 [Hmong]
- Native American: Iglitzen and Wandschneiderr 1993-4

This article describes lessons learned from a nursery school in a high-need community, in downtown Toronto.


There are many relevant articles collected in this guide.


This article provides a good overview of the topic with vignettes to illustrate the developmental sequence of second-language learning.


See Section VII of this handbook for excellent articles dealing with current issues in family literacy programming for culturally and linguistically diverse participants.


This resource is full of relevant information and great ideas for working with children (and their parents) around issues of multiculturalism and children’s developing awareness of differences.

**Different Ages**


**Learning Disabilities**


These two booklets provide a good introduction to learning disabilities for family literacy practitioners. An estimated 30% of participants in literacy classes have learning disabilities that often have not been formally diagnosed. Possible signs, assessments, strategies and other suggestions for working with learning disabled adults are presented. Resources for further information are provided.


This article provides conclusive evidence of the benefits of reading with children who have developmental delays.


For information about learning disabilities and resources, visit the website.

**Physical Disabilities**

Ontario March of Dimes [http://www.dimes.on.ca](http://www.dimes.on.ca)

For information about the variety of programs and services available to support families who have various physical disabilities in this province, visit the website of the Ontario March of Dimes. This organization has also established regional offices and subsidiary corporations to help create a society inclusive of people with physical disabilities.

Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf [http://www.ocsd.ca](http://www.ocsd.ca)

Visit the website of the Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf for information about Deaf culture and heritage, and how to support families who have members who are deaf. This organization also provides opportunities for the formal study of American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf culture.

**Mental Health**

Canada Health Portal — [http://chp-pcs.gc.ca/CHP/index_e.jsp/pageid/4005/odp/Top/Health/Mental_Health](http://chp-pcs.gc.ca/CHP/index_e.jsp/pageid/4005/odp/Top/Health/Mental_Health)

This website offers resources including links to other Canadian website pertaining to health issues for children from birth to age fifteen.
NYU Child Study Center: About Our Kids —
http://www.aboutourkids.org

Visit this website for information for professionals and parents about children’s mental health issues. Browse through the “About Our Kids” library and subscribe to an online newsletter. Check out the A-Z Disorder Guide and read related articles.

**Multiple Intelligences and Learning Styles**

See Appendix D.ii. for a description of multiple intelligence and emotional intelligence theories, information about learning styles and recommended resources.
Funding and sustainability

A quality family literacy program takes steps to become sustainable by exploring long-term funding sources at local, provincial and national levels. The program also recognizes great value in short-term funding opportunities and community collaborations.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our agency…

1 has developed a realistic budget that outlines how much it would cost to implement a particular family literacy program model. We have included costs associated with:
  • administrative support (including fundraising, and writing proposals and reports)
  • staff salaries and staff time (that is extra time staff spend working on a new program that adds to their other responsibilities within the agency)
  • producing promotional and recruitment materials
  • purchasing materials and expenses related to the activities of the program
  • maintaining and modifying program facilities
  • factors around the frequency and duration of the program
  • extra supports for participants such as child care, transportation and food
  • special events including open houses, field trips and volunteer recognition
  • in-kind donations and volunteer time
  • interpretation services and translation of written materials for participants
  • partnership development
  • community outreach activities and public speaking
  • researching community needs

2 has developed a funding plan for the family literacy program we want to offer, in response to the following criteria:
  • eligibility: how well does our agency meet the criteria of various funders?
  • philosophy: how well does our agency’s philosophy and values match those of potential funders?
  • resources: how much expertise and effort is required to research sources and write proposals that will fit potential funders’ guidelines?
  • accountability: how well do our plans, timelines and capabilities reasonably fit with funders’ reporting requirements?
• sustainability: what are the chances of gaining long-term funding for our program based on our success and good relationships with our funders?

3 has recruited staff with the expertise and experience needed to research, plan and write compelling proposals, and follow up with potential funders in large corporations, private foundations, service clubs and government agencies.

4 approaches various local funding sources including service clubs, religious groups and businesses, to ask them to invest in a program that enriches the lives of people within the community.

5 researches sources in the community that could be approached for in-kind donations, volunteer services and expertise to family literacy.

6 has developed a list of prospective individual donors as part of an organized campaign to appeal for financial donations, starting with those people most closely involved with our agency.

7 has organized relevant well-publicized events (such as Family Literacy Day) to raise awareness in the community and build a donor base.

8 has joined relevant literacy coalitions to make contacts and learn from others’ fund-raising experiences.

9 networks with other organizations that are involved with literacy to keep informed about funding trends and potential funding sources at the municipal, regional, provincial and federal levels of government.

10 advocates to all levels of government for more coordinated long-term funding for family literacy by emphasizing the importance, impact and long-term benefits of family literacy programs.

11 has made sustainability a goal with outcomes to be tracked, and establishes objectives for getting there.

12 has created a structure to support sustainability (such as matching funds, technical assistance, public relations) and built in opportunities to reflect on what is being learned and note changes that need to be made to achieve sustainability.
Recommended Resources

See Appendix 7.C.iv. for funding information for family literacy programs.

See Appendix B.ii. for a template for a family literacy program budget, and a comparison of program budgets.

Charity Village [www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com)

This Internet resource provides information on a range of topics relevant to the non-profit sector in Canada. For articles about fundraising and sustainability go to Main Street (home page) and click on Library, then Research Section, then the Fundraising Marketing, Fundraising Management, and Relationship Marketing sections. To read the following particularly relevant articles click on Search Research Library and enter the titles:

“Rules of Etiquette for Fundraising Volunteers” by Bruce Raymond.

“Not JUST a Budget” by Angela Byrne

“Finding the Right Community Partners” [i.e. corporate sponsors] by Pat Kahnert

“Six out of Seven Charities Flunk Responsiveness Test” by Steve Thomas

“How to Get Noticed” by the Canadian FundRaiser
Community involvement and partnerships

A quality family literacy program views itself as a vital part of a community, able to meet the learning needs of families most effectively when working closely within a network of family support agencies with similar values and goals.

Ask yourself how these statements apply to your program.

Our family literacy program/agency...

1. works continually to raise the overall level of awareness of family literacy needs and issues in the community.

2. identifies through community needs assessment and ongoing informal networking, potential collaborators for time-limited joint projects and potential long-term partners for sustained program delivery.

3. delivers presentations to community agencies and groups to provide an overview of family literacy, outlines the needs in our community and how this program works to meet those needs, and indicates where further support is needed.

4. is clear about our own reasons for wanting to work with other agencies, recognizing that partnerships:
   • may ultimately be more efficient and cost-effective
   • allow for more effective sharing of resources and expertise
   • improve accessibility for program participants
   • impress (and may even be required by) funders
   • involve more people in building community
   • strengthen the whole community

5. systematically develops relationships with other social service agencies, referral sources and educational programs, to increase understanding of each other’s work, avoid duplication of services, and explore possibilities for working together.

6. understands that laying the foundation for partnerships and maintaining strong working collaborations requires a lot of time, effort and resources.
7. seeks to collaborate with agencies that share our values, are committed to principles of community development, and will involve families in all aspects of program development.

8. approaches potential partners with carefully considered suggestions and requests that clearly outline how everyone involved would benefit from the partnership.

9. meets with potential partners to discuss details about what is needed and what each agency is willing or able to provide (including administrative, concrete expertise and information, materials and resources, and other support).

10. negotiates partnerships and develops written partnership agreements to ensure everyone is clear about various roles and responsibilities, what may or may not be shared, and where there is and is not any flexibility.

11. involves “power players” in each partner agency (including board members, committee chairs and executive directors) to ensure that the organization fully understands the need for its involvement and commitment.

12. regularly reviews and renegotiates partnership agreements (usually following an evaluation of the program and process at the end of a session or time period).

13. recognizes and immediately addresses issues that strain partnerships including issues around leadership, decision-making and control, competition for funds, trust and a program’s evolution away from the original model or vision to meet the community’s changing needs.

14. invites community members and staff from collaborating agencies to join the agency’s volunteer Board of Directors or Advisory Board, and to participate on various committees according to their interest and expertise.

15. invites staff and volunteers from collaborating agencies and potential partners to participate in recognition events and, as appropriate, in professional development opportunities concerning family literacy.

16. maintains regular ongoing contact with the following agencies in our community:
   - Early Years Centres
   - family resource centres
   - local libraries
   - public health units and staff
• community centres
• community-based service groups
• volunteer referral services
• schools and school boards, including adult literacy programs
• agencies involved with home visiting and community outreach programs
• agencies that deliver adult literacy and English as a second language programs
• agencies that work with the families we want to reach
• agencies that are willing to share in-kind or financial resources
• agencies we have worked with in the past
• organizations that have supported other literacy initiatives in our community

17 distributes a summary report after each session and invites media coverage of special events to maintain a high profile in the community that will attract potential partners.

Recommended Resources


This manual provides background information for experienced literacy practitioners to present literacy awareness workshops to any organizations that work with families (including human service agencies, police, libraries, health care workers and government departments).


This collection of essays and articles about family literacy in the USA is from leading experts in the field. Part one helps build a definition for family literacy. Part two presents programs in schools and organization-sponsored programs across the US. The articles take the reader into family literacy programs and discuss their differences from other adult learning programs. The fourth part deals with research and includes an article about family literacy in the UK.

