Family literacy connections

A Guide to Family Literacy Partnerships

Produced for The Peel-Halton-Dufferin Adult Learning Network.

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The basis for this project was the "Weaving Literacy Into Family and Community Life – A Resource Guide for Promoting Literacy in Family Resource Programs" by Suzanne Smythe and Lee Weinstein.

The idea to create a guide on Family Literacy Partnerships was the brainchild of Sue McCormack (former Executive Director of the Peel-Halton-Dufferin Adult Learning Network) and has been aptly carried on by the current Executive Director, Michael Johnny.

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HOW THE RESEARCH WAS DONE

Throughout the guide you will find references to the results of our survey. To ensure you understand how we came up with these results, we will outline our process here.

A copy of the original survey can be found in the Appendices on pages 121 to 125

For the Family Literacy Program Survey:

- A detailed survey was put together with the input of the Advisory Committee.
- This survey was then posted on a temporary website, which allowed individuals to fill out the survey anonymously (if they chose) and to send it the completed survey to project e-mail.
- The e-mail only indicated that the results came from an "unknown sender".
- After testing the site for any "glitches" we began the process of e-mailing as many Family Literacy Programs, Family Resource Programs, Family Literacy Advocates and provincial literacy coalitions, as could be found. This was done through the National Adult Literacy Database – Family Literacy Database; Foundational Training project; Alphaplus Centre Database of programs; and various individuals.

- The request to fill out the survey was successfully sent to almost 350 e-mails across Canada. After two requests, 99 organizations or individuals responded from across Canada (28.3%).
- The results were compiled quantitatively and the data has been related by what the majority of respondents stated.

Information on "Other Community Partnerships" was done by research through libraries and the internet on Canadian, community programs run in partnership.

First contact was through mass e-mailing to 100 organizations. This e-mail contained a similar survey without the literacy-specific information or when it appeared obvious the questions or answers were geared to literacy groups.

The most amazing thing about this survey was that out of 100 organizations contacted, 73 organizations replied to the survey.

A more detailed follow-up call or e-mail was made to 17 respondents to clarify their responses.

Other research methods and sources:

- Site visits with five Family Literacy Programs ensuring contact was made with school board programs, family resource centres, literacy programs and military centres. At least one of the site visits was to a rural program. These visits also included interviews with volunteers, employees and participants within the program.

- Detailed internet research.

- Reading and researching a variety of written materials (see Bibliography, pages 127 - 129).

- E-mail contact with specific Family Literacy, Adult Literacy and Family related programs at a national and international level.

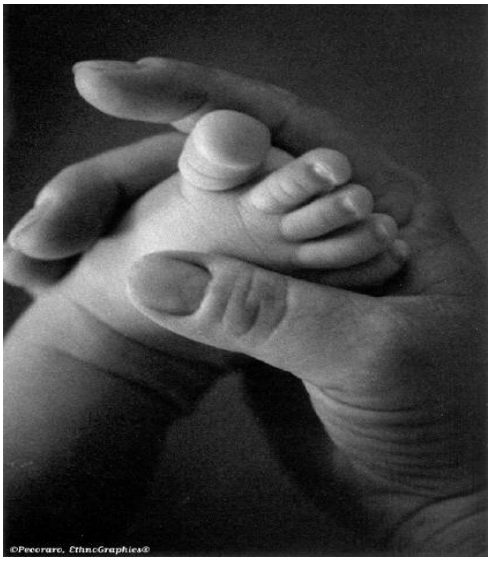
This mass amount of information was then organized and summarized into this guide. The intent of this guide is to give you the information you need and to not overwhelm you with TOO MUCH INFORMATION. If you would like more information, please use the Bibliography as a resource for materials on Family Literacy

INDEX

	Page#
CHAPTER ONE: Who is this guide intended for?	9
CHAPTER TWO: How to use the guide	11
CHAPTER THREE: A summary of what is found in the following chapters	15
CHAPTER FOUR: Definitions of Family Literacy	19
CHAPTER FIVE: Family Literacy Partnerships and Programs	35
CHAPTER SIX: When did it work and when didn't it work?	43
CHAPTER SEVEN: How to develop successful partnerships in Family Literacy Programs	63
CHAPTER EIGHT: Funding… Show me the Money! Please!!	73
CHAPTER NINE: Early Years Centres in Ontario	95
APPENDICES:	101
Appendix 1 – Partnership Agreement	102
Appendix 2 – Partnership Evaluations	109
Appendix 3 – Family Literacy Survey	113
Appendix 4 – PowerPoint Presentation (also to be found on enclosed CD)	121
BIBLIOGRAPHY	127

Chapter One

Who is this guide intended for?



IS THIS GUIDE IMPORTANT TO ME?

The easiest way to answer that question is to ask yourself these questions:

- Are you interested in starting a Family Literacy Program?
- Would a Family Literacy Program enhance services to your clients?
- Are you interested in family literacy?
- Do you currently run a Family Literacy Program?
- Are you a community agency interested in starting community partnerships to enhance your current or future programs?
- Are you an Early Childhood Educator?
- Do you work for or belong to a school board?

If you answered YES to any of these questions then this guide will be of use to you.

Each chapter in this guide is a stand-alone section. It is best to be read in its entirety, but if you have specific needs and interests, please follow "Chapter Two – How to Use the Guide" on page 11.

Chapter Two

How to Use the Guide

HOW DO I GET THE BANG FOR MY BUCK?

Personally, I believe there are two kinds of people out there who will use this guide:

1. People who like to read Guides, Manuals and Reference materials from beginning to end.

AND

2. People who like or need to find specific information in a Guide, Manual or Reference material.

This is based on the Kolbe A Index, by Kathy Kolbe. This index is based on your natural mode of operation or natural drive/instincts. According to Kolbe there are four basic action modes:

- Fact Finder – prober/researcher (#1)
- Follow Thru – planner/theorist (#1)
- Quick Start – generalist/entrepreneur (#2)
- Implementor – builder/handler (#2)

We all have a mix of these four, but it is where our natural impulse lies that we excel and that is our mode of operation.

If you are a Fact Finder or a Follow Thru person, you will still probably read the chapter breakdowns, however, you will also read the whole manual and be glad there is a bibliography for further research.

If you are a Quick Start or an Implementor then the chapter breakdowns will be a great way for you to focus in on what you "need" to read.

We also wanted to take into account that today individuals are extremely busy and need to have information given to them in a quick and

efficient way. That means “getting the bang for your buck”, as time is money.

Chapter Three

A summary of what is found in the following Chapters

CHAPTER BREAKDOWN

CHAPTER FOUR – DEFINITIONS OF FAMILY LITERACY

- This Chapter starts with the varying opinions on what family literacy means and the definitions (pages 20 - 24).
- The next section starts with identifying and summarizing the most common family literacy programs (pages 25 - 29).
- The next section deals with the definitions of partnerships and the kinds of partnerships found within the community and particular to family literacy (pages 30 - 33).

CHAPTER FIVE – FAMILY LITERACY PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMS

- This chapter starts with discussing how many agencies should be in a partnership (pages 36 - 37).
- The next section discusses the kinds of partners, the roles they can and should play (pages 38 - 41).

CHAPTER SIX – WHEN DID IT WORK AND WHEN DIDN'T IT WORK?

- This Chapter starts with the common elements of successful partnerships (pages 44 - 49).
- The next section deals with the common elements of Unsuccessful partnerships (pages 50 - 53).
- A summary of the "key elements for success" can be found on page 53.
- The next section reveals the findings of partnerships developed by other community organizations and what we can learn from them (pages 54 - 57).

- The next section deals with the common threads between successful family literacy partnerships and successful community organization partnerships (pages 58 - 60).
- The final section to this chapter summarizes the characteristics of an "ideal" partnership (page 61).

CHAPTER SEVEN – HOW TO DEVELOP SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS IN FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS

- This Chapter answers the questions of who, what, where, when, why and how when developing family literacy partnerships (pages 64 - 72).
- It gives concrete examples of "outside the norm" partners; needs and wish list items for the program; and facilitating the first partnership meeting.

CHAPTER EIGHT – FUNDING…SHOW ME THE MONEY! PLEASE!!

- This Chapter begins with answering the question of how important is funding to family literacy programs and partnerships? (pages 74 - 76).
- The next section deals with how to find funding (pages 77 - 79).
- Available funding is then highlighted (pages 80 - 84).
- The next section discusses the importance of and how to maintain funding once you get it (pages 85 - 86).
- Marketing strategy for obtaining funds and support is included (pages 87 - 91).
- Then a section on how to think differently…moving outside the box in obtaining funds and support (pages 92 - 94).

CHAPTER NINE – EARLY YEARS CENTRES IN ONTARIO

- This Chapter is specifically on the Early Years Initiative, Plan and Centres for Ontario and what that means to Family Literacy Programs and their partnerships (pages 96 - 99).

APPENDICES

- APPENDIX 1 contains:
  - A checklist for Developing a Partnership Agreement/Contract (pages 102 - 104).
  - A sample Partnership Agreement (pages 104 - 107).
  - A sample Format for a Partnership Agreement (page 108).

- APPENDIX 2 contains:
  - A sample of a "qualitative" evaluation process for partnerships (pages 109 - 111).
  - A sample of a mostly "quantitative" evaluation process for partnerships (page 112).

- APPENDIX 3 contains:
  - A copy of the on-line Family Literacy Survey that was used to gather information from Family Literacy Programs/Partnerships (pages 113 - 120).

- APPENDIX 4 contains:
  - A hard copy of the PowerPoint Presentation found on the enclosed CD. This version also contains presenter's notes and tips (pages 121 – 125).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Contains lists of resources and websites used in the research and writing of this guide (pages 127 – 129).

Chapter Four

Definitions of Family Literacy

A VARIETY OF OPINIONS

The one thing that is very clear about the definition of Family Literacy is that everyone has one and it is different!

