

TEXAS Adult & Family Literacy QUARTERLY

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Adult Education Leaders Earn National Credential



Leadership Excellence Academy participants, trainers, and VIPs celebrated the July 27, 2011 graduation of Louisa Kessel, Bill Medina, Beth Thompson, Rosalinda Pineda, Richard Cantu, and two graduates who are not pictured - Becky Collet and Sherry Solis. Congratulations to these seven newly-minted Adult Education & Literacy CMPIs (Certified Managers of Program Improvement). Pictured from left to right are: Louisa Kessel, Clem Gallerson, Robin Booth, Rene Coronado, Guadalupe Ruvalcaba, Bill Medina, Kristi Hayman, Beth Thompson, Lucille Dominguez, Michelle Yzaguirre, Rosalinda Pineda, Richard Cantu, Joanie Rethlake, and graduation speaker Jose Griñan.

TWO HOUSTON-AREA MOTHERS RECEIVE PAT PEEBLER MEMORIAL ADULT EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

The Barbara Bush Texas Fund for Family Literacy has awarded Pat Peebler Memorial Adult Education scholarships to two Houston-area mothers who are recent GED graduates. The scholarships are funded by a donation from the family of the late Ms. Peebler, in honor of her dedication to programs that support family literacy, working women, and single mothers in Houston.

As single mother to a toddler, Diana Penate of Richmond, Texas prepared for her GED test with help from the Adult Basic Education program at Wharton County Junior College. She has enrolled at WCJC for the fall and hopes to transfer to the University of Houston to complete a bachelor's degree. Diana envisions higher education as a path to personal success and as an example for her daughter.

As a GED student in College of the Mainland's Adult Education program, Carmen Bahena of Texas City volunteered in her children's schools and in other civic groups, yet was the first in her class to take the GED exam, all the while encouraging other adult learners to challenge themselves academically. Carmen will continue to be a role model for her four daughters, ages 3 through 15, when she begins her postsecondary education this fall.

Ms. Bahena and Ms. Penate each received an initial \$1,500 scholarship payment, having passed all five GED tests and enrolled in a university, community college, or technical training program for fall 2011. Upon enrollment for a second semester or quarter of classes, each woman will receive an additional \$1,000 scholarship payment, for a total individual scholarship award of \$2,500.

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning (TCALL) is providing administrative support for this unique scholarship program. TCALL is a center of the College of Education & Human Development at Texas A&M University.

NEWS FROM TCALL

by Harriet Vardiman Smith, Director

This issue marks both a new delivery method and a new approach to content for ***Texas Adult & Family Literacy Quarterly***. Unlike the single-theme focus of ***The Quarterly*** in recent years, this issue features a section specifically for teachers, along with sections focused on: professional development: building collaborations and program improvement; adult learner transitions; the perennial challenge of recruiting, retaining, and motivating adult learners (such as through goal-setting); and success stories. Check out the Table of Contents below to find articles in each of those sections. ***The Quarterly*** continues to feature loan resources available free by mail from TCALL's Clearinghouse Library, and free resources as well.

This issue also introduces our new approach to dissemination of ***The Quarterly***. In a state and national budget climate where everyone is seeking ways to accomplish more work with fewer resources, we consulted with Texas Education Agency and Texas LEARNS, and decided it was time to make the transition to all-electronic publication and dissemination of ***The Quarterly***.

Subscribers who formerly received a print copy of each issue by mail can now subscribe instead to a new, single-purpose email discussion list. That email list will be used **ONLY** to notify subscribers four times per year when a new issue of ***The Quarterly*** has been published on TCALL's website.

Many of us will miss some aspects of the convenience and/or the aesthetics of having that hard copy in our hands. But I hope we can all appreciate not only the efficiency of electronic distribution, but also that fact that we are saving trees and minimizing the carbon footprint of TCALL's work to support YOUR roles as literacy educators, leaders, partners and stakeholders.

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Ideas for Teachers of Adults

Implementing Pen-Pal Writing in the Adult ESL Classroom

by Dr. Clarena Larrotta

With this project we overcome the fear to write in English...the pen-pals activity is fun, we learn English and more. (Rodolfo)

Having a pen-pal is a good idea; even though I am just learning how to read and write in English I am making the effort to write the letters...This is a challenging activity but fun. (Jorge)

In this project, sixteen Spanish-speaking adult English learners exchanged letters weekly with a group of volunteer native-English-speakers enrolled in an Adult Master's Program. This article describes pen pal letter writing as a successful learning activity promoting literacy development and fluent writing in English as a second language (ESL). Walker-Dalhouse, Sanders, and Dalhouse (2009) explain that "Pen pal writing can provide valuable learning experiences for students even though it does not involve direct instruction in writing. It can provide the students involved with language skills, social skills, and an appreciation for cultural diversity" (p. 339). Pen-pal writing is an authentic language learning activity favoring individualized student learning and engagement.

Our ESL class met on Tuesday evening for two hours and lasted ten weeks. The pen-pals activity was implemented for eight weeks during the first 40 minutes of class. I was the instructor for both groups of students keeping correspondence. In fall 2010, I was teaching a course on Adult Literacy to a group of graduate students, and I was also volunteering as an ESL instructor in a local community program. Field notes, interviews, students' written reflections, and students' letters served as data sources to explore the students' response to implementing the pen-pals letter exchange. The goal was for the ESL students to develop fluency in writing in English and to gain confidence using the language for communication purposes. "Because writing is a skill, it makes sense that the more you practice writing, the better you will write" (Lagan, 2000, p. 14). Most of the students had a positive view of the pen-pal writing activity; in the interview students said that (all

names are pseudonyms):

It is interesting. It is a way to meet people, and at the same time we learn how to interact better and practice what we have been learning in the English class. (Luis)

I think that it's good because we get to know each other better, and we share different opinions. (Marilu)

I think that it's good because we learn to write in English. We also learn how to write using present, past and future, all at the same time. (Petra)

More than developing writing skills through the pen-pals activity, these adults had a chance to experience an authentic social interaction using ESL. Also, the students were motivated to learn correct forms of punctuation, grammar, and spelling because they were writing for an authentic audience. The students wrote about their personal lives, their dreams and goals, and critical events in their lives. Pen-pal participants connected as human beings by achieving an appropriate level of communication and making a new friend. They were able to talk in writing about the similarities and differences in their lives and cultures as members of a same social and geographic community. Both made spelling and grammar errors in their letters, and that helped the ESL students realize that native-English-speakers make mistakes, writing is a skill that we all need to practice to become better writers, and we can learn from our mistakes if we stop and reflect in order to understand them. Asking questions was a challenge for the ESL students. As the instructor, I designed a series of mini-lessons focusing on formulating questions in English. I also addressed, on the blackboard, the mistakes I identified as common mistakes in the ESL students' letters.

Suggestions for Implementation

- Identify a group of English-native-speakers or a more advanced group of ESL learners to volunteer as pen-pals

- Figure out a system to collect and deliver the letters
- Take pictures of the participants, develop, and distribute them among participants
- Allocate class time to implement the activity
- With the help of the volunteer native or advanced-English-speakers, prepare an introductory letter
- Deliver the first letter and provide the ESL students with guidance on how to respond
- Decide your level of involvement in the process and how to address mistakes
- Prepare a set of questions for reflection at the middle and end of the term

Conclusion

Implementing the pen-pals activity provided adult English learners with opportunities to use written language for authentic communication purposes and allowed the instructor to foster a functional view of language. English was learned and used beyond the classroom setting with communication as the focus. At the same time, students learned about language structure, grammar, punc-

tuation, spelling, and culture. Also, spontaneous language production and training for communicative competence were possible.

In the ESL classroom, scaffolding English literacy learning should take place in a variety of ways – not just through the class instructor. Make use of the many resources you have in the community to enhance your teaching as well as provide authentic and valuable learning experiences for your students.

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About the Author

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Dialogue Journaling - A Classroom Practice that Works

by Elizabeth Harling & Dr. Barbara Berthold

English language learners come to adult literacy programs for a variety of reasons. However, most of them have one common goal. They want to learn English to better participate in the English speaking community that surrounds them. Speaking and being understood come first. For that reason teachers often face the challenge of incorporating writing assignments that their students perceive as meaningful. These assignments go beyond filling out blanks in a worksheet; they must become bridges to writing outside the classroom-writing in order to be understood.

In the late 1980s dialogue journals emerged as a means to support the writing process. Also, they were found to promote language acquisition as a whole (Holmes & Mouton, 1997). By the mid 1990s dialogue journals were a vital part of many educational settings (Peyton, 2000). Inspired by Peyton's argument that supports journaling as an instructional approach to develop language and literacy (Peyton, 2000), we have practiced journaling at the Richardson Adult Literacy Center (RALC) for the past couple of years. The majority of students who used journaling for at least a semester reported that, although admittedly difficult, the dialogue journals were the activity they felt they benefitted from the most. The RALC seeks to address the literacy needs of beginning to

intermediate ESL students in a learning environment that values the individual. Dialogue journals fit our mission well because of their student-centered nature. We see dialogue journaling as slow-paced written conversation between a single student and his/her teacher. We use journals in both the classroom and one-on-one settings. The goal is to be responsive to topics and concerns, to ask questions, to introduce topics, and to write about one's self (Peyton, 2000). Very quickly each journal develops a life of its own. It provides learning opportunities using content and language relevant to the individual student. Let's take a closer look at some of the benefits that dialogue journaling can bring to the classroom.

Dialogue journaling provides a means for building a relationship between student and teacher based on mutual respect and trust. Their relationship is built through the interpersonal connection established by writing which is relevant to and chosen by the student.