The information for this resource guide was developed through the results from an extensive survey of family literacy programs, Internet research, and consultation with family literacy programs and practitioners. This guide sets forth best practices that will go far to ensure the success of family literacy partnerships in Ontario communities. Included is a list of Ontario Early Years Centres in Ontario.

Charity Village [www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com)

This Internet resource provides information on a range of topics relevant to the non-profit sector in Canada. For articles about community involvement go to *Main Street* (home page) and click on *Library*, then *Research Section*. In the *Online Fundraising and Community-building* section, look for: “Building a Community Website” by Gillian Kerr

In the *A-Z Subject Index*, click on *Corporate/Nonprofit Partnerships* for some good articles including:

“Is an Alliance, Coalition or Partnership the Right Strategy for Your Problem?” by Joan Roberts
Assessment and evaluation

A quality family literacy program uses a participatory method to assess and document progress, and to evaluate the effectiveness of different aspects of the program in helping participants meet their learning goals.

Ask yourself how these statements on assessment of participants’ progress apply to your program.

Our family literacy program/agency …

1 has developed a documented initial, ongoing, and exit assessment process. Initial assessment results identify entry needs, strengths, educational backgrounds, previous experiences and goals for each participating family member.

2 assesses the progress of adult participants at regular intervals, noting progress towards the goals and outcomes they have identified for themselves, as well as internal and ongoing changes. Areas of progress may include:
   • self-esteem, self-awareness and self-direction
   • parenting skills and warmth of parent-child interactions
   • understanding of child development related to literacy
   • understanding of and confidence in their role in children’s learning
   • interaction with children using strategies to promote literacy
   • increased literacy activities in the home
   • improved literacy skills according to established benchmarks of success
   • interest in further education or training
   • communication with children’s schools
   • involvement in the community
   • social relationships
   • workplace readiness
   • advocacy for self and for family

3 documents the progress of children in the program according to goals established in consultation with the parents, using appropriate measurement tools and approaches. Assessment includes noting parents’ reports of positive changes in their children in such areas as:
   • self-esteem
   • speech and language development
• emergent literacy skills including phonemic awareness
• cognitive development
• increased vocabulary recognition and use
• interest in literacy activities
• engagement in learning activities apart from parents
• participation in activities involving literacy at home and in the community

4 maintains confidential family files that families can access. Files include samples of their work, evidence of their improvement, and their feedback about the program.

5 has developed forms to gather relevant information in an ongoing way, that indicates a family’s level of participation, comfort and progress, such as forms for documenting:
• observations of progress by each participant
• literacy materials borrowed from the program to use at home
• books that parents read to children during the week
• self-evaluation and reflection forms for parents and staff to comment on progress and plans the mid-point and end of sessions
• home visits (to be completed with or by visiting staff)
• number and frequency of school contacts

6 provides a summary questionnaire for parents to complete at the end of each session and an exit interview with staff, to document their feedback on all aspects of the program and how it has met a family’s individual needs.

7 involves participating families in discussions around the planning, design and implementation of formal evaluations of the program.

Ask yourself how these statements on program evaluation apply to your program.

Our family literacy program/agency …

1 researches issues of family literacy program evaluation and has a good understanding of various approaches and methods, resources and materials, standardized and alternative assessment instruments, qualitative and quantitative measures.

2 uses participatory evaluation methods, ensuring all stakeholders’ voices are included in discussions about the goals of annual and ongoing program evaluation, to ensure that we are ready and that our results will be relevant.
3 identifies and addresses challenges, ensuring that we have the staff time and other resources required to conduct a meaningful evaluation.

4 has developed an evaluation plan to examine program procedures and to assess how well expected outcomes for parents, children and the community are being achieved. This evaluation plan:
   • is consistent with our philosophy, mission and vision objectives
   • is tied to the realistic objectives and goals that were set for the program
   • takes into account our program’s structure and resources
   • is tailored to the community context and factors related to participation
   • measures success in participants achieving their priority outcomes and meeting benchmarks for success
   • provides information to improve program planning and implementation
   • indicates areas where staff could benefit from further training
   • notes contributions made by volunteers
   • provides the information required by funders
   • includes cost/benefit analysis

5 integrates program evaluation into day-to-day activities as well as doing annual reviews.

6 has an annual evaluation plan that uses a variety of measures to ensure reliability and validity in our results through triangulation17 (including interviews with participants and stakeholders, questionnaires, surveys, and focus groups).

7 trains staff to use different tools to collect information and provides opportunities for them to practice within the context of our program, so that any necessary revisions may be made prior to conducting the real evaluation.

8 makes sustainability an outcome to be tracked, carefully documenting our progress and success and feeding back information to funders and stakeholders.

9 evaluates the effectiveness of our partnerships and collaborations, including the experience of working together.

10 compiles and analyzes the results of all assessment and evaluative measures, writes reports for stakeholders and decides on how program components and services could be improved.

17. “Triangulation” is a method used in evaluation to verify results by looking at them from at least three different positions or angles.
Recommended Resources

http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval.html

Harvard [University’s] Family Research Project’s periodical, *The Evaluation Exchange,* addresses current issues facing program evaluators of all levels. Prominent evaluators write articles on methods and approaches, application of evaluation theory and emerging trends. Past issues are available online, or you can subscribe for free. Check out the Archives, especially: “Community-Based Initiatives” Volume IX, No. 3, Fall 2003.


This publication is an updated and revised edition with a new emphasis on adult English language programs contextualized in family literacy, workplace and workforce literacy. It provides a wealth of practical information on surveys, interviews, observation measures and performance samples as well as sample assessment tools. Overall the this book is a useful support to programs in developing a comprehensive evaluation process to meet accountability requirements.


This resource for administrators and practitioners describes more than 80 measurement tools, categorizing them as measures of adult learner outcomes, parent-child interaction outcomes, and early childhood outcomes. This expanded edition also offers summaries of assessments that focus on children grades K-6, reading assessments, screening instruments for learning disabilities in adults and workplace preparation assessments.


This guide outlines the Core Quality Standards for literacy programs in Ontario as approved by the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board (OTAB) in 1994. It provides basic useful information about evaluation, and encourages individual agencies to develop evaluations that will help increase the effectiveness of their own programs.

This excellent document reviews and synthesizes research reports about a wide range of family literacy programs and practices, focusing on outcomes for adult learners. Resources available in the ERIC database from 1990 to 2002 are emphasized.


This report details findings from two complementary studies: the Even Start Performance Information Reporting System (ESPIRS), which provided annual data on the universe of Even Start projects, and the Experimental Design Study (EDS). It provides an interesting overview of the effectiveness of a huge (855 projects), nationally funded and legislated, comprehensive family literacy program.


Although working with an external evaluator, research agency or university is beyond the capacity of most family literacy programs in Ontario, for those interested, this book provides a good summary of useful suggestions.


This guide is intended to support literacy practitioners in integrating assessment activities into the family literacy activities in their programs, and to assist program coordinators who wish to integrate evaluation processes in family literacy program development. The guide is organized in six sections; the first three sections consist of a review of the rationale for evaluation in family literacy as well as tips for getting started. Sections four and five contain family literacy activities linked to specific assessment strategies. Section six contains sample recording and reporting techniques and sample assessment instruments.


This outstanding collection of articles by experts in the field of family literacy contains a very good section on difficult issues in assessment and evaluation. They address goals, procedures, instruments, cultural relevance and interpretation of data.
Appendices

Appendix A: Research Background

i. List of best practice documents

In Canada


In the U.S.A.


Appendix A

Research Background


In the United Kingdom

ii. Questionnaire

Questionnaire Sent to Family Literacy Practitioners, February 2005

Action for Family Literacy Ontario (AFLO), a working group of the Ontario Literacy Coalition (OLC), is developing a guide that will provide quick reference support to anyone working with families. The guide will outline in clear language some of the key elements of best practices found across the variety of family literacy programs in Ontario.

We are asking practitioners to share their experiences and suggestions about best practices in family literacy and issues that may be specific to this province. The following 7 questions are easy to complete and will provide exactly the information needed. Thank you so much for participating!

Please return your completed questionnaire by February 25th, 2005.

All participants will be entered in a draw to win a great resource book!

1. Which of the following ‘best practices in family literacy’ could you use more information about? (Check as many as you like.)
   1) Needs Assessment & Planning
   2) Program Model Selection
   3) Content
   4) Training & Development
   5) Promotion & Recruiting
   6) Community Involvement
   7) Partnerships
   8) Family Support Services
   9) Access & Participation
   10) Diversity
   11) Resources
   12) Funding
   13) Sustainability
   14) Assessment & Evaluation

   Other ‘best practices’:

   Comments:

2. Which family literacy programs have you implemented?

3. Referring to the list of best practices, please describe any modifications you made to the program models, and why you made these modifications.

4. If you had unlimited money and time, which family literacy program would you run? Why?
   In other words, what is your ideal family literacy program?

5. Describe the ‘best practices’ you use to support or accommodate the following diversities/ issues affecting participants in your family literacy programs:
Cultural diversity
Linguistic diversity
Special needs
Single parents
Homelessness
Urban settings
Rural settings
Low literacy levels
Age

6. Describe specific challenges or obstacles that limit your ability to effectively deliver quality family literacy program.

