



Teaching Adults in a Family Literacy Program

Adult Basic Education (ABE) Program
Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development
West Virginia Department of Education

The West Virginia Adult Basic Education (WVABE) Program is funded by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, enacted August 7, 1998 as Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

WVABE is administered through the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development, Building 6, Room 230, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0330.

RESA 3 does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law in access to, employment in, or provision of any of RESA 3's programs, benefits, or activities.

Teaching Adults in a Family Literacy Program

Table of Contents

FAMILY LITERACY AND EVEN START IN WEST VIRGINIA	1
WHAT IS FAMILY LITERACY?	1
ADULT EDUCATION	1
CHILDREN’S EDUCATION	2
PACT TIME	3
PARENT TIME	4
WHAT ARE SOME IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS IN COORDINATING CHILD AND PARENT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES?	5
WHAT RESPONSIBILITY DO I HAVE FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE?	6
WHAT HAPPENS IN A HOME VISIT?	6
WHAT DOES A FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?	6
WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EVEN START AND OTHER FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS?	7
EVEN START PROGRAMS	7
COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS	7
WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR EVEN START IN OUR STATE?	7
WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT FAMILY LITERACY?	7
APPENDIX.....	9

This page intentionally left blank.

FAMILY LITERACY AND EVEN START IN WEST VIRGINIA

What is family literacy?

Family literacy is a structured program that provides opportunities to combine the critical issues of adult basic skills for parents with educational development in children. The purpose of family literacy is to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by improving educational opportunities for low-income families.

Family literacy in West Virginia, consistent with the definition in the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), includes the following four components:

- **Adult Education** – parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency;
- **Children’s Education** – age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences;
- **Parent and Child Together (PACT)** – interactive activities between parents and their children; and
- **Parent Time** – training for parents to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.

These components must be fully integrated into a program with sufficient intensity (focused, planned, and frequent program activities within each of the four components) and appropriate duration to achieve substantial participant outcomes. Key elements of each of the components include the following:

Adult Education

The adult education component is designed to extend basic education skills. More than just an academic, GED® preparation, work-focused or ESL program, a family literacy adult education class teaches adults at all levels and abilities to:

- think critically and creatively;
- set goals and achieve them;
- solve problems; and
- acquire successful interpersonal skills.

Family literacy instructional methods combine the more traditional individualized and tutor-assisted study with active learning. An adult education instructor often employs peer collaboration, balancing both large and small group instruction.

Life is the classroom for an adult education instructor in family literacy. In close consultation with instructors, students set both academic and personal goals, and instructors help students see the relationship between them. Often students testify to the fact that the family literacy program's different approach helped them to finally understand the classroom material. Classroom methods of instruction include teaching skills within the

family context. In addition to providing instruction, the adult education instructor is a friend and facilitator. Significant bonds are established between staff and student, as well as between students.

Instruction provided in the adult education component not only impacts the parents, but anticipates affecting the future of the children who attend the program as well. The adult education component expects to affect significantly the future of the children who attend the program. This is accomplished by including personal and family problem solving in the curriculum, along with an understanding of the parent support role in the development and learning of children. Changing the skill level of parents, as well as their attitudes and expectations for themselves and their family members, is not left to chance. It is the primary goal of family literacy. As parents move toward jobs and self-sufficiency, they make solid connections between skills learned in the classroom and their application in the home. These same skills are needed in the work place. To successfully function in a job, workers will need to:

- manage time and material;
- be able to successfully communicate;
- be able to work on a team;
- know how to establish and use systems;
- be responsible; and
- demonstrate an ability to self-assess and monitor personal behavior.

The adult education component not only helps to prepare parents for the experience of successful parenting, but helps parents realize their own dreams—a GED, a college or technical school education, mastery of English, a good job—and to assume a productive and important position in society.

Children's Education

The children's education component is designed to promote the growth and development of young children and to engage parents in their child's educational program in order to foster meaningful involvement that will be maintained throughout the child's educational career.