The National Adult Literacy Database has divided the definition of Family Literacy into six activity categories. Not truly definitions in the dictionary sense, but they help to describe the variety of programming that organizations call Family Literacy

- Intergenerational – both parents and children are offered literacy instruction with both being seen as equal participants in the program.

An example of this kind of programming is the "United Kingdom Basic Skills Agency Intergenerational Family Literacy"

- Focus on Parent or Primary Caregiver – parents/caregivers are the main focus of the program. They usually receive training on ways to help develop their children's literacy skills at home.

An example of this kind of programming is "PRINTS".

- Parent Involvements – the focus of these programs is to increase parents/caregivers involvement in their children's literacy development through sessions which have both the parent/caregiver and child doing literacy related activities.

An example of this kind of programming is "Mother Goose" or "Come Read With Me".

- Family Literacy Activity for the General Public – the focus of these programs is on public awareness and/or informal participation for literacy enjoyment.

Examples of this kind of programming are "Reading Tents" or "Reading Circles".

- Projects for Family Literacy Resources – these programs create a variety of resources made available to parents/caregivers to help support family literacy.

An example of this kind of programming is "Books for Babies".

- Family Literacy Professional Development – these programs involve training practitioners already working in literacy or with families to help increase the support they give to family literacy development.

An example of this kind of programming is "Literacy and Parenting (LAPS)"

Definitions were also gleaned from a variety of resources: books, reference materials, manuals, surveys and interviews. The one thing that became very clear is that the parent MUST be involved to call it Family Literacy. If the program only focuses on children, then it should be defined as Children's Literacy.

The reason it is difficult to come up with a definitive definition is because Family Literacy encompasses many criteria and outcomes. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Addressing parents' child rearing concerns
- Parents/caregivers being able to interact with the school system on their own terms.
- Supporting the development of language and culture at home.
- The ways parents, children and extended family members use literacy at home and in their community.
- Addressing family and community concerns.
- Improving oral language, reading and writing and numeracy skills.
- Adults helping children with homework.
- Family members working together in literacy activities.
- Preventing children from having future literacy problems.

- Parents being a child's first and most important teacher.

- Being culturally responsive and diverse.

- Day-to-day tasks and activities.

- Providing families with information and support.

- Preventing the intergenerational problems of low literacy.

"To reach the children, reach the parents!"
Anonymous

A key observation that was made and emphasizes the point of this guide is that "Family Literacy is a shared responsibility that builds on existing community resources and combines the strengths of many partners and builds knowledge within the community."[1]

No one program can cover all aspects of Family Literacy, so it is important for groups to define their literacy program within their community and its needs.

Potential partners will need clear definitions. This is to ensure that everyone knows the expected outcomes and no

[1] The British Columbia Framework of Statements and Standards of Best Practices in Family Literacy, by Jean Rasmussen and Jo Dunaway

partner is "surprised." Partners having different agendas has been a common reason why Family Literacy partnerships have failed in the past.

The next chapter will deal with Family Literacy Partnerships and Programs and deal with why partnerships are successful and why they have been unsuccessful.

PROGRAMS

There are as many varied and variations of Family Literacy programs as there are definitions. It has proven to be advantageous for groups to use a well-recognized Family Literacy program when developing partnerships. However, there are unique programs that have defied these odds, too.

Even though there is a high degree of "definitional diversity" programs tend to fall into a few main types as defined on this and the following pages.

This section will deal with defining a number of different Family Literacy programs and share their rates of success in partnerships.

The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program: This is a very popular program run by 51% of Family Literacy providers. Parents and children work together on activities centred on rhymes, songs and stories. The teaching is done by a trained facilitator and directed at parents with children joining in, napping or wandering, as befits their age. Discussions are also done on how rhymes can be used in every day life.

Some facilitators, when asked why they used this particular program, stated it was a very cost-effective way to provide Family Literacy programming.

Books for Babies: This is the next most popular Family Literacy Program (26% of programs use this format). Parents of newborns receive "book bags" which have books they can read to their infants and tips on how to read and talk to their children. The program is usually sponsored by hospital and medical centres. It can also include a visit to the new mother explaining the importance of reading to children at birth.

Toy Library: This is a very popular program in Ontario with 32% (21% across Canada) of programs providing toy libraries. These are usually sturdy boxes filled with toys, games, books, activities and instructions directed at specific age groups. Just like books in a library, these boxes can be signed-out for families to use at home.

Nobody's Perfect: This model is used by 19% of programs (it is also very popular in Ontario with 32% of programs there). It is designed for parents with children under the age of five. It is also targeted at parents who are:

- Single
- Young
- Little formal education
- Low income
- Isolated

Facilitators create discussions around parent booklets based on "Body", "Safety", "Mind", "Behaviour" and "Parents."

Reading Circles: They are clubs where adults and children come together to read for pleasure. Group reading and literacy-related games are also a part of the process.

Storysacks: The focus of Storysacks is to give parents the confidence to enjoy books and reading with their children. A Storysack is a bag that contains: a picture book and activity materials related to the book (e.g. Sock puppets); a non-fiction book with an audio tape and a game based on the book. There are also information cards to give parents ideas for helping children with listening, reading and writing.

Literacy and Parenting (LAPS): This is a five module training program for Family Literacy practitioners. The concept is parents tutoring their children.

B.O.O.K.S. (Books Offer Our Kids Success): A trained facilitator works with small groups of eight to ten parents modeling ways to share books.

Come Read With Me: A trained facilitator works with parents and children to: encourage reading as a "fun" activity; aid

parents in developing their children's pre-reading and reading skills; help parents with low literacy skills read to their children and to encourage adults to continue their own education.

Kenan Intergenerational Model: Parents and children enroll in a full day program with four main goals:

1. adult education for the parents
2. early childhood education for preschoolers
3. parent and child time together
4. adult group discussions on parenting

Homespun: Provides instruction for parents on reading with their children. Parents discuss children's reactions to books, parenting and educational issues.

Learning Together Workshops: Communities offer cost effective family literacy workshops without costly prior training. The program offers workshop manuals and easy-to-read parent booklets.

Home-Based Family Literacy (Parents as Teachers, HIPPY): A trained individual (usually a parent within the community) visits another parent at home and works with him or her to increase her skills to enable her to participate in parent-child literacy activities. The program also supplies literacy resource materials focusing on language and reading with children.

Creating a Learning Culture in your Home (LLC): Trained facilitators provide a workshop series for

parents based on helping children to develop literacy skills and self-esteem. It also involves giving parents practical suggestions and tips for fitting reading and writing into the everyday routines of their family.

United Kingdom Basic Skills Agency Intergenerational Family Literacy: This model provides parent sessions and joint sessions for parents and children. The focus is to: help parents improve their own basic skills; support child literacy and language development; and help parents learn ways to support their children's literacy learning.

Parents' Roles Interacting with Teacher Support (PRINTS): A trained facilitator works with parents in teaching them ways to foster literacy development in their children. These include: talk, play, environmental print, books, book sharing and scribbling, drawing and writing.

Book Mates: A trained facilitator offers workshops for parents of preschoolers. The workshops focus on: the value of reading to children; literacy in daily activities; and the role of writing in early literacy development.

DEFINING PARTNERSHIPS

What is the definition of a partnership? *A* partnership is "an undertaking to do something together."[2]

What constitutes a partnership in Family Literacy is not always clear to everyone. Partners can be involved in a variety of ways. They can provide:

- Funds/Grants*
- In-kind services
- The programming
- The site
- The participants
- Public awareness
- Resources

Family literacy partnerships or family literacy community partnerships occur when there is involvement of at least two or more different organizations in providing the family literacy program. Often, two or more partners determine that they need

[2] Partnership Resource Kit, 1995

more resources or other expertise that they alone cannot offer.

It is perhaps easier to state the types of partnerships currently running within Family Literacy programs.

Donation – a one time financial or non-financial contribution to a program.

Sponsorship – ongoing financial support for a program.

Cooperation – two or more agencies share information.

Coordination – multi-disciplinary sharing of knowledge, decision-making and coordination of service delivery in the best interests of the participants.

Collaboration – Requires two or more agencies working together which includes joint planning, implementation and evaluation.

The most common cooperative, coordinated or collaborative partners for Family Literacy programs are:

- Libraries (50%)
- Literacy Agencies (49%)
- School Boards (48%)

- Parent/Family Resource Centres (35%)
- Health Care Associations (30%)

The most common sponsoring partnerships are with:

- Provincial government (50%)
- Service Clubs (23%)
- Federal government (20%)

Donation partnerships are more common than sponsoring partnerships. There are 55% of programs funded by donations.

Chapter Five

Family Literacy Partnerships and Programs

WHAT SHOULD BE THE NUMBER OF AGENCIES IN A PARTNERSHIP?

The term "the more the merrier" also seems to apply to Family Literacy program partnerships.

The national survey shows that 38% of Family Literacy programs run with five or more partners. If an organization wishes to have a smaller partnership three (23%) or two (17%) partners seems to be the most common.

It also showed that 35% of programs said the reason their partnership is a success is because they have a variety of partners involved.

In Chapter Seven we will be discussing the common elements of successful partnerships, but some of those elements come into play here as well.

No matter the number of partners in the program it is key to have one group as the lead in the partnership. It is also important to have partnership guidelines which include a vision/mission statement and roles of all the partners.

No common vision or goal was stated by 61% of programs that experienced a partnership

that failed. They all agreed they should have created partnership guidelines as that would have helped ensuring the workload was shared by all partners.

It is also key to note that only 11% of programs indicated having a very small number of partners involved is the reason their partnership is a success.

One program stated it is important to "go with the flow – accept that partnerships will come and go – as long as vision is maintained."

