

Connecting

Literacy



Community

Building Community Capacity:
**Literacy Audits
and Strategic Planning**

Summary

This research project was part of Phase One of a larger initiative, “Connecting Literacy to Community” (CLC) undertaken by Bow Valley College. The Research Project investigated the literacy assets and barriers of 10 community agencies in 3 urban and 3 rural Alberta communities. The Project helped agencies to identify and begin to either minimize or resolve specific literacy barriers in an effort to enhance the services provide to clients in general and specifically those with low literacy skills.

The primary agent for this activity was a literacy specialist assigned to each of the communities. CLC literacy specialists acted as a catalyst for literacy awareness, identified, investigated, and assessed literacy assets and barriers, and consulted on improving print materials or verbal communications.

The study was conducted in two exploratory and descriptive steps. The first step identified literacy assets and barriers in each agency, and developed an action plan, with specific goals and objectives, to resolve those barriers. This step drew heavily on the *Literacy Audit Kit* (AAAL, 1997) and a modified strategic planning model. The second step involved follow-up activities, in the form of formative and summative reviews, which were intended to examine the literacy changes that had taken place in each agency since Step 1.

The Project:

- Consulted with agencies on improving print materials, and verbal communications to better meet the needs of people with low literacy skills.
- Improved the agencies’ capacity to serve participants with literacy issues.

- Heightened the agencies' awareness of literacy, literacy issues, and services to individuals who face literacy challenges.
- Developed collaborative and educational partnerships with the agencies and individuals that have literacy challenges.
- Used existing resources such as *the Literacy Audit Kit* (AAAL, 1997) to assess the "literacy friendliness" of agencies, and resources such as *Learning for Life* (LCA, 2001) and *The Media Binder* (LCA, 2001) to promote an understanding of literacy.
- Measured change by monitoring outcomes.

1. The Connecting Literacy to Community Research Project

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Community agencies provide a variety of important services to a wide range of clients. These agencies often give people information that can help them achieve their goals, increase their knowledge, and develop their potential. However, if the agency's clients have literacy problems, they may not be able to benefit fully from the agency's information and services. Further, the agency may have literacy barriers that make it difficult for people with low literacy skills to use its services successfully.

1.2 Purposes of the Project

The Connecting Literacy to Community Project (CLC) was intended to improve literacy outreach and awareness in particular Alberta communities. The Project had seven (7) purposes:

- To consult with agencies on improving print materials, and verbal communications to better meet the needs of people with low literacy skills.

- To improve the agencies' capacity to serve participants with literacy issues.
- To heighten the agencies' awareness of literacy, literacy issues, and services to individuals who face literacy challenges.
- To develop collaborative and educational partnerships with the agencies and individuals that have literacy challenges.
- To use existing resources such as *the Literacy Audit Kit* (AAL, 1997) to assess the "literacy friendliness" of agencies, and resources such as *Learning for Life* (LCA, 2001) and *The Media Binder* (LCA, 2001) to promote an understanding of literacy.
- To measure change by monitoring outcomes such as:
 - increased calls or referrals to literacy programs (rural communities only),
 - changes in procedures within agencies that make access more literacy friendly,
 - changes in print material, and
 - a new presence of literacy in the agencies' policy statements or mandate that will facilitate literacy as a sustainable agenda item.
- To describe and document the process using a "research in practice" methodology.

The primary agent for this activity was a literacy specialist assigned to each of the communities involved in the Project. The literacy specialists were individuals with education and training in Adult Literacy. Each came with a strong background in community work with a proven ability to work with individuals, community groups and businesses. Through partnerships with select agencies and service providers in each community, CLC literacy specialists:

- acted as a catalyst for literacy awareness,

- identified, investigated, and assessed literacy assets and barriers, and
- consulted on improving print materials or verbal communications.

These activities were intended to help the participating agencies to minimize or remove literacy barriers, and better meet the needs of their clientele who have low literacy skills.

1.3 Format of the Project

The study was conducted in two steps and involved 10 agencies in three urban and three rural Alberta communities. The first step identified literacy assets and barriers in each agency, and developed an action plan, with specific goals and objectives, to resolve those barriers. The second step involved follow-up activities designed to examine the changes that had taken place in each agency since Step 1.

The Project's Steps were exploratory and descriptive. The Project was undertaken with no formal hypotheses, and without a set of clearly delineated dependent and independent variables. The research was non-manipulative, and non-controlling with openness to whatever emerged. The primary sources of data were the agencies, with the emphasis on the perceptions of each agency's management, staff and volunteers.

Data analysis was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques including Microsoft Excel spread sheets. Inferential statistics were not used to analyze the data as the study was designed to be exploratory and descriptive. As well, the internal consistency and reliability of the data was not assessed.

2. Methodology

The goal of the research methodology was to suggest and facilitate sustainable ways through which each participating agency could minimize or eliminate their literacy barriers, and enhance their literacy assets. The underlying guiding principle of the Project was a sensitivity to the successful implementation of change.

A participative and collaborative approach was fundamental to the methodology. This approach was intended to facilitate participants (those in the agency) to co-create and implement the change. It was also intended to build participant consensus and buy-in throughout the Project by involving and communicating with as many stakeholders as practical and possible.

2.1 Step 1

The First Step in CLC included two activities. One involved the selection of participating agencies and the introduction of the Project to a key contact in each agency. The other activity involved the analysis of each agency's literacy assets and barriers, as well as the development of a plan to minimize or eliminate the barriers.

2.1.1 Selection of Participating Agencies

The purpose of this Step was to select up to 18 agencies that would participate in the Project, and to develop clear and positive working relationships and expectations with them.

The selection of agencies was done through a non-random method. The initial selection of potential participating agencies was based on the following criteria:

- The agency was required to have been established and located in the participating communities. The targeted

urban communities in Calgary were: Bowness, Huntington Hills, and Inglewood / Ramsey. The targeted rural communities in southern Alberta: High River, Olds, and Pincher Creek / Crowsnest Pass.

- Among the eligible agencies in each community were social service agencies, community kitchens, women's shelters, family resource centres, health clinics, recreational and educational programs. These offer services to marginalized individuals in "high risk" groups, including unemployed youth, women, aboriginals, former offenders, single parents and those with less than a high school education.
- Ideally, the eligible agency (or work unit within a larger agency) would be small with fewer than 10 employees.
- Ideally, a relationship existed between a senior level decision-maker in the agency and someone, like the literacy specialist, connected with the Project.
- Someone connected with the project would have knowledge that there was both a need and willingness in the agency for literacy change.
- Someone with the project would have knowledge that the leadership of the agency was supportive of literacy or change initiatives.
- The selection process occurred as follows:
 - The project manager, literacy specialists, and researcher collaborated to develop a list of potential participating agencies in each of the six target communities.
 - A maximum of 3 agencies in each community were selected and prioritized, according to the

criteria noted above, for potential participation in the Project.

- Once the prioritized list of potential participating agencies was finalized, each agency was invited to participate until the maximum number of agencies was achieved.

The project manager sent letters to agencies in each targeted community that could potentially participate in order to:

- request their participation;
- outline the purpose of the Project, the benefits to the agency and its clients for participation, and Project timelines; and
- request a brief meeting to answer questions.

The literacy specialist brokered and managed this initial contact. Often, the recipient of the letter was given a “heads-up”, by the literacy specialist, that the letter was coming, that this was a worthwhile project, and that a meeting would be beneficial.

The project manager and the literacy specialist held meetings with key management and staff of the participating agency. The results of this, for each participating agency were:

- A key contact and advocate for the Project in each participating agency;
- Preliminary identification of literacy assets and barriers;
- A defined Work Plan.

Over 15 agencies in the various communities were contacted. Of the 12 that agreed to participate, 10 were involved in the initial workshop and the follow-up activities. While the names of the participating agencies have been omitted, following is a brief description of the agencies.

Agency 1 is an urban society that serves families with children from birth to age 6, by providing information and support to parents so their child(ren) will have the best possible start towards academic and social success. This agency's programs include: a toy lending library, Parents as Teachers, and Moving Forward.

Agency 2 is a teen drop-in centre, in a rural location, that provides safe, comfortable home-like environment to help youth identify their strengths, improve their life-skills and participate in on-going programs.

Agency 3 is an urban society that offers information on and referral to community services and events. It has various volunteer committees to help and support local residents care for their community, and a steering committee that is comprised of service providers.

Agency 4 is a rural based non-profit organization that provides support for children and families through community building and provision of resources.

Agency 5 uses a multidisciplinary team approach to health, and serves individuals at risk in an urban community. Their programs include: medical and nurses services,

chiropractic services, counselling for families, couples and individuals, seniors outreach, basic needs referral and services, computer access point (CAP), and assists individuals to be able to participate in community initiatives.

Agency 6 provides health services to young children and their mothers through inoculations, screening and health information in rural locations.

Agency 7 provides information, referral and support to at-risk individuals in 11 urban communities. Programs include, family support and counselling, single parent support groups, and partnership with other organizations for community based initiatives

Agency 8 is a rural based agency that serves as a central meeting place and drop-in facility for women. Services include family violence counselling, referral and personal support, and a clothing store.

Agency 9 primarily serves residents of a large urban housing complex. Programs are developed in response to the needs of the residents. The agency is staffed by various organizations working together to provide programs. These include: access to computer, internet and fax for employment searches and schoolwork needs, support programs for parents, information and referral to community services, free clothing and food, and assist residents with building community initiatives.

Agency 10 is a rural based organization that serves as a single point of access for community programs and services.

2.1.2 Data Collection - Literacy Assets & Barriers

At a CLC workshop, management and staff of each participating agency commented on their agency's success in meeting the literacy needs of their clients. In so doing, they identified current and anticipated barriers in their sensitivity to literacy as well in either verbal communication techniques, or print materials. As well, they developed a plan to resolve those barriers.

Literacy assets and barriers were identified using an exercise, which was adapted from The Literacy Audit Kit developed by the Alberta Association for Adult Literacy. Such barriers can be grouped in four areas: a) promotion and publicity, b) print materials, c) clear verbal communication, and d) sensitivity to literacy. The Literacy Audit Tool, found in Appendix 1, provides details.

Specifically, the workshop helped participants to:

- identify the agency's sensitivity to literacy (These are the standard practices used to address the literacy needs of clients);
- identify and clarify print material qualities (These are the general literacy qualities of brochures, forms, and posters.) or

- identify and clarify verbal communication attributes (These describe how effective verbal communication takes place with clients); and
- begin to develop a plan to address any barriers, and increase the agency's literacy capabilities.

The format of the workshop is found in Appendix 2.

The Literacy Audit has four Categories to classify the qualities noted in the Defficiency Groups. The Categories are:

1. "This is something we are not doing." If the agency is not doing it, is it something that should be considered?
2. "We are doing this, but could make some improvements." Where and how do people feel the agency could improve the way it does things?
3. "We are satisfied that we are doing this well."
4. "Not applicable."

Using these Categories, the agency's sensitivity to literacy and either verbal communications or print material qualities were reviewed.

Subsequently, using a strategic planning model, each agency's workshop participants developed an Action Plan intended to either eliminate or minimize both the barriers and their impact on clients. The plan was a systematic, comprehensive, and integrated response

to one or more literacy barriers. It represents a course of action that was intended to help the agency to:

- change,
- remove literacy barriers, and
- better serve its clients.