Student and teacher explore subjects collaboratively. Thus, dialogue journals allow the students to utilize knowledge they have gathered throughout their lives. Their expertise is valued. With

the teacher responding in written language that “is modified to, but slightly beyond, the learner’s proficiency level” (Peyton, 2000) the student’s language can improve. Knowing about developmental stages of language acquisition (Lightbown & Spada, 2010) empowers the teacher to assess and to “target the language level at which a learner is individually operating comfortably, and then tailor the conversation to a level that is just beyond what the learner can do alone” (Nordeen, 2006). This targeting includes vocabulary, grammar and syntax. One of the RALC’s more advanced students wrote extensively about the traditions of the Chinese New Year. These were all clearly communicated despite her belief that “my English is very poor, a lot vocabulary I don’t know so I only can write this.” As the teacher responded, the student and teacher together figured out the vocabulary to fill in the gaps. Because the students have looked for the words and found them on their own or within the teacher’s response, they will more easily remember them (Champeau de Lopez, 1989). In the process, they will most likely become less fearful and more confident expressing themselves in writing.

Topics that arise in the journals may become themes for the class curriculum because the content has appeal to multiple students (Peyton 2000; Szeto, 2009). Lessons can be better tailored to the students’ interests and therefore become more relevant. For example, we once used IHOP, McDonald’s, and Chili’s menus in class to discuss ordering food in restaurants. We found our students didn’t frequent those restaurants, a point they had not brought out in class but did address in the journals. As a result, we facilitated a classroom discussion about favorite restaurants and changed our menu selection. Also, the focus of topics can be fine-tuned. In another class the students were asked about Thanksgiving-type celebrations. One student responded: “In thanksgiving all uu us be together and we cook turkey and we have it For Dinner and we have cold coke and after that the family talk a time and after that we eat the turkey and small cake its all.” From this and similar responses a few “Thanksgiving” lesson plans were devised: one on family get-togethers, one on celebration meals—with less focus on the history of Thanksgiving or even the traditional foods, and one on football or Black Friday shopping. We were better able to approach this subject from a student’s perspective.

Conclusion

Dialogue journals give insight into students’ interests and what they can do with language. Therefore, we see dialogue journals as a crucial part of a learner-centered curriculum. The student’s responses and questions can be used to create relevant and meaningful lessons. Dialogue journaling enhances student engagement. It individualizes the language acquisition process to better fit the student’s needs. Moreover, it takes the fear out of writing. In this safe environment students will find that writing is a way in which they can be understood in the English speaking culture that surrounds them. Nordeen (2006) shared a comment

from one of her students: “I was scared to write before, but I’m not scared to write anymore.” Our students reported much the same.

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About the Authors

Elizabeth Harling is a lawyer and volunteer ESL teacher/tutor. She has been involved in literacy advocacy for over ten years. She has served on the board of the Richardson Adult Literacy Center and trains volunteers to tutor ESL. She helped develop a mothers’ elementary school program and taught the pilot classes.

Barbara Berthold holds a doctorate in School Improvement. English is her second language. She has volunteered as an ESL tutor for the Richardson Adult Literacy Center (RALC) since 2007, and currently serves her 2nd term as President of the RALC Board of Directors.

Teach Beyond the Classroom!

by Lon Rogers

The use of electronic media as teaching tools has revolutionized the academic world. Students learn from computer screens as well as from the printed page. The ease of sending, receiving, downloading, and storing electronic files allows teachers and students alike to keep materials for use whenever desired; a single PDF file can contain the curriculum—and much more—for an entire academic year.

Going electronic need not be total, but consider the advantages of taking a step in that direction; PDF files can remain safely in the possession of the school indefinitely. Unlike printed materials, they require no shelf space, and they are easily updated. Newly revised files can be distributed as e-mail attachments at no cost, year after year. Students can keep the lessons on hand as long as desired; and unlike lost books, lost files can be replaced instantly and cost-free. ESL and foreign students may share the files with friends and relatives abroad, multiplying the learning experience beyond our shores.

These and other advantages of going electronic are obvious, but not every student owns a computer. So, if preferred, the lessons may be printed from the file by the teacher and used in the traditional manner. Even then, waste and cost are minimized since the number of lessons printed can be tailored to the exact size of the class; and updated electronic files leave no outdated printed versions to scrap.

Fortunately, the first step into the electronic world has already been taken by some schools with the creation of a website. Many schools also have teachers—or friends—who alone or in collaboration can write curricula into PDF (or other electronic) files. So, why not take an additional step and add a library to the website, a repository of lessons, assignments, and instructions—an indestructible resource available to students indefinitely, even after their enrollment at school ends? Those same lessons, offered online (and free of charge), become a gift that benefits students and instructors across the world.

A personal note: During the past two years, I have been privileged to teach an adult class of ESL students at the Aberg Center for Literacy. While teaching, I also wrote thirty lessons—as stories with worksheets—which I combined into a single PDF file to use as a supplement to the standard curriculum. As the first academic year ended, I realized that by creating a website, I could reach beyond the single classroom with my lessons; and knowing that many ESL schools and students must minimize expenses, I decided to offer the file *TenPlusTwenty.pdf* as a gift—free of

charge—to all schools, classes, instructors, and students. That PDF file containing all thirty lessons and worksheets can be read and/or downloaded cost-free at the following website: www.tenplustwenty.com

During the first ten months of its existence, this website has been visited by people of more than fifty nations across the world—a testimony to the fact that English has become the *lingua franca* of our time. The lessons first read in a small Dallas classroom reached students of many nations.

So, why not join me and take a step toward every teacher's dream? *Teach beyond the classroom!*

About the Author:

Lon Rogers is a volunteer teacher of ESL students at the Aberg Center for Literacy in Dallas, Texas.

Visit the website of the Aberg Center for Literacy at: www.aberg-center.org

SAVE THE DATE for the 2012 TALAE Conference!

Texas Association for Literacy & Adult Education

will hold its 2012 Conference

February 2-4, 2012
at the Crowne Plaza Riverwalk,
111 E. Pecan Street in San Antonio.

The Texas LEARNS Winter Business
Meeting will be a
pre-conference on February 1.

For more information, visit the Conference page of TALAE's website, found under the Organizations link on TCALL's homepage.

Professional Development

South Central Region's Keystone Conference Builds Knowledge and Partnerships to Foster Successful Adult Learner Transitions

by Dr. Olga Escamilla

For the past seven years the Education Service Center, Region 20, South Central Project GREAT has been hosting numerous conferences to bring adult, correctional, higher education, and workforce professionals together through training activities. These training activities are meant to provide opportunities for the sharing of resources and ideas. This sharing assists all in creating a network of services to support adult learners in their transition to college or career. By way of professional development, we can begin to instill the importance of college and career into our classrooms and infuse the message that college is an expectation for all students and college access and completion are necessary for success in the workplace.

This year the annual conference was entitled: The First Annual College & Career KEYSTONE CONFERENCE: Supporting Student Success through K-16 Collaboration. The conference convened in San Antonio at ESC, Region 20 on June 24, 2011. For the first time this year's conference included K-12 educators.

The conference objectives were to foster successful transitions for academic and career achievements; strengthen strategies for collaboration among K-12, Adult Education, Workforce, and Higher Education; develop an understanding of the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards; and develop an understanding of the new State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Assessment program.

Adrienne van der Valk provided the Keynote address on *Meeting the Challenge of College and Career Readiness*. Adrienne is the Program Administrator for Educational Policy and Improvement Center (EPIC), in Eugene, Oregon and leads the Texas College and Career Readiness Initiative. Adrienne is actively involved in creating classroom materials that promote college and career readiness in Texas. You can view Adrienne's message regarding the conference and the college and career effort at: <http://portal.esc20.net/portal/page/portal/esc20public/Vision2020/HotTopics>

Collaborative sessions focused on addressing the professional development needs of educators serving learners at all levels. Some of the sessions presented at the conference included partnering strategies, data sharing, business employer's panel, an overview of the College & Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), an overview of the New STAAR Assessment Program, labor market realities for career guidance, teaching literacy skills to the 21st century learner, and tools for teaching math, science, language arts, and social studies.

Over three hundred individuals participated in the conference. The collaboration we are fostering through our conferences is important to the economic success of our students, communities, regions, states, and ultimately the United States. Because we all serve common clients, it is important to begin working as one large effort and not several small ones. Many adults take the first step in beginning their college and career pathway through the assistance of the collaborating organizations that were represented at the conference.

As educators, it is our charge to meet our student's needs. We can achieve this through collaborative professional development; therefore, planning for next year's conference is already under way. Next year's conference has been scheduled for June 22, 2012. The Keystone Conference will again bring together the key partners mentioned above. Participants will once again have the opportunity to network and attend collaborative sessions. It is through networking and creating valuable partnerships that we can assist our common clients who walk through our doors and will ultimately help meet the critical demand for a more educated workforce.

About the Author

For additional information, contact Olga M. Escamilla, Ph.D., Education Specialist for the ESC-20, South Central GREAT Center. olga.escamilla@esc20.net.

Building Collaboration & Program Improvement

Engaging Instructors in the Search for Formative Data

by Joshua Gahr

Most adult educators agree that reflection on classroom practices, curriculum content, and instructional strategies make for a more effective instructor. Such reflection, however, is often very subjective, based only upon the intuition of individual instructors. What is often missing in this reflection process is a source of more substantial information -- “hard” data -- that can be analyzed, interpreted, and translated into concrete outcomes in the classroom. These are *formative data*, data collected and analyzed for the purpose of program improvement.

Every productive staff member in an adult education program can and should be in search of formative data, both in their respective component and throughout the wider program. Classroom instructors, though busy with the tasks of instruction, are no exception.