7. Please share any other comments or information about ‘best practices’ in family literacy in Ontario.

Once again, thank you for completing this questionnaire! Your input is invaluable to the growing number of family literacy practitioners in Ontario.
iii. Research summary

The information shared by family literacy practitioners through the questionnaire has been incorporated throughout this guide. The responses came from a wide variety of community-based program practitioners across the province. There were not many responses from practitioners working within school boards; however, many librarians and early literacy specialists responded.

The greatest challenges faced by a large majority of respondents pertained to obtaining funding, sustainable funding, staff training, finding appropriate space, reaching the most needy families, developing partnerships with “competitors”, retention, and reliance on volunteers.

Many practitioners said they did not know very much about different family literacy program models available or being used in Ontario. Quite a lot more information on this area has therefore been included than had been planned for this guide.

Most adult literacy practitioners who responded said they would like to be more involved in family literacy but were limited for a number of reasons, primarily funding and time.

Respondents to the Guide Questionnaire (76) prioritized their need for more information on the 14 different topics*, in the following order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual # of requests:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Training and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Needs Assessment &amp; Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Assessment &amp; Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Program Model Selection + Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Community Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Access &amp; Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) Promotion &amp; Recruiting</td>
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<tr>
<td>13) Partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>14) Family Support Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* AFLO also recommended that information be included on “Policies and Procedures”
Appendix B: Worksheets

i. Action plan worksheet for agencies

Photocopy and use the following worksheet in your program planning and development. Go through each section of the guide regularly with staff and program partners to see how current practices and working partnerships could be improved. Encourage critical reflection and discussion.

► Read the best practices statement at the beginning of each topic section. It begins: “A quality family literacy program...”

► Read through the related statements or indicators that detail the topic. Discuss them with your colleagues and community partners or collaborators. Ask yourself how they apply to your program.

► Make detailed notes about points relevant to your program, situation or agency.

► Make note of any specific challenges you need to find help with, or follow-up action your agency or community partners could take to better meet the standard.

► Establish timelines to reach short- and long-term goals and objectives.

► Review the recommended reading material and websites for each section.

► Plan to discuss your progress with your colleagues, partners and stakeholders at scheduled meetings.
### Family Literacy in Ontario: A Guide to Best Practices

**Action plan worksheet for agencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Agency:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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</table>

**Family Literacy Program Staff:**

**Other Involved Staff:**

**Volunteers:**

**Community Partners:**

*Encourage everyone listed above to complete the Personal Checklist for Individual Practitioners (p 7)*

**Family Literacy Topic:**

(Select from the list below)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Philosophy</td>
<td>8) Volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Needs Assessment &amp; Planning</td>
<td>9) Promotion &amp; Recruitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Policies &amp; Procedures</td>
<td>10) Access, Participation &amp; Retention</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Program Models</td>
<td>11) Supporting Families’ Diversities &amp; Differences</td>
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<td>5) Program Content</td>
<td>12) Funding &amp; Sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>6) Resources, Materials &amp; Facilities</td>
<td>13) Community Involvement &amp; Partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>7) Staff Development</td>
<td>14) Assessment &amp; Evaluation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Read through the best practice statements in each section of the guide. Think carefully about what you could do to improve your practices in the different areas of family literacy programming. Identify small measurable steps to take. Name individuals or agencies that could do specific things (include existing or potential community partners). Establish timelines wherever possible to meet short- and long-term goals and objectives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement #</th>
<th>Specific action items and who needs to be involved</th>
<th>Timeline and other considerations such as funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: Section 6—Resources Statement # 1—Reusing good quality books and materials borrowed from our local library</td>
<td>1. Ask all program leaders to assess our agency’s current book collection.</td>
<td>Do this over the next week. Volunteers could help with this.</td>
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<td>2. Brainstorm and plan different ways to incorporate borrowed books into our programs.</td>
<td>How can we assess benefits to participating families?</td>
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<td>3. Visit local library branches to meet librarians and tell them about our programs. Discuss ways they might provide support.</td>
<td>Start now and build good relationships carefully over time.</td>
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Other related issues and concerns raised in this discussion:

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### ii. Budgeting for a family literacy program

This document may be photocopied without permission for program use.

This sample form may help you plan a budget for a new family literacy program. This is not a comprehensive list. Many expenses are obvious, while others may not be relevant to your situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Literacy Program Expenses</th>
<th>Length of Time or Number</th>
<th>Cost per Expense</th>
<th>Total Amount/Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Needs Assessment &amp; Program Planning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff time researching community needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment materials purchased or developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time in partnership development &amp; speaking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal writing &amp; other fundraising</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hiring of multilingual staff/interpreters</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Training, Outreach, Preparation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitator training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-facilitator training</td>
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<td>Training for child care staff</td>
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<td>Training consultant fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police checks for all staff &amp; volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program manual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community outreach preparation expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials (posters, flyers, brochures etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Program Facilitation/Staffing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitator (preparing for &amp; delivering sessions)</td>
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<td>Co-facilitator</td>
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<td>Program assistant</td>
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<td>Childcare staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ongoing outreach &amp; follow-up time</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Program Materials</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivery materials (flipchart, photocopies)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials for adults (list in advance)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials/resources for children (list in advance)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Books in different languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age appropriate toys for children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials to loan (book and toy library)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homework materials/activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Translation of printed materials as needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpreter for non-English speaking participants</td>
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</table>
### Family Literacy Program Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment &amp; Evaluation</th>
<th>Length of Time or Number</th>
<th>Cost per Expense</th>
<th>Total Amount/Expense</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intake &amp; exit interview time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of assessment materials</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Development &amp; production of various forms</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Research &amp; purchase of standardized tools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting time to evaluate &amp; improve program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of results &amp; report writing</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Length of Time or Number</th>
<th>Cost per Expense</th>
<th>Total Amount/Expense</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room rental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleaning &amp; maintenance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tables &amp; chairs (child-size and for adults)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Expenses</th>
<th>Length of Time or Number</th>
<th>Cost per Expense</th>
<th>Total Amount/Expense</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Snacks/breakfast/lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reimbursement for food contributed by families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bus tickets for participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ongoing professional development for staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation expenses for trainer</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Field trip” expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gifts/honorariums for special guests</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Kind Donations</th>
<th>Length of Time or Number</th>
<th>Cost per Expense</th>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good quality toys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilities (furniture, office equipment &amp; supplies)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooler/bar fridge/coffee-maker</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Length of Time or Number</th>
<th>Cost per Expense</th>
<th>Total Amount/Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Considerations</th>
<th>Length of Time or Number</th>
<th>Cost per Expense</th>
<th>Total Amount/Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers pay own expenses?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should the program charge a registration fee?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What expenses can we sustain?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Initial Budget

The following budget, developed by the Ontario Literacy Coalition and Kingston Literacy, is intended to inform a first-time offering of a program and includes initial start-up costs for training and materials.\(^\text{18}\) As much as possible, it attempts to provide comparable costs and to control for local variations to the models.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Parent-Child Goose Program</th>
<th>From Lullabies to Literacy</th>
<th>PRINTS</th>
<th>RAPP</th>
<th>Storysacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training Costs including manual</td>
<td>$320</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$90</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>$325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$1,800</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Costs for Start Up</td>
<td>$360</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$90</td>
<td>$1,920</td>
<td>$545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator Training Time</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>$180</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>$240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach and pre-program preparation</td>
<td>$740</td>
<td>$560</td>
<td>$460</td>
<td>$1480</td>
<td>$460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Facilitator</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Facilitator (part time childcare)</td>
<td>$940</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$1,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Facilitation Costs</td>
<td>$3,580</td>
<td>$2,180</td>
<td>$2,140</td>
<td>$3,100</td>
<td>$3,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare Provider Costs</td>
<td>$240</td>
<td>$1,120</td>
<td>$1,120</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous — cost for Rounding Salaries</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Staffing</td>
<td>$3,920</td>
<td>$3,400</td>
<td>$3,360</td>
<td>$3,200</td>
<td>$3,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Resources &amp; Materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach flyers</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Program Resources</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>$530</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Program Crafts &amp; Resources</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$355</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Resources Costs</td>
<td>$130</td>
<td>$430</td>
<td>$630</td>
<td>$170</td>
<td>$720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space for Adult Program</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate Child Space Required</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snacks ($13 week/10 weeks)</td>
<td>$130</td>
<td>$130</td>
<td>$130</td>
<td>$130</td>
<td>$130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Facilities Costs</td>
<td>$530</td>
<td>$530</td>
<td>$530</td>
<td>$330</td>
<td>$330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cost</td>
<td>$4,940</td>
<td>$4,460</td>
<td>$4,610</td>
<td>$5,580</td>
<td>$5,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead (15%)</td>
<td>$740</td>
<td>$669</td>
<td>$692</td>
<td>$835</td>
<td>$770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Costs</td>
<td>$5,680</td>
<td>$5,129</td>
<td>$5,302</td>
<td>$6,455</td>
<td>$5,885</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix C: Family literacy information

i. Program models

Family literacy program models may be classified into five different types or categories.