Each Plan was comprised of specific goals and strategies. The goals described how the agency's management, staff and volunteers planned to enhance and provide their products and services. The goals described the primary changes in literacy that the agency was planning to strive to achieve. Short-term goals of 6 to 12 months in duration and long-term goals of 13 to 36 months in duration were identified. As well, strategies were developed. These were manageable "steps" which, when completed, would lead to accomplishing a goal. Strategies specified the "how", "when" and "what" that would have to be accomplished in order to achieve each goal.

2.1.3 Preliminary Report

The researcher, in collaboration with the literacy specialist, and the project manager prepared report containing the categorization of barriers as well as the Action Plan for each participating agency. The literacy specialist delivered each Report to the respective agency. A sample report appears in Appendix 3.

2.2 Step 2: Follow-up

The purpose of this Step was to examine outcomes that have occurred in the agency as a result of implementation of the changes and recommendations presented in the Report.

One of the primary objectives of CLC is to gauge the change that takes place in each participating agency because of the plans and

actions identified in the literacy workshop. Change was reviewed in two stages. The first was the “Formative Review”, the second was the “Summative Review”.

2.2.1 Formative Review

The Formative Review took place approximately 6 weeks after the initial workshop and development of the Action Plan. Meetings with the key contact and select employees of each agency took place. These meetings were to determine the extent of work that had taken place to implement goals that were identified in the Action Plan, the short-term effect of those changes, and the benefits the participants sensed from their experience in the Project. Appendix 4 contains the format of the Formative Review.

2.2.2 Summative Review

The “Summative Review” took place with each agency in May. The purpose of the Summative Review was similar to that of the Formative Review. Appendix 5 contains the format of the Summative Review.

3. Data Analysis & Results

3.1 Literacy Assets & Barriers

All 10 agencies assessed their sensitivity to literacy, and the standard practices used to address the literacy needs of clients. Seven (7) assessed the general literacy qualities of their brochures, forms, and posters. Two (2) assessed the general effectiveness of their verbal communications with clients. One (1) agency didn't complete the verbal communications portion of their workshop.

3.1.1 Sensitivity to Literacy

The results in the “Sensitivity to Literacy” attributes seem to indicate that participants are aware but looking for improvements. There were a very small number of responses in the “NA” column. Those in most of the agencies, 6 to 9 of the 10 agencies, felt that they were either “not doing” or “could make improvements” on all the sensitivity to literacy attributes except for the third attribute. Here, 70% of the agencies were satisfied that they were doing a good job of accommodating clients who want or need to bring a friend or spokesperson to a meeting. Table 1 provides a summary of agency responses to the sensitivity to literacy attributes.

3.1.2 Print Materials

All the agencies indicated that they were either “not doing” or “could make improvements” on all the print materials attributes except for the fifth attribute. Two (2) of the seven (7) agencies indicated that they were satisfied that they did a good job of “using graphics and illustrations in print materials.” Table 2 provides details.

3.1.3 Verbal Communications

Results for the agencies that assessed themselves using this set of attributes were about evenly split between “not doing” and “doing well”. Results can be seen in Table 3.

Table 1: Sensitivity to Literacy

Sensitivity To Literacy	This is something we are not doing.	We are doing this, but could make improvements.	We are satisfied we are doing this well.	Not Applicable	Total
We ask all clients whether they need help filling out forms.	2 - 20%	7 - 70%	1 - 10%		10 - 100%
Staff, volunteers, audiotapes, and/or videotapes are available to help clients fill out our organization's forms.	2 - 20%	6 - 60%	1 - 10%	1 - 10%	10 - 100%
We accommodate clients who may want or need to bring friends or spokespersons to their meetings with our staff.	1 - 10%	2 - 20%	7 - 70%		10 - 100%
We offer all clients the same help to avoid drawing attention to literacy problems through special and potentially embarrassing treatment.	4 - 40%	2 - 20%	4 - 40%		10 - 100%
We have identified what a client must know and the literacy skills a client must have in order to make use of our services.	5 - 50%	2 - 20%	2 - 20%	1 - 10%	10 - 100%
We regularly ask our clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services.		10 - 100%			10 - 100%
All staff who have direct contact with clients are aware that certain behaviors may indicate that the client could have literacy problems.	5 - 50%	4 - 40%	1 - 10%		10 - 100%
Our staff has received awareness and sensitivity training about literacy and literacy issues.	5 - 50%	4 - 40%	1 - 10%		10 - 100%
Our staff knows about the literacy resources in our community. If asked, they could tell a client where to get help to improve their literacy skills.		6 - 60%	4 - 40%		10 - 100%

Table 2: Print Materials

Print Materials	This is something we are not doing.	We are doing this, but could make improvements.	We are satisfied we are doing this well.	Not Applicable	Total
Our print materials are easy for adults with low literacy skills to read.	3 - 42.9%	4 - 57.1%			7 - 100%
All the forms we use in our organization are easy for everyone to read and understand.	4 - 57.1%	3 - 42.9%			7 - 100%
Our print materials are written in simple and clear language. We avoid using technical jargon and scientific terms in the materials we prepare for the general public.	1 - 14.3%	6 - 85.7%			7 - 100%
Print materials are designed with lots of white space to provide relief from the print.	3 - 42.9%	4 - 57.1%			7 - 100%
We use graphics and illustrations in our print materials.	1 - 14.3%	4 - 57.1%	2 - 28.6%		7 - 100%
If appropriate, our print materials are available in other languages.	5 - 71.4%	2 - 28.6%			7 - 100%
We regularly review our print materials, including forms, to check how easy they are to read.	3 - 42.9%	4 - 57.1%			7 - 100%
We consult with people outside the organization for feedback on written materials we prepare for the general public.	3 - 42.9%	4 - 57.1%			7 - 100%
Our organization has guidelines for limiting the level of reading difficulty of our printed materials.	7 - 100%				7 - 100%
Our staff has received training in how to prepare materials in plain language.	6 - 85.7%	1 - 14.3%			7 - 100%

Table 3: Verbal Communications

Verbal Communications	This is something we are not doing.	We are doing this, but could make improvements.	We are satisfied we are doing this well.	Not Applicable	Total
We have audio and/or videotapes clients can use to help them review and remember the information we give them.	2 - 100%				2 - 100%
We avoid organizational jargon when we communicate with clients.			2 - 100%		2 - 100%
We have identified the jargon that is specific to our organization or service we provide, and have developed an easy way to explain these words to our clients.	1 - 50%		1 - 50%		2 - 100%
We give verbal information to clients in a way that is adapted to their needs.	1 - 50%		1 - 50%		2 - 100%
We schedule appointments so that clients have enough time to ask questions or can take extra time to understand the information we give them.	1 - 50%		1 - 50%		2 - 100%
When we work with clients, we continually check that they have understood the information we give them.	1 - 50%		1 - 50%		2 - 100%
We have been trained to recognize non-verbal cues that may indicate a person does not understand what is being said.	2 - 100%				2 - 100%
We adjust the pace at which we talk and the vocabulary we use when we work with people for whom English is a second language.		1 - 50%	1 - 50%		2 - 100%
All our staff receive training on clear verbal communication techniques	2 - 100%				2 - 100%

3.2 Initial Steps

When asked, during the Formative Review, “What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?”, all agencies reported taking some steps and making progress towards accomplish their goals. Responses ranged from “Not many as yet.” to “We are addressing all the goals concurrently.” Many agencies had scheduled literacy awareness or plain language workshops in response to their new awareness of literacy barriers. Several of those that were striving to accomplish print material related goals were completing an initial redraft of a brochure, newsletter or manual using the tips and techniques that had been conveyed through the Report of Literacy Audit Workshop. Some had solicited feedback, from clients, concerning print materials. All agencies directly or indirectly reported an increased awareness of literacy and literacy barriers. Some were widening the circle of awareness by addressing literacy matters at staff meetings.

See Appendix 6 for the Plans and Progress Reports for the 10 Agencies.

3.3 Outcomes

Two questions from the Formative and Summative Reviews provided “outcomes” related data. The questions were, “What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?” and “What has worked well in your efforts to accomplish goals?”

By the time of the Summative Review, except for one agency that indicated that an insufficient amount of time had elapsed since the planning event, the agencies were reporting significant progress towards accomplishing their literacy goals. The agencies identified 4 primary and interrelated outcomes from participation in the project.

Those were better resources for clients in the form of improved print materials, an increased sensitivity towards clients, a heightened awareness of literacy and its importance among staff and clients, and improved communication among staff and between the agency and its clients. Other outcomes reported by the agencies included professional development through the various workshops that were part of the project and through participation in efforts to accomplish the goals they established in the planning process, increased promotion of their agency through communication concerning the Project, and the development of guidelines for print and verbal communications.

While several agencies reported having completed clearer and more effective printed materials and information, others were making good progress. One agency stated, “Our brochure will make it easier for people to access our program, and it is more economical because our brochure might not be thrown out because it is now easier to read.” Another agency explained that because of their new skills and awareness they are better able to develop new print materials.

Most of the agencies reported an increased awareness of literacy. That awareness is leading to an enhanced consciousness about the form and format of written material, the use of plain language, an increase in the number of conversations about literacy among staff, and a “greater respect for clients who may be struggling with literacy compared to before when we just didn’t have the awareness”.

An increased sensitivity towards clients is manifesting itself in various ways. Staff is more aware of what they say in the community about their agencies, what and how they write and present information, and more observant of clients who may need help completing forms. Those we talked to reported increased respect for their clients,

increasing efforts to welcome clients, and more effort to listen to and be user friendly towards their clients. One participant stated, “We are much more sensitive about how people (clients) feel, I think we are paying more attention to the unspoken signs of discomfort, and thinking ‘oh maybe this person can’t write well, or can’t read’, where before we didn’t even consider this.” Among other benefits reported by participants was the effect this client sensitivity was having on increasing positive feedback from clients.

Improved print and verbal communication both between the agency and its clients and among those in agency was reported. Print communication included pamphlets, newsletters and flyers, bulletin boards, signage, staff memos, and letters. Verbal communications involved giving and gathering information among staff and with clients. Participants indicated that they are reaching out to their communities more effectively, “more people [are] using the pamphlets because they are visually appealing, less cluttered and easier to read.” and “We are also having more phone calls asking about the programs.”

Further, several of those who participated in the Summative Reviews reported team development. As one participant stated, “We have had better communication among our team because of this. We speak more clearly and directly with each other. It feels like we are more cohesive.” Participants reported that their work on the literacy project showed them that they could work well as a team towards a common goal.

3.4 Difficulties & Issues

Two questions, one of which appeared in both the Formative and Summative Reviews, provided the data for this section. The first question that appeared in both Reviews was, “What difficulties are you

experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your agency's professional practice?" The second question, which appeared only in the Summative Review, was "What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the goals and implementing the resulting changes?" People from the agencies identified three primary issues: resistance to change, time and scheduling, and sustainability.