Another program said, "Partnerships are a great way to run a program, as well as a good way to reach a wide variety of clients directly through their service providers (who are partners)."

ROLES OF THE PARTNERS

We have established that it is important for one partner to take the lead in the partnership. The beginning need for this is that someone needs to approach the other partners to start the partnerships. The lead's responsibility is to ensure there is a goal or mission for the Family Literacy program. They also must play the "watchdog" to make sure the vision is maintained.

Most (85%) Family Literacy programs have run as partnerships since their inception.

Partners can take on many roles. As one program coordinator said, "Partnerships can really help you to meet goals, re: clientele, financing special projects, providing expertise and resources.

It is important for every partner to have a specific role. They need to feel valued and that their contributions are worth their while. When deciding on the roles of partners refer to what kind of partnerships (see page 31 "Types of Partnerships") you need and what you need them to provide to the partnership and/or program (see page 39 "Roles of Partners").

It is important to make a list of what is needed for the Family Literacy program (public awareness, resources, sites, participants, funds, etc.). From this list you

can identify key roles. From those roles you can identify potential partners. This is just the start, as once you have at least one more partner in place you can brainstorm these same ideas, again. It follows the six-degrees-of-separation theory, that we are only six communication steps away from anybody.

Skills in community development are key for partners to also have. Community partnerships are based on community development. If someone cannot be made to see how the partnership will benefit them and the community as a whole, you may lose them as a potential partner.

The following are roles that partners can play:

- Fundraising/donations. It is important to have a partner with these skills, as 55% of Family Literacy programs are funded or supplemented in this way.

- Site provision. In large urban areas the cost of sites is exorbitant and partnerships for this are key. In rural areas, it is important to find sites that are accessible. Obviously free is best, but sometimes cost-sharing a site with others is an important partnership.

- Participants. In many programs it is a struggle to accommodate the waiting lists. Unfortunately, when you are dealing with Family Literacy and low-literate parents, this is not the case. Family Literacy programs are generally open to all parents, but most would like to focus on non-reading parents. The easiest way to do this is to partner with programs that provide other parenting services, especially in low-income neighbourhoods (there is a direct correlation to poverty and low literacy [IALS 1996]).

- Educators. School boards are under a great deal of scrutiny today with the high rate of failure in early literacy testing. Most are looking for programs that can help both the children and parents. There is funding for certain age groups of children and adolescents they can access through the Ministry of Education to help supply extra support to these children.

- Resources. This can range from books to office supplies.

- Literacy Expertise. When dealing with low-literate parents it is best for practitioners to have knowledge and sensitivity to adult literacy issues and needs. Too many groups think it is just an "English as a Second language" issue.

- Early Education Development. Practitioners also must have a solid knowledge of brain development and literacy skills development in children. Besides child care centres and centres that focus on pre-school aged programming, colleges are a good partner for this if they run an Early Childhood Education program.

- Public Awareness. This role is key in promoting the program(s) to the broader community.

- Sponsorship. Funding is important and an on-going partnership with a sponsor or funder takes a major worry away for the Family Literacy program. Sixty-one percent of Family Literacy programs identified funding as being the biggest challenge for their partnership.

- Trained Facilitators. This depends on the kind of Family Literacy program you are running (or going to run). If the program requires trained facilitators, they are also partners, as many of them work as volunteers or for a small honorarium.

Chapter Six

When did it work and when didn't it work?

COMMON ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Family Literacy is complex. It is rare for one organization to have all of the resources necessary to provide a quality family literacy program. This is the reason that partnerships are vital. However, developing partnerships is time consuming. Typically, it takes two to three years to build a successful collaboration for it takes time to build the people relationships that make things happen.

It is clear that there is not just one element that makes a partnership successful, but rather a combination of many. These include:

- One organization maintaining the lead in the partnership. This concept needs to be dealt with in the Partnership Agreement (see Appendix 1, Page 102) to ensure clear accountability.

- Having partnership guidelines with clear goals for the Family Literacy program.

- Having a variety of partners involved.

- Having sustainable funding in place.

- Creation of an advisory committee with representatives from all the partners.

- Strategic planning being done on an annual basis.

- Having paid, skilled staff for the program.

One group leading in the partnership was identified by 54% of respondents as being a reason for success within their partnerships. This element is key to maintaining the vision of the Family Literacy program. It was noted that most partners are happy to play a secondary role, as they are busy with other programming needs. Partnerships function best with one strong leader.

An important first step is to clarify realistic expectations for each partner, including the workload. Creation of partnership guidelines that include these expectations was identified by 35% of respondents as a reason for the success of their partnerships. Partnership agreements aid in building trust and clarifying roles.

It is interesting to note that 100% respondents who had a failed partnership in the past would create partnership guidelines to ensure success in the future.

Thirty-five percent of respondents identified that having a variety of partners involved was the reason for the success of their Family Literacy programs. When there are a number of different partners involved, the program and participants benefit. According to participants, it is because with more partners they can provide better services. Perceived success rates seemed to be higher when partners were not too similar in nature. This may be explained because when partners have vastly different expertise they are clearer about their roles within the program. However, it is important to ensure that partners have similar philosophies. For example, if your Family Literacy program was geared to low-income, single mothers and their pre-school-aged children, sharing space and resources with a marriage counselor would likely not be the best fit.

Funding is an issue for all social service programs, but especially for Family Literacy programs. Respondents were asked if their partnerships had failed, what would they do differently in the future? Sixty-one percent of respondents stated they would solidify funding before starting the program. The same number of respondents also identified funding as being the biggest challenge for the partners. If Family Literacy partners need to spend a large

portion of their time seeking funding sources to maintain programs, then program development time is curtailed.

It is important that an advisory committee that represents all partners is there to ensure that the vision of the Family Literacy program is adhered to and that any revisions have input and are agreed on. It is also key for strategic planning and program evaluation. Evaluation allows all partners to see what the successes have been and also where things could be improved. The success (or failure) of achieving the outcomes of the program is a motivation for continuing the partnerships. The long-term success of a program can be predicted by the strength of the advisory committee.

The majority of Family Literacy programs (77%) have paid staff. Their roles vary from coordinator to facilitator. Dependent on the role they play, the qualifications usually include:

- Specific training to the particular Family Literacy program provided

- Experienced adult literacy practitioner

- Early Childhood Education Certificate

A paid staff person handles a large part of the workload for the partners by running the program(s). This helps with the main reason that partnerships have failed in the past…lack of sharing the workload by all partners.

Providing good lines of communication was also mentioned as a facet of successful partnerships. Successful partnering requires time, patience and relationship building. In many cases, the funding that is available for Family Literacy programs requires the participation of a variety of partners, without financially acknowledging the skills, time and effort that go into building and sustaining these partnerships.

Researchers agree that collaboration in services for children and families provides coordinated, linked program delivery. It is a way to make community resources more accessible and responsive to families. For example, have a family literacy program that is run by the community literacy organization, housed in the library and co-located with the health unit. Collaborative efforts tend to include more referrals of families. It is unlikely that family literacy programs will be able to have as significant an impact if they acted alone as compared to those that collaborate with other family services.

Finally, in order for the partnership to be long-lasting, the partners must have a vested interest in the project. If partners get involved at the grass roots level, they may be more able to see the vision and their connection to it. This is key in getting partners to time commit to the program for the time needed to fulfill the aims of the program. The partnership can be short or long term, but if partners do not remain the partnership for the needed length of time, then the family literacy program may stop and leave participants without a program. Participants and the community will lose confidence in the family literacy program and in future programs.

COMMON ELEMENTS OF UNSUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

In many cases, the reverse of the reasons for success are the reasons for not having a successful family literacy partnership. The list includes:

- Lack of funding (it is important to note that you can have a successful partnership, but the program could still fail because of funding problems).
- A lack of action or sharing the workload by all partners
- No common vision or goal
- Lack of communication
- Partners having hidden agendas
- Lack of flexibility and variety amongst the partners

Funding is often a reason that many agencies begin to enter into a partnership. "Many partnerships don't work and many are ill-conceived because organizations are forced into them to get funding."[3] In order to access funding, partnerships are necessary because almost any funding requires showing community partnerships.

[3] Smythe and Weinstein, 2000

In the past some funding requirements were plagued with red tape, as everything needed signed approval from all partners. This requirement was even included for simple in-kind donations.

Lack of work-sharing was also an identified reason for partnerships to have failed. Maureen Saunders from the Centre for Family Literacy, Alberta states that is essential to partner with others when providing a family literacy program because you end up providing better services when you work jointly with others' expertise. Family Literacy cannot be done in isolation. You need the resources and expertise of other agencies.

Differing values within partners can create a partnership barrier. In other words, when choosing a partner or partners, choose ones who have similar values. If goals, objectives and mandates of the agencies or groups partnering are not compatible, these differences can present conflict in the partnership. It is impossible to maintain the goal or vision of your program with partners who have dissimilar values.

It is necessary to meet and talk with partners on a continual basis in order to ensure that information is being shared and

If a program or partnership runs into these kind of issues, it is important to meet with the funders and discuss the drawbacks of this kind of "approval". A signed Partnership Agreement, indicating one or two partners as the signing authority, may also help to alleviate this problem

discussed. "Lack of time and poor communication were among the most
frequently cited problems in research regarding community partnerships."[3]

Thirty-nine percent of respondents stated that lack of communication and partners having hidden agendas were the reason the process failed. Some even stated that if there had been time to talk through the difficulties, solutions could have been reached. If there had been regular channels of communication to solve small problems they would never have become insurmountable. It does become clear that many of the "hidden agendas" were just a lack of communication.

A challenge to maintaining a partnership is a lack of flexibility with regards to scheduling meetings, meeting timelines and working together. Many times when advisory or partnership committees are created the manager or director of each group involved is asked to sit on the committee. Unfortunately, these are also people who have extremely busy meeting schedules. Other staff and members of each organization should be able to play a role on the advisory committee.