Types of Family Literacy Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intergenerational</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education (ECE) supports the development of emergent literacy in children, while separate programming for parents focuses on family literacy, parenting skills, and/or adult literacy and upgrading. Structured time known as PACT (Parents And Children Together), gives parents opportunities to practise the skills and strategies they have learned. Examples of this type of program are Parenting for Literate Community and From Lullabies to Literacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Parents</td>
<td>Parents participate in workshop-style training that helps them to support the development of children’s literacy skills at home. Some programs help parents develop effective reading strategies and encourage them to read to children at home; others include topics such as how children learn through dramatic play, developing children’s self-esteem, and developmental stages. An example of this type of program is PRINTS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children and Parents Together</td>
<td>Parents and pre-school children participate in sessions together where they engage in language and literacy-related activities such as rhymes, songs, and storytelling. The emphasis is on enjoyment. The objective is to increase parental awareness and involvement in child literacy development. An example of this type of program is the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of Family Literacy Resources</td>
<td>Community volunteers and/or staff of literacy or family support organizations develop and distribute literacy resources to families. These “family literacy kits” can include children’s books, games, craft activities and materials, and information for parents on how to use the kit at home. Examples of this type of program are RAPP and Storysacks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities for the General Public</td>
<td>These programs focus on building community awareness about the importance of family literacy and/or on informal participation for literacy enjoyment. There is no direct training or instruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Family literacy models have provided several frameworks from which new family literacy programs have been developed. Most agencies in Ontario adapt programs to meet the diverse needs of their community, or incorporate family literacy elements to enrich their existing programs. The prototypes described below represent a variety of intergenerational and parent involvement family literacy approaches, as well as practitioner training. References and links are provided.

**Books for Babies**

These programs have been implemented in many communities across Canada usually operated by volunteers in conjunction with hospital or medical centre sponsorship. Either identified before or during delivery stay in hospital, mothers receive a visit to explain the importance of reading to children from birth. After their hospital stay, parents receive book bags containing books for reading to their infants, along with tips on how to read and talk to their young children. For more information visit: [www.famlit.ca](http://www.famlit.ca) and [www.nald.ca/fulltext/family/famlit/page27.htm](http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/family/famlit/page27.htm).

**Book Mates**

Developed by Dr. Beverly Zakaluk of the University of Manitoba, this model offers a series of workshops for parents of preschoolers that emphasize:

- the value of reading to preschool children
- functional literacy which draws children’s attention to environmental print that conveys meaning throughout daily activities
- the role of writing in early literacy development

Facilitator training and various workshops are offered (in Winnipeg). For more information visit: [www.bookmatesfamilyliteracycentre.ca](http://www.bookmatesfamilyliteracycentre.ca)

**Come Read With Me**

Developed by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network in 1993, this prototype model provides both facilitator training and direct services to parents and their children. Programs are located in a variety of community and school settings. Program goals for parents and children include:

- encouraging reading as a fun and valued activity for both parents and children
- aiding parents to help their children develop pre-reading and reading skills
- helping parents with low literacy skills read to their children
- encouraging parents to pursue further adult education opportunities

Facilitator training (in Saskatchewan) is three days long and includes resource materials and certificate of participation on completion. Training includes: issues in family literacy, steps in starting a program, reaching “hard to reach” parents and overcoming potential problems in leading groups. For more information visit: [www.nald.ca/fulltext/family/famlit/page169.htm](http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/family/famlit/page169.htm) and [www.sk.literacy.ca/resources/searching.asp?Id=869](http://www.sk.literacy.ca/resources/searching.asp?Id=869)
**Early Learning Canada**

This program offers workshop leader training to parents and professionals who work with young children. Through a series of eight workshops, participants learn strategies for interacting with children in ways that maximize learning. Workshop topics include multi-sensory learning, the developmental stages of learning, thinking processes, the relationship between health and learning, and more. Participants receive a comprehensive resource book, a workshop leader guide and a series of resource sheets. There are currently eleven trainers offering very low-cost workshop training in Ontario. For more information visit: [http://www.elc-apec.ca/about_en.htm](http://www.elc-apec.ca/about_en.htm)

**Esso Family Math**

The Esso Family Math Project is a community-based program for families who would like their children to experience success in math. Esso Family Math uses everyday materials and math games to help children understand math ideas. Concepts used in the real world such as measurement, estimation and mental math are sometimes difficult for children to grasp during structured classes. Esso Family Math provides a means for parents to reinforce everyday schooling while encouraging their children to have fun as they learn. Parents gain confidence and feel they are better able to help their children enjoy and understand math in a positive environment.

The website describes all the resources the Esso team has developed as well as information learned from families and volunteers. It is important that leaders be familiar with the philosophy of Family Math, the math that is contained in the carefully designed activities and the strategies for assisting parents to learn how to facilitate their children’s understanding of mathematics. Program leaders are, however, encouraged to build on the initiatives and adapt the program to meet participating families’ specific needs. For more information visit: [http://www.edu.uwo.ca/essofamilymath/index.asp](http://www.edu.uwo.ca/essofamilymath/index.asp).
From Lullabies to Literacy: Building Foundations for Learning

This program was designed in consultation with the community by the Macaulay Child Development Centre, a multi-service child care and family support agency in Toronto. The curriculum emphasizes using everyday activities and materials to promote the development of early literacy skills within nurturing relationships. Parents and caregivers discuss research-based information in light of their own experience then with the support of trained facilitators, they practice the new strategies with their young children (age 0-5).

The curriculum can be used with individuals (such as through a home-visiting program) or groups, and may be delivered as a multi-week program or individually as single session workshops. It has been professionally evaluated and found to primarily enhance:

► speech and language development and emergent literacy skills in children
► parent/caregiver confidence and knowledge of strategies for supporting children’s literacy development
► participation among children and adults in community related literacy activities

A comprehensive manual provides information for agencies to set up and deliver the program, including discussion guides, handouts, recommended strategies and much more. Macaulay also provides training for service providers to implement the curriculum. For more information visit: www.macaulaycentre.org/famlit_train.html

Home-Based Family Literacy (Parents As Teachers, HIPPY)

Designed to help parents support their children’s literacy development and school success, this program may be run through community centres, libraries, and school boards. A paraprofessional, usually a trained parent from the same community, visits a parent at home and works with her or him to enable the parent to participate in parent-child literacy activities. Parent assistants may work with 10 to 15 families, and each program has a coordinator for every 12 parent assistants. Literacy resource materials are available that focus on language and reading with children. For more information visit: www.hippyusa.org

Kenan Intergenerational Model

This comprehensive model emphasizes improving parents’ own literacy skills and attitudes toward education, while supporting their efforts to improve their children’s ability to learn. Participants may enroll for up to 18 months in a full day program which includes:

► adult education for parents
► early childhood education for preschoolers
► parent and child together (PACT) time
► parent group discussions on parenting

This model is widely used and promoted across the U.S.A. (Even Start, Toyota Families for Learning, [U.S.A.] National Center for Family Literacy) as it is well funded. As the same level of funding is not available in Ontario, it is too expensive for most community-based agencies.
in Ontario to offer. Agencies are encouraged to collaborate and partner with others in their communities to deliver all four components. For more information on this model, visit: [http://www.famlit.org/Publications/JourneytoSuccess/index.cfm](http://www.famlit.org/Publications/JourneytoSuccess/index.cfm)

**Kindermusik**

Kindermusik is an intergenerational program with a central goal of developing the whole child through music. Kindermusik programs evolve as leaders consult on an ongoing basis with experts in such fields as child psychology, literacy and language development, vocal development and special needs. Emergent literacy, language and listening skills are fostered through singing, dancing and other musical activities. Interaction among young children (age 0-7) with their parents and grandparents is emphasized. In Ontario, the program has been successfully held in seniors’ centres where parents bring their young children to enjoy the program and strengthen relationships with grandparents. For more information visit: [http://www.kindermusik.com](http://www.kindermusik.com)

**Learning Together Workshops**

Developed by the Adult Education Section of the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture to achieve the goal of providing accessible family literacy resources and facilitator materials, communities conduct family literacy workshops without costly prior training. Workshop manuals, paired with easy-to-read parent booklets allow communities to plan and implement family literacy workshops that meet specific local needs. For more information visit: [http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/family/famlit/page107.htm](http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/family/famlit/page107.htm)

**Literacy and Parenting (LAPS)**

Developed in 1995 in Alberta by Elaine Cairns and Laureen Mackenzie, LAPS is a five module training program for family literacy practitioners. Two manuals of resources and family literacy session outlines are provided in courses for future LAPS facilitators. Candidates for training have been literacy and ESL (English as a Second Language) coordinators and staff of organizations that provide ongoing family services. For more information visit: [http://www.nald.ca/laps/](http://www.nald.ca/laps/)

**Parent-Child Mother Goose Program**

Developed by Celia Lottridge, this non-profit charitable organization has operated several on-going parent and child groups in the Toronto area since 1986. Since 1993, the program has developed training workshops and resources which enable other organizations to offer the program. Parents and their young children attend weekly sessions (usually in ten-week cycles) for about one and a half hours each week. Activities centre on oral literature — rhymes, songs, and stories, with parents and children all seated in a circle. Teaching is directed to parents with children participating, napping or wandering, as is appropriate to their age. There is informal discussion of how rhymes can be used in daily life. The program accommodates families who are non-English users. Resource materials (rhyme collections, songs, stories) and a program video are available in facilitator training. For more information visit: [www.nald.ca/mothergooseprogram/start.htm](http://www.nald.ca/mothergooseprogram/start.htm)
Parents as Partners in Education