Several reported that there was some resistance to the changes that were happening, and would need to take place in the future, as a result of the Project. This resistance took the forms of reluctance to redo publications, alter processes, acquire and apply new knowledge, share information and resources, and consider the agency's initiatives from the clients' perspectives. Some expressed concern about unintentionally or inadvertently alienating their colleagues because of either their new focus on literacy and advocating plain language or sounding judgmental about the way information was being conveyed. The most frequently cited issue was that associated with time. Most seemed to feel like they were having difficulty managing the extra activities that were required because of the Project in addition to their ongoing work. One participant stated that, "... the demands of everyday service are sometimes not met, so trying to put [effort and attention] into all our [Plan's] priority areas ... is difficult." Others commented on the difficulty of arranging meetings and having those who were essential to the activity able to take time from busy schedules. Some expressed concerns about underestimating the time required to make decisions, and to change publications and processes. In some instances changes to print materials had to be delayed.

The third difficulty reported was that of a concern about the sustainability of the Project and the resulting changes. Some participants indicated that they felt overwhelmed both by the current

efforts and the amount that either needed to be or could be done. Others expressed concern that, as staff or volunteers left the agency for other opportunities, the literacy awareness and training left with them. Having a critical mass of management and staff championing literacy both by action and with resources (availability of a literacy specialist, and funding for a staff person to help specifically on literacy) was of significant concern to some participants. Others felt that support for the literacy initiatives could diminish over time unless the matter was kept in the for-front of the agency's planning. One participant said it best, "More time, more tools and resources. I feel we are just beginning to get a handle on this."

4. Conclusions

This project set out to investigate the literacy assets and barriers of 10 Alberta community agencies. The investigation was guided by, and achieved 7, purposes.

The first purpose was to consult with agencies on improving print materials, and verbal communications to better meet the needs of people with low literacy skills. With the facilitation and encouragement of the literacy specialists, agencies made plans for and initiated changes to print materials, verbal communications techniques, and agency processes in order to begin to minimize or eliminate the agency's literacy barriers that were effecting clients with low literacy skills. As a literacy specialist pointed out, "Although they ... indicated print materials as an area for change, their action plans include a strong emphasis on verbal communication. This is great as it speaks to more of a holistic approach...which increases the potential for change at a deeper level." The primary difficulty reported by many of the agencies was that of conveying complex information in simple language. This

difficulty was mirrored by the frequency of requests for plain language workshops.

The second purpose of the Project was to improve the agencies' capacity to serve participants with literacy issues. Dedicated people work in the agencies that participated in the Project. These folks are committed to both their clients and making their agencies more accessible to those clients by improving the manner in which the clients are served. Typically, the literacy initiatives began with a small group in each agency becoming aware of literacy barriers and the impact those had on clients. This led to a desire to resolve the barriers so as to better serve clients. As the individuals and groups in each agency worked towards accomplishing their literacy goals, which had been identified in the initial workshop, the circle of those influenced and involved widened at various rates and degrees in each agency. One of the literacy specialists commented that "...taking on/embracing literacy is dependent on a number of factors, such as workload, staff (including volunteer) relationships and numbers."

The sustainability of the changes and the importance of a literacy champion became evident as the Project unfolded. Typically, the agencies are understaffed, are carrying heavy work loads, are being confronted by diminishing resources, and both an expanding number of clients and diversity of needs among those clients. Competing and conflicting priorities in addition to funding issues could jeopardize the sustainability of some agencies' literacy efforts.

The third purpose was to heighten the agencies' awareness of literacy, literacy issues, and services to individuals who face literacy challenges. Awareness and understanding of literacy issues increased. People in the agencies seemed keen to learn and share both for themselves and for the sake of their clients. However, the passion of those involved in implementing

the literacy changes was often countered by the frustrations of finding ways to apply the new knowledge in other groups and areas within agencies.

The fourth purpose of the Project was to develop collaborative and educational partnerships with the agencies and individuals that have literacy challenges. This occurred primarily with the management and staff of the agencies and not with the clients of those agencies.

Individuals seemed enthusiastic both toward the literacy initiative and for the professional development opportunity presented by the literacy project. Addressing literacy barriers became an end in itself, as well as an individual and group learning experience and a team development and cohesion process.

Participants learned by doing. Capability was built slowly by investigating and examining the feasibility of changing one brochure, letter, bulletin board, procedure or verbal communication quality, then applying those principles to the next change, learning something new and then applying that and so on. The issue of maintaining and expanding the learning in the face of time and resource constraints emerged, as did the importance of the literacy specialist as the catalyst, change agent and expert both to facilitate and guide the changes.

Many commented on the importance and positive contributions of the literacy specialists. As one group reported, "Having an outside person come to help has made all the difference." A literacy specialist stated, "Attention to literacy appears to have been set aside in many agencies because of budget cuts; however participants seemed anxious to address the matter once it was reintroduced through the literacy specialists and the workshops." The enthusiasm, flexibility to accommodate difficult scheduling, and expertise and support played no small role in facilitating, guiding and moving the various

agencies towards accomplishing their literacy goals. As well, the hardcopy resources and referrals provided by literacy specialists appeared to be beneficial to the various agencies.

The fifth purpose of the Project was to use existing resources, such as *the Literacy Audit Kit* (AAAL, 1997), to assess and promote an understanding of literacy. The Literacy Audit Kit as well as a modified strategic planning model were used to identify and develop a plan to resolve literacy barriers. As well, numerous other literacy resources were utilized by the agencies as they implemented their plans.

While the sixth purpose of the Project was to measure change by monitoring outcomes, the seventh purpose was to describe and document the processes of the Project using a “research in practice” methodology. The literacy specialists facilitated the development of each agency’s action plan as well as monitored the implementation of the plan and progress to accomplishing the plan’s strategies and goals. A literacy Specialist stated, “The majority of the reports were done in a discussion format ... [which] were beneficial for a couple of reasons. First, it allowed for a time to reflect and share how literacy had seeped into their work, both thoughtfully and in action. And, it normalized the process of moving from planning to action which always involves unexpected outcomes and opportunities for further learning...” The activities and changes were documented through each agency’s Workshop Report as well as both formative and summative reviews.

Appendix 1: The Literacy Audit Tool

A. Promotion & Publicity

1. Our agency's logo or symbol illustrates the service we provide in the community.
2. Our phone number is easy for everyone to find on all our promotional materials.
3. When we give directions for finding our agency, we refer to familiar landmarks and bus stops.
4. Our agency's name and symbol are clearly displayed on the building.
5. Clear signs and symbols direct people from the front door of the building to our offices.
6. The reception area is clearly marked and easy to find.
7. The atmosphere in our reception area is friendly. People feel they can ask for help without embarrassment.
8. The reception area of our office provides some privacy if clients need to discuss confidential information.
9. The walls and bulletin boards in our reception area are not covered with a lot of printed notices. It's easy for anyone to pick out the important information on them.
10. We make sure that we display our pamphlets and educational brochures in a way that makes it easy for people to find the information they need or want.
11. Our agency uses a variety of ways to advertise its services: radio, TV, video and email as well as printed materials.
12. We are confident that we promote our agency in ways that allow adults with low literacy skills to learn about our programs and services.

B. Printed Materials

1. Our print materials are easy for adults with low literacy skills to read.
2. All the forms we use in our agency are easy for everyone to read and understand.

3. Our print materials are written in simple and clear language. We avoid using technical jargon and scientific terms in the materials we prepare for the general public.
4. Print materials are designed with lots of white space to provide relief from the print.
5. We use graphics and illustrations in our print materials.
6. If appropriate, our print materials are available in other languages.
7. We regularly review our print materials, including forms, to check how easy they are to read.
8. We consult with people outside the agency for feedback on written materials we prepare for the general public.
9. Our agency has guidelines for limiting the level of reading difficulty of our printed materials.
10. Our staff has received training in how to prepare materials in plain language.

C. Clear Verbal Communication

1. We have audio and/or videotapes clients can use to help them review and remember the information we give them.
2. We avoid agency jargon when we communicate with clients.
3. We have identified the jargon that is specific to our agency or service we provide, and have developed an easy way to explain these words to our clients.
4. We give verbal information to clients in a way that is adapted to their needs.
5. We schedule appointments so clients have enough time to ask questions or can take extra time to understand the information we give them.
6. When we work with clients, we continually check that they have understood the information we give them.
7. We have been trained to recognize non-verbal cues that may indicate a person does not understand what is being said.

8. We adjust the pace at which we talk and the vocabulary we use when we work with people for whom English is a second language.
9. All our staff receive training on clear verbal communication techniques such as:
 - How to effectively organize the information given to clients
 - How to communicate using simple language
 - How to check for understanding

D. Sensitivity to Literacy

1. We ask all clients whether they need help filling out forms.
2. Staff, volunteers, audiotapes, and/or videotapes are available to help clients fill out our agency's forms.
3. We accommodate clients who may want or need to bring friends or spokespersons to their meetings with our staff.
4. We offer all clients the same help to avoid drawing attention to literacy problems through special and potentially embarrassing treatment.
5. We have identified what a client must know and the literacy skills a client must have in order to make use of our services.
 - For example:
 - Does a client need to be able to read, write, and speak well in order to use our services?
 - Does a client need to know things about the law before we can help them?
 - Does a client need to know that a completed written referral is necessary before coming to our agency?
6. We regularly ask our clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services.
7. All staff who have direct contact with clients are aware that certain behaviors may indicate that the client could have literacy problems.
8. Our staff has received awareness and sensitivity training about literacy and literacy issues.
9. Our staff knows about the literacy resources in our community. If asked, they could tell a client where to get help to improve their literacy skills.

Appendix 2: The Connecting Literacy to Community Project Workshop

Exercise: Identify Literacy Assets and Needs

Purpose: This exercise, which has been adapted from The Literacy Audit Kit, begins the process of looking at your agency's literacy capabilities and needs.

This exercise will help participants to:

- Identify your agency's sensitivity to literacy;
- Identify and clarify a literacy issue; and
- Begin to develop a plan to resolve the issue and increase your agency's literacy capabilities.

Step 1: Sensitivity to Literacy

This step is intended to focus your attention on the standard practices your agency uses to deliver its services to your clients.

Working individually, participants review the statements noted below, and consider if each is applicable to your agency.

1. We ask all clients whether they need help filling out forms.
2. Staff, volunteers, audio tapes, and/or videotapes are available to help clients fill out our agency's forms.
3. We accommodate clients who may want or need to bring friends or spokespersons to their meetings with our staff.
4. We offer all clients the same help to avoid drawing attention to literacy problems through special and potentially embarrassing treatment.
5. We have identified what a client must know and the literacy skills a client must have in order to make use of our services.
For example:
 - Does a client need to be able to read, write, and speak well in order to use our services?
 - Does a client need to know things about the law before we can help them?
 - Does a client need to know that a completed written referral is necessary before coming to our agency?

6. We regularly ask our clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services.
7. All staff who have direct contact with clients are aware that certain behaviors may indicate that the client could have literacy problems.
8. Our staff has received awareness and sensitivity training about literacy and literacy issues.
9. Our staff knows about the literacy resources in our community. If asked, they could tell a client where to get help to improve their literacy skills.