Not having a common mission or goal can totally stop a partnership. If one partner only wants to produce family literacy pamphlets but the other wants to promote family literacy by using mass media, it is unlikely that this partnership will continue. However, accept that some partnerships

[3] Skage, 1996

will come and go and that is okay as long as the vision is maintained.

In summary the key elements for success are:

- Solidifying funding before starting the program.
- Establishing an advisory committee from the partnership organizations.
- Identifying one group as the lead for the partnership.
- Creating partnership guidelines with a vision or goal for the Family Literacy program.
- Building partnerships with a variety of partners who have similar values
- Clear and frequent communication between the partners.
- Evaluating the program and partnerships.

Without these elements, the partnerships can fail and eventually so can the Family Literacy program.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS OUTSIDE FAMILY LITERACY?

Obviously many partnerships run within every community. Looking at other successful partnerships within the non-profit sector across Canada, is important to see if Family Literacy can work "outside the box." The survey asked the same questions of different respondents with the removal of any reference to Family Literacy.

Almost 100% of the respondents reported that the partnership is or was a success. Follow-up suggested that as many as 25% could possibly be reported as failures by at least one of the partners.

Partnerships were either less than one year or ongoing with many being over three years in length. Follow-up found that the short lived partnerships were the ones with the highest failure rates.

The majority of partnerships consisted of just two partners. The reasoning behind this for most respondents was it is potentially more difficult to maintain good lines of communication with multiple partners.

The types of partners involved were varied. They ran from similar non-profit groups (i.e. Block Parents partnering with Neighbourhood Watch) to corporate partners. The success rate was higher when the partners were not too similar in nature.

The most successful partnerships were with business and corporate partners. The reasons for this are two-fold:

- Businesses will only partner with those programs that are already successful or appear to have a good chance of success.

- Having "business minds" in the partnership allows for good organization and strategic planning.

The initiating partners usually perceived the partnership as a success. This seems to be due to the fact that they had a vision and had already planned it out before approaching the other partners. Non-initiating partners, for the most part, played a "follower" role.

Funding was also an issue for partners, as the programs usually ran outside their current budgets. A higher success rate was shown when one of the partners was a business providing financial sponsorship.

Even though respondents were hesitant to admit any partnership failures, the main problems reported were:

- Funding
- Work sharing
- Communication

The type of programs or the people it served had little to do with the success or failure of the partnership.

The key elements for a successful partnership are:

- A partnership consisting of no more than two partners.
- Being the initiating partner.
- Clear and regular communication between the partners.
- One organization as the lead group.
- Annual and strategic planning with partnership guidelines.
- Sharing the workload.
- Evaluation.

The key elements for unsuccessful partnerships are:

- A partnership consisting of multiple partners.
- Lack of communication.
- Partners "going along for the ride" and not taking responsibility for the program.
- No strategic planning.
- No partnership guidelines.
- Funding stopped.

ARE THERE COMMON THREADS TO SUCCESS?

The most obvious answer is "yes" and these are the threads:

- One partner takes the lead in the partnership.
- Open and clear communication between the partners.
- Creating partnership guidelines (sharing the workload) with a common vision or goal for the program/project.
- Annual and strategic planning with an evaluation process.
- Solid and/or on-going funding.

The differences are in the number of partners, establishing an advisory committee, being the initiating partner and the importance of funding.

Establishing an advisory committee is less important when you have only two partners. As research has shown, a variety of partners brings more information, skills and access to the program. The reason for two partners is clear, it is easier to maintain, not better. Fewer partners means fewer

differing opinions. It is also important to note that when the majority of individuals doing the work are volunteers then two partners may be all that can be maintained without paid staff.

The majority of respondents from other community partnership programs/projects identified their programs as being run by volunteers with no paid staff. Even though funding was indicated as an issue it was not identified as the reason for success or failure of the program. This could be because more of these partnerships were with businesses who provided the funding than business partnerships with Family Literacy programs (21% as compared to 11%).

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Family Literacy programs take the lead in developing community partnerships with a variety of partners. However, other community organizations take the lead in developing partnerships outside the not for profit sector…more specifically, business partnerships.

WHAT IS THE IDEAL PARTNERSHIP?

The specifics of an ideal partnership will vary from community to community, but the elements should remain the same:

- All partners have a variety of skills and expertise but hold similar values.
- Partnership guidelines are developed and agreed to by each partner.
- A clear vision or goal for the Family Literacy program is in place.
- The workload is shared.
- A source for funding the program is established.
- An advisory committee is in place holding regular meetings.
- Clear lines of communication are established.
- One organization is the lead partner responsible for the day-to-day running of the program.
- Annual and strategic planning is done.
- An evaluation process is established and carried out.

Chapter Seven

How to develop successful partnerships in Family Literacy Programs

W-5…IT'S NOT JUST THE NAME OF A SHOW

The Canadian television news show, "W-5" is based on the simple concept of a good news story. This means it answers the questions:

- WHO
- WHAT
- WHERE
- WHEN
- WHY

and HOW. These questions are also key for marketing (see pages 87 - 90 in Chapter Eight).

To successfully develop family literacy partnerships you must also be able to answer the W-5.

WHO?

Some of your partners maybe obvious and come from the previous lists the survey has suggested (see pages 30 - 32). However, there may be other partners that fall outside the norm:

- Tenants' associations
- Women's shelters
- Home-schoolers' associations
- Retired teachers' federations
- Volunteer service clubs
- Banks

The question is: Where do you find these people and organizations? The answer is simpler than you think. Most libraries carry a variety of directories for their regions. These directories have invaluable information on businesses, organizations, foundations, etc.

- Scott's Directories are well researched and present a synopsis on all of these kinds of groups.

- Chambers of Commerce also print out directories of their members with a biographical sketch on each.

- Business Directories are also created by cities and regions and most can be accessed by CD-ROM.

- Blue Books on not-for-profit organizations are also available in most cities.

Librarians are extremely helpful when looking for these kinds of reference materials and may be able to help you refine your search.

WHAT?

You now have a list of potential partners, but what do you need them to do? This is where you must create your "need" and "wish" lists for your program.

Needs:

- Research…your program has to find out what you NEED for it to be a success in your community
- Clients…parents/caregivers and their children
- Space…what size and kind of space do you need to administer and provide your program?
- Resources…books, materials, office supplies, etc.
- Human Resources…staff, trainers, volunteers
- Advertising…to attract potential clients and funders/donors
- "Start-up" funding…this can cover your costs for up to one year
- On-going funding…stable funding is what we "wish" to achieve, but as long as there are project and special dollars available, the partnership can get started

Wish List:

- Stable funding sources…it has been identified as a key to the success of family literacy partnerships, but currently stable funding is just a "wish" for many programs
- Permanent space…many not-for-profit programs are located in spaces donated by community groups and religious organizations
- Accessibility…we strive to make our programs available to everyone, but physically and financially this may not be possible
- Childcare…this may be a need for some programs, but other family literacy programs have the children and parents working together (move it to the list most appropriate for your program)
- Special Speakers…no matter the program it is always important to break-up the routine or to draw new interest with presentations from "experts"
- Food…snacks and beverages are helpful and can enhance a program for parents/caregivers in economically-depressed areas

The next step is to match potential partners with your Needs and Wish Lists.

WHERE?

You have your list of partners with solid reasons for partnering with them, but where do you meet and…

WHEN?

Everyone's time is valuable and most likely the people you want to partner with are quite busy, however, it is important to meet with each partner individually. You can start with an introductory letter or e-mail about your program. This letter should also contain information on their potential role in the partnership and that you will be following up the letter with a telephone call. All of this needs to be done in one-page, so be concise…the letter should leave them wanting more information.

Follow-up the letter with a phone call (as stated) within a week of sending it. Tell them you have a brief presentation (see the PowerPoint Presentation in the Appendices on pages 121 - 125) that you would like to give to them and anyone else in their organization (this presentation can also be done by using overheads). It is important to emphasize that this is a partnership and that your presentation will outline the benefits to not only the community, but to them as well. If they seem hesitant about a face-to-face meeting, then offer to send them the presentation via e-mail.

Remember to modify the presentation to the specifics of <u>this</u> particular partner.

WHY?

This question has been answered in some ways, but you may be asking the question, "Why approach them separately?"

Approaching each potential partner separately before bringing everyone together gives you the chance to emphasize their specific role in the partnership. Some people will see the "big picture" and understand where they fit in, but others need to see the benefit to their particular program, business or organization before seeing how everything will fit together. It is also a key step in cultivating relationships which can be done best in a one-to-one situation.

HOW?

You have a sample PowerPoint presentation that can be adapted to your needs for the one-to-one presentations. The next "how" is how to get everyone together.

Once you have given the presentation, ensure you have a set a date for a potential first meeting of all partners. It needs to be enough in advance to give everyone appropriate notice and to allow you time to meet with each group or person individually. Looking at your own schedule, you know that

you need at least one month's notice of impending meetings. The first presentation should give you a good idea how much time a partner may require to schedule a meeting.

The first meeting of all partners is important for the success of the program. There needs to be a very clear agenda with solid times allotted to each point. This means facilitating the meeting will require an excellent chair that can keep everyone to the time. The agenda should cover:

- Warm-up exercise…new people in a new group situation need to have a chance to feel more comfortable or to bond…find an appropriate "icebreaker" to start the meeting.
- Timelines for the program…let them know when you hope to have the program up and running and show timelines for each set-up step.
- Partnership agreements…this needs to be discussed, as some individuals may not feel comfortable with signing an agreement. Sample agreements (see appendices, page 104) should be shared ahead of time when the agenda is sent out. Ask them to come with their own ideas on the wording of the agreement.
- Brainstorming session…you have done a lot of research to find the right partners. Now you have a few and perhaps they have suggestions for other partners they can bring into the partnership. This can be listing the "strengths" of the current group and the "gaps" they see needing to be filled.