Developed by the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board, this program is intended to help parents and guardians with low literacy skills help their children with school. A Facilitator’s Manual with a CD outlines how to deliver a series of 12 stand-alone workshops. Handouts, overheads, forms and evaluations are included. Training is required. For more information contact: www.continuingeducation.occdsb.on.ca

Parents’ Roles Interacting with Teacher Support (PRINTS)

This program is designed to empower parents to foster the literacy development of their young children. Parents are empowered to take on five literacy roles across five contexts of a child’s life: talk, play, environmental print, books, book sharing and scribbling/drawing/writing. PRINTS is structured, yet flexible, and parents become co-partners in its implementation. The program runs for 12 sessions of approximately two hours each and is also suitable for preschool and kindergarten teachers. Facilitator training includes three-day workshops with a facilitator’s handbook, training manual and facilitator training video. Program materials include a parent video and parent handbook. For more information visit: http://www.nald.ca/prints/

Reading and Parents Program (RAPP)

Developed by Kingston Literacy, the Reading and Parents Program was started in 1990 when the first RAPP packs were assembled. Each pack contains a book suitable for a child between two and a half and five years of age and supporting materials that relate to the theme of the story. Each pack includes a book, tips for parents on how to use the pack to develop their children’s language skills, a selection of poetry, activity sheets, a craft idea and materials necessary to make the craft. RAPP packs are used regularly by parent-child groups, and are an excellent resource for modelling how to read with a child. For more information or to order copies of RAPP materials, visit: www.kingstonliteracy.com

Reading Circles

Reading circles have been a major component of Frontier College’s family literacy program focus across Canada for over a decade. Designed to strengthen child and family reading, a reading circle is a club where adults and children come together to read for pleasure. In settings surrounded by books, group reading and literacy-related games, reading circles are community-based, volunteer staffed family literacy projects. For more information about reading circles and to order resources visit: www.frontiercollege.ca/english/programs/children/circle.htm

Storysacks

Storysacks originated in England and operates in Canada through the Centre for Literacy of Quebec. Agency staff are trained to work with volunteers, families and community members to participate in hands-on workshops to create and put together materials for Storysacks. A Storysack is a large cloth bag containing materials and activities that relate to a high-quality a children’s book, including the following components:

► an engaging large-print story with pictures that follow the text
► age appropriate vocabulary
► props
 характер и сценарий необходимы для приведения книги в жизнь
 ► аудио-запись истории
 ► игра на язык
 ► карточка-заготовка с идеями, как родители могут использовать мешок, чтобы развивать грамотность своих детей

Storysacks are loaned to families through libraries, community agencies, day cares and schools.

For more information visit: www.storysacks.nald.ca/

**United Kingdom Basic Skills Agency Intergenerational Family Literacy**

Four demonstration programs were developed in 1993 to help parents improve their own basic skills, to support child literacy and language development, and help parents discover ways to support their children’s literacy learning. There is a high degree of uniformity in practices across programs, based on voluntary participation and clear objectives for parent-child joint literacy development. A required commitment to a course (96 hours over 12 weeks of participation) enables families to focus on achieving goals. Parents set clear objectives for themselves and their children at the outset and this encourages group cohesion for parent support. Joint sessions for parents and children together are coordinated with parent sessions. Parents receive immediate feedback on what they can achieve with their children and how to adapt to their children’s needs. Adult literacy sessions also follow Wordpower, a flexible adult literacy accreditation system in the U.K. For more information visit: www.basic-skills.co.uk

**You Make the Difference™ Parent-child Interaction Program**

This parenting program, developed by experienced speech-language pathologists, is designed to foster the social and language development of young children and enhance the parent-child relationship. It is suitable for parents of both children who are developing normally and children who may be at risk. The program consists of nine weekly ninety-minute sessions. Parents are guided through a process where they learn how to:

► allow their child to lead
► adapt to share the moment with their child
► add experience and words at their child’s level

The Hanen Centre provides licensed training to professionals working in the community, and the program is supported by a very readable parent guidebook:


For more information on this program and related resources visit: http://www.hanen.org/

Many of the program descriptions above were adapted from the AFLO website, http://www.aflo.on.literacy.ca/famlit/models.htm, and the National Adult Literacy Database website, www.nald.ca/Famlit/common/intro.asp.
ii. Family literacy manuals and materials

The following resources are recommended in addition to those described in the section about program models.


Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in the education of their children through participating in workshops where they gain information, skills, and support to assist them in caring for their children. Parenting approaches that support children’s social and emotional development, self-control, and self-confidence are highlighted.


*RAPP* is intended to help literacy organizations introduce a family literacy component to their existing programs. The resource collection is available in four thematic volumes: The Spring and Fall Collection, The Winter and Summer Collection, The Classics Collection and The Holidays Collection. Each volume includes reading and language hints, poetry, and activities based on a selection of quality children’s books. Each volume can also be used separately.


These two kits contain teacher’s guides, student readers and workbooks for adult learners or ESL learners in family literacy programs. They would be easy to incorporate into existing programs that have previously focused on children’s learning needs. The materials help adult learners develop reading fluency and invite meaningful interaction related to common concerns parents have about school-related issues. Activities based on each story help parents gain a deeper understanding of these issues and provide them with tools for making decisions that will nurture their children’s development.


This manual is a valuable resource for sharing with newcomer families. Based on a research project of the School of Early Childhood Education, Ryerson University, it provides links and explanations about the people, places and programs that can assist them in the areas of education, health, childcare and child safety, and observing traditions and cultural heritage in Canada. Free copies and a video are available from Ryerson in Amharic, Dari, English, French, Mandarin, Somali, Twi, and Urdu.


Setting up a Family Literacy program will be much easier to do with the use of this resource. This manual gives practical suggestions and learning experiences for parents and their children up to 5 years of age. Thirty weekly themes are listed along with songs, finger plays and craft ideas. Information on locating space, choosing books and fund-raising is also included.

This book provides a clear picture of the process involved in establishing a work-focus family literacy program. In addition to basic literacy skills, adults may be equipped with skills necessary for the workforce. The Family Independence Initiative is discussed as a model, and the Resources section is extensive, including plans for skill development.


This manual shows programs how to link family literacy activities with general literacy programming within an LBS framework by combining levelled activities, learning outcomes and demonstrations. The first section describes learning activities for reading, writing, speaking and listening. It is designed to help parents upgrade their own literacy skills through take-home activities that they can do with their children. Programs can assess the parents’ levels with a success marker matrix. Section Two lists 20 Family Literacy model demonstrations and demonstrations for level 1 and 2 learners. It concludes with bibliographies on family literacy and children’s literature.

* This manual may be reproduced and adapted by literacy programs.


Frontier College. *So You Want to Start a Reading Circle* [Video or CD-Rom with guidebook]. Toronto, ON: Frontier College, 2003.

These two resources provide an excellent overview of reading circles, how to establish them and run them effectively in different communities and with children of different ages.

Paul, Marianne. *Literacy is a Family Affair! How to Deliver Family Literacy Workshops in Your Community.* Kitchener, ON: Project Read, 2002.

This manual shows how to set up family literacy workshops in your community to help parents help their children get ready to read. It is divided into four main sections: background knowledge about how young children learn early or first literacy skills and how to deliver/lead a family literacy workshop; step-by-step plans for the family literacy workshop leader aimed at adults interested in helping children from birth to pre-school get ready for literacy; additional plans to help adults support children’s literacy efforts during the first few years at school; and appendices that offer supplementary ideas as well as contact and order information for selected resources and related agencies.

This clearly written and beautifully illustrated book is an excellent resource for family literacy practitioners. It promotes a child-centred approach to early language intervention using the mediator model (i.e. training parents, teachers and other caregivers to become the child’s language facilitator). Supported by recent research, this guide is full of strategies for helping parents have fun and communicate effectively with any very young children, not only those who have language delays. This revised version also includes a section on building the foundations for literacy.


This manual provides program support for family literacy programs and for early childhood programs, community programs or family resource centres that wish to include a family literacy component as part of their regular programming. There are pamphlets to accompany the curriculum topics and support family literacy activities in the home.


Four booklets affirm the family resource program context as a quality learning environment. It is a useful reference guide for sharing ideas and information with parents and colleagues, and for planning literacy activities and partnerships.


This book provides a good overview of issues of best practices when working with school-age children and their families.


These two books describe in detail, a program developed in Ontario that was designed specifically for young mothers (age seventeen to thirty-three). The daily half-day program takes place in a school where participants can earn high school credits while learning to support their children’s literacy development.