An Evolving Rubric

Data collection normally starts out very simply, as it should, and grows increasingly more sophisticated in layers over time. An example of the evolution of an instructor’s participation in collecting formative data might unfold like this: Instructor X, attendance list in hand, unknowingly engages in the first round of data collection. From this list, he creates a simple table in a spreadsheet. Now he is able to track and graph student attendance over time. Instead of recreating the table to collect test scores, he aggregates the data. The spreadsheet begins to be multilayered. Student attendance can now be correlated to test scores. Curious, Instructor X begins to ask some questions: *Do my best attendees score highest? Can I predict students’ attendance based on their baseline score?* To round out the table, Instructor X integrates student contact information into the original table. The result is a rudimentary database incorporating three basic data axes that can be used as a launching point for a powerful classroom tool— one that can generate reports that are limited only by the curiosity of the instructor. These simple data can be used to make slight classroom adjustments with disproportionately big pay offs.

Applied Improvements

An instructor who creates a rudimentary data collection system using a common software application, such as MS Excel or Access, can leverage it to generate surprising formative data. Our Adult Ed program developed an internal data collection system that gave us the ability to look at enrollment and attendance trends and dynamics. These data led us to certain insights. Here are some real time examples from our classrooms:

Ours is an open enrollment program. Our data collection system has been used to calculate the flow of students in and out of our program on a monthly basis. Knowledge of these trends assists instructors in anticipating classroom resource needs and in taking action to break recurring cycles of low attendance.

Measuring student separations (drops) has been used as a valuable and formative measurement for instructors. In our classes, we have found that significant breaks in programming are followed by rises in student separations. In order to maintain class stability and program continuity, our instructors and staff need to be vigilant, following up with students after holidays, class cancellations, and other breaks in programming. Furthermore, the drop rate of students who are “transferred up”, i.e. promoted a level into a new class, is lower than students who are not promoted. In other words, in our program, student promotion increases student persistence. This knowledge will be important in making decisions about practices on promotions.

There are a great variety of applications for the hard data that our instructors collect. We have used these formative data to satisfy our curiosity on a great many issues including class room density (*How many students fit in class spaces without sacrificing student success?*), program capacity (*Where it is? How can we keep our program full?*), and hours to level completions (*How do we pace our classroom content?*).

We also look for places where our data can enhance the level of

service our entire program offers the community. We have found that the students who will not make it to the end of the year accrue an average of 61 hours of attendance. This translates into roughly three weeks of programming contact on average that we have with the most “vulnerable” of our students, those student who will not persist in our classrooms. We can frame a student’s first three weeks as a “window of opportunity” for the entire staff to impart the most vital skills, information, and resources.

Principles

There are three principles that should guide the search for formative data in the classroom.

Subsidiarity. This means that data collection and interpretation should happen at the *most local level*, in this case, in the classroom. The instructor should be the primary agent tasked with the collection of data from the adult students that are represented by the data. The instructor is the actor most intimate with each student and is therefore the most creative in generating inquiries of curiosity for statistical evaluation. The instructor is also the most accurate interpreter of data within his classroom, vetting conclusions that have no basis.

Simplicity. Data collection and interpretation should not be unnecessarily complicated but instead straightforward, seeking to test instructor’s unfounded assertions about classroom trends

and dynamics. Since instructors are rarely reporting directly to funders, the data do not need to serve the metrics of an outside granting organization, only the immediate needs of the classroom. The principle of simplicity aims to avoid the fuzzy math aimed at misrepresenting the effectiveness of a classroom and to equip instructors with a tool for professional self-improvement.

Applicability. Data collection and interpretation should be both *applicable* to program needs and *applied* to those needs. Data should not be collected that are not analyzed, and no data should be analyzed that are not relevant to the instructor’s classroom improvement. The principle of applicability asserts that only where data collection and interpretation can be *formative*, i.e. where it can be used to improve student/teacher performance, should it be utilized.

Not every instructor aspires to be a statistician. Yet, every instructor should be professionally curious enough to formulate testable classroom hypothesis, to create the necessary metrics to test the hypothesis, and to utilize that information to assist their students to achieve a greater measure of success. That is, in essence, the search for formative data.

About the Author

Joshua Gahr is the Adult Education Coordinator at ASPIRE Family Literacy Center in Austin, Texas.

LITERACY TEXAS CHAMPIONS OF LITERACY AWARD

TCALL Among Recipients

In recognition of the ways that the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning (TCALL) has championed literacy in Texas, Literacy Texas honored TCALL with its Champions of Literacy award in August in conjunction with the annual Literacy Texas Conference.

2011 marks the tenth anniversary for Literacy Texas. In the beginning, the name was the Texas Association of Adult Literacy Councils. Serving adults through literacy councils – bringing together community and faith-based programs using approaches from Laubach Literacy and Literacy Volunteers of America has now become a statewide coalition across the age spectrum. Literacy Texas marks this anniversary by highlighting the literacy achievements of ten very special recipients.

Literacy Texas works closely with TCALL in a variety of projects including the Volunteer Training Initiative that provides funding for professional development to volunteers in community-based organizations that provide literacy services. TCALL also maintains a statewide literacy provider directory. TCALL is located on the Texas A&M campus in Bryan. Harriet Smith, TCALL Director was present to accept the award.

If you would like additional information, please contact Lester Meriwether AT 817 455-5442 or Lester@literacyconnexus.org.

Adult Learner Transitions to Work and Postsecondary Education

The Value of Postsecondary Certificates

by Barbara Tondre-El Zorkani

The following information is taken from *Certificates Count: An Analysis of Sub-baccalaureate Certificates*, Brian Bosworth, December 2010, Future Works. The study was commissioned by Complete College America. The full report can be found online at www.completecollege.org.

According to the report, tough economical times call for extraordinary measures. In order to stay competitive in the global marketplace, postsecondary education takes on added significance. Americans are challenged to complete at least one year of education beyond high school. But going back to school can be tough for working adults. Still, dropping in for a couple of courses at the local college campus rarely makes a significant impact on long-term student success. States are therefore challenged to ensure that students have the opportunity to pursue a full range of higher education pathways that not only increase the likelihood of college completion, but also lead to sustainable careers.

A strategy too often underutilized, but one that can often deliver greater income returns than associate degrees, is certificates. For adults balancing jobs and family life, completing a certificate can be the most direct path to postsecondary and career success. Certificates can position individuals for immediate workforce success while establishing solid foundations for future academic achievement.

What are Certificates and Who Earns Them?

To be successful, certificate programs must be of high quality, rigorous enough to have real value, tailored to the job market, widely available, and designed for timely completion. The most popular programs, making up 43 percent of all certificates issued nationwide, are in nursing and allied healthcare. Fields like business, technology, construction trades, and mechanic and repair trades also attract large numbers of students who are generally eligible for federal and state financial aid. By contrast, certificates in service occupations and the humanities do not yield consistently positive returns. In Texas, workers are needed in healthcare, energy, and technology-based jobs as well as the growth industries of wind, biofuel, and energy efficiency.

In 2007-2008, approximately 750,000 certificates were awarded. This figure represents a modest increase over the past decade but a decline from the one million-plus certificates awarded in 1992-1993 before a regulatory crackdown. A little more than half of all certificates are issued by public sector institutions such as community and technical colleges. Research in Kentucky found that increases in average income for those who earned certificates of at least one year were nearly identical to returns from associate degrees.

Women account for close to two-thirds of certificate holders. A national goal is to double the number of long-term certificates awarded within the next five years, and then double that number again over the following five years. Certificates come in three categories, based on length of study:

- completion in less than one academic year;
- completion in at least one but less than two academic years; and
- completion in at least two but less than four academic years.

Choosing a Certificate Program of Study

Shorter term credentials (those of much less than a year in length) may be helpful in updating the skills of adult workers who are well launched in their occupations and who have good earnings history. However, shorter term certificate training may not have the same labor market value for young adults or for older and dislocated workers seeking to start a new occupation. In advising learners to consider education and training that lead to certificates, it is important to encourage discretion. Institutional culture and state policy play a significant role in community college certificate offerings. Program offerings may even have less to do with labor market needs than with interests of faculty or college leadership and with the inertia of resource-allocation practices.

Recommendations

Complete College America is a national nonprofit working to increase the number of Americans with a college degree or

credential of value and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations. CCA believes that to significantly boost America's postsecondary graduation rate, we must reinvent higher education to meet the needs of the majority of community college students – learners who must balance the jobs they need with the education they desire. Certificates are an important part of the solution. Complete College America makes the following recommendations:

- count sub-baccalaureate certificates of a year or more toward national, state, and college-level attainment goals;
- set aggressive goals to double the number of long-term certificates produced within the next five years and then double that number again over the subsequent five years;
- reward long-term certificates with funding formula and other policy incentives;
- collect outcome data and promote labor market alignment; and
- focus on program completion by focusing tightly on student needs.

What is Adult Education's Role?

Many adult learners are potential recruits for rigorous, high quality postsecondary education and training programs that lead to valuable certificates tailored to the local job market. With one of the largest and most diverse populations in the country, Texas' commitment to advancing higher education is poised to play a critical role in national trends. But adult educators generally have little or

no impact on what community colleges offer in terms of certificate programs. However, adult educators can play a critical role in helping learners develop career readiness and select a career pathway that fits their individual needs and potential. Adult learners "talk with their feet." For many, completing a certificate can be the most direct path to college and career success. Adult educators can help these individuals by investigating the certificate training programs offered by local community colleges, and by promoting enrollment in those that appear to provide an appealing combination of relatively rapid postsecondary achievement as well as portable skills and knowledge. Community colleges need the adult learners over whom adult educators have a meaningful influence. Opportunities for partnerships must be seriously pursued. Certificates count.

SHOP TALK is a series sponsored by Texas LEARNS to highlight promising practices and address issues, concerns, and questions related to meeting adult learners' needs for workforce development and successful transitions. For additional information or to request that a particular topic be addressed, contact Barbara Tondre-EI Zorkani at btondre@earthlink.net

This article was first published in April 2011 as #54 in the SHOP TALK series sponsored by Texas LEARNS to highlight promising practices and address issues, concerns, and questions related to meeting the adult education needs of Texas' emerging, incumbent, and displaced workers. See all releases in the SHOP TALKS series on the Workforce Partnerships Web page linked from TCALL's home page (<http://tcall.tamu.edu>).