- Next steps…you have done all the planning to this point, but now the work can be shared. Make sure that when the next steps are identified that someone's name or organization goes next to it for taking responsibility of that item. Attaching completion dates to these milestones is also important.

- Next meeting date…everyone will want to keep meetings to a minimum, but follow-up and deadlines are required at the start-up and that requires meetings to ensure that everything is done.

Make sure to take minutes of the meeting and that they are sent out to all partners as soon as possible. Action steps should be in bold for easy reference.

At the next meeting of the partners, make sure to talk about strategic planning and one and two year plans. Keeping everyone focused on the longevity of the program will create the positive environment for success.

Remember that it is important for one group to take the lead in the partnership. It may seem like a lot of work at the start, but eventually the work will pay off in many ways.

Chapter Eight

Funding. . . Show me the Money! Please!!

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT?

By now you understand the importance of partnerships. In addition to partnerships, funding is also vital. It is important because without money, a program cannot continue. Presently, a large number of family literacy programs are not funded by either provincial or federal governments as these programs do not "fit" their specific mandates. Due to this, there is no sustainable source of funding for these programs. This results in many family literacy programs looking to alternate sources for financial support, such as:

- Foundations
- community businesses
- institutions

"Funding is one of the biggest challenges facing family literacy practitioners and those interested in developing programs"[4]. You may recall that "sustainable funding" was listed by 30% of survey respondents as being necessary for the success of the program.

[4] Skage, 1995

In 2000, the Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs held a national consultation and developed a response to a "Public Dialogue on the National Children's Agenda Developing a Shared Vision" (July 2000). One of the four recommendations was to designate funds to stabilize and expand existing support to families. This organization determined that offering a comprehensive system of family support in Canada would cost $76.58 per year per family with children.

"Between government cutbacks on the one hand and increased demands from the public on the other, family resource programs urgently require additional funding to support a wide range of program components "[5].

In 1987, there was a public policy formulated by national organizations concerned about the lack of literacy skills in Canadians. The organizations responsible were concerned that one in five Canadians could not read and write well enough to effectively participate in Canadian society. They also recognized that a lack of literacy skills was interrelated with poverty, unemployment, and decreased national productivity. As well, they found that a lack of literacy skills was an inter-generational problem in that children were

[5] Kellerman, 1998

far more likely to have good literacy skills if their parents had good literacy skills. They felt that a comprehensive system of family support in Canada was necessary.

HOW DO YOU FIND FUNDING?

Finding funds can be a daunting endeavour to say the least. By now you have learned that having many diverse partners can help your family literacy program. What you may not know is that often you still need financial support.

There are many places you can begin to look for money. Unfortunately, most of you do not have a lot of extra time to look for money.

One way to obtain money is to write a proposal to a funder such as the National Literacy Secretariat. This proposal will need to include a lot of information about your program including what you promise to deliver, who your clients will be, and how much the program will cost. In this proposal you will be asked to list your partners so having many diverse partners will help you. Way to go! You are already partly there.

It is important to note that the National Literacy Secretariat will fund "projects", not "programs". These grants are a wonderful way to get a program started, but alternate funding will be required to sustain the program.

When developing a funding concept, a detailed action plan with measurable outcomes helps in guiding and evaluating the work through its evolution. There are a few things that you can do to make your proposal leap to the top of the pile.

- Make your proposal a regional one because it saves the funder time and it makes it easier for them because they can receive one proposal from many organizations instead of five proposals from five different organizations.

- Determine the links between literacy and other social development programs because often the funder will not see the link. "Any program can be a family literacy program if links are made between the literacy development of children and the learning needs and roles of their parents and families "[6]

- Encourage specific organizations to fund specific programs. For example, if you have a diverse program (and you will with all the different partners you have), find the links. For example, the library may offer you free space and the Ministry of Health may give you money for prevention of malnutrition because you can offer a course for low-literate parents regarding nutrition.

[6] Smythe, 2000

- When you are writing your proposal, highlight the areas of interest to that specific funding agency first. For example, if you are asking the Ministry of Community and Social Services for money, highlight the portion dealing with children and the benefits from prevention of illiteracy.

- Use your local network to identify government officials who have an interest in family literacy issues or who can influence budgetary decisions. Invite them to sponsor or be guest speakers at your events.

- Capitalize on any changes in policy direction. In 2000, there was an announcement of the "National Children's Agenda" funding which designated $30 million dollars for the development of Early Years Centres to support families and children aged zero to six. This was and still is an opportunity for all centres to find additional funding.

- Develop a personal relationship and rapport with any possible funders as this will keep your name fresh in their memory and first, when and if new money becomes available.

WHERE IS FUNDING AVAILABLE?

There are many possible sources of funding. The key to attaining funding is to be creative, honest, and linked to the funder's mandate. Some possible sources for family literacy funding include:

- National Literacy Secretariat – provides start up money for many family literacy initiatives. They will support projects that improve access and outreach. Also, they support projects that increase public awareness so family literacy can fit into their mandate.

- Family and Children's Services – if there is a direct link to their clients (i.e. children who live in difficult family situations) they may support your program.

- School Boards, Community Colleges, Universities – again if you can find a specific link to one of their programs or mandates, they sometimes can find money to help support a program with "in kind" or financial support

- Faculty of Education – sometimes there are funds available for programming that helps children.

- Ministries of Health, Education, Social Services – federal ministries will support initiatives that can be supported with a cause/effect relationship. You are best to talk with a representative before putting all of the time and effort into writing your proposal because they may give you ideas as to how to make your idea fit with their funding.

- Fundraising (i.e. Bingo's, Nevada Tickets, etc.) – find a local artist to donate some artwork to be raffled off or have a local nursing home have their residents create a quilt to be raffled off. In fundraising, you are only limited by your creativity.

- Donations from Service Groups – if you can find a local member who believes in your cause, make a presentation at one of their meetings to "drum up" some funding for your project.

- Churches – often have extra money for special projects. They may be able to provide a "one-time" donation towards a program running in their community.

- Corporate and Business Donations – again, finding an employee (preferably one in management) who can be a champion for your family literacy program. If you can find a need within that business, the business or corporation is more likely to provide sponsorship for your family literacy program (s).

- Provincial Government – depending on the mandate for any given year, some ministries within the provincial government may be open to funding a family literacy program if a direct causal nature can be demonstrated.

- Canada Council for the Arts – will fund Literacy Festivals.

- United Way – you can apply to be a United Way recipient. They require an annual proposal as well as reports detailing the program and the participants attending the program.

- Champions or Individual donors - find a rich person who you can convince that family literacy is important and you may have found the quickest way to money for your program.

- Newspapers – some local newspapers will provide funds for family literacy.

For example: The Ministry of Health in Ontario has funded Family Literacy Programs when sections of the program dealt with Health Issues.

- Literacy Foundations – those geared specifically to literacy programming are open to new ideas for programs.

- ABC Canada - Honda Canada sponsors family literacy initiatives which you can find out about through the provincial family literacy organization (Ontario Literacy Coalition). You must be a member of the OLC in order to be considered for these funds.

- The Writer's Union of Canada – will fund author's visits to public venues and programs across Canada. This might be one way to get your family literacy program jump-started.

- Canada Post – become familiar with the manager in your region, as both the Corporation and employees are very supportive of family literacy.

- Starbucks Foundation – these grants require a partnership with a local Starbucks store and employees. Not only are there funds available, but you can also have a partnership with a local business that can provide beverages and volunteers for events.

- Other Foundations such as Ontario Trillium Foundation – it has a

community grant which recognizes the important and interdependent roles played by arts, culture, heritage, recreation, sports, and social services and the underlying value of a strong economy and a healthy environment. Many other foundations have specific programs or projects they will fund. You may source various foundations through a book on Foundations located in libraries.

HOW DO YOU MAINTAIN FUNDING?

What you need to do is find the connection for the funder/donor/sponsor and make sure that you have their logo and/or name in as many places as possible. Some literacy foundations have a full time person who seeks funding for literacy. Many corporations are looking for their logo on as much stuff as they can get for their sponsorship. A tip to please the sponsor is to add their name or logo on all media opportunities. These include:

- Articles in the paper (daily and community newspapers)
- Local radio stations
- Regional and trade magazines
- Local television affiliates
- Municipal newsletters and mailings
- Newsletters of local service clubs, community organizations, unions, and professional associations
- Community bulletin boards

Present them with a report that includes how many times their name was mentioned in the paper or on the television or other mass media. "In concrete terms demonstrate the return on their investment"[7].

[7] Featherstone, 2002

You must also try to develop a relationship with newspapers and magazines so that you may be able to get some articles for free. Make sure that you always produce high quality advertisements so that the sponsor is well represented.

Business and corporate donations appreciate a letter detailing how their money will be spent and follow this up with a "year-end" report. This is something concrete they can share with their shareholders and employees.

Certificates of appreciation to all business donors have a two-fold benefit.

1. The donors feel appreciated and acknowledged and will remember this when budgeting for donations in the next fiscal year.

2. The donor is likely to publicly display your certificate and other potential donors may become interested in supporting your program.

HOW TO MARKET YOUR FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM

You must begin by conceptualizing that family literacy is larger than you think. **"Literacy gets good media coverage, but only as a charity on the community page of the newspaper…We need to make a more compelling case."**[8] The key to any marketing plan is to develop a targeted and comprehensive plan. You must answer all of the following questions: who, what, where, when, why, and how.

1. **Who can you and will you contact?**
   - Try to think about possible sponsors for your family literacy program. For a complete list, see list on previous pages entitled "Where is funding available?"