Next, working as a group, participants first transcribe each of the statements to a post-it note. Then, participants place each post-it note in one of the four Sensitivity to Literacy Quadrants, noted on the flip chart page, according to how they perceive the statement in relation to the agency. The four quadrants are:

1. “This is something we are not doing.”
2. “We are doing this but could make some improvements.”
3. “We are satisfied that we are doing this well.”
4. “Not applicable.”

Participants discuss the placement of each statement, and may move the post-it notes until consensus on their placement is reached. The flip chart page is posted for all participants to see.

Step 2: Reviewing The Agency’s (Promotions & Publicity; or Printed Materials; or Verbal Communications.

(Same instructions as noted above in Step 1)

The “Literacy Audit Tool” statements that appear here are those relevant to each agency’s expressed need, and Project Work Plan. For example, if the agency decision maker or work group decides they want to examine a “printed materials” literacy issue, then the set of statements from the Literacy Audit Tool pertaining to “Printed Materials” would appear here.

Step 3: Develop an action plan to address the items identified in Steps 1 & 2.

Working as a group, participants indicate the items, which were identified in Steps 1 & 2, that they would like to resolve. Using the flip chart page marked “Action Sheet” participants prioritize their action items under the appropriate heading, either “Short Tem Goals” or “Long Term Goals”.

Step 4: Establish Strategies to Accomplish the Goals

A strategy is a clever and carefully contrived plan, scheme or method for gaining an end or a result. It is the arrangement, behaviour, skill, system, or procedure of employing available means to accomplish a goal. Strategies specify the “how”, “when” and “what” that will need to be accomplished in order to achieve each goal. Strategies should be “SMART”: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reasonable, and Time limited.

To begin, participants work individually. For each Goal, reflect on what **YOU** think could be done, so that the Goal would be achieved. You may have several ideas for one Goal and none for another, that’s OK - just jot down your idea(s). There are no “right” or “wrong” ideas.

Now, in a group, share your strategy ideas with your colleagues. Select a scribe to record your ideas on flip-chart paper, and choose one member of your group to present the ideas.

Step 5: Report and Follow-up.

<p>1.This is something we are not doing.</p>	<p>2. We are doing this but could make some improvements.</p>
<p>3. We are satisfied we are doing this well.</p>	<p>4. Not Applicable.</p>

Action Plan

Short-Term Goals (6 – 12 Months)	Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)

The Society Connecting Literacy to Community Workshop Report February 2002

Community organizations provide a variety of important services to a wide range of clients. These agencies often give people information that can help them achieve their goals, increase their knowledge, and develop their potential.

However, if the agency's clients have literacy problems, they may not be able to benefit fully from the agency's information and services. Further, the agency may have barriers that make it difficult for people with low literacy skills to use its services successfully. Such barriers, according to The Literacy Audit Kit, developed by the Adult Association for Adult Literacy, can be grouped in four areas: a) promotion and publicity, b) print materials, c) clear verbal communication, and d) sensitivity to literacy.

The Connecting Literacy to Community Project (CLCP) is intended to improve literacy outreach and awareness in particular Alberta communities. Through partnerships with select agencies and service providers in each community, CLCP literacy specialists:

- act as a catalyst for literacy awareness,
- investigate literacy needs, and
- consult on improving print materials or verbal communications.

These activities are intended to help the agencies minimize or remove barriers, and better meet the needs of their clientele with low literacy skills.

The Literacy Audit Workshop

The Executive Director of the Society in consultation with the CLCP Literacy Specialist decided to examine qualities of the Society's print materials.

At a CLCP workshop participants identified literacy assets and needs using an exercise which was adapted from The Literacy Audit Kit. The workshop was intended to offer the staff an opportunity to comment on the Society's success in meeting the literacy needs of its clients. A plan was developed, to address needs, using a strategic planning model.

Specifically, the workshop helped participants to:

- Identify the Society's sensitivity to literacy. These are the standard practices used to address the literacy needs of clients.
- Identify and clarify print material qualities. These are the general literacy qualities of brochures, forms, and posters.
- Begin to develop a plan to address any needs, and increase the Society's literacy capabilities.

The Literacy Audit has four Categories to classify the qualities noted in the Barrier Groups. The Categories are:

1. This is something we are not doing. If the organization is not doing it, is it something that should be considered?
2. We are doing this, but could make some improvements. Where and how do people feel the organization could improve the way it does things?
3. We are satisfied that we are doing this well.
4. Not applicable. Which statements don't apply to the organization?

Why?

Using these Categories, participants reviewed the Society's sensitivity to literacy and print materials. The results of the review appear in Appendices I and II.

The Society's Literacy Action Plan

The Literacy Action Plan is a map. It represents a course of action that will help the Society to:

- change,
- remove literacy barriers, and
- better serve its clients.

The Plan is comprised of specific goals and strategies. The goals describe the Society's management, staff and volunteers plan to enhance and provide their products and services. The goals describe the primary changes in literacy that the Society is striving to achieve. A strategy is a manageable "step" which, when completed along with other strategies, leads to accomplishing a goal. Strategies specify the "how", "when" and "what" that will need to be accomplished in order to achieve each goal.

The workshop participants identified three (3) short-term goals, and strategies, as well as three (3) long-term goals. Accomplishing the short-term goals will help to increase the quality of the Society's print materials, and its sensitivity to literacy.

Short-Term Goals (1 – 12 Months)

1. Client Assistance:

- Ask clients if they need help filling out forms.
- Have staff, volunteers, audiotapes, and/or videotapes available to help clients fill out forms.
- Offer clients help in a way that avoids drawing attention to literacy problems.
- Regularly ask clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of services.

Strategies:

- At a staff meeting go through registration form and highlight how to assist clients fill it in – Audrey attend
- Get fact sheet on literacy, tip sheets on plain language and verbal communication, and websites from Audrey
- Get posters on literacy.

2. Redevelopment of Materials:

- Our print materials including forms:
 - are written in simple and clear language
 - avoid the use of technical jargon
 - are designed with lots of white space
 - use graphics and illustrations
 - are easy for adults with low literacy skills to read and understand

Strategies:

- Workshop on plain language revision of the newsletter for the Society coordinators and newsletter volunteer

3. Staff Training:

- Enhance awareness and sensitivity about:
 - behaviors may indicate that the client could have literacy problems
 - literacy and literacy issues
 - the literacy resources in our community
- Consult with people outside the Centre for feedback on written materials we prepare for the general public.
- Preparing materials in plain language.

Strategies:

- Half-day workshop on verbal communication for Society staff (during spring break). Invite “Parents As Teachers” staff to share their learning from the workshop they had on verbal communication. Focus on the similarities and differences between literacy and ESL
- Half day workshop on plain language for all staff (during spring break).

Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)

1. We regularly review our print materials, including forms, to check how easy they are to read.

2. Our organization has guidelines for limiting the level of reading difficulty of our printed materials.
3. Our staff has received training in how to prepare materials in plain language.

Additional Strategies

The Literacy Audit Kit provides useful suggestions that could be utilized by the Society's as strategies to accomplish the literacy goals.

General Strategies

- Give a copy of the plan to the Board, and solicit board support for the literacy initiative.
- Determine how literacy issues relate to both the Society's Mission, and the way management, staff and volunteers perform their respective tasks to accomplish the Mission.
- Ensure that the literacy needs of clients are considered when you develop new programs and services.
- Develop brochures, posters, etc. with input from the community and clients.
- Pretest new or revised brochures with advisory committees and/or students in a literacy program.

Operational Strategies

- Take time to prepare, and organize information in a logical sequence.
- Use plain language, as well as appropriate and varied vocabulary.
- Paraphrase what a person has said to increase understanding.
- Ask questions and clarify information in an appropriate way in order to enhance understanding.
- Involve a literacy professional in the training.
- Have staff discuss ways to respectfully offer assistance to a client who may have literacy difficulties.

Implementation and Follow-up of the Plan

Implementation of the Society's plan should begin as soon as possible with one of the short-term goals. Audrey Gardner will contact the Centre by telephone in 4 – 6 weeks. Formal follow-up on the project, with a site visit, will take place in May 2002.

Appendix I: Sensitivity to Literacy

These are the standard practices used to address the literacy needs of clients.

1. This is something we are not doing.

- We offer all clients the same help to avoid drawing attention to literacy problems through special and potentially embarrassing treatment.
- All staff who have direct contact with clients are aware that certain behaviors may indicate that the client could have literacy problems.
- Our staff has received awareness and sensitivity training about literacy and literacy issues.

2. We are doing this but could make some improvements.

- We ask all clients whether they need help filling out forms.
- Staff, volunteers, audio tapes, and/or videotapes are available to help clients fill out our organization's forms.
- We regularly ask our clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services.
- Our staff knows about the literacy resources in our community. If asked, they could tell a client where to get help to improve their literacy skills.

3. We are satisfied we are doing this well.

- We accommodate clients who may want or need to bring friends or spokespersons to their meetings with our staff.

4. Not applicable.

- We have identified what a client must know and the literacy skills a client must have in order to make use of our services.

For example:

- Does a client need to be able to read, write, and speak well in order to use our services?
- Does a client need to know things about the law before we can help them?

- Does a client need to know that a completed written referral is necessary before coming to our organization?

Appendix II: Printed Materials

The print materials section, of The Literacy Audit, refers to the general literacy qualities of brochures, forms, and posters.

1. This is something we are not doing.

- If appropriate, our print materials are available in other languages.
- We regularly review our print materials, including forms, to check how easy they are to read.
- Our organization has guidelines for limiting the level of reading difficulty of our printed materials.
- Our staff has received training in how to prepare materials in plain language.

2. We are doing this but could make some improvements.

- Our print materials are easy for adults with low literacy skills to read.
- All the forms we use in our organization are easy for everyone to read and understand.
- Our print materials are written in simple and clear language. We avoid using technical jargon and scientific terms in the materials we prepare for the general public.
- Print materials are designed with lots of white space to provide relief from the print.
- We use graphics and illustrations in our print materials.
- We consult with people outside the organization for feedback on written materials we prepare for the general public.

3. We are satisfied we are doing this well.

- No qualities were assigned to this category.

4. Not applicable.

- No qualities were assigned to this category.

Appendix 4: Formative Review Form

Connecting Literacy to Community (CLC) Formative Review

Note to the Literacy Specialist: This interview can be done over the phone. You will need to have the Agency's Workshop Report and Action Plan handy for your reference. One of the primary objectives of CLC is to gauge the change that takes place in each participating agency because of the literacy workshop that was conducted as part of the research component of the project. We will attempt to review the change in two stages. The first time, a "formative review" takes place about six (6) weeks after the workshop. The second "summative review" will take place with each agency in May. Following is a list of questions to ask your contact in each agency. Please record the responses and email them to Bill Holbrow.

Name of Participating Agency:

Date:

Name of Agency contact:

(The person you talked to)

1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?
2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?
3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?

Literacy Specialist Comments:

Appendix 5: Summative Review Form

Connecting Literacy to Community (CLC) Summative Review

Note to the Literacy Specialist: This step continues the process of gauging the change that is taking place in each participating agency. The review of change began with the Formative Review . The format of this step should be a short workshop involving those who attended the first workshop. This Review must be completed, and the report submitted by May 31, 2002.
Following is a list of questions to ask your contact in each agency. Please record the responses and email them to Bill Holbrow.