THE FIRST LADY'S FAMILY LITERACY INITIATIVE FOR TEXAS OFFICIAL 2012-2013 GRANT COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

TCALL is pleased to announce the annual grant competition of The First Lady's Family Literacy Initiative for Texas, a program of The Barbara Bush Texas Fund for Family Literacy. Two grant opportunities are now available, both with an application deadline of March 5, 2012.

Family Literacy Program Implementation Grants

Up to ten one-year Implementation Grants of up to \$50,000 will be awarded to Texas organizations to help create, develop, or expand a family literacy program, i.e. one that offers three integrated components: adult literacy education (basic literacy, GED® Test preparation, or English as a Second Language) for parents or primary caregivers; pre-literacy or literacy instruction for young children (ages birth through grade 3) of those adults, and; interactive literacy activities for the young children together with their parents or primary caregivers.

Family Literacy Program Planning Grants

Up to five Planning Grants of \$5,000 will be awarded to Texas organizations to support a 9-month planning and development process (from June 2012 through February 2013), intended to enable an organization to more effectively compete in 2013 for a 2013-2014 First Lady's Family Literacy Initiative for Texas Program Implementation Grant. Receipt of a Planning Grant does not guarantee subsequent selection to receive an Implementation Grant, as described above.

We are also delighted to announce a NEW initiative of The Barbara Bush Texas Fund for Family Literacy. Experienced family literacy programs that are selected to receive a 2012-2013 Implementation Grant (described above) will be invited to apply for a **Family Literacy Trailblazer Grant** that would provide a three-year funding commitment of up to \$50,000 per year. In exchange for a longer-term funding commitment, Trailblazer Grant programs will be expected to share their practices and experiences through outreach or professional development activities and mentorship of less-experienced family literacy programs. Up to three Trailblazer Grants will be selected based on quality, specific approach to family literacy, population served, geographic location, and creativity and value of proposed outreach activities.

For more information or to request an application, look for the detailed grant announcement on The First Lady's Family Literacy Initiative for Texas page of TCALL's website (under Projects at <http://tcall.tamu.edu>).

Texas Expands Its Role in National Career Awareness Initiative

by Barbara Tondre-El Zorkani

This past winter, adult education in Texas was selected to participate in an exciting professional development opportunity sponsored by the National College Transition Network (NCTN) and World Education. This initiative enabled Texas and several other states to increase their capacity to deliver career awareness and counseling using the *Integrating Career Awareness (ICA)* curriculum.

The goal of the Career Awareness Project is to increase and improve adult learners' career awareness and planning throughout all levels of English as a Second Language, Adult Basic, and Adult Secondary Education. The project is designed to help adult education program staff incorporate career awareness and planning into instruction and counseling.

The project kicked off with a webinar in January. Four local adult education programs participated in the online course and related webinars. A mix of urban and rural programs were selected to participate in the project. Texas team members included the following local programs:

- San Antonio ISD Adult and Community Education (San Antonio)
- Community Action, Inc. Adult Education Program (San Marcos and surrounding rural counties)
- Kilgore College Adult Education (Longview)
- Harris County Department of Education - Adult Education (Houston)

The programs worked with NCTN and World Ed to develop a plan for sustaining professional development offerings related to career planning. In addition, project participants assisted in identifying state-specific materials and information to compliment the ICA curriculum. A third objective of the project was to respond to questions about how to connect the curriculum to state standards and other state initiatives.

This fall, Texas is moving forward with a full-fledged implementation of the ICA Curriculum Guide into every adult education classroom in the state. To start the process, Texas began by offering a six-week online class, hosted by World Education. In the future, face-to-face and/or hybrid training models will also be used in order to reach every instructor. This large scale implementation will be made possible by a WIA Incentive Grant and will occur over a period of two years.

The first group of teachers to be trained in the use of the ICA Curriculum Guide are those participating in an initiative known as the C-4 pilot. The C-4 pilot is being launched in three regions of the state that are developing "robust" relationships with their workforce partners. These regions include the Central Texas, San Antonio, and Coastal/Houston areas. C-4 is part of the Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce. Since it requires the integration of a GED fast track and a career awareness/career exploration component, the ICA appears to be a good fit for this pilot. Programs will be developing a cross-referral process for successfully moving learners from adult education to workforce-related services and/or employment, and for referrals from one-stop career centers to adult education.

For additional information, contact Beth Thompson at ethompson@hcde-texas.org or Barbara Tondre at btondre@earthlink.net.

This article was first published in April 2011 as #53 in the SHOP TALK series sponsored by Texas LEARNS to highlight promising practices and address issues, concerns, and questions related to meeting the adult education needs of Texas' emerging, incumbent, and displaced workers. See all releases in the SHOP TALKS series on the Workforce Partnerships Web page linked from TCALL's home page (<http://tcall.tamu.edu>).

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Recruitment, Retention, Motivation & Goal Setting

Providing Incentives to Increase Student Participation

by Debbie Alford

Programs across the state vary in their funding. Some operate with million dollar budgets, while others barely hold on with a shoe string budget. Yet there are things all program directors can do to encourage participation and enhance student motivation to attend our programs. Not all of them involve a cost to the program. It is innovative thinking that will get you and your program far.

Our program receives about 33% federal funds, 33% state funds and 33% local funds. When your budget doesn't provide for incentives, it will take time, humility and a lot of letter writing to bring in the bucks, but it is possible. If you are fortunate enough to have someone on your staff who is willing, let that person help you. If you are not so fortunate, it is up to you to make it happen. After working hours, call on local businesses, such as Wendy's, Whataburger, Dairy Queen, Mr. Gattis, etc. and ask if they will provide you with coupons or tokens to give to your students. Most of the organizations do say yes and some will require a letter from your program. These incentives can be given to students who have perfect attendance, come to tutorials, or achieve whatever goals you provide for them. If you are in a rural location, find farms or ranches that may offer "freebies" for your students. Never assume that businesses are tied to just the K-12 population, many will work with you and offer you something.

Coupons, tokens, hay rides, and tours are a lot easier to come by than a \$500 donation. Be realistic with your goals and you won't be disappointed. If you are requiring a larger sum of money for materials or capital outlay, it will take some work. Make sure to follow your Fiscal Agents policies for donations. Again, phoning, letter writing or a friendly face-to-face visit may be in order. Having a form letter prepared on your letterhead allows you to introduce your program and the goals you are trying to accomplish. Communities know that an educated society means more productivity; therefore, some will be interested in assisting you.

Look to your community partners for assistance. Are you involved with your local chamber of commerce, workforce commission, AARP, community college, housing authority, etc.? You need to be! Allowing these entities to partner with you will allow you to boast about your strengths and successes. Have meetings and invite them. They will come. In turn, they will network with others and discuss your pro-

gram. They can put you in touch with businesses, attorneys, state representatives and the like who may wish to support your programs with donations. Don't be shy!

Aside from monetary incentives, there are some things you can do to make people feel valued and motivated to continue. Certificates go a long way, even with the adult population. When the students have reached their 60 hours and progress assessed, it is time to move on for those that are ready. It may mean reorganizing and restructuring your program, but it is worth it. Have certificates made for those who have "completed" their requirement of progressing as well as those who have "participated" but not completed their requirements. Hold a ceremony; invite their families. Make it a big deal.

Another idea is to have pizza parties and barbeques for the class that has had the best attendance (by average) or for the class who has showed the most gains. If you haven't found any donations, then it is time to ask for a "pitch in" from your staff. You would be surprised how generous your staff may be. They want the program to be successful and will offer to assist you in any way. These pizza parties and barbeques can be every couple of months or by semester. Pizza, chips, and sodas go a long way. For the barbeque, an inexpensive box of frozen burgers and chips and sodas is another option. Make it a competition, announce the winner and post it. Take pictures and send them to your local paper or district website. Let everyone in on your success!

Your teachers may also want to have incentives in the classroom for their students, such as for perfect attendance. Monitoring of this practice should take place as we do not want to take too much instructional time from our students. When we work hard, rewards will come.

About the Author

Debbie Alford has completed 26 years of educational experience with the Brownsville ISD. She has a Masters Degree in Education and holds certificates in administration, counseling and ELA. She began as a teacher's aide and has been a teacher, counselor, assistant principal, dean of instruction and principal prior to receiving the director's position of Adult Continuing Education (ACE).

Success Stories

My 9,000 Mile Journey to Learning English

by Mayumi Riffel

In the Fall of 2009, I started to go to the Adult Reading Center to learn English. There were many Hispanic and Asian students in the class. They were studying really hard to improve their English. I was really surprised by how many of these students had jobs. I was too ashamed of my low English skills to practice them outside of my home. But these students, despite their English skills, were not afraid to work in America. They gave me courage! After that, even though I did not know enough English, I tried to speak English more.

Two years ago when I started classes, I couldn't have imagined how much I would change. The Reading Center is helping me a lot. There is still a lot that I am learning about English right now. I'm working with my tutor, Miss Sandy, to practice my pronunciation. I have a hard time with L's and R's because in Japanese they sound alike. But I enjoy learning in her class.

Seven years ago, I married an American in the military. We moved around to different bases, but I always had trouble with speaking English. Because of my trouble with English, I spent all of my time at home and dedicated myself to raising our two daughters. But even this was difficult.

I had to rely on my husband to help me through doctor's appointments. While my husband was in the military, he was always nearby so I could rely on him, and I could also meet other Japanese spouses who could help me while he was away.