This component uses a developmentally appropriate curriculum that focuses on the whole child and emphasizes the development of literacy. The child's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional skills develop through:

- active exploration and investigation;
- personal discovery;
- reorganization of the physical environment;
- verbal interaction with peers and adults; and
- support from adults.

With the purposeful guidance and support of teachers and parents, children learn and develop their views of the environment. They are provided opportunities to make decisions

and solve problems, thereby creating a feeling of success and self-confidence, as well as a positive view of themselves and their abilities.

Active learning forms the foundation for all activities and instruction. The classroom environment is equipped with a wide variety of materials that are of interest to children and provide meaningful learning opportunities. Materials are culturally appropriate and accessible to children.

Throughout each class day, under teachers' supervision, children are given the opportunity to work individually, in small groups, in large groups, and with adults. Routines are predictable and students understand them. Parents are involved in meaningful activities each day with their children in the children's classroom.

Assessment of the children's development by the teacher occurs through a systematic and ongoing process that includes observations of children during the regular, daily activities. Parents are encouraged to participate in the process through observation of their own children and communicate with teachers about their children's progress.

All of these aspects work together to set the stage for children's continued success throughout their lives.

PACT Time

Parents who support and extend their children's learning contribute to their children's successes both in school and in life. The Parent and Child Together Time component provides the opportunity for parents and children to interact together as a family unit. For the most part, the children's interests and preferences drive activities, with parents following the lead. Staff members help parents learn how to support their children's learning through interaction with each other in meaningful activities, including play. The reciprocal learning that takes place during this time offers parents and children a chance to become true partners in education. At the end of the session, a literacy-focused large group activity provides ideas for transferring learning to the home and brings closure to the session.

When parent and child interact together during PACT - Interactive Literacy Activities Time, enhancing and enriching their relationship is the primary goal. Therefore, PACT - Interactive Literacy Activities Time is:

- a regular scheduled session;
- a quality one-on-one time for children with their parents;
- interaction between parent and children; and
- child-centered.

There is a close connection between PACT - Interactive Literacy Activities Time and Parent Time. During the Parent Time component, as parents debrief and reflect on PACT - Interactive Literacy Activities Time activities, they gain understanding and knowledge of child development and learning behaviors which help parents to be more successful

partners in their child's learning. This also strengthens the parent/child bonds. As the parenting skills of adults develop and translate into changes in positive parenting behaviors and practices, children's behavior may reflect those changes.

Direct effects of the Parent and Child Together Time component include increases in:

- time spent reading to children;
- the ability of parents to positively guide their children's freedom of choice;
- adults and children engaging in other forms of learning;
- parents' confidence as they work and play with their children; and
- the perception of parents' value of education as viewed by their children.*

*Mikulecky, L., Llyod, P., & Brannon, D. (1994) *Evaluating Parent/Child Interactions*, Indiana University

Parent Time

A strong and effective Parent Time is a key ingredient in successful family literacy programs. This component:

- provides information on effective life skills, issues critical in the lives of families, literacy and child development, parenting skills, and work-readiness;
- connects parents with a wide array of community services; and
- provides parents with opportunities to network and develop mutual support systems with others in the program.

A significant portion of the new information provided for parents addresses children's growth and development and their relation to cognitive processes. Often the child's instructor facilitates Parent Time sessions. These teachers not only know about child growth and development, but their knowledge of children in the program is particularly helpful in guiding instruction. Providing information through traditional classroom instruction is one way topics are approached; however, observing the early childhood teacher is another. Often parents ask, "How do they [the early childhood teachers] get children to do that?" An analysis of teacher behavior, observed during PACT - Interactive Literacy Activities Time, can take place in Parent Time. If parents decide they want to experiment with newly discovered behaviors and seek change with positive results, staff members play a supporting role, one that encourages and affirms. The ultimate goal is to strengthen parents to do the best parenting job possible.

A healthy parent must first be a healthy person. During Parent Time, parents learn to access many resources within the larger community. Often the help that is needed is in place, but accessing it may be the problem. "Help" may range from eyeglasses and good nutrition to mental health services. Individually and in a group, parents work on the development of personal and social skills. As they strengthen skills, confidence develops and expectations for themselves and their children change. Within this healthy, knowledge-based and comfortable atmosphere, parents find learning enjoyable.