**Parenting for a Literate Community Booklets:**

Pam Nason, Anne Hunt and Pam Whitty developed excellent materials based on a Health Canada-funded project at the Early Childhood Centre at the University of New Brunswick (1999). Taking a strength-based approach, the emphasis is on honouring and using families’ own every day life experiences and activities to develop meaningful literacy teaching and learning.
The booklets are titled:

Books for Babies: Connecting Warmth, Well-being and Books

Connecting: Home, School and Community Based Programs

Cultivating Language and Literate Play: Transforming the Self, Transforming the World
Folk and Fairy Tales: Exploring Our Own Stories
Where Does Fonix Phit?: Connecting Sound, Sense and Symbol
Singing and Dancing: Cadence and Creative Expression
Honouring Domestic Literacies: Texts of Caring, Cooking & Other Household Work
Anticipating Text: Predictable Books, The Pleasure of Patterns

These booklets may be read online or copies may be ordered.
Visit: [http://www.unbf.ca/education/ecc/plc/index2.htm](http://www.unbf.ca/education/ecc/plc/index2.htm)
iii. Staff development and training opportunities

1) Foundational Training in Family Literacy

The national Foundational Training in Family Literacy is intended for practitioners (program facilitators and coordinators) of family literacy programs. It is offered in Ontario using two different modes of delivery: Community Literacy of Ontario has been offering it online once a month for six months, and the Ontario Literacy Coalition has offered it as a week-long face-to-face summer institute. Both agencies rely on financial support from the provincial and federal governments to be able to offer this training. Discussions are ongoing concerning future delivery options and certification.19

The Foundational Training in Family Literacy: Practitioners’ Resource includes the following topic areas20:

1. Understanding Family Literacy
2. The Practice of Family Literacy in an Unjust World
3. The Dynamics of Working with Parents
4. Understanding Children and their Development
5. Understanding Emergent Literacy
6. Working with Families in a Family Literacy Setting
7. Working with Communities
8. Administering a Family Literacy Project
9. Evaluating Family Literacy Projects
10. Best practices in Family Literacy

The Centre for Family Literacy [Alberta] has developed the following standards around the delivery of the foundational training:

- maintain national standards in order to enhance the credibility of the training and give practitioners a common knowledge base
- use the course material in full in order to maintain the integrity of the course and provide consistency and continuity across Canada
- provide certificates only to those who complete all ten modules of the training
- base all training on the content developed for the National Foundational Training in Family Literacy, as contained in the Practitioners’ Resource
- deliver training only through certified trainers

provide course material only to participants in approved training

honour copyright rules for the course material as established by the Centre for Family Literacy

adhere to the Centre for Family Literacy’s guidelines for distributing course material, issuing certificates, adding new sections to the course materials, coordinating and sharing information, and generally ensuring national standards are met

ensure that the training sessions are evaluated by participants²¹

To learn more about *Foundational Training in Family Literacy*, and when training will be offered next in Ontario, contact these agencies:

- Community Literacy of Ontario: [www.nald.ca/clo.htm](http://www.nald.ca/clo.htm)
- The Ontario Literacy Coalition: [www.on.literacy.ca](http://www.on.literacy.ca)

2) *From Lullabies to Literacy*

The Macaulay Child Development Centre, a multi-service agency in Toronto, offers training sessions to implement this ten-session family literacy program. A comprehensive manual including delivery instructions has been developed. For more information about training and to order a manual, contact: [info@macaulaycentre.org](mailto:info@macaulaycentre.org)

3) *Parent-Child Mother Goose Program*

*Parent-Child Mother Goose Program*® offers two levels of training for certification, involving both a Teacher Training Workshop and Apprenticeship or Practicum training. All workshops are taught by qualified *Workshop Facilitators* and are booked through the P-CMGP National Office. For further information on attending or hosting a workshop, contact the Workshop and Membership Coordinator at [pcmgpmemb@bellnet.ca](mailto:pcmgpmemb@bellnet.ca) or 416.588.5234. For more information visit: [http://www.nald.ca/mothergooseprogram/start.htm](http://www.nald.ca/mothergooseprogram/start.htm)

4) *Frontier College’s Reading Circles*

Frontier College trains parents, volunteers, organizations and others interested in setting up and operating Reading Circles for the children in their neighbourhoods. Frontier College’s family literacy activities also include free Annual Reading Circle Conferences with a variety of excellent workshops, speaking engagements and promotional events to encourage and enable parents and other primary care-givers to read with their children every day. For more information about upcoming training opportunities contact: [http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/programs/children/children.htm](http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/programs/children/children.htm)

5) *Esso Family Math*

The website for Esso Family Math clearly outlines the steps to take to bring this program into your community. Further details about the training and the program may be found by reading the Coordinator Manuals, for which direct links are provided. Early Years Family Math

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²¹ From [http://www.nald.ca/PROVINCE/ONT/CLO/training/explore/03.htm](http://www.nald.ca/PROVINCE/ONT/CLO/training/explore/03.htm)
Appendix C

Family literacy information

Coordinators and Grades 2-5 Coordinators are available to help with the process of establishing a program and with training. Contact information is provided according to regions across the province. [http://www.edu.uwo.ca/essofamilymath/index.asp](http://www.edu.uwo.ca/essofamilymath/index.asp)

6) **You Make the Difference™**

The Hanen Centre offers three-day workshop-style training sessions scheduled regularly throughout the year. The training is designed for community professionals who want to enrich the parent-child interaction component in various intervention programs. Upon completion of this training, participants sign a Licensing Agreement with the Hanen Centre that entitles them to lead this program according to certain criteria. For more information, visit [www.hanen.org](http://www.hanen.org).

**Other Professional Development Opportunities**

Visit AFLO’s website regularly for information on upcoming training opportunities: [http://www.aflo.on.literacy.ca/training/training.htm](http://www.aflo.on.literacy.ca/training/training.htm)

For a list of literacy activities scheduled to take place in communities across the province, including conferences and training opportunities, visit the National Adult Literacy Database: [http://www.nald.ca/literacyevents/](http://www.nald.ca/literacyevents/)

Visit the Community Literacy Ontario (CLO) website for information about online workshops on human resource development: [http://www.nald.ca/volman.htm](http://www.nald.ca/volman.htm)


Visit the AlphaPlus Centre’s website for their ‘Weekly News’ and ‘Announcements’ postings: [http://www.alphaplus.ca/eng.asp](http://www.alphaplus.ca/eng.asp)

*The Canadian Association of Storytellers for Children* holds “Talking Pots” (information sharing, rhyme, song and story swaps) with featured presenters. There is also a school for professional storytellers or for anyone wanting to develop their skills. Contact Carol Ashton: mc.ashton@sympatico.ca or phone: 416-699-2608

**In the U.S.A.:**

**Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn. State University**

The Goodling Institute developed the *Certificate in Family Literacy* in partnership with the National Center for Family Literacy and the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy. Courses integrate research findings and best practices, and are offered continuously via distance learning through Penn State World Campus. Credits earned through this certificate program are applicable toward a Masters Degree in Adult Education at Penn State, and may also be transferred into other programs of study at various universities in the U.S.A. For more information see: [http://www.ed.psu.edu/goodlinginstitute](http://www.ed.psu.edu/goodlinginstitute)
National Center for Family Literacy

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), in Louisville, Kentucky, offers a range of professional development services including two levels of training called Foundations in Family Literacy. They also offer a Summer Institute, with different workshops offered every year and expert guest speakers. An Annual National Conference on Family Literacy has been held in different major cities for 14 years. The Family Literacy Alliance, a membership program sponsored by NCFL, holds regular regional conferences (many accessible from Ontario). For more information see: http://www.famlit.org

Verizon Literacy University (VLU)

VLU offers free high-quality short online courses on a range of topics relevant to and including family literacy. These courses are developed and taught by highly qualified professionals associated with the National Center for Family Literacy. For more information, to browse through their resource center, and to enroll in courses visit: http://www.vluonline.org/course/index.asp.
iv. Funding information for family literacy programs

Visit the following websites for information about funding resources available for family literacy programs.

**ABC Canada**
Find out more about funding opportunities through ABC Canada programs:
- Share the Stories (in partnership with Coca-Cola Canada Ltd.) — [www.abc-canada.org/sts/](http://www.abc-canada.org/sts/)
- PGI Golf Tournaments — [www.abc-canada.org/pgi_tournaments/](http://www.abc-canada.org/pgi_tournaments/)

**Canada Post**
Literacy is Canada Post’s chosen cause to support through its corporate giving and annual literacy awards:
- Annual Literacy Awards — [www.canadapost.ca/personal/corporate/about/community/literacy/literacy_awards/default-e.asp](http://www.canadapost.ca/personal/corporate/about/community/literacy/literacy_awards/default-e.asp)
- Funding and Partnership Opportunities — [www.canadapost.ca/personal/corporate/about/community/literacy/](http://www.canadapost.ca/personal/corporate/about/community/literacy/)

**Canadian Centre for Philanthropy**
Order the CCP Canadian Directory to Foundations and Grants to search for possible funding opportunities — [www.ccp.ca/page.asp?foundation_directory](http://www.ccp.ca/page.asp?foundation_directory)

**CanWest Global Foundation**
The Raise-a-Reader program provides funding support to local literacy programs across Canada:

**FundsNet.com**
Visit this site to find a selection of foundations and corporations funding projects in Canada:

**Indigo Books, Music & More**

**Kiwanis Clubs**
Kiwanis Clubs and Kiwanis International are mandated to support programs for children both locally and internationally. Search for your local Kiwanis Club on the Internet using search words “Kiwanis” and the name of your city or province. Visit the Kiwanis International site to find more information about Kiwanis programs: [http://www.kiwanis.org/](http://www.kiwanis.org/)
To search for a Kiwanis member club, visit: [http://www.kiwanis.org/clubloc/](http://www.kiwanis.org/clubloc/)
National Literacy Secretariat
Family literacy was highlighted as a Canadian federal budget item in 2004. Find out about NLS program funding opportunities —

Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Learn about program funding opportunities for early years’ initiatives —

Rotary Clubs
Rotary Clubs support a wide variety of community and international programs. Search for your local Rotary Club on the Internet using search words “rotary club” and the name of your city or town. Also, visit the Rotary International site to find more information about Rotary programs, and linkages to member clubs: http://www.rotary.org/

United Way of Canada
Visit the United Way of Canada website to find links to regional and provincial United Way programs, and to learn about local funding opportunities:
http://www.unitedway.ca/english/

Primarily adapted from the AFLO website: http://www.aflo.on.literacy.ca/famlit/models.htm
v. Safety issues in family literacy programs

Agencies working with families need to develop policies in the positive context of safety. Safety and security procedures need to be made known to all volunteers, staff and program participants through discussions and by posting signage where appropriate.