When he got out of the military, that changed. My husband could not easily leave work to help me through doctor's appointments. There were not many Japanese neighbors who could assist me and be friends. At the same time my husband got out of the military, my daughters started elementary school. I now had to deal with school forms, teacher's notes, and permission slips. My daughters also had homework, and it was hard for me to help them. My husband was working and going to college, so he was always busy. I needed to become more responsible for myself while living in a foreign country. I needed to improve my English

so I could do this. So I decided to take lessons at the Reading Center.

There is still a lot that I am learning about English, but now I can do most things without my husband, and I can even help my daughters with their homework. I appreciate the Adult Reading Center for what they do, and I'm very happy to volunteer at the Center so I can help others like they helped me.

About the Author

Mayumi Riffel is not only an ESL student at the Adult Reading Center, but she is also working toward her GED, and she volunteers eight hours each week during the school year in the office.

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Changing Roads Late in Life

by Michael Koon

I made the decision to leave school in my senior year to go to work. I was bored with school, I had no intention of going to college, and since my parents had recently divorced, we needed the extra money due to my mother's business was really being supported by my dad in the past.

I tried a few jobs before finding one I enjoyed. I started as an alarm technician, then worked my way into middle management. After doing that for thirteen years, I moved to another job as a telephone systems technician, and then later became the operations manager of the company. I was with that company for fifteen years. The economy finally caused me to lose that position.

Many more circumstances occurred to make life more difficult, but my wife found a job in her field in another town. Fortunately, my dad lived near there so she was able to stay with him while starting her new job. I stayed behind to try to get our belongings packed before joining her there in east Texas.

After a few months, CPS in Arizona called my wife to offer her a job that she had applied for previously. Again, she moved but I decided to stay back with my dad and help where I could. Besides, I still had my house to try to sell before foreclosure; unfortunately, due to the economy, the house was worth less than what was still owed. But I was eventually able to do a short sale and get out from under that responsibility.

It was nearly impossible to find a job in my field of expertise in the rural area in which my dad lived, so I made the decision to go ahead and get my GED and possibly go to college to change my field of work. I found that Kilgore College offered free classes to help individuals get their GEDs.

The program was wonderful; the teacher Ms. Monika Kajstura was able to determine where I needed assistance and plan a course of study. After I attended more than the required amount of time in the course, I was ready to test. I passed all subjects on my first attempt at the tests.

After completing the tests, I continued to go to the Adult Education

Center to keep studying and to help tutor others while I weighed my options for future studies. During that time I became a member of the National Adult Education Honor Society.

My thoughts kept going towards the medical field because I enjoy helping others, and it is a field that should be available almost anywhere I might relocate. I started by taking the Certified Nursing Assistant course to see if it really was the type of work I would enjoy. I really did enjoy helping others, so I began thinking about becoming a nurse. I applied to take the LVN accuplacer test to be accepted into the Licensed Vocational Nurse program.

I firmly believe that things happen when they are truly supposed to happen. I think being so fresh out of the GED program assisted me in my high scores that I achieved on the accuplacer test, so I was one of the few that were accepted into the course.

During this same period of time, I was preparing for my graduation ceremony from the GED program that occurs once a year. Imagine my surprise when I found out that I had the highest GED score and was to be the valedictorian. I really hate giving speeches, especially to such a large crowd, but I believe I did it well.

The week following graduation, I started into an Intensive College Readiness course, which is offered for free by the college to help prepare students who have been out of school for some period of time. It has been a big help preparing me, for the change in lifestyle to be a success in college.

I'm truly excited about the opportunities that are opening up for me and I have my dad to thank for supporting me in my endeavors. He says he is happy to do it because he was not in a position to have done so in my earlier years. With his help and the positive feedback I keep receiving from my instructors in the Intensive College Readiness program, I think I have what it will take to succeed in my college future and all other future endeavors.

About the Author

Michael Koon is a fifty-two year-old student at Kilgore College-Longview in Longview, Texas. He is about to embark on his journey into the Licensed Vocational Nurse program with ambitions to possibly move into a Registered Nurse program in his future.



Michael Koon, left, his teacher Monica Kajstura, and Michael's father, James Koon

Licensed Journeyman Plumber Goal Achieved through Adult Education Program

Reprinted from Texas Workforce Investment Council's July 2011 issue of Profiles in Success

For the last two and a half years, Ramiro Barboza, Jr., has been working as a licensed journeyman plumber in Fort Worth. Ramiro started in construction when he was 17 years old, and had actually been working in the plumbing field for over ten years. However, he faced an obstacle in moving ahead to obtain his plumber's license because he had never graduated from high school. It was the Adult Secondary Education (ASE) program that made the difference in Ramiro's life, enabling him to eventually go through the testing process to earn his license.

Ramiro struggled in high school and decided to quit when he was in the tenth grade. Since his parents would not allow him to simply stay at home, he went to work for his father's construction business where he worked as a concrete finisher for many years. Ramiro married, and unfortunately, not long after that, his father sustained a serious injury on the job. His father's bad accident made Ramiro pause and rethink his life, and he began considering other ways to earn a living and support his family. He quit his construction job and went to work as a driver for the John Peter Smith Hospital network in Fort Worth. Ramiro did not especially enjoy this job, but one thing the driving allowed him to do was think—think about his future, think about what was missing, and think about what he could do to improve his station in life.

Ramiro understood that getting a General Educational Development (GED®) certificate was essential to moving forward in his life. As good luck would have it, the dispatcher on this particular job knew of Ramiro's background in construction, and understanding Ramiro's restlessness, urged him to investigate job possibilities where her husband worked as a plumber. Ramiro went to SKIHI Enterprises, a full-service mechanical and industrial contractor, and met his future supervisor, an individual who would eventually have considerable impact upon his life.

Once employed with SKIHI, Ramiro began work as a plumber's apprentice. He completed a four-year apprenticeship through the Construction Education Foundation of North Texas and continued working for the same supervisor. However, without his GED®, Ramiro could not sit for his plumber's license, nor could he advance on the pay scale. Ramiro had in fact, started work on his GED® once before, but at a pace of four hours a week, he became discouraged and let it go. He understood he would need to focus full-time, and after his wife located a GED® program for him, he decided to take six months off of work in order to prepare for the GED®. The class was taught at Workforce Solutions Tarrant County, Westside Workforce Center. Workforce Solutions provides

the space and the Fort Worth Independent School District partners with Workforce Solutions to provide the teacher, instruction and materials. Ramiro's teacher administered a diagnostic test and then prescribed a course of study based on his needs. His teacher stated, "Ramiro always displayed a desire to achieve, a strong work ethic, and positive attitude." Ramiro says that looking back on it, he believes he was functionally illiterate and the progress he made in those six months was remarkable. His teacher worked with him diligently and with her considerable patience and support, he was able to methodically hone his math and science skills. Ramiro eventually passed all portions of the GED®, although he recalls that the essay was an immense challenge. He says without the perseverance and encouragement of his teacher, he would not have stayed with it.



There were some starts and stops for Ramiro as he reentered his work place, due to temporary layoffs at his employer's business. Ramiro took advantage of this down time and armed with newfound confidence of having achieved his GED®, he studied hard in preparation for the exam to become a licensed plumber in Texas. He traveled to Austin to take it, and he remembers being the last person to finish his test. But he had a good feeling about it, and about two weeks later, he received news that he was now a licensed plumber. He called his supervisor, and Ramiro chuckles as he recalls his supervisor saying, "Look out world, Ramiro got his license!" The two of them work well together, and Ramiro feels he is on a steady path forward. His supervisor is gradually giving Ramiro more responsibility to prepare him to take the position of foreman on future jobs.

For Ramiro, one of the most satisfying aspects of completing his ASE program and getting the GED® has been that he is able to present himself as a positive role model for his children. When his oldest son began to lose interest in completing high school, Ramiro was able to point to his own personal struggle and resulting achievement. He explained that if he'd been able to do it years after leaving high school, his son could certainly make the push and graduate from high school in a timely fashion. Ramiro did indeed enjoy the satisfaction of seeing his son graduate. Now, the two of them serve as models for Ramiro's younger sons.

This article is reprinted from the July 2011 issue of *Profiles in Success*, an online publication of Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC). The Council assists the Governor and the Legislature with strategic planning for and evaluation of the Texas workforce development system, and advocates for the development of an integrated system that provides quality services for the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce for Texas. The Council also serves as the State Workforce Investment Board under the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998. To learn more about the work of TWIC and read other issues of Profiles in Success, visit TWIC's website: <http://governor.state.tx.us/twic/>

Teen Mom Inspired to Complete High School

Shared by Jenny Martinez, Deer Park Family Literacy Program

This is the story of a teen parent that we had in our program who was pregnant and became a mother at 13 years old. Most importantly, she is now one of our 10 graduates and has officially received her high school diploma. Adrienne is only 16 years old and is enrolled to start college in August. Here is her story in her own words:

My Name Is Adrienne Lopez & I am I teen parent. As a teen parent, i feel like I am looked down on. I feel like everyone feels like I did something wrong, but I know my life, what's wrong, what's right; I truly believe keeping my baby was the right thing to do. I also get the feeling that adults think us, teenagers, have it easy, but i've realized that everyone has their own definition of a hard life, whether it be money problems, family trouble, etc. I feel like I had a hard life, i lost my mother at a young age, my father was in&out of jail, and bringing a baby into the world has made it a little bit harder. Sometimes people feel sorry for me because I lost my mother, my father wasn't in most of my life, and I have a baby, but if these events wouldn't have happened too me, then I wouldn't be the strong girl standing up here today. People look at us, teen parents, like we have no head what we are doing or getting ourselves into, but in my 16yrs of living i've seen unfitted adult parents and unfitted teen parents. I don't think age defines what kind of parent you'll be, i think your maturity level and mind state will. At the age of 13, i became pregnant with my now 2 1/2 yr old. Three years ago my life changed for the better. I was in my 2nd semester of my 7th grade year. My jeans started getting tighter, i noticed a little bump and every time my boyfriend would touch Me, i could feel something moving in my stomach, i knew it was more than little butterflies. We realized that we were pregnant, we made some careless mistakes and now we had too deal with it. Rumors spread faster than butter on bread. Students started talking about my growing stomach.. On may 1st 2008 my close teaches confronted me, she asked me if there was a baby in me, i stayed silent and started crying. She held Me and told Me everything would be okay.

