

Spring 2016 Regional Meeting Summary

General best practices for CALPs

Working in your community:

- Know the wants and needs of community members
- Have CALP building open and accessible
- Maintain strong communication with stakeholders
- Cost share with community partners
- Have an open door policy with community
- Be visible – attend community events, interagency meetings, community dialogues
- Advocate for your agency and programming everywhere
- Expand to reach outlying areas
- Know what agencies are available in your community and try to not overlap services

Serving adult learners:

- Be outgoing, compassionate and caring
- Be culturally sensitive
- Be flexible
- Ensure non-judgmental intake
- Personalize learner plans to each learner
- Respect individuality and backgrounds
- Ensure confidentiality (FOIP, Consent Forms)
- Ongoing professional development for staff and board members

Best practices in Literacy

Coordinating programs:

- Partner with Health Agencies/offices for literacy awareness and referrals
- Can be difficult to recruit these learners – we need to go to them - coordinators must get out and be visible in the community
- Environment needs to be welcoming & supportive for all types of learners
- Adult literacy students are unlikely to participate in class learning – they require 1-on-1

Delivering programs:

- Teachers have to be very flexible in their teaching style, approach
- Offering meaningful programming topics to learners, incorporating soft steps to literacy (what is important to the learner)
- Key that learning is focused on their goals and interests – build skills through materials and experiences that match their interests
- Visit museums, meet in coffee shops, keep the experience positive and engaging
- The importance of practicing reading; using topics of interest specific to the student
- Reading charts/graphs (document use) is an important skill
- Workplace essential skills – filling in timesheets and incident reports

Suggested resources:

Active Reader Series (Grass Roots Press) – Each workbook provides ten carefully levelled reading passages relating to five popular themes: people, relationships, health and safety, environment, and history.

<http://www.grassrootsbooks.net/ca/workbooks/the-active-reader>

Answers May Vary Guidebook: Incorporating Literacy and other Essential Skills into Daily Life for Adults with Developmental Disabilities (Bow Valley College)

<https://centreforfoundationallearning.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/answers-may-vary-guidebook.pdf>

Challenger Adult Reading Series (New Readers Press) – This is an eight-level integrated series that develops reading, writing, and reasoning skills through high-interest fiction and nonfiction stories relevant to today's adults.

<http://www.newreaderspress.com/challenger-levels-1-4>

Best Practices in Numeracy

Delivering programs:

- Highlight how numbers are a part of everything we do
- 4 basic operations – putting a lens on math (addition, subtraction, division, multiplication) – need to learn basics first
- Make it concrete – how the word relates to the symbol
- Embed numeracy in other activities, ex. Cooking, menu planning, portions (teaches fractions, etc.)
- Make learning numeracy experiential
- Use manipulatives: jar of buttons, play money, etc.
- ELL need math terms
- Math vocabulary varies from country to country, be aware when using resources from out of Canada

Resource:

The Math Literacy Program at PALS (Project Adult Literacy Society) in Edmonton could serve as a model for other math literacy programs. While the curriculum is not publicly available, this link does describe the program in detail.

<http://palsedmonton.ca/index.php/math-literacy/>

Best Practices in English Language Learning (ELL)

Coordinating programs:

- Train tutors in outcomes & goal-setting
- Keep tutors accountable to learners
- Structure class work more in a social setting – e.g. work group learning opportunities
- Implement ongoing assessments to track progress
- Coordinating classes for smaller numbers
- Cultural awareness for instructors
- Need to distinguish ESL Literacy and English Language Learning (ELL) as strategies are very different – clear division needed
- Volunteers can fill gaps when there aren't enough instructors
- Use potential ESL instructors from community and pay for their training – use pooled funds from variety of CALPs, instructors may be willing to work in more than one community
- Embracing Diversity – community workshops to inform agencies and/or public to the needs and cultural backgrounds in community

Delivering programs:

- Learners are I.T. savvy – can use online learning
- More task-based learning in tutoring about life or employment tasks
- Meet and greet (Canadian-born non-ELLS and Newcomers)
- Give them tasks to do in the community (partner with the community)
- Opportunities to use language (eg. How much for winter tires? Insurance? Rent a room (meeting) for the day? Etc. Find out about services (city)
- Focus on language and culture – language that they can use every day – immediate application – social/cultural application of language
- Needing to be flexible in the classes with plans – somewhat open agendas while still meeting program goals
- Because students don't practice at home, they bring an English speaking friend to practice with during class
- learners learn vocabulary in English then teach others in English
- Use real life materials/forms for curriculum
- Move programming more from classroom to real life, family living skills, real life situations
- Example: give each student a disposable camera and have them take photos of what's important to them, then build curriculum around the stories they tell
- Caution learners not to use TV as their basis of what is culturally appropriate

Best Practices in English Language Learning (continued)

Suggested resources:

ESL Literacy Network (Bow Valley College) – an online community or practice that provides resources and information to support the professional development of ESL literacy practitioners

Most popular resources:

- Learning for Life: ESL Literacy Curriculum Framework
- Learning for Life: An ESL Literacy Handbook
- ESL Literacy Readers

<https://centre.bowvalleycollege.ca/networks/esl-literacy-network>

ESL Rural Routes (Norquest College) - We support and build capacity of ESL providers so they can offer culturally integrated English language programs and services to enhance economic and social integration in rural communities for adult newcomers.