Procedures need to be designed with the specific programs offered in mind, related to the comings and goings at different times of the day and week.

Forms and procedures should be in place to deal with a serious incident, before there is a crisis. When there is a serious incident, the facts need to be recorded as soon as possible, while the details are still clear (such as witnessed or suspected child abuse). Appropriate follow-up action needs to be taken by the right person, either corrective or preventive.

Agencies should consider developing policies and forms for:

- information about allergies or other health concerns that might affect participation
- permission to administer first aid
- an accident report form
- field trip policies, procedures and permission
- permission for named individuals to leave with children
- emergency contact information
- photo/video permission
- sharing food (all ingredients should be listed for any food brought to share)

Staff need to take extra care to maintain a safe and healthy environment in the space used by families with young children. As a minimum, the following safety precautions should be taken:

- emergency numbers are posted near the telephone
- household cleaners are locked away
- no strong solvents or paints are used (except when there is time for all fumes to have disappeared, such as during holiday time)
- fire extinguishers are located near exits
- electrical outlets are covered with child-proof covers
- electrical appliances are unplugged and out of child’s reach
- any medicines (including vitamins) are locked away
- furniture is soft or has padded corners
- heavy furniture, such as a bookcase or television, is secured to the wall in order to prevent the furniture from falling
- there is a smoke detector with a working battery that is tested regularly
blind and drapery cords are cut and secured with cord wind-ups, and are out of reach from children
water temperature is turned down to 49°C or 120°F
proper hand-washing instructions are posted beside all sinks
any cribs used are built after 1986 (bars are properly spaced to prevent strangulation)
any cooking is done on back burners, with turn pot handles toward back of stove
safety gates are properly installed to keep children from falling down stairs
any mats used are non-skid
carpets and rugs are vacuumed regularly
playground areas have soft surfaces, such as wood chips, pea gravel or sand
playground equipment is well-anchored
all program toys are washed regularly with soap
all program toys are checked regularly for broken or loose parts
all materials borrowed by participants are cleaned and checked upon their return
the floor area is checked carefully for things small children might put into their mouths, before the children arrive onsite
all snacks offered to children are approved in advance by parents or guardians
no nuts or seafood is allowed onsite (to protect anyone with allergies)
strangers are not permitted to loiter in the area with families
children do not leave the room to use the washroom without staff or a parent
no violence is acceptable (including slapping or spanking children)
foul, disrespectful or racist language is not acceptable
staff, volunteers and participants are encouraged to raise any safety concerns

For information about how to protect children from outdoor environmental dangers and contaminants, visit: http://www.cfc-efc.ca/healthy-spaces/home_en.php


vi. Family literacy web links

**Family Literacy and Education in Canada**

ABC Canada: Family Literacy links directory — [www.abc-canada.org/fld-jaf/parfam.shtml#fl_links](http://www.abc-canada.org/fld-jaf/parfam.shtml#fl_links)
Bookmates — [www.bookmatesfamilyliteracycentre.ca](http://www.bookmatesfamilyliteracycentre.ca)
Canada’s SchoolNet — [www.schoolnet.ca](http://www.schoolnet.ca)
Centre for Family Literacy — [www.famlit.ca](http://www.famlit.ca)
Family Literacy Action Group (FLAG) — [www.nald.ca/flag.htm](http://www.nald.ca/flag.htm)
Coin de la famille: Francophone Family Literacy in Canada (site in French only) — [www.coindelafamille.ca](http://www.coindelafamille.ca)
Canadian Family Literacy Directory — [www.nald.ca/FamLit/common/intro.asp](http://www.nald.ca/FamLit/common/intro.asp)
Roots of Empathy — [www.rootsofempathy.org](http://www.rootsofempathy.org)

**International Family Literacy Links**

Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy — [www.barbarabushfoundation.com](http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com)
Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement — [www.ciera.org](http://www.ciera.org)
Connect for Kids — [www.connectforkids.org](http://www.connectforkids.org)
Family Literacy Foundation — [www.read2kids.org](http://www.read2kids.org)
Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy — [www.ed.psu.edu/goodlinginstitute](http://www.ed.psu.edu/goodlinginstitute)
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters — [www.hippyusa.org](http://www.hippyusa.org)
National Centre for Family Literacy (NCFL) — [www.famlit.org](http://www.famlit.org)
National Even Start Association — [www.evenstart.org](http://www.evenstart.org)
Skills for Families — [www.skillsforfamilies.org](http://www.skillsforfamilies.org)

**Family Literacy Resources and Publications**

AlphaCat Resource Library Catalogue — [alphacat.alphaplus.ca/ipac-cgi/ipac.exe](http://alphacat.alphaplus.ca/ipac-cgi/ipac.exe)
AlphaPlus Index to Web Resources — [www.alphaplus.ca/opnhs/english/SubjAuth.asp](http://www.alphaplus.ca/opnhs/english/SubjAuth.asp)
All Kinds of Minds — [www.allkindsofminds.org](http://www.allkindsofminds.org)
Basic Skills Agency — [www.basic-skills.co.uk/site/page.php?cms=0&p=678](http://www.basic-skills.co.uk/site/page.php?cms=0&p=678)
Centre for Family Literacy — [www.famlit.ca/resources/resources.html](http://www.famlit.ca/resources/resources.html)
Child Trends — [www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org)
Early Childhood Research and Practice — [ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html](http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html)
Family Literacy: Directions in Research and Implications for Practice — [www.ed.gov/pubs/FamLit/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/FamLit/index.html)
Family Literacy Resource Notebook — [literacy.kent.edu/Oasis/famlitnotebook/](http://literacy.kent.edu/Oasis/famlitnotebook/)
Family Literacy Special Collection — [literacy.kent.edu/Midwest/FamilyLit/](http://literacy.kent.edu/Midwest/FamilyLit/)
Literacy Investment for Tomorrow (LIFT) Missouri — [lift-missouri.org](http://lift-missouri.org)
Literacy and Parenting (LAPS) — [www.nald.ca/laps/](http://www.nald.ca/laps/)
Literacy Partners of Manitoba Resource Centre — www.mb.literacy.ca/family/flresour/cover.htm
National Literacy Trust Family Literacy Research Directory —
www.literacytrust.org.uk/Research/famlitresch.html
Family Literacy: Annotated Bibliography (NCEDL) —
www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncedl/pages/famlitbib_2.cfm
NYU Child Study Center: About Our Kids — www.aboutourkids.org

**Current Research on Family Literacy in Ontario**

AlphaPlus Database of Literacy Research in Ontario — research.alphaplus.ca/
Action for Family Literacy Ontario — www.aflo.on.literacy.ca

**For Parents and Children**

Activities Club — www.activitiesclub.com
American Library Association Resources for Parents, Teens and Kids —
www.al.a.org/parents/
Canadian Living Magazine —
Canadian Parents Online — www.canadianparents.com
Educational Web Adventures — www.eduweb.com
Family Education — www.familyeducation.com
Family Education Network — www.fen.com
Family Information Centre of the Clearinghouse on Reading, English & Communication and
Parents and Children Together Online — reading.indiana.edu/www/indexfr.html
Ideas for Parents — literacy.kent.edu/Midwest/FamilyLit/parentideas.html
Parent Resource Centre, The — www.parentresource.on.ca
Parents as Teachers — www.patnc.org
Partnership for Family Involvement in Education — www.thefamilyworks.org
Positive Parenting — www.positiveparenting.com
Surfing the Net with Kids — www.surfnetkids.com
Today’s Parent Online — www.todaysparent.com

**Family Organizations in Canada**

Canadian Child Care Federation — www.cccf-fcsge.ca
Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs (FRP Canada) — www.frp.ca
Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) — www.ccsd.ca
Canadian Institute of Child Health — www.cich.ca
Centres of Excellence for Children’s Well-being — www.hcsc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth
Child and Family Canada — www.cfc-efc.ca
Child Welfare League of Canada & Canadian Resource Centre on Children and Youth —
www.cwlc.ca
Family Service Canada — www.familyservicecanada.org
Invest in Kids Foundation — www.investinkids.ca
Kids First Parent Association of Canada — kidsfirst1.tripod.com
Appendix C

Family literacy information

National Children’s Alliance — www.nationalchildrensalliance.com
Vanier Institute of the Family — www.vifamily.ca