The next day she made Me tell the nurse and counselor. For the next couple of week I was in and out of the the counselors office because I neede someone too talk too and I neede help telling my parents. I called my sister from school and she said she was disappointed in me. My dad was told by a well respected counselor. For weeks there was a lot of crying and arguing in my house. My sister wanted me too get an abortion my dad wanted me too give it up for adoption and my sister wanted me too keep it but in the end I knew it was up too me. I couldn't give away something that was mine and I couldn't imagine getting something scraped or whatever they do so I made the decision too keep my baby.

On May nineteenth 2008 I laid there looking at the screen that showed a little baby. I started crying when I wiped the jelly off

my stomach cuz that's when it hit Me. How would I provide for my baby? Would I finish school? Would I have help? Would I be a single parents? I needed answers too my questions! When my dad saw the ultrasound he wanted Me to keep the baby, he said he'd be there financially and the father said he'd be ties and would do what he could cuz he was too young too work. I let my counselor know I was going to keep my baby and she introduced me to the family literacy program :) I had all my answers and plans all I need too do was see how everything worked out. On october 23rd 2008 at 11:04pm I me the most important 8lbs4oz, twenty. five inches long baby boy named Anthony! I knew being a teen parent would be hard, but I also knew that I would and had too do everything I could for my baby boy.

There has been rumors that this or next year si the programs last year and too hear that is so heart breaking. The program has helped so many of us teens become successful and they've also helped us become better parents and ppl. This daycare is one of the best daycares i've ever seen in my life. My baby learned how too sit up all by himself at 4 mon, crawled at 5 mon, walked at ten months, and started using three words sentences at thirteen months. At the age of two he knew his colors, his numbers one through ten in english and spanish, and he was potty trained. Without the daycares help I would be few steps behind. Anthony learned so much from the daycare but so did i. They helped Me look at friendship, relationships, parenthood and basically life in a different way. This isn't just some daycare where your children get taken care of, its more than that. Its like more of 2nd family. We trust each other, we help each other, and we are there for each other like family is. If the daycare were too close I would feel bad for the teen parents for not being able too experience something like this. I am grateful for having the opportunity too be apart of the program with the daycare I wouldn't be where I am today. I'd be a junior high drop out. Im also grateful for having an extraordinary instructor like mrs. Jenny martinez :) she's like my best friend but in a grown up version. I can talk too her about anything and everything. She's one of my role models. My life has completely changed. At the age of sixteen, I should be in the tenth grade, hanging out with my friends and deciding what I want too be when I grow up. Because I became a teen parent, i had too take a dif-ferent path. At the age of sixteen, i finished 4yrs of high school in 3 semesters, i've signed up for classes in the fall at san Jacinto college and will transfer too a university too major in psychology :) sometimes ppl ask me where'd I be if I weren't a teen parent? If I regret it? If i'd go back in time but I wouldn't trade my life right now for anything in this universe. Anthony's my pride and joy, my inspiration, my motivation, my baby boy, my everything. He's depending on me, i'm going to get somewhere in life, i'm going too get Anthony somewhere in life, I won't fail him :) I wouldn't be who I am today without Anthony.

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Transitions from Adult Education to Postsecondary Education and Work

Becoming a Master Student, Thirteenth Edition. Ellis, Dave (2011). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company. Through interactive journaling, a motivational writing style, and hands-on activities, this book is intended to help users succeed in college and in life. Tools like the Discovery Wheel, Discovery and Intention Journal, Power Process articles, Master Student Profiles, and the Kolb Learning Style Inventory (LSI) are intended to deepen users' knowledge of themselves and the world around them. In this latest edition, users will find more ways to connect to the content with the new Master Users in Action feature and end-of-chapter Skills Snapshot exercise. This book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Improving Literacy at Work. Wolf, Alison and Evans, Karen (2011). New York, NY: Routledge. Modern societies demand high levels of literacy, making the basic skills of adult workers of more concern than ever, a focus for workplace and education policy and practice. While this book builds on detailed research from the UK, the issue is a universal one and rising skill requirements mean the conclusions drawn will be of equal interest elsewhere. The research findings have very direct implications and practical relevance for teaching and learning, as this book demonstrates, providing advice on how to develop effective provision and how best to support learners at work.

Learning for Economic Self-Sufficiency: Constructing Pedagogies of Hope Among Low-Income, Low-Literate Adults Alfred, Mary V., Editor (2010). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc. This book highlights the problems and challenges that low-literate adults encounter in various environments and presents strategies for addressing the chronic illiteracy among low-income workers. The author describes a holistic view of the complexities of educating a population of low-literate adult learners from various life conditions. From language literacy issues in corrections, the workplace and access to higher education, and migrant workers literacy learning barriers, to technology literacies, and consumerism myths, this book explores the complex scope of issues faced by low-income, low-literate adults as they seek learning for economic self-sufficiency. This book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Transition Resources for Adult Educators. Thislethwaite, Linda L. (June 2009). Macomb, IL: Curriculum Publications

Clearinghouse. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Transitions Study and Literature Review provide an overview of adult education student transitions. Transitioning, defined here as moving students through adult education toward post-secondary education, training, and employment, prepares adult students to compete in an increasingly complex high-tech workplace. In this study, the Illinois Service Center Network researched the literature and compiled best practices and programs that created successful transitions for adult education students. The report features program models, best practices, guidance for decision making, and recommendations at the state and program levels. Accompanying CD includes literature reviews in the transition areas of ABE to ASE, ASE to Postsecondary, ASE to the Workforce, and ESL. Users are able to access the articles reviewed via direct link and need not be connected to the Internet to view the PDF documents.

Teacher Resources to Improve Instruction

Becoming a Teacher Researcher in Literacy Teaching and Learning: Strategies and Tools for the Inquiry Process Pappas, Christine C. and Tucker-Raymond, Eli (2011). New York, NY: Routledge. Designed to facilitate teachers' efforts to meet the actual challenges and dilemmas they face in their classrooms, this book provides background information and key concepts in teacher research; covers the "how-to" strategies of the teacher research process from the initial proposal to writing up the report as publishable or presentable work; illustrates a range of literacy topics and grade levels; features twelve reports by teacher researchers who have gone through the process, and their candid remarks about how activities helped (or not); and helps teachers understand how knowledge is constructed socially in their classrooms so that they can create instructional communities that promote all students' learning. Addressing the importance of teacher research for better instruction, reform, and political action, this text emphasizes strategies teachers can use to support and strengthen their voices as they dialogue with others in the educational community. This book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Bringing Community to the Adult ESL Classroom. Larrotta, Clarena and Brooks, Ann K. (Spring 2009). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. Number 121 in the New Directions for

HOW DOES THIS MAIL ORDER LENDING LIBRARY WORK?

Books and other resources described in the Library section may be requested for a 30-day loan. We will mail each borrower up to five loan items at a time (just two for first-time borrowers), and even include a postage-paid return address sticker for mailing them back to us! Borrowers must be affiliated with a non-profit program providing adult or family literacy services. Annotated bibliographies of our entire library of resources are available in hard copy by request, and the library can also be searched in 'real time' on our website (<http://tcall.tamu.edu>). Call 800-441-7323 or email tcall@tamu.edu to check out materials described here or to request hard copy listings of even more resources.

Adult and Continuing Education series. From the Editor: Using the concept of community building as a framework, this volume summarizes and updates readers on the state of adult English as a second language (ESL) education in the United States, providing a complete description of this population of learners and their learning needs. Chapters discuss possibilities for community building in the adult ESL classroom, combining research, theory, and practice. Several practitioners and researchers explain the ways in which they use community-building principles in adult ESL settings. This book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Crunchtime: Lessons to Help Students Blow the Roof off Writing Tests - and Become Better Writers in the Process

Bernabei, Gretchen S. and Hover, Jane and Candler, Cynthia (2009). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. The authors share the results of a collaboration to craft writing lessons that are healthy for kids, promote lifelong literacy, and help students blow the roof off of state test scores. Organized around the writing process selecting topics, crafting drafts, and polishing finished pieces explicit lessons engage student writers while shoring up the gaps between learning and testing. In addition to providing classroom-tested strategies that help students grow as writers, the authors also provide a wealth of crunchtime tools (rubrics, reproducibles, and writing samples) and mini-lessons that will help teachers teach strategically and position their students for success on their state writing tests and beyond.

Improving Education for English Learners: Research-Based Approaches.

Ong, Raye, Editor (2010). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education. This volume provides a review and analysis of research evidence on improving educational outcomes for English learners. Six chapters, written by teams of well-known and respected researchers and practitioners, address critical questions for educators about optimizing English language and literacy development and content instruction. This publication is intended to assist school districts in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs for English learners. Chapters are directed to an audience of classroom teachers, resource teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and providers of professional development. Program designers and policy makers are also likely to find the publication helpful.

Improving Vocabulary Skills, Fourth Edition. Nist, Sherrie L. (2010). West Berlin, NJ: Townsend Press. This fourth edition

provides an answer to a problem that many students have: they simply don't know enough words. This book will help them master 300 important words and word parts. The student will see and use these words in a number of different contexts. By working actively with the materials in this book, they will be able to build a solid vocabulary base. The book introduces 260 essential words that are needed for general reading comprehension in high school and college.

Speech to Print Workbook: Language Exercises for Teachers, Second Edition.