Parent Time is a good place for parents to connect and bond, offering the opportunity to both give and receive support. Parents practice goal-setting and problem-solving strategies to realize those goals and begin to see themselves as change agents. Welfare reform demands that parents become self-reliant and employed. The barriers that keep parents from becoming successful often seem insurmountable. Family literacy helps parents remove those barriers. Parent Time offers solutions and support. The instructor is able to offer the caring and encouragement parents need to stay in the program and to succeed.

What are some important considerations in coordinating child and parent programs and activities?

In a full, four-prong family literacy program, parent-related activities must be coordinated with the educational activities of the children in the program/school. Some major goals of the program are to assist parents in:

- understanding the educational process;
- learning how to work more effectively with their children as their first and lifelong teachers;
- discovering teaching and discipline styles used by educators that are positive and that reinforce learning; and
- finding the appropriate times to speak with school staff regarding their child.

Communication with school/program key people is the most important tool of a successful family literacy program. The adult education and parent time components of the program are especially appropriate times to coordinate activities and to prepare parents for the proper approach to the school environment.

Adult education instructors working with the principal, Head Start staff, Even Start staff, Title I staff, etc. can prepare the way for the parents to become more participatory in the education of their children.

Some questions to consider **before arrangements are made** for PACT time (Parent and Child Together Time):

- What should parents know about the classroom before entering for PACT?
- What should teachers know about parents?
- What do teachers (classroom and adult education) need in order to make PACT work?
- How should children be prepared?
- What will teachers need to change to accommodate PACT Time parents?
- How can these activities be transferred to the home?
- How will the adult education instructor prepare the parent regarding the confidentiality of information heard within the school/classroom?

The challenge of confidentiality needs to be addressed – it is the number one issue that schools express as a concern. The first step is to let the staff know you recognize and

understand the issue. The second step is to plan how you will address this prior to parents entering the classrooms. The third step is to plan for “debriefing” once the parents return from PACT. This allows for them to discuss any questions that they may have prior to leaving the program/school for the day. It sets a pattern that it is appropriate to discuss questions with school staff or adult education instructors, but not outside the schools walls. Parents need to understand the “Golden Rule” – they will not want their child discussed out in the community, so they should not discuss other people’s children.

The National Center for Family Literacy has excellent materials, including videos, regarding PACT time, Parent Time discussion circles, etc.

What responsibility do I have for reporting child abuse?

As instructors, we have the legal responsibility to report suspected child abuse to Child Protective Services.

What happens in a home visit?

Home visits are another necessary characteristic that distinguishes a family literacy program from a stand-alone adult education class and a separate educational component for the children. During the home visit, the instructor(s)-a team is recommended-visit in the home with all family members who are enrolled in the program. The purpose of the visit is to provide continuity in the education of parents and children. The visit encourages the transfer of learning from the classroom into the home and helps support the idea of “lifelong learning” for families. Both the enrolled parent and children should participate. Other family members who live in the home are encouraged to take part in activities. Although programs vary in design and implementation, a home visit provided by a family literacy program includes activities that address all four components of the family literacy model: an education component for the children, adult education, PACT time and parent education.

What does a family literacy program look like?

All family literacy programs in West Virginia, including Even Start, follow the four-prong model of family literacy as outlined by the National Center for Family Literacy. These components are childhood education, adult education, parent education, and parent and child together (PACT) activities as discussed previously under the definition of family literacy. For additional information, visit the West Virginia Even Start web site at: <https://sites.google.com/a/wvde.k12.wv.us/west-virginia-even-start>.

Family literacy programs can look very different. Some models meet three to four days a week in a school setting, usually an elementary school or a facility with an early childhood program such as Head Start. These programs are called center-based programs. Other programs deliver services to the home of the children and are called home-based programs. Flexibility is the key to meeting the needs of the participants.