2. **What are you selling (put it in concrete terms)?**
   - For a literacy program, you are selling a program that will enable parents and their children to communicate and relate to each other better. You may be selling the chance for parents to understand how to parent in a

[8] Community Development Worker during Consultation in British Columbia, 2002

better way and how to read to their children in a more deliberate, literacy fashion. For children, you are offering a fun and learning time for them to spend with their parents/caregivers. You may be selling self-esteem for parents when they understand how they can help their child(ren),when they can model good literacy practices, and when they realize that they have been doing some of the right things all along.

3. **Where are you selling the family literacy program?**
   - You may be confined to offering the family literacy program at your agency but if you are able to offer it at various community sites, this is more far-reaching and may enable to you contact different partners/sponsors.

4. **When will the family literacy program occur?**
   - You should detail all of your family literacy programs so that the donor can determine if this meets their mandate and need. Will it be a morning program, afternoon, evening, weekend program?

   - You may have a number of family literacy programs occurring so include all of them. The sponsor may decide to sponsor one program, many programs, administrative costs; who knows? Give as much information as possible so that the donor can decide what the best fit is for them.

5. **Why do they need this family literacy program?**

- This is usually an "easy sell." There is a tremendous amount of documentation around why and how family literacy works. You are best to use the statistics readily available. Try to find local statistics if possible. Foremost, use Canadian data.

- You can contact your local literacy network to find out the literacy statistics and population.

- Then check the NALD (National Adult Literacy Database) website www.nald.ca to find specific data on family literacy which will include the benefits to individuals. You can extrapolate this data to include your local community.

- Then create a package that has all the information that you will need (at your fingertips) to present to potential sponsors.

6. **How will their money support the family literacy program?**
    - Part of this strategy is to create a "Cost-Benefit Analysis." This analysis should include:

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Costs	Benefits
1. Administration - salaries - paper - facsimile - telephone calls to parents - advertisement in the paper (let them know that their name will appear on all correspondence with media as a sponsor of the program) 2. Rent 3. Electricity 4. Any other Costs incurred in the program	1. How will they save money? 2. How will this improve the local community? 3. Is it advantageous to program for families in addition to providing education for children and adults? 4. How much better will their company look to the community when shown on all media regarding the program?

LOOKING OUTSIDE THE BOX -

The thing that jumps out at us is the way we divide our resources. With every charity and special interest group vying for the same pot of money, it seems impossible for Canadians to ever have enough money to support all of the necessary causes. Family literacy is an exception. It must be supported.

Family literacy has a direct cause/effect relationship for chances at success later in life. Parents who read to their children from day one and who practice literacy activities at home, tend to have children who grow up to be readers and who model their parents. If we wish to have a literate society, then we need to put money into family literacy programs now.
In order to provide funds for family literacy programs we need to:

- Advertise on all mediums that "literacy" is a good word, not a bad word
- Provide opportunities for all parents to attend family literacy programs with their children (which encourage them to improve their own literacy skills and teach them literacy techniques and activities that they can do at home with their children)

- We need to provide transportation to and from programs
- We need to provide on-site child care for pre-school aged children
- We need to encourage, not penalize programs who partner with many different organizations, who save money and who continue to offer the same program if it is successful
- We need to encourage the acceptance of literacy practitioners as experts, even if they do not have a teaching certificate
- We need to provide money for administration, not only program delivery
- We need to be more holistic in our thinking and see that family literacy training is only the beginning of a continuum of learning and is the first of all literacy training
- The Early Years Funding should be linked closely with programs who have practitioners such as Early Childhood Education workers, teachers, family literacy practitioners, librarians,
- Fund family literacy as a right unto itself

These are all key points that can be shared within our own communities, politicians, funders and media. The more these kinds of points are emphasized, the more that

family literacy will be at the forefront of the public's mind.

Thinking outside of the box also requires us to not just go after the regular avenues of funding. Many Canadian universities and colleges have requirements for their business students to do volunteer work within the community. It may be as simple as writing a one to two page proposal for having students:

- create a marketing plan for raising funds
- research foundations that support family literacy initiatives
- assist with fundraising activities
- plan a fundraising event

The opportunities are endless!

Chapter Nine

Early Years Centres in Ontario

Ontario's Early Years Plan

The plan is based on the Early Years Study that was commissioned by the provincial government in 1998.

The plan had a two-fold purpose:

- To learn more about how parents, government and communities can affect every aspect of a young child's life positively.

- To learn more about how parents, government and communities can help prepare youth for success in school, careers and society.

The Early Years Study found that the first six years of a child's life are crucial for setting the foundation for the child's lifelong learning, behaviour and health.

Focusing on that thought the "Plan" has three main points:

1. Set-up Ontario Early Years Centres across the province.
2. Investment in targeted programs (for example: children's mental health, learning disabilities, etc.).
3. Investment in universal programs (for example: Healthy Babies/Healthy Children, **Early Literacy**, etc.).

The mandate of the Early Years Centres is to ensure that ALL families have access to early years services within their community.

The provincial government under the Ministry of Community, Family and Children Services is planning to establish 103 Early Years Centres across Ontario. 61 of these Centres will be set up by April 2003.

Data Analysis Coordinators (DAC) and Early Literacy Consultants (OEYC) are part of the Ontario Early Years Centres.

One service they provide is "early learning and literacy programs for parents and children".

For the first phase of these Centres it has been crucial for Family Literacy Programs to become involved in the Community Planning Process. This process is a mandate for the Centres and the reason it is crucial to Family Literacy Programs is to ensure that the skills and knowledge of these programs is valued by the Centres. Currently, Family Literacy Programs in communities who have started the planning process and the operation of Early Years Centres have found that it has been helpful to:

- Be involved at the planning stage

- Be involved in the hiring of the OEYC and ensure they are familiar with Family Literacy Programs within that community (currently a number of OEYCs were former Family Literacy Program employees and in these communities the Family Literacy Programs have positively reported towards this initiative)

- Offer to host the OEYC and DAC in the planning stage (Family Resource Centres would either be an Early Years Site or become a satellite office)

- Maintain continuous contact with the OEYC

- Apply for special funds provided by the Early Years Initiative through the planning process

Many current Family Literacy Programs have been successful in procuring these special funds to help support their programs or new initiatives. This funding is only available if the program or project is done in a community partnership.

Partnerships are the emphasis for the Early Years Plan and Centres. Working in isolation as a Family Literacy Program in Ontario is soon going to be a thing of the past.

This guide cannot say how the other provinces will react to the Ontario Early Years Centres and Plan, but both the Federal and Provincial governments

have shown that groups working together in partnership are favoured.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Checklist for Developing a Partnership Agreement/Contract[9]

This is a comprehensive checklist – address the items that pertain to your partnership.

General Information	To Be Started	In the Works	Finished	Action Steps
Mission statement for the agreement				
Length of the Partnership				
Partnership agreement amendments, renewal and termination procedures				
Role of each partner in the agreement development and approval process				
"Conflict of interest" statements				
Signatures of partners and date of signing (usually at the end of the document)				
Partnership Services				
Number of parents/children/families to be served				
Hours, days and weeks of operation				
Location of services				
Each partner's role in delivering the Family Literacy Program: program, meetings, record keeping, promotion, staff, overseeing, funding, fundraising, childcare, evaluation etc.				
Staff assigned to support the partnership; which partner employs and supervises which staff				
Responsibilities of each partner's staff				
Staff Schedules				
Supervision procedures				
Professional development responsibilities				

[9] Adapted from QUILT – Quality In Linking Together Early Education Partnerships - 2002

Partnership Services (cont'd)	To Be Started	In the Works	Finished	Action Steps
Hiring procedures				
Annual performance appraisal procedures				
Provisions for back-up staff				
Funding and Resources				
Funding and resource commitment of each partner				
Payment by participants				
Funding strategies				
Fundraising				
Designated responsibilities for: facilities/space, maintenance, repairs, food service, supplies, equipment, books and who will retain ownership of equipment when/if the partnership ends				
In-kind services				
Provisions for the loss of grant funding				
Planning and Decision-Making				
Role of each partner in planning and decision making				
Policies and procedures for the advisory committee				
Evaluation process				
Strategies to include parents/families and the community in the planning				
Items that will require approval by the partners				
Communications				
Frequency and type of meetings				
Frequency and type of reports				
Communications responsibility of each partner				
Use of technology – e-mail, shared databases, fax, etc.				
Protocols for information sharing				
Dispute resolution procedures				
Record keeping and Documentation				
Recruitment, enrollment applications and intake				
Statistical information of program participants				
Storage of records – stats, intake, minutes, agreements, etc.				
Evaluation distribution and summaries				

Record keeping and Documentation (cont'd)	To Be Started	In the Works	Finished	Action Steps
Confidentiality				
General Administrative Elements				
Designated contact person for each organization involved				
Liability insurance				
Use of partners' names (how partners will publicize the services sponsored by the partnership)				

Sample Partnership Agreement - 1

Partnership Agreements[10]

Model of a "Partnership Agreement"

The following model is used for illustrative purposes and is not a recommendation for a specific agreement nor does it represent a particular priority.

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

1. Agreement To Establish Partnership.

The Baltimore District of the Food and Drug Administration and the Department of Medical Services of the State of Columbia agree to plan and schedule joint statutory inspectional coverage of the medical gas repacking industry in the State of Columbia.

2. Partnership Purpose and Goals.

To cover the entire medical gas industry in the State of Columbia without duplication of effort and to achieve maximum consumer protection. This agreement covers the period 10/1/98 - 9/30/99.

3. Program Areas and Activities For Partnership.

a. The program area for partnership includes the Federal and State statutory inspectional requirements for domestic CGMP drug manufacturers/repackers. Specifically identified are those firms which produce medical gases within the State of Columbia. Inspectional priorities are as follows:

(1) Firms with previously violative histories.