Moats, Louisa Cook (2011). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. The second edition of this workbook helps preservice teachers practice and strengthen the skills they learned from the Speech to Print textbook (a separate TCALL title). It responds to high user demand for exercises unique to the workbook. Students will get more than 80 new or revised exercises not found in the textbook, plus new quizzes, exercises that provide models for instruction, and helpful icons that explicitly connect the workbook to the textbook.

English Literacy & Civics Education

Civics Flash Cards for the New Naturalization Test

Office of Citizenship (March 2009). Washington, DC: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. These colorfully illustrated flash cards are intended to help new immigrants increase their knowledge and understanding of U.S. history and government. Immigrants applying for naturalization can use the 100 questions and answers on these flash cards as a study tool to prepare for the naturalization exam, and teachers and volunteers can use these flash cards in the classroom. These questions are for the new citizenship test. Set of 102 Cards is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Connecting Diverse Cultures: A Video Guide for A New Day and Be Who You Are.

Abrams, Dani M. (2010). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. These videos were created to assist refugees and refugee providers in learning about adjustment of refugee families and refugee youth to their new lives in the United States. Topics include family adjustment; discipline; school life; home life; and learning English. A New Day runs 24 minutes. Be Who You Are runs 9 minutes. The guide has been developed to accompany the DVD and can be used as an entire unit or in parts. Binder with DVD is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction. Algonzzine, Bob and O’Shea, Dorothy J. and Obiakor, Festus E. (2009). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. This book helps improve reading achievement for students from diverse backgrounds with research-supported practices and culturally responsive interventions in phonemic awareness, phonics/decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons for the New Naturalization Test. U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (2009). Washington, DC: U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons for the New Naturalization Test will help your students study for the civics and English portions of the naturalization interview. There are 100 civics (history and government) questions on the naturalization test. Learn About the United States contains short lessons based on each of the 100 civics (U.S. history and government) questions. Book and Audio CD are available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Program Improvement and Leadership

Making It Worth the Stay: Findings from the New England Adult Learner Persistence Project. Nash, Andy and Kallenbach, Silja (2009). Boston, MA: New England Literacy Resource Center/World Education. The underlying assumption of the New England Learner Persistence Project was that persistence is the underpinning for academic progress that ultimately results in positive outcomes and an improved quality of life for adult learners. Their interventions impacted 755 students. This report details the persistence strategies and their outcomes by the four categories that roughly correspond to students’ phases of participation in the program: Intake and Orientation; Instruction; Counseling and Peer Support; and Re-engagement. Adult education providers can boost learner persistence by addressing learner’s needs through all facets and phases of the program by employing multiple strategies. Hard copy of the report is available on loan to Texas educators ONLY, but is also available online: <http://nelrc.org/persist/report09.pdf>

Negotiating Ethical Practice in Adult Education. Burge, Elizabeth J., Editor (Fall 2009). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. One practical philosopher and seven experienced adult educators dig into their driving values, the existing literature, and frank narratives of direct experience to illuminate key lessons in being one’s own applied ethicist. In explaining their decision-making and confronting their unease and doubts, the authors emerge as self-aware, context-aware, principled practitioners. But they are not immune to the problems encountered in the intellectual and interpersonal complexities of ethical analysis. Acknowledging the challenges in moving beyond such reductionist analyses as “right versus wrong,” the authors look for negotiated possibilities of “rightness.” Negotiation, reflection, and power

emerge as three key themes of the reflective chapters. Readers should consider the various thinking strategies offered, in particular the strategy of “sinning bravely.” Additional critical thinking about conflicts that hide in the background of our work ought to help unearth some hegemonic uses of concepts such as fairness and justice. Book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Family Literacy

Celebrating Family Literacy for 20 Years: Selected Case Studies 1989 - 2009. Fitzpatrick, Jessica, Principal Investigator (2009). Washington, DC: The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. From the introduction by Barbara Bush: “The nine case studies profiled here – programs all funded by The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy – attest to the power of family literacy to transform lives. For example, a family literacy program in Canton, OH, has helped young adults earn their GED and find careers in the medical industry. Another program in South Carolina focused on teenage mothers combined classroom instruction with sessions on parenting skills. And in Elgin, TX, an innovative program targeting low-income, low-literacy populations whose first language is not English has raised reading levels and employment rates while reducing homelessness in that community. While much has been accomplished in the field of family literacy over the past two decades, much work remains.” Book is available for loan to Texas educators ONLY.

Empowering Women through Literacy: Views from Experience. Miller, Mev and King, Kathleen P., Editors (2009). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc. From the review: Empowering Women through Literacy: Voices from Experience is the first comprehensive collection of writing from the field by everyday educators who experience the joys and challenges, creativity and barriers to acknowledge or integrate innovative solutions to support women’s learning needs in adult basic education and literacy settings.

Routines-Based Early Intervention: Supporting Young Children and Their Families. McWilliam, R. A. (2010). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. Routines-based intervention is the approach thousands of professionals trust to improve the lives of young children and families. With the step-by-step guidance on each part of the routines-based intervention model, professionals in Part C programs will reach their key goals during visits to homes and child care settings. This practical how-to guide gives professionals photocopyable checklists and other tools. And the review quizzes at the end of each chapter help make this an ideal textbook for pre-service professionals as they prepare to work with children and families. With this proven model aligned with DEC Recommended Practices Part C programs will ensure high-quality services that get right to the heart of each family’s needs and improve young children’s outcomes.



"The materials arrived superfast and are very applicable to our program."

Roxann Gleason
Director, Adult Basic Education
Coastal Bend College

Free Things to Send For . . .

*In this issue, we are highlighting some of the many free resources added to our library in the past year, which have not yet been featured in *The Quarterly*.*

English as a Second Language

Adult English Language Learners with Limited Literacy

Bigelow, Martha and Schwarz, Robin Lovrien (2006).. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy. Adult English language learners who lack print literacy or experience with formal education encounter a unique set of challenges in their lives and their efforts to learn English. Educators and policymakers are similarly challenged by how best to help these adults acquire English literacy. This paper reviews a variety of research, including that on language acquisition, literacy development in adults and children, cognition and brain functioning, adult education, and professional development. Though research on this specific group of adult learners is sparse, available findings suggest that they need programs and classes separate from those for other beginning-level English language learners, with particular attention paid to cultural influences and their experiences (or lack thereof) with formal education. Those who teach these adults can benefit from professional development opportunities that focus closely on the specific backgrounds, strengths and needs of these learners.

Building Tomorrow's Workforce: Promoting the Education and Advancement of Hispanic Immigrant Workers in America. Gershwin, Mary and Coxen, Tammy and Kelly, Brian and Yakimov, Gary (2007). Big Rapids, MI: National Council for Workforce Education. Over 50% of Hispanic immigrants have less than a high school education, and like other low-skilled working adults, they face a host of barriers if they want to earn the credentials they need to compete in today's labor market. This report presents promising employer/community college partnerships that expand access to higher education and benefit low-skilled, immigrant Hispanic adults. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Effective Teaching and Learning: ESOL. Brooks, Greg and Burton, Maxine and Cole, Pam and Szczerbinski, Marcin (2007). London, England: National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy. This report is one of five that arose from the NRDC Effective Practice Studies which explored

teaching and learning in reading, writing, numeracy, ESOL and ICT. It takes an in-depth look at effective practice in the ESOL classroom. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Adult Basic Education / Literacy

Adult Education Literacy Instruction: A Review of the Research. Kruidenier, John and MacArthur, Charles A. and Wrigley, Heide S. (October 2010). Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy. Adult Literacy Instruction: A Review of the Research is a follow-up to the original review of Adult Education (AE) reading instruction, *Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction*, published in 2002. This new report is an analysis of the AE reading instruction research base, designed as a resource for both practitioners and reading researchers. It focuses on findings that can be derived from the research and their application in adult education settings. It includes research findings from reviews of adolescent reading instruction, reading-writing connections, English for Speakers of Other Languages reading and writing instruction, and an appendix. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Corrections & Inmate Re-entry Education

Back to School: A Guide to Continuing Your Education after Prison. Crayton, Anna and Lindahl, Nicole (Spring 2008). New York, NY: John Jay College of Criminal Justice. This guide is designed to help you take the first steps toward continuing your education, whether that means learning English, working towards your GED, learning an occupation, or building on college credits you have already earned" (p. 3). This manual is divided into three parts: preparing to go back to school; earning a GED (General Education Development); and earning a college degree or certificate. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Community-based Correctional Education. U.S. Department of Education (February 2011). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. The report presents information from 15 community-based education programs in 10 states—from charter schools to technical colleges and adult education programs. Two Texas programs are featured: Kilgore College Adult Education in

Longview and Victoria College Adult Education in Victoria. These programs provide services for individuals serving all or part of a criminal sentence under parole or probation. Community-based correctional education has attracted attention as a potentially cost-effective way to address two challenges: rising correctional costs and the needs of those in the inmate population who generally have lower literacy and workforce skills than those in the general population. The report describes characteristics of community-based correctional education programs, their presence as viable and more cost-efficient alternatives to incarceration for improving public safety and decreasing recidivism rates, and the challenges and implications for state and federal policies in addressing these issues. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Partnerships Between Community Colleges and Prisons: Providing Workforce Education and Training to Reduce Recidivism. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (2009). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Most of the nearly 700,000 state prisoners released each year are ill equipped to meet the challenges of reentering society. More than two-thirds of released prisoners are arrested within three years of leaving prison, and almost half are reincarcerated because they are lacking marketable skills, are burdened by a criminal record that makes them ineligible to be hired in many occupations, and have few supports to make transitions to society. These alarmingly high recidivism rates, and the associated rising budgetary and safety costs, have caught the attention of policymakers. National public policy organizations have launched initiatives to help states develop, coordinate, and promote state and local strategies for addressing the challenges of reentry to society. This report details the components of partnerships between community colleges and prisons. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Transitions to Postsecondary Education & Work

ABE Career Connections: A Manual for Integrating Adult Basic Education into Career Pathways. Office of Vocational and Adult Education (February 2010). Washington, DC: MPR Associates, Inc. Adult Basic Education Career Connections (ABECC) was a project funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, from 2006 to 2010 to work with five sites across the country to demonstrate the impact of connecting ABE programs with career pathways in prominent industries in their communities. This manual provides a good overview of career pathways with examples from programs that are successfully transitioning learners to high priority occupations such as health care and the building trades. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY;

contact us for online publication details.