The vital ingredients that must remain in any comprehensive program are integrated services provided for both generations with the intensity and duration of instruction to effect significant changes. More specifically, this means that all components of a comprehensive program will be in operation daily, three to five times a week for several hours. All four components will be integrated into a holistic service approach and a program year spans several months, typically a school year.

What is the difference between Even Start and other family literacy programs?

Even Start programs

- Federally Funded through Title I
- Serve families with children between 0-7 years of age and those most in need
- Early childhood program is developmentally appropriate and follows state and federal guidelines

Community-based programs

- Funded through collaboration of agencies
- Serve families with school-age children
- Serve all families
- Normally utilize existing children's education programs to provide child education component

What are the guidelines for Even Start in our state?

See the [West Virginia Even Start Performance Indicators](#) and [Guidance for the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Programs](#). These can be found at the West Virginia Even Start website at: <https://sites.google.com/a/wvde.k12.wv.us/west-virginia-even-start>.

Where can I find additional information about family literacy?

Additional information is located in the [Appendix](#) of this document.

This page intentionally left blank.

APPENDIX

Teaching Adults in a Family Literacy Program

This page intentionally left blank.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION PERSONAL GOALS CHECKLIST

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

WORKER GOALS:

	CAN DO	CAN DO WITH HELP	CAN'T DO	WANT TO DO	NO INTEREST
PREPARING TO WORK:					
Understand help wanted ads					
Research career options					
Enter a job training program					
Pass a test for a job					
Fill out a job application					
Write a resume and cover letter					
Learn to handle a formal job interview					
IMPROVING SKILLS FOR THE JOB:					
Learn to type					
Demonstrate basic computer skills					
Complete work forms					
Read and understand manuals					
Read and understand workplace signs, notices, memos					
Read and understand paycheck stub					
Write memos/notes/messages at work					
OTHER:					

COMMUNITY GOALS:

	CAN DO	CAN DO WITH HELP	CAN'T DO	WANT TO DO	NO INTEREST
FOR ACCESS:					
Use library resources					
Read the newspaper					
Learn about the candidates for public office					
Understand political issues					
FOR VOICE:					
Register to vote					
Vote					
Write a letter to the editor					
Get more involved in church					
Join a civic group or committee					
FOR INDEPENDENT ACTION:					
Get a driver's license					
Read signs & maps					
Read menus					
Use the telephone book					
Read transportation schedules (bus, train, airplane)					
Volunteer in the community					
OTHER:					

New River Community College
The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center
1.800.237.0178

Orienting Students Using EFF
Available online: <http://www.valrc.org/>

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

PERSONAL GOALS CHECKLIST

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

FAMILY GOALS:

	CAN DO	CAN DO WITH HELP	CAN'T DO	WANT TO DO	NO INTEREST
WANT TO BE ABLE TO:					
Make and follow a budget					
Organize financial records					
Understand how bank accounts work					
Understand housing issues (tenant rights, billing)					
Comparison shop and use coupons					
Complete a tax form					
Use recipes					
Write for pleasure (letters, poetry, journal, stories, other)					
WOULD LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT:					
Educational activities for children					
Disciplining children					
Improving children's self esteem					
Helping children in the public school system					
Good nutrition					
Family Counseling					
Alcohol/drug abuse treatment resources					
Family abuse resources					
Health care resources (vision, dental, medical)					
Learning styles and personality styles					
Handling stress					
PARENTING GOALS:					
Read to children regularly					
Help children with homework					
Volunteer in child's school					
Read and write notes for child's school					
OTHER:					

New River Community College

Orienting Students Using EFF

The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center
1.800.237.0178

Available online: <http://www.valrc.org/>

SURVEY OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL

Parent name _____ Date _____

During the past school year, approximately how often did you go to _____'s preschool/school for each of the following activities? Child's name

Never	Once a year	Two or three times a year	Four to six times a year	Once a month or more	Once a week or more
0	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate number.