Early Childhood Development
Canadian Institute of Child Health — www.cich.ca
Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development — www.excellence-earlychildhood.ca
Early Years Study — www.children.gov.on.ca/CS/en/programs/EarlyYearsInitiatives/Publications/EarlyYearsStudy.htm
Founders’ Network — www.founders.net/
National Center for Early Development and Learning — www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncedl/index.cfm
National Association for the Education of Young Children — www.naeyc.org
Ontario Early Years Centres — www.ontarioearlyyears.ca
Ontario Early Years Initiatives —
Success by 6 (United Way agencies throughout Canada) —
www.unitedthisistheway.com/successby6.htm
Success by 6 (United Way of America) — national.unitedway.org/sb6/
Understanding the Early Years, Social Development Canada —
“How the early years are so important” Fact Sheet, Child and Family Canada —
www.cfc-efc.ca/docs/vocfc/00001084.htm
Zero To Three — www.zerotothree.org

Storytellers
Directory of Storytellers for Ontario —
www.storytellingtoronto.org/Pages/Directory.html
Storytellers of Canada — www.sc-cc.com

Other Helpful Contacts
Clear Language and Design — www.eastendliteracy.on.ca/ClearLanguageAndDesign/start.htm
The Center on Education and Training for Employment (CETE) — www.cete.org/acve/
Community Literacy of Ontario — www.nald.ca/volman
Volunteer Canada — www.volunteer.ca

Literacy Facts
ABC Canada — www.abc-canada.org/literacy_facts/
AlphaPlus Centre — alphaplus.ca
International Adult Literacy Survey Database -
www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/89-588-XIE/ials-eiaa.htm
Movement for Canadian Literacy — www.literacy.ca/litand/litand.htm
National Adult Literacy Database — www.nald.ca
National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada -
Ontario Literacy Coalition — www.on.literacy.ca/literacy/aboutlit.htm
Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy in Canada -
www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/89F0093XIE/free.htm
Statistics Canada — www.statcan.ca/

Literacy Listserv Discussion Groups
AlphaPlus Centre — http://alphaplus.ca/
National Adult Literacy Database lists — nald.ca/Listserv/listserv.htm

American Listserv Discussion Groups
U.S.A. National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) has several online discussion groups to deal with
issues critical to the literacy field. For a list of the different groups visit www.nald.ca/Listserv/
listserv.htm#Listserv. Email your subscription request to listproc@novel.nifl.gov and ask to join the
Forum on Family Literacy: NIFL-Family

Ontario Literacy Newsletters
Family literacy practitioners may find it useful to subscribe to newsletters from agencies working
locally in their own communities or across the province. Newsletters will help you keep up to
date about literacy issues, funding sources, potential partnerships, networking opportunities
and activities taking place in your area. For more information and a list of all the newsletters
concerning literacy in Ontario, visit: www.nald.ca/newslet/province.htm#ont
Appendix D: General information

i. Plain language pointers

Plain language, also called clear language, means writing or speaking using language that everyone in your audience can easily understand.

In order to determine the appropriate level to use when writing (or ‘readability features’), it can be helpful to develop an audience profile. Ask, for example,

- How much information do they need, and how much do they already know?
- How might they feel about the content?
- What is their educational or literacy level?
- Is English (or the language you will use) their first language?
- What is their age range?
- What else about them might be relevant to what I have to say? (gender, family structure, geographic origin, ethnicity, faith, culture, economic status, physical ability, etc.)

According to Clear Language and Design (CLAD — a public education program of East End Literacy), clear language experts suggest that writers keep in mind three different levels of readers.22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask yourself if what you are writing is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential information for a diverse public, including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• people whose first language is not English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• people with less than 8 years of formal education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information for the general public that introduces:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• new terms and concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• specialized subject matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized information intended for an informed audience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For examples of pieces of writing that have been rewritten in clear language visit: [http://www.eastendliteracy.on.ca/ClearLanguageAndDesign/makeover/makeover.htm](http://www.eastendliteracy.on.ca/ClearLanguageAndDesign/makeover/makeover.htm)

Once you have determined the approximate reading level of your audience, consider how the following affects your writing:

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22. The information for this section is taken primarily from the website of CLAD: [http://www.eastendliteracy.on.ca/ClearLanguageAndDesign/start.htm](http://www.eastendliteracy.on.ca/ClearLanguageAndDesign/start.htm)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Watch</th>
<th>Go for</th>
<th>Avoid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word choice</td>
<td>familiar, short words from reader’s own vocabulary</td>
<td>needless words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>specialized terms defined</td>
<td>complicated words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>jargon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of sentences</td>
<td>short sentences</td>
<td>rambling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>active (rarely passive)</td>
<td>bossy, patronizing, negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>informal or formal</td>
<td>impersonal terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>inclusive language</td>
<td>technical or specialized language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>humour (carefully)</td>
<td>acronyms (short forms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>short paragraphs, logical flow, frequent subheadings</td>
<td>paragraphs more than 3 sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rambling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>pictures</td>
<td>graphics, charts, ornate fonts,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lots of ‘white space’ around print</td>
<td>heavy screens, colour overlays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margins</td>
<td>ragged</td>
<td>justified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print size &amp; font</td>
<td>Minimum size 12–14 use <strong>bold</strong> for emphasis</td>
<td>colour, underlining, CAPITALS or <strong>italics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(for low literacy levels)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To learn more about reading levels and to test a sample of your writing, try the ‘Reading Effectiveness Tool’ on the CLAD website: [http://www.eastendliteracy.on.ca/ClearLanguageAndDesign/readingeffectivenesstool/](http://www.eastendliteracy.on.ca/ClearLanguageAndDesign/readingeffectivenesstool/)

For more information, the following booklet from the OLC is another excellent resource:

ii. Multiple intelligences and learning styles

Multiple intelligences

The theory of multiple intelligences was developed in 1983 by Dr. Howard Gardner, professor of education at Harvard University. It suggests that the traditional notion of intelligence, based on I.Q. testing, is far too limited. Instead, Dr. Gardner proposes eight different intelligences to account for a broader range of human potential in children and adults. These intelligences are:

- **Linguistic intelligence** ("word smart")
- **Logical-mathematical intelligence** ("number/reasoning smart")
- **Spatial intelligence** ("picture smart")
- **Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence** ("body smart")
- **Musical intelligence** ("music smart")
- **Interpersonal intelligence** ("people smart")
- **Intrapersonal intelligence** ("self smart")
- **Naturalist intelligence** ("nature smart")

Dr. Gardner says that our schools and culture focus most of their attention on linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligence. We esteem the highly articulate or logical people of our culture. However, Dr. Gardner says that we should also place equal attention on individuals who show gifts in the other intelligences: the artists, architects, musicians, naturalists, designers, dancers, therapists, entrepreneurs and others who enrich the world in which we live. Unfortunately, many children who have these gifts don’t receive much reinforcement for them in school. Many of these kids, in fact, end up being labeled “learning disabled,” “ADD (attention deficit disorder),” or simply underachievers, when their unique ways of thinking and learning aren’t addressed by a heavily linguistic or logical-mathematical classroom. The theory of multiple intelligences proposes a major transformation in the way our schools are run. It suggests that teachers be trained to present their lessons in a wide variety of ways using music, cooperative learning, art activities, role play, multimedia, field trips, inner reflection and much more. The challenge is to get this information out to many more teachers, school administrators and others who work with children, so that each child has the opportunity to learn in ways harmonious with their unique minds (see In Their Own Way).

The theory of multiple intelligences also has strong implications for adult learning and development. The theory of multiple intelligences gives adults a whole new way to look at their lives, examining potentials that they left behind in their childhood (such as a love for art or drama) but now have the opportunity to develop through courses, hobbies, or other programs of self-development (see 7 Kinds of Smart).

For more information see:


23. This information was copied, with permission, from the website of Dr. Thomas Armstrong: [http://www.thomasarmstrong.com/multiple_intelligences.htm](http://www.thomasarmstrong.com/multiple_intelligences.htm)


Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is yet another way to talk about being smart. Daniel Goleman argues that in learning to acknowledge and value feelings in others and ourselves, we develop a crucial set of skills that better prepare us to respond in our daily lives and work. He also shows how parents’ degree of emotional intelligence determines their children’s level of emotional intelligence. Apparently “emotional literacy” is not fixed early in life, but we can all learn to change our responses to achieve more healthy successful lives.


Learning Styles and Differences

Identifying their preferred learning style gives adult learners tools for taking charge of their learning. From this point on, they are better prepared to develop coping strategies to compensate for weaknesses, and build on their strengths. There are three main learning styles:

► Visual learners learn through seeing. They watch body language and facial expression, and benefit from visual aids, diagrams, colour-coded handouts, highlighted information etc.

► Auditory learners learn through listening. They benefit from discussions, reading aloud and listening to what others have to say.

► Tactile/kinesthetic learners learn through hands-on activity and by doing things themselves. They enjoy using computers they can touch, objects they can move around and moving around themselves.

Literacy instructors and family literacy practitioners also benefit from knowing how they think and learn themselves, so they better understand how to support learners in their programs who think and learn differently. When presenting information in a program, be aware of the three different ways that adult participants will be absorbing it.


This booklet takes the reader through the Kolb Learning Style Inventory to assess his or her own learning style. This exercise leads to a good discussion of the different ways people learn and how teachers can support all four different types of learners.

All Kinds of Minds is a non-profit institute for the understanding of differences in learning. For news, resources and information for parents and educators, visit: http://www.allkindsofminds.org/


Clear Language and Design. Reading Effectiveness Tool. [Cited June 2005].


www.nald.ca/fulltext/tralearn/cover.htm