Beyond Basic Skills: State Strategies to Connect Low-Skilled Students to an Employer-Valued Postsecondary Education. Foster, Marcie and Strawn, Julie and Duke-Benfield, Amy Ellen (March 2011). Washington, DC: Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success. Beyond Basic Skills describes strategies that can be used to strengthen connections between basic skills education and postsecondary education to help lower-skilled adults and out-of-school youth attain the postsecondary credentials they need to advance in the labor market. This includes state-level innovations such as: instructional strategies that provide a strong foundation in occupational skills required for jobs in the local economy; acceleration strategies that help students progress further and more quickly in education and training programs in a shorter period of time than traditional approaches, and funding formulas, assessment policies, and other administrative policies that support a statewide vision to provide adults and youth with pathways to better jobs through postsecondary education. The report also includes examples of states and local institutions that are effectively implementing one or more of these innovations. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Bridges to Careers for Low-Skilled Adults: A Program Development Guide. Henle, Toni, Project Manager (October 2005). Chicago, IL: Women Employed with Chicago Jobs Council and UIC Great Cities Institute. This guide provides concrete guidance on how to develop and implement “bridge programs,” which help adult students improve their basic skills and succeed in college. The guide contains information and interactive worksheets that program developers and managers can use to help with program design, curriculum development, funding, implementation, and evaluation. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Building Career Ladders for the Working Poor Through Literacy Training. Bruno, Lee and Jin, Ying and Norris, Dwayne (October 2010). Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research. Using data collected from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL),¹ this report compares workers who reported an average weekly wage that, if they were employed full time, was less than 125 percent of official poverty levels for a family of three¹ with workers whose hourly wages translate into incomes greater than 125 percent of official poverty levels for a family of three. All workers represented in the NAAL study are thus divided into the working poor and the working nonpoor—or “other workers,” for the purposes of this report.

Complete to Compete: Improving Postsecondary Attainment Among Adults. National Governors Association (2011). Washington, DC: National Governors Association.

The recently released National Governors Association (NGA) report, *Complete to Compete: Improving Postsecondary Attainment Among Adults* was designed to help states improve postsecondary credential attainment rates for adults and increase their chances of success in the labor market. The report urges states to focus on four key policy areas: flexible and integrated learning environments, comprehensive support services, cross-institutional data to track performance, and innovative financing. In addition to improving policy in these areas, the NGA recommends as critical such actions as bringing successful local programs to scale, investing in technology, and informing individuals of the benefits of increased training and education for developing a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.

Crossing the Bridge: GED Credentials and Postsecondary Educational Outcomes. Patterson, Margaret Becker and Zhang, Jizhi and Song, Wei and Guison-Dowdy, Anne (April 2010). Washington, DC: GED Testing Service. Preparing adults to transition successfully to postsecondary education and careers has become the central message for adult educators in terms of learner outcomes. The underlying message, however, is that learners need to improve their basic skills if they are to be successful in those transitions. This message is clear in *Crossing the Bridge: GED Credentials and Postsecondary Educational Outcomes*, the first year report of a longitudinal study on the effects of obtaining the GED on postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion. Findings show that higher GED scores result in a greater likelihood of postsecondary success. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Family Literacy

Big Dreams: A Family Book about Reading. Goldman, Elizabeth and Adler, C. Ralph (2006). Jessup, MD: National Institute for Literacy. This family booklet about reading is aimed at parents of children in Preschool through 3rd Grade. The simple text provides ideas for parents of all literacy skill levels to read with their children and find lessons for reading in everyday activities.

Can Teacher Training in Classroom Management Make a Difference for Children's Experiences in Preschool? Morris, Pamela and Raver, Cybele and Lloyd, Chrishana M. and Miltenky, Megan (September 2009). New York, NY: MDRC. [from Public Education Network's Weekly NewsBlast:] According to a new report from MDRC, evidence suggests that improving young children's healthy emotional and behavioral development is both an important outcome in its own right and can also be a pathway to improved academic achievement. In survey after survey, the authors write, teachers consistently emphasize their need for professional development and other supports to help them address children's behavioral issues. The report offers a preview of promising findings from Foundations of Learning (FOL), a demonstration and random assignment evaluation in Newark and

Chicago of an intervention that trains preschool teachers to better support children's behavior and emotional development. The model combined teacher training in effective classroom management with weekly classroom consultation, with mentors coaching teachers in workshop strategies and providing individualized support to the highest-risk children. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel: A Scientific Synthesis of Early Literacy Development and Implications for Intervention: Executive Summary Lonigan, Christopher J. and Shanahan, Timothy (January 2009). Jessup, MD: National Institute for Literacy and National Center for Family Literacy. This report shows the scientific validity of earlier and more targeted investments in literacy development," said NELP chairman Dr. Timothy Shanahan. Some of the key findings of the report reveal the best early predictors of literacy, which include alphabet knowledge, phonemic awareness, rapid naming skills, writing (such as writing one's name), and short-term memory for words said aloud. Instruction on these skills may be especially helpful for children at risk for developing reading difficulties. More complex oral language skills also appear to be important. In addition to presenting findings on which early measures of a child's skills predict later decoding, reading comprehension, and spelling achievement, this report identifies a wide-variety of interventions and instructional approaches that improve a child's early literacy skills. NELP researchers also looked at the role of environment and at child characteristics that may link to future outcomes in reading, writing, and spelling.

The Effect of Family Literacy Interventions on Children's Acquisition of Reading: From Kindergarten to Grade 3. Senechal, Monique (2006). Portsmouth, NH: National Institute for Literacy. Educators believe that parents can help their children learn to read. But what evidence supports this belief? And if parent involvement does matter, what kinds of parent involvement are most efficient? The goal of this report was to review the scientific literature on parent involvement in the acquisition of reading from kindergarten to grade 3. The combined results for the 14 intervention studies, representing 1174 families, were clear: Parent involvement has a positive impact on children's reading acquisition. Having parents teach specific literacy skills to their children was two times more effective than having parents listen to their children read and six times more effective than encouraging parents to read to their children. Parent involvement had a positive impact from kindergarten to grade 3. In addition, the interventions were as effective for children experiencing reading difficulties as they were for normally-developing children. Finally, the socioeconomic level of the participating families did not affect the positive impact of the interventions. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Empowering Parents School Box: A Tool To Equip Parents for the School Year. U. S. Department of Education (September 2007). Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Education. The U. S. Department of Education has developed a publication, "Empowering Parents School Box: A Tool To Equip Parents For the School Year," that contains three booklets: What Parents Need to Know, Taking a Closer Look, and Learning Checklists; a brochure: Examples of Resources; a poster: Empowered Parents Stay Involved With School; a bookmark; and a door hanger. The school box provides tips on working with children from birth to high school; guidelines for taking advantage of free tutoring opportunities; steps for selecting a high-quality school; ways to get involved in children's schools; information about financial aid and scholarships; and resources for improving learning. It also includes success stories of schools where parent involvement made a difference. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Health Literacy

Coping with Stress. Soto, Naomi and Atkinson, Rhonda and Smith, Gregory (2010). Orlando, FL: Florida Literacy Coalition. This is an additional component to the Staying Healthy: An English Learner's Guide to Health Care and Healthy Living curriculum (a separate TCALL title). This unit is an introduction to stress and stress management. It focuses on the effects of stress on thinking, behavior, and health. It discusses different kinds of stressors, and provides suggestions for coping with stress. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies of Student Book and Teacher's Guide available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Women's Health. Soto, Naomi and Koonce, Maria and Smith, Gregory (2010). Orlando, FL: Florida Literacy Coalition. This is a special addition to Staying Healthy: An English Learner's Guide to Health Care and Healthy Living (a separate TCALL title). It is a broad overview of various women's health topics. Stages of women's health reproduction, pregnancy and early childcare are also addressed in this unit. It emphasizes certain cancers and diseases that many women face. This women's health unit also explains dangers like domestic and sexual abuse. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies of Student Book and Teacher's Guide available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Program Leadership & Collaborative Partnerships

Doing Business Together: Adult Education and Business Partnering to Build a Qualified Workforce. Parker, James T. (February 2011). New York, NY: Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy. This report results from a project to stimulate more and effective partnerships for the purpose of planning for

and providing basic and workforce skills to current and potential workers at the local and state levels. The report has a heavy focus on exemplary programs that already exist, in part as a result of adult education and business collaboration, with a focus on models in 16 states. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

Employers, Low-Income Young Adults, and Postsecondary Credentials: A Practical Typology for Business, Education, and Community Leaders. Bozell, Maureen R. and Goldberg, Melissa (October 2009). New York, NY: Workforce Strategy Center. This report investigates a number of education and training programs involving employers in efforts to help disadvantaged young adults attain post-secondary credentials leading to career track employment. The report explores the aspects of the programs investigated that they believe to be of greatest interest to business, education, and community leaders, as well as funders interested in replicating such endeavors. The common characteristics across model programs, the key challenges and how they were addressed, and the lessons learned about each program are captured in the report resulting in a document that is part typology report and part practical guide. Clearinghouse Library makes free copies available to Texas educators ONLY; contact us for online publication details.

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