Name of Participating Agency:

Date of Summative Review Workshop:

1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?
Which Goals have you implemented? Which Goals are you making progress toward implementing?
2. What do you see as outcomes from the implementation?
3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?
4. What has worked well in your efforts to accomplish the Goals?
What has not worked well?
5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the Goals and implementing the resulting changes?

Literacy Specialist Observations & Comments:

Appendix 6: Agency Action Plan & Review Reports

The following 10 Action Plan & Review Reports represent a summary of the plans and progress for each participating agency regarding their literacy goals. Here again is a description of each of the 10 agencies.

Agency 1 is an urban society that serves families with children from birth to age 6, by providing information and support to parents so their child(ren) will have the best possible start towards academic and social success. This agency's programs include: a toy lending library, Parents as Teachers, and Moving Forward.

Agency 2 is a teen drop-in centre, in a rural location, that provides safe, comfortable home-like environment to help youth identify their strengths, improve their life-skills and participate in on-going programs.

Agency 3 is an urban society that offers information on and referral to community services and events. It has various volunteer committees to help and support local residents care for their community, and a steering committee that is comprised of service providers.

Agency 4 is a rural based non-profit organization that provides support for children and families through community building and provision of resources.

Agency 5 uses a multidisciplinary team approach to health, and serves individuals at risk in an urban community. Their programs include: medical and nurses services, chiropractic services, counselling for families, couples and individuals, seniors outreach, basic needs referral and services, computer access point (CAP), and assists individuals to be able to participate in community initiatives.

Agency 6 provides health services to young children and their mothers through inoculations, screening and health information in rural locations.

Agency 7 provides information, referral and support to at-risk individuals in 11 urban communities. Programs include, family support and counselling, single parent support groups, and partnership with other organizations for community based initiatives

Agency 8 is a rural based agency that serves as a central meeting place and drop-in facility for women. Services include family violence counselling, referral and personal support, and a clothing store.

Agency 9 primarily serves residents of a large urban housing complex. Programs are developed in response to the needs of the residents. The agency is staff by various organizations working together to provide programs. These include: access to computer, internet and fax for employment searches and schoolwork needs, support programs for parents, information and referral to community services, free clothing and food, and assist residents with building community initiatives.

Agency 10 is a rural based organization that serves as a single point of access for community programs and services.

Agency 1.		
Action Plan Goals	Formative Review	Summative Review
<p>Short-Term Goals (1 – 12 Months)</p> <p>1. Client Assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask clients if they need help filling out forms. • Have staff, volunteers, audiotapes, and/or videotapes available to help clients fill out forms. • Offer clients help in a way that avoids drawing attention to literacy problems. • Regularly ask clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of services. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At a staff meeting go through registration form and highlight how to assist clients fill it in – Literacy Specialist to attend • Get fact sheet on literacy, tip sheets on plain language and verbal communication, and websites from the LS • Get posters on literacy. <p>2. Redevelopment of Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our print materials including forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are written in simple and 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are now asking all new clients if they need help filling out the registration form • We are having the plain language workshop on April 4 • I am teaching all the staff at next staff meeting about how to fill out the registration form with new clients <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... and I believe in the importance of this project, but it has only been a month since the workshop and not a lot of new families have come in, it is hard to see much difference <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TIME – the demands of everyday service are sometimes not met, so trying to put the (action) plan into all our priority areas ... is difficult. 	<p>1. What steps has your agency taken to implement your short-term goals? Which goals have you implemented? Which goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are asking new families better questions and are more welcoming. • Presented the project at the Coordinators meeting. • Making changes to the newsletter at both centres. • Will make further changes to the registration form this fall. • We didn't do the workshops with the staff, but we [agency coordinators] are going to present on literacy at our all staff meeting in the fall. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My attitude has changed; I am more aware now and don't assume that everyone can read. • I feel much better about how I am welcoming parents into the

Agency 1.		
Action Plan Goals	Formative Review	Summative Review
<p>clear language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid the use of technical jargon • are designed with lots of white space • use graphics and illustrations • are easy for adults with low literacy skills to read and understand <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop on plain language revision of the newsletter for the ... coordinators and newsletter volunteer <p>3. Staff Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance awareness and sensitivity about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behaviors may indicate that the client could have literacy problems • literacy and literacy issues • the literacy resources in our community • Consult with people outside the ... for feedback on written materials we prepare for the general public. • Preparing materials in plain 	<p>Literacy Specialist Comments: The challenge for the [agency's] coordinators is time. They have a good understanding of literacy issues, and clearly feel strongly about making their services accessible to people with low literacy. In order to work toward their short-term goals they will need support from management to take the time to practice strategies to reduce literacy barriers. The plain language workshop to revise their newsletter is a good opportunity for making positive changes.</p>	<p>centre, and can ask questions that tell me about their literacy without embarrassing them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now we always fill out the registration with new parents and offer to do the writing. • I write the information on the communication board in sentences now, and have had parents tell me it is easier to read. • Revised toy-lending library system so that it is much easier for parents to sign toys in and out. • Newsletter is written clearer, no parents have asked for clarification on what we meant...so I think it is easier to read. • I am listening better to clients and paying attention to signs about their literacy levels.

Agency 1.		
Action Plan Goals	Formative Review	Summative Review
<p>language.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half-day workshop on verbal communication for ... staff (during spring break). Invite “Parents As Teachers” staff to share their learning from the workshop they had on verbal communication. Focus on the similarities and differences between literacy and ESL • Half day workshop on plain language for all staff (during spring break). <p>Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We regularly review our print materials, including forms, to check how easy they are to read. 2. Our organization has guidelines for limiting the level of reading difficulty of our printed materials. 3. Our staff has received training in how to prepare materials in plain language. 		<p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time, not enough of it. • Feeling overwhelmed...that’s the downside of consciousness raising! But, it’s worth it I know, and there’s no turning back. • I am still wary of sounding judgmental, and making people feel that I think they can’t write. • The newsletter volunteer that took the training is leaving so I feel like I have to start from scratch again. • I am just learning about different audiences, I was writing a communication to the staff and writing it in plain language until I realized I could use the jargon because the staff knows it. <p>4. What has worked well in your efforts to accomplish the goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not worked well – see #3 • Worked well: • The tip sheet for the newsletter is great.

Agency 1.		
Action Plan Goals	Formative Review	Summative Review
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wrote an information letter to the parents for a field trip and was told that it was very clear, and most of the parents do not speak much English • Being able to apply what I have learned in tangible ways and seeing it being understood (bulletin board, communication board, newsletter, and talking). <p>5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time for us to learn and to get the rest of the staff on board. • Need to find \$ to get a staff person to help specifically on literacy (newsletter and linking to community resources). • Need to continue to have your (LS) services, there is still so much to be done. <p>Literacy Specialist observations and comments: Very dedicated [agency] coordinators, who feel passionate and excited about</p>

Agency 1.		
Action Plan Goals	Formative Review	Summative Review
		<p>how they have integrated their learning into the [agency]. The [agency] deals with parents with English as their first language who may or may not have a high school diploma, and the [other location] deals with parents who first language is not English and know little about their literacy abilities. Thus, the literacy needs are somewhat different for each [location].</p> <p>The approach I have taking is to focus on the [location] as it is in the community for this project, but also address the literacy (and language) issues at the [other location]. They are very interested in phase two work and have requested workshops for the parents on looking at the connection between the parent's school experience and their feelings and expectations for their children's school experience</p>

Agency 2.		
Action Plan Goals	Formative Review – Jan. 4/02	Summative Review
<p>Short-Term Goals (6 – 12 Months)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a form explaining how to get on a chat line • Staff attend training programs and workshops on literacy <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take time to explain to the kids how to use the form(s) • Have employees attend a P.A.L. tutor training session • Career-corner staff could get information to include in a resource file <p>Long-Term Goals (2 – 3 Years)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a feed-back tool or evaluation form for clients 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the first of the two short-term goals (creating a form with directions for accessing teen- Chat-Lines): The Director said that they have put up a sheet above the computer with directions of how to access a chat-room. • The other short-term goal of lining up more training for the staff on literacy The Director was off for an operation and hasn't had the opportunity yet to contact P.A.L. to set-up a training session for her staff. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students are able to get onto the Chat-line by themselves more or less. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None so far. <p>Literacy Specialist Comments:</p>	<p>1. What steps has your agency taken to implement your short-term goals? Which goals have you implemented? Which goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chat Line – Helping kids to know how to access a chat-line on computer. (We made a direction chart in the form of stickies on the computer.) <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are not bugged so much so kids feel more skilled and confident to do it by themselves. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none <p>4. What has worked well in your</p>

Agency 2.		
Action Plan Goals	Formative Review – Jan. 4/02	Summative Review
	<p>The Director had to have a knee-operation in January therefore she was out of the [agency] and has just returned to work this week.</p> <p>The Director and I have scheduled a date to continue with the Literacy Audit workshop: Verbal Communication Segment in February.</p>	<p>efforts to accomplish the goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P/T youth staff are better able to help younger kids. This improved their self-esteem. <p>5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a whole lot. <p>Literacy Specialist observations and comments: The Director said she has seen some positive outcomes with her part-time staff who have gone to seek other employment opportunities. She feels that teaching the younger kids has really improved their own skill level and self esteem. We had a workshop on listening skills that they also found helpful and part of the short-term goals is to have more training programs/workshops on literacy.</p>

Agency 3.		
Action Plan Goals	Formative Review	Summative Review
<p>Short-Term Goals (1 – 12 Months)</p> <p>1. Plain Language Training Print materials are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • easy for adults with low literacy skills to read; • written in simple and clear language, avoiding the use of technical jargon; and • designed with lots of white space. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise “Support for Families” information sheet <p>2. Develop techniques / guidelines for making posters easier to read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish guidelines limiting the level of reading difficulty of printed materials. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get an example of techniques or guidelines for plain language posters • Draft techniques or guidelines and review with the steering committee, then review with representatives from all other committees 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not many as yet • Set up time with Literacy Specialist to re-write flyer into plain language • Will attend interagency workshop on plain language • Much more aware of how things are written • Revising the agency brochure by reducing wordiness and including good graphics <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now when I speak with new community residents I am more aware of what I am saying about [the agency] and how I am saying it <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency’s professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some frustration about finding straightforward words to say or write instead of the lengthier words, e.g., how to include our 	<p>1. What steps has your agency taken to implement your short-term goals? Which goals have you implemented? Which goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised “Support for Families” flyer and distributed with Good Food Box and increased distribution through out community centre. Gave it to Bingo participants. Also added “Community Update” to it (double sided). • We have not developed guidelines yet, but it has become part of the strategic planning process we are in. • We have not organized a way to get client feedback, but what we know is that people can’t find us easily (we are not in the phone book). We do get feedback informally, and I try to share that with the board and committees, but this is not on literacy in particular. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final draft and present to all committees <p>3. Client Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly ask our clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services. <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edit and add to current feedback questions Distribute evaluation forms at workshops When appropriate ask client how their friend(s) felt about the service Brainstorming: follow-up phone calls with clients; have anonymous client feedback forms in the office <p>Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)</p>	<p>mission statement in the agency brochure is very difficult</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feels like I now have more work to do, which is normal when you take on a new approach. I am looking at everything and thinking “it needs to redone” <p>Literacy Specialist Comments: This agency has one staff member and a number of volunteer committees. Thus, it took a long time for them to get going. The initial steps they have taken such as increasing their awareness, viewing their print material with a “how readable is this” perspective, and taking the initiative with the agency brochure reflects a positive attitude toward literacy and change. The agency brochure was not identified in the action plan. Involving volunteers in the learning process was not identified in the action plan, but is occurring as ... works with each committee. This may be an unexpected outcome of the project.</p> <p>Because of the demands on the one staff member, achieving their short-term goals may be difficult. However, this organization offers a lot of potential</p>	<p>from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive feedback from some clients about the “Support for Families”, and increased distribution because we feel better about it and now it is easier to share. We are also having more phone calls asking about the programs advertised on this flyer. More people are calling back after receiving service to say thank you, this seems to have increased in the last month. Increased awareness: I am much more aware of how things are written and I look at posters more closely now. I am suggesting PL things to committee members, and have done a mini explanation of PL to the environment committee. I am reading things with a critical awareness, and adding or highlighting words on posters on the bulletin board outside the office. Started revising the client intake forms.