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | For a conference or informal talk with (CHILD's) teacher, director, or principal | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | To observe classroom activities | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | To attend a school event in which (CHILD) participated such as a play, art show, or party | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | To attend after school programs such as crafts or music | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | To meet with a parent teacher organization such as the PTA | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | For a parent advisory committee meeting | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | For school fundraising activities | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | To volunteer in the school office, cafeteria, or library | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | To volunteer in (CHILD's) classroom | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | To volunteer for school projects or trips | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | To work as a paid employee in the office, cafeteria, library, or in a classroom | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | To serve on the school's governing board or committee | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

4/14/2003 Collect information on entry and as a post test at the end of each program year.
© Monongalia County Schools Even Start

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES
ABOUT FAMILY LITERACY**

**Annotated List of Websites of Family
Literacy Resources**

<http://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/goodling-institute/family-literacy-resources/Annoated%20website%20list%203-28-11.pdf>

This PDF document is updated regularly and is found on the Penn State College of Education website under the Family Literacy Resources section. This is a list of websites and general resources for family literacy programs.

Certificate in Family Literacy

<http://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/FamilyLiteracyCertificate.shtml>

For an in-depth study of family literacy, parenting education for supporting language and literacy development, early literacy development, adult literacy, and adult education, explore the Certificate in Family Literacy offered by the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy and the National Center for Family Literacy, available online through Penn State University's World Campus.

Child Development Institute

www.childdevelopmentinfo.com

This site contains resources and suggestions for parents on child development from infants to teenagers.

Family Support Network

<http://familysupportamerica.org/>

Family Support America is a national resource organization for the theory, policy, and practice of family support.

Color'in Colorado!

www.colorincolorado.org/homepage.php

This bilingual English-Spanish site offers information, activities, and advice for Spanish-speaking parents and educators of English language learners. It is the companion site to Reading Rockets, and is funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

International Reading Association

www.reading.org/resources/index.html

Click on the second paragraph of Tips and tools for parents and teachers. Here you will find free parent brochures in English and in Spanish to download and print.

**National Association for the Education of
Young Children**

www.naeyc.org

NAEYC provides resources and information for guidance for educators of children birth to age eight as well as gives parents guidance in choosing the best possible care and education for their children.

National Center for Family Literacy

www.famlit.org

The NCFL is recognized nationally and internationally as the leader in family literacy. The intergenerational approach pioneered by NCFL has received critical acclaim and has helped hundreds of thousands of families start on a path to success. By providing professional development services, research and policy analysis, NCFL annually trains more than 5,000 practitioners and reaches thousands more through its advocacy efforts, working to expand the literacy opportunities for all families nationwide.

National Head Start Association

www.nhsa.org

Find program information and legislation for the National Head Start Association. The Association provides support for the entire Head Start community by advocating for policies that strengthen services to Head Start children and their families; by providing extensive training and professional development to Head Start staff; and by developing and disseminating research, information, and resources that enrich Head Start program delivery.

PBS KIDS Share a Story

www.pbskids.org/shareastory/

PBS KIDS Share a Story is a national campaign that helps kids develop reading and language skills funded in part by a Ready to Learn cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Education.

Reading is Fundamental

www.rif.org

Find out how RIF uses support from the U.S. Department of Education, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and countless individuals to place more than 200 million books in the hands and homes of children who need them most.

Reading Recovery Council of North America

<http://www.readingrecovery.org/>

This site (formerly known as CELI—Center for Early Literacy Information) is a resource for researchers, teachers, families, school administrators, and others who are looking for early literacy information from a variety of sources including articles, books, reports, technical papers, and more.

Reading Rockets

www.readingrockets.org/about

Reading Rockets offers information and resources on how young children learn to read, why so many struggle, and how caring adults can help. It is produced by WETA and funded by a major grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

StudyDog

www.studydog.com

StudyDog is a computer-based, supplemental reading program designed for children from Pre-K to 2nd Grade. StudyDog focuses on specific early reading skills that children need to practice and accomplish in order to become successful readers. StudyDog was developed under the guidelines of the National Reading Panel and other reading experts and has shown to be particularly effective.