(2) Firms not inspected within the last two years or longer.

[10] This sample partnership agreement came from the Food and Drug Administration of the United States Government. It also gives a clear model outline following the sample contract.

(3) Firms having unusually complex operational technologies.

b. Cooperating Agency Contacts.

(1) FDA.

Sidney Rogers - Medical Gas Program Monitor for Baltimore District.

(2) State of Columbia.

Cynthia Roberts - Department of Medical Services Program Supervisor.

c. Statutory Basis for Partnership Agreement.

FDA - Federal Food Drug and Cosmetic Act: Section 501 (a)(2)(b), 21 CFR 210 & 211.

State of Columbia - Columbia Public Health Code.

The requirements of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act have been adopted by the State of Columbia by reference in their Public Health Code and are, therefore, equivalent requirements.

4. Responsibilities.

Joint:

Each party will provide their Official Establishment Inventories of Medical gas firms to produce a combined list.

Ten inspections will be conducted jointly by the parties during this agreement.

Each party will share inspection reports for inspections not performed jointly.

Coordinate legal actions before they are carried out.

Coordinate anticipated publicity.

Conduct a one week training course in CGMP compliance issues and inspection techniques on medical gases to assure consistency of inspection efforts between FDA and Columbia inspectors.

Evaluate work results.

FDA:

Inspect 25% of the medical gas industry in the State of Columbia listed on the combined inventory during the partnership period.

Provide funding for training of FDA and Columbia inspectors who will conduct inspections.

Provide instructors for joint training.

Columbia:

Inspect 75% of the medical gas industry in the State of Columbia listed on the combined inventory.

Provide a training site for joint inspection training.

Provide instructors for joint training.

5. Planned Resources.

a. Funding.

Training - $5,000 to be funded by FDA.

Inspections - Partners will individually fund inspections performed from operating budgets.

b. Personnel.

FDA will provide 5 investigators to perform inspections.

FDA will provide 2 instructors for training purposes.

Columbia will provide 12 inspectors to perform inspections.

Columbia will provide 1 instructor for training purposes.

6. Assessment Mechanisms.

a. Track EIs performed with classifications

b. Database of 483s or lists of adverse findings showing specific adverse findings and frequency.

c. Develop a database to reflect costs of EIs, training, overhead so average cost/EI could be calculated.

d. Interim evaluations of progress occur quarterly by joint FDA/Columbia project coordinators meeting to review data (i.e. teleconference, face-to-face meeting).

e. Final evaluations occur within 30 days after 9/30/99. Evaluation occurs in the form of a narrative report reflecting the extent to which goals of eliminating Federal/State duplication of inspections and maximizing consumer protection by assessment of individual databases and drawing conclusions. The evaluation will be performed jointly by the FDA and

Columbia project coordinators. Again, the joint effort can occur by teleconference or face-to-face meeting.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations.

Based on the final evaluations performed, the Project Coordinators will jointly prepare several options for follow-up agency actions, if and when appropriate, for approval by the signatories to this agreement.

8. Signatures of Responsible Parties:

FOR FDA:

_____ _____

Melvin Klutz date
District Director, Baltimore

FOR COLUMBIA:

_____ _____

Zelda O'Brien date
Director, Columbia Dept. of Medical Services

last edited 06/07/00

Partnership Agreements

Format of "<u>Partnership Agreement</u>"

1. Statement of agreement to establish partnership.

2. Partnership purpose and goals.

    a. Identify specific timeframes-beginning-ending periods.

    b. List anticipated outcomes.

3. Program area and activities.

    a. Identification of program area and priority.

    b. Cooperating agency contacts.

    c. Affirmation that there is a statutory basis for partnership activity.

4. Responsibilities.

Anticipated output activities of partners.

    a. Identify FDA responsibilities.

    b. Identify cooperating agency responsibilities.

5. Resources planned to carry out partnership.

6. Assessment mechanisms.

Based on anticipated output activities and anticipated outcomes.

    a. Interim (time frames).

    b. Final (time frames).

7. Conclusions and Recommendations.

Review of activities and accomplishments.

Provides for a final report including a discussion of results of partnering efforts along with recommendations for follow-up action if warranted.

8. Signatures of responsible parties.

APPENDIX 2

PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION

Samples of Partnership Evaluation

This is a sample of an qualitative evaluation process.

Partnership Agreements

PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION [11](Fiscal Year _____)

DFSR Tracking #_____ (Partnership Agreement)

1. TYPE: _____ Partnership Agreement _____Partnership Activity

2. FDA REGION/DISTRICT:

3. STATE/OTHER PARTNER:

4. PARTNERSHIP SUMMARY:

5. INCLUSIVE DATES: _____TO _____

6. RESOURCES:

7. OUTPUTS: (How many samples, number people trained, etc.)

[11] This sample partnership evaluation came from the Food and Drug Administration of the United States Government.

8. OUTCOMES:(What was the result, benefit to partners, consumers?)

9. EVALUATION OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT/ACTIVITY: (strengths/weakness, positives/negatives, goals met, etc.)

10. RECOMMENDATIONS:

11. Annual Evaluation Final Evaluation

12. RENEW PARTNERSHIP: YES/NO

13. NEW PARTNERSHIP DATES: _____TO _____

14. Date of Meeting/Conference Call on evaluating Partnership Agreement/Activity: _____

15. Names of partners who participated in the evaluation

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

This is a sample of a mostly quantitative evaluation process.

Partnership Evaluation[12]

1=poor/unsatisfactory to 6=excellent

1. How was the partnership development process?

   1 2 3 4 5 6

2. Were the advisory committee meetings run efficiently?

   1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Did the Family Literacy Program meet your expectations?

   1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Was the distribution of work within the partnership fair?

   1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Would you recommend this kind of partnership to others?

   1 2 3 4 5 6

a) How would you improve this Family Literacy Partnership?

b) What do you think was the best component of this partnership?

c) What did you least like about this partnership?

d) Would you be interested in continuing this partnership?

e) Comments (is there any further information on this partnership that you think would be valuable to share):

_____ _____ ___/___/___

Name (please print) Signature Date

[12] Tuer, 2002

APPENDIX 3

FAMILY LITERACY SURVEY

How to fill the survey out…

This survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete. It is a simple process of reading each question and then clicking on the choice or choices that answer the question for your organization or experience. If more than one choice is applicable in each answer, you can choose all that apply. In some cases you will be prompted for further information, if necessary (i.e. *Other:____*). If you are involved in more than one family literacy partnership, please fill out a separate survey for each partnership.

At the end you will be asked for any other information you may think would be helpful to the research being done.

It is important for you to know that all information will be kept confidential, so honesty is important. All information will be summarized and reported anonymously. You will be asked for your name, program and contact address(es) and phone numbers. This information will be used if further clarification is needed. However, if you do not feel comfortable giving this information you can just let us know the province you are in and whether your program is located in an urban or rural setting.

Once again, thank you very much for sharing this information with us and potential family literacy partnerships in the future.

Definition of family literacy partnerships or family literacy community partnerships: for this project the definition of a partnership is when there is involvement of at least two or more different organizations in providing the family literacy program (i.e. literacy program and library or community agency and a funding body (business)).

Survey Questions for
Family Connections

1. The family literacy program you are/were involved in has run for:
- Less than one year
- One to two years
- Three to five years
- Over five years

2. Has the program run as a community partnership for all these years?
- Yes
- No
- If no, when did it become a partnership or when did the partnership end?
    - _____

3. How many partners, including yourself are involved in the family literacy initiative?
- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five or more

4. Who are or were your community partners?
- School board (if so, is there a specific department or teacher or grade? i.e. literacy and basic skills department? _____)
- School parents' council
- Literacy Agency
- College
- Family and Children's Services
- Community Centre
- YMCA/YWCA
- Learning Disabilities Association
- Library
- Association for Community Living
- Centre that focuses on pre-school aged programming (please name: _____)
- Child Care Centre
- Parent/Family Resource Centre
- Multicultural Centre

- Health Care Association (e.g. public health office, Victorian Order of Nurses [VON], etc.) (please name: _____)
- Hospital
- Cooperative Housing Association
- Health and Social Services
- Boys and Girls Club
- Speech Therapist
- Employment Services (please name: _____)
- Church Group
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Local business
- Chamber of Commerce
- Newspaper(s)
- Other (please specify)
    - _____

5. Do you run one or more of the following programs?

- The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program
- Creating a Learning Culture in your Home (LLC)
- Early Learning Canada
- BOOKS (Books Offer Our Kids Success)
- LAPS (Learning and Parenting Skills)
- Nobody's Perfect
- Storysacks
- Books for Babies
- Homework Clubs (please specify what kind: _____)
- Reading Buddies
- Reading Circles
- Reading Tents
- Toy Library
- Book Mates
- Come Read With Me
- Home-Based Family Literacy (Parents As Teachers, HIPPY)
- Kenan Intergenerational Model
- Learning Together Workshops
- Homespun
- PRINTS (Parents' Roles INteracting with Teacher Support)
- United Kingdom Basic Skills Agency Intergenerational Family Literacy

- Specialized (please give a brief description:
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____)

6. How did the community partnership start?
- You approached the partner(s)
- One partner approached you (and they brought in other partners, if applicable)
- One partner approached you and you approached others
- A group of partners approached you
- Other (please specify)
  - _____

Reminder: If more than one choice is applicable, you can choose all that apply.