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<p>1. We have identified what a client must know and the literacy skills a client must have in order to make use of our services.</p> <p>2. All the forms we use in our organization are easy for everyone to read and understand.</p> <p>3. If appropriate, our print materials are available in other languages.</p> <p>4. We regularly review our print materials, including forms, to check how easy they are to read.</p> <p>5. Our staff has received training in how to prepare materials in plain language.</p>	<p>for Phase II participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering committee informed about the CLC project and they are supportive of the change process. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time – not enough time to look for models or templates for PL. I have not looked at the websites on PL you (LS) provided. Because I am the only staff it is sometimes hard to get others (committee volunteers and board) to get involved and learn about PL and clearer ways to communicate with community residents. <p>4. What has worked well in your efforts to accomplish the goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not worked well see #3 Worked well: see below Having a LS come and work with me on the “Support for Families” flyer really made a difference.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning about the literacy programs and how to refer or get information. • Knowing that BVC supports this project is great and helps me understand more about what BVC does. • Getting the PL tip sheet was great, I have gone through it with the environment committee. • The way the project is set up is really good, where the LS helps with the process like doing the flyer, emailing info and websites, doing a PL workshop and just taking the time to talk one-to-one about the whole business of literacy...it has really helped my learning much more than just a one time workshop. • Knowing that the LS can be more involved in phase two is good incentive for me to learn. • I have found this project very valuable, what I have learned is really sticking, there is no turning back now. <p>5. What needs to change in order to</p>

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		<p>be more successful in accomplishing the goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More emphasis on literacy among the committee members, and how it affects everything that we do. Seeing it more than just a tool. • For client feedback I need help in planning how to do it and especially how to find the appropriate questions to ask and then how to ask those questions in a sensitive and useful way. <p>Literacy Specialist observations and comments: Clearly, literacy has made its mark with the coordinator of [agency], as she stated, “there is no turning back”. The challenge for this organization is maintain the learning and to find ways to expand this learning to committee members and the board. The board is made up of representatives from service providers in [the community]. This is different from volunteer boards where members could more readily participate in the project than boards</p>

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		<p>made up from a number of community services.</p> <p>In my opinion, the opportunity to support continued learning will be through the initiatives planned for phase two. [agency] is running an employment project this fall and has requested assistance from CLC in the planning and implementation phases. Also they would like the CLC to help with gathering client feedback. Ideas on how to gather feedback included building a working group of community residents who would plan and conduct the survey. Overall, the amount of learning that the coordinator has experienced and how she has applied this in tangible ways is quite remarkable.</p>

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<p>Short-Term Goals (6 – 12 Months)</p> <p>1. Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase staff awareness about behaviors that may indicate a client could have literacy problems. • Initiate awareness and sensitivity training about literacy and literacy issues. • Initiate training in the preparation of print materials in plain language. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact a literacy specialist • Clarify and prioritize needs • Secure funding • Arrange a time(s) for training session(s) <p>2. Print Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop print materials that are easy for adults with low literacy skills to read. • Insure that all [agency]’s forms are easy for everyone to read and understand. • Write print materials in simple and clear language, avoiding the use of technical jargon. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the skill to do the work 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "We have taken into account the changes needed to make our pamphlet easier to use. We changed sentence structure and the font, used more graphics, used boxes around some information and changed the front of the pamphlet." <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "We hope people will be able to read it better. It doesn't appear as intimidating as the previous pamphlets. We would like to ask people how they like our pamphlet and get some feedback on it." <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency’s professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • " Our challenge is finding time to work on our goals. We also need to remember to ask people about the effectiveness of [agency] when we 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals? Which Goals have you implemented? Which Goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've had literacy awareness training as well as a plain language workshop. We know who to contact for literacy help. Since the plain language workshop we have worked with our brochure and made some changes. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from the implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We made some changes in our last brochure and there seems to have been an increase in the number of people signing up for our classes. Also, the staff is more aware of literacy issues. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency’s professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't seem to have any. The biggest challenge is keeping in mind literacy issues on a day to day basis. But we know that it will come with time. Things are starting to become

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<p>in-house.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather technical information and develop the ability to apply it. • Conduct an inventory of [agency]'s print materials. • Prioritize those print materials that require work. • Begin to review and revise print materials. <p>3. Client Service & Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer all clients the same help to avoid drawing attention to literacy problems through special and potentially embarrassing treatment. • Ask clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of [agency]'s services. <p>4. Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policies on literacy and plain language. • Establish guidelines for limiting the level of reading difficulty of print materials. <p>Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)</p>	<p>talk with them."</p> <p>Literacy Specialist Comments: I have set a date with [agency] to have the first workshop, which will focus on literacy awareness. [Agency] has moved forward in changing their pamphlet to meet plain language criteria. However, we will continue to work together on this project. They would like a workshop on plain language which we will setup in April or May. The next time the pamphlet will be worked on is at the end of summer when they plan their fall programs. ... thought it would be a good idea to ask people about the effectiveness of the pamphlet as well as their other services. I think it would be a good idea to discuss with them a way to remember to ask people about their services. Maybe a type of checklist that sits by their phone would help. I will discuss some strategies with them and see if they can find something that will work.</p>	<p>ingrained.</p> <p>4. What has worked well in your efforts to accomplish the Goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are implementing some of the changes. We are more aware of literacy issues. It has helped having a literacy specialist to talk to. <p>5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the Goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to continue to use plain language in all our posters and brochures as well as our other writing. <p>Literacy Specialist Observations & Comments: The staff started talking about ways they could use a specialist. One idea was to have a literacy awareness workshop with all of their facilitators as part of facilitator training. They also asked if I would be interested in doing a short presentation at a training workshop next month.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design print materials with lots of white space to provide relief from the print. • Have print materials available in other languages, as is appropriate. 		

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<p>Short-Term Goals (1 – 12 Months)</p> <p>1. Staff Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff receive training regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literacy and literacy issues. • preparing materials in plain language • appropriate ways to ask all clients whether they need help filling out forms • methods of avoiding potentially embarrassing treatment when offering help to clients with literacy problems • the spotting of behaviors that may indicate the client could have literacy problems. • Resources such as staff, volunteers, audiotapes, and/or videotapes are available to help clients complete forms. • Staff are kept informed about the literacy resources in our community. If asked, they could tell a client where to get help to improve their literacy skills. • Staff have identified what a client must know and the literacy skills a client must have 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are addressing all the goals concurrently: training of communications committee, review of draft of agency brochure • Some materials have been looked at by clients • Staff development • Redeveloping our client brochure • Feedback from clients and staff • Introduced literacy idea to team • Audit has occurred • Educated staff through workshop • A committee dedicated to re-designing the brochure for the [agency] • Reviewing the brochure • Set up a literacy committee <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more accessible agency • Clearer print documents • Wiser staff • Greater awareness, individual 	<p>1. What steps has your agency taken to implement your short-term goals? Which goals have you implemented? Which goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print Material Goal: the “Families Services” brochure has gone through an extensive development process, to make sure the language and wording is accessible to our clients, potential clients and other service providers • Staff Development Goal: the communications committee members have increased their awareness and sensitivity about literacy skills among our clients, and we do have a presentation planned for the full staff meeting in the fall • Will include this project in the annual report and the next newsletter <p>2. What do you see as outcomes</p>

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<p>in order to make use of [agency's] various our services. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of ability to read, write, and speak needed to use [agency]'s services. • The things about the law a client must know before help can be provided. <p>2. Client Brochure / Print Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print materials including forms are easy for adults with low literacy skills to read and understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written in simple and clear language • no technical jargon and scientific terms • designed with lots of white space to provide relief from the print • use of graphics and illustrations • Clients are informed, through print materials, they can bring friends or spokespersons to their meetings with staff <p>Strategies:</p>	<p>staff and entire agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing past material for revision • Devising new material based on new skills and awareness • A clear and effective brochure • Clear and effective brochures and posters • Literacy friendly material <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At this point we have sensitized our awareness of literacy issues, the next step will be to consciously utilize these principles on an on-going basis • Scheduling meeting times with the staff to carry out this work • Newness of approach, will take some time to become more familiar and comfortable • Looking at material from clients perspective instead of providers • Time <p>Literacy Specialist Comments</p>	<p>from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness has led to telling other staff members about what we are doing, and noticing when someone needs some help around filling out a form. • I saw a client sitting with an intake form and not filling it out. I talked to the Crisis and Resources Specialist that this person may not be able to read, and asked that he assist the client. • I now ask volunteer applicants if they want to complete the application together or by themselves • I am more aware of how I am writing now, and who I am writing for when I am working on the newsletter or website • I see this (growing awareness) being pervasive throughout the agency. Although we have not done any formal announcement there have been lots of conversations around literacy between staff, especially about

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get both current and new staff “on board” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • articulate the reason for the change in [agency’s] print materials and the focus on literacy • be able to offer examples of other places and situations where a similar change has worked, and the benefits to the organization, staff, and clients • deliver a presentation, describing the changes and the reasons for making them, at a staff meeting • include information and a discussion concerning the literacy project, at the April 2002 Long-term Planning Day • develop information packages that can be distributed to both new and current employees • start with the “Client Brochure” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritize other print materials that require changes: • those that go to clients 	<p>Strong commitment to having their agency accessible to clients and potential clients. The communications committee has taken on literacy as their main work. Their biggest challenge may be trying to find ways to convey their philosophy in plain language. As demonstrated in the plain language workshop today, there was much discussion about how to present “holistic health”, “multi-disciplinary”, and “participatory” in a brochure. It is clear that literacy is already incorporated into their philosophy, and that they are very keen to share and learn ways that are literacy friendly for clients.</p>	<p>readability of the client consent form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We got help from the literacy specialist when we couldn’t decide what the title of the Crisis and Resources Specialist should be. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your agency’s professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We all feel that we don’t have enough time to be able to get together as a group to work on the brochure. <p>4. What has worked well in your efforts to accomplish the goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having the literacy specialist provide information and particularly facilitate our learning process has been tremendous. We have really appreciated her availability to fit into our schedule because it is difficult to get us all together. • What has not worked well, is the difficulty in getting all the committee members to be able