Website has links to resources, discussions, and newsletters and so much more.

<https://eslruralroutes.norquest.ca/>

Best Practices in Basic Computers

Coordinating programs:

- Stay up to date on technology
- Classes shouldn't be too long
- Bring them in with other courses & introduce basic computers
- Name computer access points like community computers at libraries, etc.

Delivering programs:

- Define basic skills needed (what is basic to this learner/group of learners?)
- Learning needs can be very specific to each person
- Make connections to other skills they're learning as they learn basic computers – like reading, writing, language learning (for ELL)
- Some will be more independent learners and some will want more one-on-one coaching
- Specific tasks/skill building for each class
- Consecutive classes to measure outcomes after
- Review – recycle through learning
- Show advanced learners how to access online learning

Suggested websites:

ed2go – Online Adult and Continuing Education

There are fees for these courses.

<http://www.ed2go.com/>

GCF (Goodwill Community Foundation) Learn Free - has good lessons for basic computer classes + much more

<http://www.gcflearnfree.org>

Best Practices in Foundational Life Skills

Coordinating programs:

- Needs to be 1-on-1 small groups to best support these learners
- Report the “small wins” – small incremental progress is measured by identifying the successes
- Time is key – sustained effort with these learners

Delivering programs:

- Focus on learner not the program (build relationship with learner)
- The importance of exploring one’s values and getting to know oneself
- Strength-based – do not tear down and rebuild
- Self-discovery – environment is important!
- Help learners gain confidence to take learning risks
- How to share appropriately, boundaries
- Intercultural linkages (First Nations, Metis, Inuit, Buddhist, etc.)
- Relevant content – including spirituality and culturally accommodating

Best Practices in Family Literacy

Coordinating programs:

- Importance of tapping into key people within the community who have connections and additional resources
- Awareness/Networking is huge: social media, website, community, using various locations
- Invest sufficient planning time before the program delivery starts
- Intersect with best practices in adult literacy and Indigenous literacy
- Learner-centred approach to program delivery and program coordination
- Flexibility in scheduling times for programs
- Invest time – call parents to check-in
- Word-of-mouth marketing works far better than fliers
- Provide babysitting
- No fee
- Provide snacks
- Elder involvement
- Provide public transportation
- Appropriate spaces
- Connect parents to other programs that will help
- Leverage partnerships:
 - Libraries
 - EMap Coalition (eg. Provide books for classes)
 - FCSS – Family & Community Support Services
 - Brighter Futures
 - Parent Link Centre
 - Interagency
 - Boys & Girls Clubs
 - Health Nurse
 - Alberta Health Services – Baby Talk program
 - Mothers’ or parents’ groups in community, including some run by churches

Delivering programs:

- Reflective practice
- Programming – “Challenge of the Week” (ie. Challenge families to say “I love you” at the supper table)
- Make sure that parents are familiar with age-appropriate developmental milestones and expectations
- Family literacy happens in the home
- Celebrating parent success in their child’s development

Best Practices in Family Literacy (continued)

- Creating awareness with parents about modelling/interaction with their children
- Customize the program based on the needs – specific needs for small rural communities
- Weave in ELL component for newcomers – New pilot (Edson)
- Do mini sessions (Healthy Families)
- The kids are the “hooks,” then you teach adults
- Need a facilitator who is passionate and knowledgeable
- Convince parents that while it’s fun, it is important and is teaching them valuable skills
- Teach life skills and parenting skills
- Role modeling – model expected skills, how to help their children
- Make it culturally relevant

Best Practices in Learner Support Services

- Establishing partnerships is critical – knowing who is in your community, enrollment capacities
- Get to KNOW the Learner (focus on their needs)
- Skill set – knowledgeable staff

Suggested websites:

Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) – Career planning, education and jobs

<http://alis.alberta.ca/index.html>

Trade Secrets Alberta – directions about prep for trades

<https://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/>

ed2go – Online Adult and Continuing Education

There are fees for these courses.

<http://www.ed2go.com/>