7. How do you fund the family literacy program?
- Fee-for-service
- Provincial government
- Federal government
- Municipality
- United Way
- Social service agency
- Service club
- Fundraising
- No funding, it is completely volunteer driven
- Business sponsored
- Donations
- Other (please specify)
  - _____

8. For whom is your family literacy program intended?
- Single mothers
- High risk, single mothers
- Incarcerated mothers
- Single parents
- High risk, single parents
- Social Assistance recipient parents
- All families
- Caregivers
- Targeted communities for high risk families

- Other (please specify)
  - _____

9. What age of children does your program focus on?
- Babies (0 to 18 months)
- Toddlers (over 18 months to 36 months)
- Pre-school
- Kindergarten to Grade 3
- Grade 4 to Grade 6
- Youth aged 12 to 15
- Other (please specify) _____

10. What do you think your biggest challenges are for this partnership?
- Partners have hidden agendas
- Ownership of the program (Who is the lead in the partnership? Who is the decision-maker?)
- Ensuring accountability to funders
- Ensuring accountability to participants (families, parents, caregivers, children)
- Ensuring accountability between partners
- Ensuring accountability to others (please specify)
  _____
- Partners motivated to action/sharing the workload
- Solving problems together
- Maintaining a common vision or goal
- Communication
- Funding
- Volunteers
- Other (please specify)
  - _____

11. If the partnership is a success, or past partnerships were a success, what would you say was the reason(s) for the success?
    - Partnership guidelines (including a vision/mission statement)
    - One group is the lead in the partnership
    - Having an advisory group representing different participating organizations
    - Strategic planning
    - Creating annual and five year plans
    - Solid funding of the program
    - Having a variety of partners involved
    - Having a very small number of partners involved

- Other (please specify)
  - _____

12. If the partnership failed, or past partnerships have failed, what do you think was the reason?

- Partners have hidden agendas
- Ownership of the program
- Accountability
- Lack of action/sharing the workload by all partners
- Lack of problem solving
- No common vision or goal
- Communication
- Funding
- Volunteers
- Other (please specify)
  - _____

13. If the partnership failed, or past partnerships have failed, what would you do differently in the future?

- Create partnership guidelines (including a vision/mission statement)
- Ensure one group is the lead in the partnership
- Have an advisory group
- Do strategic planning
- Create annual and five year plans
- Solidify funding before starting the program
- Have more partners involved
- Have fewer partners involved
- Other (please specify)
  - _____

14. What is the usual length of the family literacy program?

- Runs year round with continuous intake
- Runs year round with specific start and end times
- Runs twice a week
- Runs once a week
- Runs once a month
- Runs only a few times per year
- Runs seasonally (i.e. summers only, please identify: _____)

- Not applicable (please explain: _____)
- Other (please specify)
  - _____

15. How does your family literacy program run?

- A parent workshop is given to parents/caregivers only
- A parent workshop is given to parents/caregivers and their children
- A reading circle is done with children and their parents/caregivers
- A reading circle is done for the children with a separate workshop being done for the parents/caregivers
- An activity time is done for parents/caregivers and their children
- A tutoring session is done with parents/caregivers and their children
- Has run as a special event in coordination with Family Literacy Day
- It is run as a special event at various times
- It provides books to various agencies for use in family literacy initiatives
- Other (please specify)
  - _____

16. Do you employ paid staff to coordinate your program?

- No, each partner provides current staff time to the program
- No, it's entirely coordinated by volunteers
- Yes
  - If yes, are they:
    - Seasonal? (What season(s)? _____)
    - Part-time? (How many hours per week? _____)
    - Full-time?

17. If you have staff for your family literacy program, what are their qualifications?

- ❑ Early Childhood Education Certificate (ECE)
- ❑ Provincial Teaching Certification
- ❑ Experienced Literacy Practitioner (over two years in the field)
- ❑ Social Work (diploma or degree)
- ❑ Recreational Leadership (diploma or degree)
- ❑ Librarian
- ❑ Specific training to your particular family literacy program (i.e. Mother Goose)
- ❑ Volunteer Management Certification
- ❑ Other (please explain):

_____

18. Other comments or information you would like to share on family literacy partnerships or family literacy programs:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Information about you (remember if you don't feel comfortable about giving all information, please include your province and whether your program is rural or urban):

Name:_____

Family Literacy Program/Partnership:

_____

Contact Information:

Mailing Address: _____
_____
_____

E-mail Address: _____@_____

Telephone: _____ (Daytime or Evening)

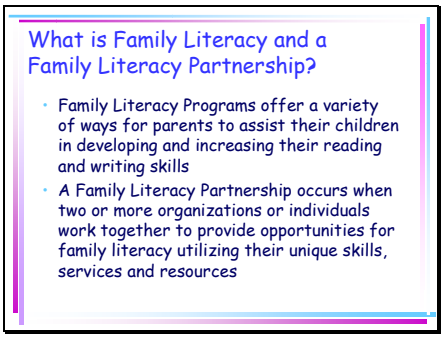
APPENDIX 4

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

The enclosed CD has the full presentation on it and is available for you to customize to your own program, including changing the graphics. It can also be used for an overhead presentation, if PowerPoint projection is not available. If you would prefer to use it as a paper presentation you can either print it from PowerPoint or you can click on "File"…then "Send to"…then "Microsoft Word"…this will bring up an option menu so you can choose how you wish it to look.

Slide 1

Slide 2



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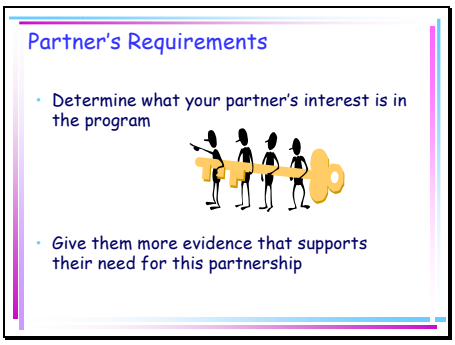
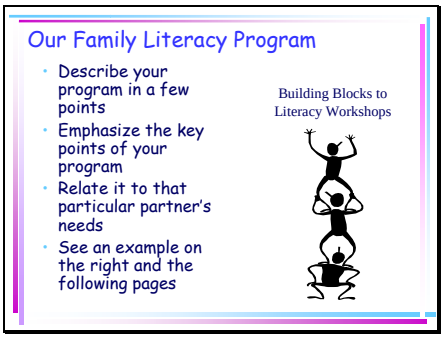


- Example: A family resource centre would benefit from providing needed programming for their clients
- Example: Less worry about their children's success in school, seeing the importance for literacy skills, children will have more access to develop the necessary skills for literacy

Slide 4



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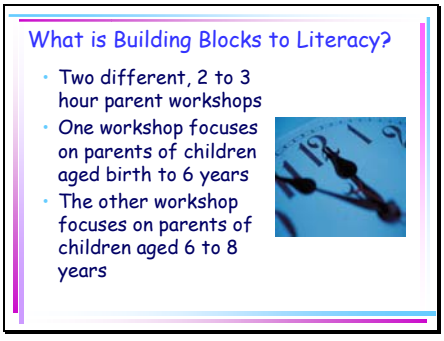


- "Building Blocks to Literacy" is a Family Literacy Program produced by Project READ Literacy Network Waterloo-Wellington and is just used to give an example of how to present your program.

Slide 6

What do the workshops provide?

- They teach parents how literacy skills are developed
- Show and give parents simple ways to help their children learn to read, write and speak
- Removes the "myths"

Slide 7

Where and when are these workshops provided?

- The best location for these workshops is at our local family resource centre
- This location already provides many needed services to the parents the workshops are geared towards
- The workshops can be provided at any time of the day or week that is convenient to both the parents and the family resource centre

Slide 8

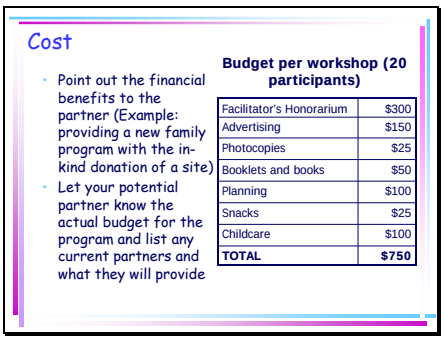
How are the workshops provided?

- Flyers for the workshop are developed and distributed
- Advertising of the workshop is done in the local newspaper
- A trained facilitator leads the workshop
- Simple handouts, booklets and examples are distributed
- Clear language is used
- The workshops are interactive and fun

"This workshop ("Building Blocks for Literacy") has helped me to realize that it's okay to let my son chew on his books and that I can create learning games from everyday life."
Anonymous quote from a parent's workshop evaluation

- A quote from a participant in your Family Literacy Program or a participant in a similar program really helps to sell your Program and partnership

Slide 9

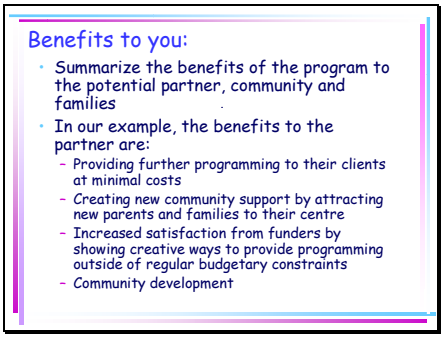


- Knowing the exact cost of your program is necessary, but remember a budget is an estimate. You can even show "in-kind" donations.
- Another way to present it would be to show what $100 worth of funding would do for your program. For example: $100 allows four families to attend these workshops.

Slide 10

- Show the strengths that you and your intended partner will be bringing to the Family Literacy Program. It allows the partner to see they do not have to do everything, as your program has strengths and it also gives them a positive feeling…being recognized for their strengths.

Slide 11



Slide 12

The important things to remember when doing any presentation to a potential partner:

- Be prepared…know your Family Literacy Program inside and out.
- Be ready to answer questions and if you cannot answer them on the spot, let the partner know you will get back to them…and mark that down in your date book.
- Research your potential partner. Know all about their business or program…their mission statement, etc. It is important to make this kind of impression on your partner.
- Be confident! You have a great Family Literacy Program and you know the community will benefit highly from its delivery.

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