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those that go to the “community” like the Annual Report, and the newsletter • internal documents like the Policy and Procedure Manual, the new staff package, and the Volunteer manual • implement literacy standards, guidelines, and policy • involve the Communications Committee <p>3. Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods are implemented to regularly ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of [agency’s] services • people outside the organization for feedback on written materials [agency] prepares for the general public • The feedback is used in decision making. <p>Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)</p>		<p>to attend our meetings.</p> <p>5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we need to do is to keep going • Since we have only done some of the things in the action plan, and realized how much time it take to do one brochure we should revisit the plan and make some changes • We plan to do 4 more brochures (the Family Services is only one of Five programs at [agency]), and hopefully with each one it will get easier. • It would be great if we could have your (Literacy Specialist) services on going...at least until we are done all the brochures. <p>Literacy Specialist observations and</p>

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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print materials are available in other languages as appropriate and required. 2. Print materials are reviewed regularly to check for ease of reading. 3. Guidelines are implemented for limiting the level of reading difficulty of print materials. 		<p>comments:</p> <p>The learning process has occurred, for the most part, through the revision of the “Family Services” brochure by the communications committee. In this process there were lively discussions around language that can convey their philosophy. Their passionate commitment to being accessible to their clients equals that to their unique approach to health. The challenge, in my opinion, is finding ways to describe their approach without a lot of jargon. For example there was quite a debate among the committee members on how to change “”consumer-responsive multi-disciplinary team approach” to plain language, but still convey their philosophy.</p> <p>Another challenge I perceive is finding ways to identify and encourage literacy positive practices across the agency. This may be due to the complexity of a multi-disciplinary, team-based organization where there is a diversity of programs and voices. My sense is that the role of catalyst may be necessary to support the long-term and on-going integration of literacy awareness and positive practices into</p>

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		[agency]. Their commitment to literacy is strong, and [agency] would admittedly benefit from having a Literacy Specialist assist them in their efforts to continue to carry out and build on their action plan.

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<p>Short-Term Goals (1 – 12 Months)</p> <p>1. Offering Help to Patients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients are asked if they need help to fill out forms. • Staff and volunteers are available to help patients complete forms. • Patients are offered help in a way that avoids drawing attention to literacy problems. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the literacy level of forms <p>2. Understanding / clarification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what a patient must know and the literacy skills a patient must have in order to make use of our services. • Regularly ask patients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services. • Verbally provide information to clients in a way that is adapted to their needs. • Continually check with patients to determine that they understand the information we give them. • Adjust the pace at which we talk and the vocabulary we use when 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased literacy awareness has led to increased vigilance in checking/reviewing written materials for literacy. • Evaluated increased need for education regarding literacy education. • Evaluation of our verbal communication with clients. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better resources (readability) for client. • More awareness – better communication with clients regarding information, educational needs. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency’s professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work schedule has not allowed us to put as much work into this as we should. • Own strategic goals. • New staff 	<p>1. What steps has your agency taken to implement you short-term goals? Which goals have you implemented? Which goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effort has been made to understand the client and their individual literacy needs, their need for different explanations, and help completing forms. • Forms are being reviewed and staff is soliciting feedback from the clients. • Staff are working at developing a better understanding and different strategies to provide better service. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a greater awareness from staff, greater effort to find alternatives, more user friendly forms and pamphlets, and a better feedback process from client input. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the</p>

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<p>we work with patients for who English is a second language.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the feasibility of lengthening the duration of the “2nd month shot” appointment; Issues include the attention span of the patient, and the amount of information to convey • Determine what information is most important for each individual patient, and prioritize for conveying to the patient • Assess the literacy level of forms • Determine the feasibility of providing the “After-Care” form in other languages such as Vietnamese, Korean, French, Spanish, German, and Arabic • Assess methods for gathering feedback from patients • Inform and encourage patients to bring interpreters or trusted friends to appointments if necessary • Schedule, as part of the monthly meeting, a portion of time to review progress toward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget cuts. <p>Literacy Specialist Comments: Due to decreased staffing time and dollars they are not able to meet as a group as often. They were not able to complete any other workshops around literacy. As a group they have decided to work on these issues individually and on their own time. This shows a great deal of commitment to the issue and to their clients. There have been some referrals to the Building Bridges program from the health nurses.</p>	<p>sort-term goals into your agency’s professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has not been enough time for the staff to incorporate new practices and to review forms and pamphlets. <p>4. What has worked well in your efforts to accomplish the goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actual workshops were a great opportunity to discuss and plan around this issue. • Not enough time to get together as a team to implement strategies, creates a barrier to the process. <p>5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There needs to be ongoing championing of the need to keep going. • There needs to be ongoing communication with Literacy ‘experts’.

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<p>accomplishing the literacy goals</p> <p>3. Jargon – ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients, who want or need to bring friends or spokespersons to their meetings with us, are encouraged to do so. • Identify jargon that is specific to our organization and service, and develop an easy way to explain these words to our patients. • Avoid jargon when communicating with patients. <p>Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months) Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness and sensitivity about literacy and literacy issues, including patient behaviors and non-verbal cues that may indicate literacy problems. • Increase awareness about the literacy resources in High River. • Enhance clear verbal communication techniques such as: • effective organization of information given to patients communicating with simple language • checking for understanding 		<p>Literacy Specialist observations and comments:</p> <p>Due to the time restraints that are forced on the nurses there hasn't been a lot of time available to them to work as a team. The changes that were made were done on an individual basis, or in small groups. The nurses are quite devoted to ensuring the clients they meet are given the best service possible.</p> <p>I look forward to meeting with them to continue the learning process.</p>

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<p>Short-Term Goals (1 – 12 Months)</p> <p>1. Staff Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what a client must know and the literacy skills a client must have in order to use our services. Enhance awareness and sensitivity about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> literacy and literacy issues; behaviors that may indicate that the client could have literacy problems; and guidelines for preparing print materials in plain language. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have two workshops, one on verbal communication and one on plain language. <p>2. Redevelopment of Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print materials including forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are written in simple and clear language; avoid the use of technical jargon; are designed with lots of 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Had plain language workshop Re-writing volunteer recruitment material Other staff are revising the newsletter More aware when interacting with clients, particularly when we use paperwork with the clients <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff more aware, especially in how we write There is an agreement among us (staff) that this work is VERY important <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time constraints – it takes a lot of time to review and re-write material Difficult sometimes to find different words for technical or professional jargon 	<p>1. What steps has your agency taken to implement your short-term goals? Which goals have you implemented? Which goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We had two workshops and got help from LS on the newsletter. We are making progress with our written materials and are more aware of what and how we are speaking with clients. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The submissions I make to community newsletters are more succinct, short, simple and action oriented. We are more user-friendly- I think we are conveying a safer and friendlier tone because we have had clients ask for help with forms and disclose that they can't read well. We are having more conversations with our partner agencies about literacy. With one partner we went over our

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<p>white space;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use graphics and illustrations; • are easy for everyone to read and understand; and • are regularly reviewed to check how easy they are to read. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with people outside the Centre for feedback on written materials we prepare for the general public. • Establish guidelines limiting the level of reading difficulty. • Staff, volunteers, audiotapes, and/or videotapes are available to help clients fill out forms. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop on Plain language principles • Experiment with newsletter, or other material • Revise newsletter or other material and review with LS <p>3. Improve Client Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial constraints on printing <p>Literacy Specialist Comments: This agency is very small (3 staff, and currently 2 practicum students), and is the main information and referral point for the entire north central corridor (up to 11 communities). They also do a lot of collaborative work (community development) with other agencies in all the communities. They are most concerned with clear communication and are very open to learning about literacy issues to make changes for client accessibility to [agency]. However, as time is their biggest challenge, actually making such changes may not occur as intended.</p>	<p>bulletin board and organized things so they are easier to read.</p> <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time, our work is so full of deadlines, lots of time we just have to leave things (print) the way they are. • I like to write well, so I feel my personal bias toward language makes it hard for me to write things simply without feeling like I am not putting in enough information or that I am “dumbing down” the words. • I might be getting too picky, because it is taking me forever to get the newsletter out that was due at the beginning of the month. • I still struggle with offending people who can read well, I don't want to sound like I am talking down to them. <p>4. What has worked well in your</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask all clients if they need help filling out forms. • Accommodate clients who may want or need to bring friends or spokespersons to meetings. • Offer clients help in a way that avoids drawing attention to literacy problems. • Regularly ask our clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of services. • Inform staff about the literacy resources in our community. <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop on verbal communications <p>Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If appropriate, print materials are available in other languages. 2. Schedule periodic reviews of print materials and client services. 		<p>efforts to accomplish the goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not worked well – see #3 • Worked well: we wrote a flyer about mouse-infestation and distributed it to residents of a housing complex that was well received. • Having an outside person come to help has made all the difference. <p>5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time, more tools and resources. I feel like we are just beginning to get a handle on this. • Need to keep the issue of literacy exciting so that we can keep on learning and not get overwhelmed. <p>Literacy Specialist observations and</p>

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		<p>comments: Like other organizations, [agency] has a very big workload. There is clearly an awareness of the importance of literacy sensitive approaches, and that the staff at [agency] are committed to learning how to better serve people with low literacy and language barriers. However, one of the major challenges for this group is to deal with their individual concepts and values around literacy. My sense is that they struggle with how to be literacy sensitive, respectful, and present themselves professionally at the same time. The staff requested continued learning/awareness work for phase two. They do not feel ready to incorporate a direct client initiative yet.</p>

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<p>Short-Term Goals (6 – 12 Months)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make easy to read bookmarks to give to youth and adults during classroom presentations. • Use card stock paper with two colors and simple text to advertise the [agency]. • Develop new pamphlets with easy to read font and format. • Get feedback from the public regarding the [agency's] service. <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access literacy resources on plain language, from ... , • Develop new material with the audience in mind, • Check the reading level of written material (participants felt that a grade 7 level would be appropriate). • Avoid unnecessary descriptions and long words when writing new pamphlets – keep it simple. • Include the statement “We help people with forms.” So that people know assistance will be given. • Include the statement [agency name] – not just women” so that the public understands in simple 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have sketched a rough draft of our pamphlets using simple language, color and clip art. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from the implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We plan to have a new format and new wording for all pamphlets. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are using the last of an existing pile of pamphlets and will look into the costs associated with printing a new batch. <p>Literacy Specialist Comments:</p>	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals? Which Goals have you implemented? Which Goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new pamphlets using plain language and illustrations are in the printing stage. Presently the [agency] is awaiting price quotes from printing companies. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from the implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is anticipated that there will be more people using the pamphlets because they are visually appealing, less cluttered and easier to read. Hopefully more people will be aware of the services that the [agency] provides. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of printing is more than expected. <p>4. What has worked well in your</p>

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<p>terms that everyone is welcome to the [agency].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put a suggestion box in the [agency]. • Use graphics and illustrations in new publications. • Check on prices of card stock paper for pamphlet and lamination bookmarks. • Avoid using jargon such as [agency acronym – use the full name, [agency]. <p>Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make print materials available in other languages. 	<p>I will be meeting on Feb. 14th with the [agency] staff, ... to discuss final changes to three pamphlets - Legal Resource, Violence and the ... general pamphlet. I have written up suggestions on ways to use simple language in the pamphlets as well as color and pictures. The [agency] is planning to print new pamphlets as soon as possible.</p>	<p>efforts to accomplish the Goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The input and suggestions from the Connecting Literacy to Community Project specialist were very helpful. The audience is much broader because the pamphlet is written in plain language and it is also visually appealing. The computer program that was used to create the pamphlet was easy to use. <p>5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the Goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our staff is presently considering some changes to the pamphlet that would lessen the printing costs. Some possible ideas for changes include using less colour and using regular paper instead of card stock. <p>Literacy Specialist Observations & Comments:</p> <p>The [agency] has worked very hard to create a literacy friendly pamphlet that is very appealing. They plan to distribute it to local businesses, agencies and schools. The [agency]</p>

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		has also become more aware of literacy issues. They mentioned that when they meet with a client they assess whether that person may have literacy difficulties and act accordingly.

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<p>Short-Term Goals (1 – 12 Months)</p> <p>1. Respect for clients through literacy awareness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask clients if they need help to fill out forms. • Staff, volunteers, audiotapes, and/or videotapes are available to help clients fill out forms. • Offer clients help in a way that avoids drawing attention to literacy problems. • Regularly ask clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-service on verbal communication skills to be able to identify and assess client literacy levels • Get tip sheet on clear verbal communication and practice • Learn how to recognize signs of literacy problems and how to respond appropriately through role-playing, brainstorming and sharing stories (as part of the above in-service) • Get fact sheet on literacy 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal communication workshop with team • Increased awareness of literacy with other staff members • Changing how we interact with our clients, more aware of what might be embarrassing, and more aware of the pamphlets we are giving them • Redesigned our program brochure to make it easier to read, ... gave us feedback and we intend to get feedback from clients • Our team is planning to do an inservice at a large staff meeting on what we have learned about literacy <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are very excited about this (literacy) and it is changing how we look at all of our work, we are even looking at how we can highlight literacy at our fundraising event • Greater respect for clients who 	<p>1. What steps has your agency taken to implement your short-term goals? Which goals have you implemented? Which goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two or three revisions to the program pamphlet: First we critiqued the old pamphlet, then brainstormed changes, worked on the layout on the computer, reviewed with Literacy Specialist, made final revisions and found more appropriate graphics. • Because of the Verbal Communication workshop we now explain things more clearly to clients, and talk with other staff and partner agencies about people being able to read posters, flyers, forms, etc. • We are planning to do literacy awareness at our fundraising event this fall. • We got free books from LAPS to pass along to the clients. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes</p>

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<p>and information on local literacy programs that can increase our awareness and provide literacy services to clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find ways to communicate with clients to normalize literacy issues, avoid embarrassment, and reduce the stigma of not being able to read or write. For example introduce the subject into discussions with clients, especially in groups (modeling) • Have “literacy moments” at staff/supervision meetings <p>2. Program Pamphlet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design print materials, including forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • so they are easy for everyone to read and understand; and • with lots of white space, graphics and illustrations. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact IT person to inform them about team revising program pamphlet in plain 	<p>may be struggling with literacy compared to before when we just didn’t have the awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our brochure will make it easier for people to access our program, and it is more economical because our brochure might not be thrown out because it is now easier to read • We have had better communication among our team because of this. We speak more clearly and directly with each other. It feels like we are more cohesive • Writing the [agency] newsletter - clearer language, better graphics and more white space <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency’s professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TIME! It does take more time such as making group decisions about our brochure • Some resistance from other staff members at the agency about redoing the brochure • Can’t control all the pamphlets from other services: we have 	<p>from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on the pamphlet really showed us we can work well as a team, we had a common goal. • I think we can show respect to clients more now that we know how important literacy is just to be able to communicate with each other. • The new pamphlet is doing what we hoped it would. One woman asked us why we don’t work in her community, which told us that how we organized the information about what communities we work in, is clear. • We are much more sensitive about how people (clients) feel, I think we are paying more attention to the unspoken signs of discomfort, and thinking “oh maybe this person can’t write well, or can’t read”, where before we didn’t even consider this. • We are reaching out to the

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<p>language, and get pamphlet file sent to [agency]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get Plain Language tip sheet and then make a draft of the pamphlet • Review draft with LS (at Verbal communication in-service) • Get client feedback on this draft • Finalize and produce <p>3. Access to the Program’s services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify what a client must know and the literacy skills a client must have in order to use our services. <p>4. Staff training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff about literacy and literacy issues: • awareness and sensitivity training • behaviors that may indicate that the client could have literacy problems • guidelines for preparing print materials in plain language and limiting the level of reading difficulty of our materials. <p>Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)</p>	<p>some that are really not easy to read, but cannot do anything about it</p> <p>Literacy Specialist Comments: This team is really enthusiastic. They are very open to learning about literacy and how they can apply this to their work with clients. Interesting comment from ... that by participating in this project the team has improved team process and cohesion. Their intention to do an in-service with the entire staff is encouraging, greater potential for agency change.</p>	<p>community better, not just relying on posters and flyers. I have gone door to door at [agency] and got a much better response for residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We made sure the poster for “Spring Fling” (a multi-service resource fair) was written in plain language. • We have shown other staff our pamphlet and now they want us to help them revise the pamphlets for every program. • I am educating teachers I work with by pointing out that maybe one reason they get such a poor response to letters they send home is that some parents might not be able to read. • I feel much better about how I communicate with people who don’t speak English very well. I don’t really know if they can read or write. They might be very literate in their own language, but I know the verbal communication workshop really helped me communicate better with our second language

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<p>1. Print materials, if appropriate, are available in other languages.</p> <p>2. Consult people outside the Program for feedback on written materials prepared for the general public.</p>		<p>clients.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The foster parent program noticed the two bookshelves filled with books (from LAPS) at the main office and asked if they could use them with their children and families. They were 'WOWED' about getting them free and about the CLC project. • What we saw with the bookshelves is how we can influence the whole agency, and hopefully one day Aspen will be known for its literacy sensitivity...we give out books! • We are referring people to literacy programs because we know about them now. • Two of us do (facilitate) Mother Goose and now we feel even more passionate about it because we have learned how important it is. <p>3. What difficulties are you</p>

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		<p>experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time, it's hard to foresee the amount of time this takes, which we don't always have. • We had some difficulty with the IT people who had the logo and desktop publishing program about sharing them with us (for the pamphlet). • Sometimes it feels overwhelming, especially when you are working with other agencies that just don't get it. You are trying to explain why things need to be written clearly, or communicated better and it feels like you are trying to change the world. <p>4. What has worked well in your efforts to accomplish the goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not worked well – see #3 • Worked well: having the Literacy Specialist here meant that we were able to do this. Her enthusiasm about literacy is very infectious, and she was able to help us with just what we

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		<p>needed help with.</p> <p>5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we need is more time to bring people together and to be as excited as we are. • Need more awareness for everyone in the agency. • We need to find a way to have a monthly reminder about literacy that will help us check to see how we have included it in our work on a daily basis. <p>Literacy Specialist observations and comments: This team has really run with the CLC project. My sense is that because the PL revision process of the program pamphlet had such a positive effect on team cohesion they are empowered and therefore willingly speak up about literacy among their peers. They have demonstrated leadership within their agency and their partner agencies. As one team member stated she would like an ongoing reminder about how</p>

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		<p>literacy plays into her work reflects the precarious nature of literacy integration work. This team will need support to continue to be champions of literacy at their agency. I would hope this could come from management. I don't perceive resistance, but neither do I see overt support. This is a sustainability issue.</p>

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<p>Short-Term Goals (6 – 12 Months)</p> <p>1. Training to learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask all clients if they need help filling out forms. • Have staff, volunteers, audiotapes, and/or videotapes available to help clients fill out forms. • Accommodate clients who may want or need to bring friends or spokespersons to meetings with our staff. • Offer all clients the help, which isn't potentially embarrassing so as to avoid drawing attention to literacy problems. • Adjust the pace at which we talk and the vocabulary we use when we work with people for who English is a second language. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact a literacy specialist • Work with a literacy specialist to schedule and deliver a 2 hour workshop <p>2. User Friendliness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to identify what a client must know and the literacy skills a client must have in order to make use of our services. 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have scheduled a date for a literacy awareness workshop for later this month. The staff is working on being aware of people who may have literacy needs. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from this implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is nothing to measure at this time. However, Wendy does feel she herself is more conscious of literacy issues. <p>3. What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the people accessing the service are coming for a specific purpose. Not a lot of other people are coming into the office. • It's been difficult to schedule the workshop because the staff hasn't been able to connect to set a date. 	<p>1. What steps has your Agency taken to implement your short-term goals? Which Goals have you implemented? Which Goals are you making progress toward implementing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've had a literacy awareness workshop. This was one of our goals. • The workshop helped us to be more aware of our job board. When someone is looking at it we offer help or ask them what type of job they are looking for and then help them find a posting for it. We're also more aware of people's needs. <p>2. What do you see as outcomes from the implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have more of an awareness of literacy issues. We recognize that someone may struggle with the posters we have. We are able to help someone read the job board. <p>What difficulties are you experiencing incorporating the short-term goals into your Agency's professional practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a major turn over of staff. Having all new staff has made

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly ask clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services. Learn to identify client behaviors, which indicate that the client could have literacy problems. Participate in awareness and sensitivity training about literacy and literacy issues. Learn to recognize non-verbal cues that may indicate a person does not understand what is being said. <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn to always ask questions of clients Learn ways to make the questions non-offensive Gather information regarding the literature that is available for distribution to individuals who have literacy barriers. Schedule a workshop. Brainstorm various scenarios and develop non-offensive ways to help clients. <p>3. Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn about, and be able to refer clients to the literacy resources in our community. 	<p>Literacy Specialist Comments: This group has faced difficulties in putting literacy near the top of their list. Some of the staff has been away, and they have been busy with other projects. However, we hope to have the workshop and will see from there what else they can work on.</p>	<p>it difficult to look at things long range. Also, there is difficulty in co-ordinating staff time.</p> <p>4. What has worked well in your efforts to accomplish the Goals? What has not worked well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The staff is now discussing literacy issues. We've been talking about literacy since the workshop. Just being aware of literacy issues has been a big change. <p>5. What needs to change in order to be more successful in accomplishing the Goals and implementing the resulting changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We would like to add more videos and books on tapes. <p>Literacy Specialist Observations & Comments: None of the original staff is with the organization. At the very beginning of the research project a new executive director was being hired. When Robin came out to visit we did not meet with the director as she was attending training. The program director we met</p>

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<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a list of literacy resource people along with their phone numbers and ensure everyone in the office has a copy <p>Long-Term Goals (13 – 36 Months)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop or obtain audio and/or videotapes that clients can use to help them review and remember the information we give them. • Receive training on clear verbal communication techniques such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effectively organizing information • communicating with simple language • checking for understanding 		<p>with has since left the agency. Of the three staff members who participated in the literacy audit, only one of them is still with the agency.</p>