National Institute for Literacy

Professional Development Offerings to State Organizations
Coordinated by *LINCS* Regional Resource Centers

I. Professional Development Workshops/presentations

A. Overview of National Institute for Literacy resources
This 1 to 1 ½ hour presentation gives participants an overview highlights publications for educators related to reading and using research. Online *LINCS* resources are demonstrated and participants receive copies of some Institute publications.

B. Evidence-based Practices: A Workshop for Training Adult Basic Education, TANF and One Stop Practitioners and Program Administrators (whole day or half day)

The goal of this workshop is to help teachers and administrators understand the meaning of evidence-based practice and develop strategies for continuously accessing, understanding, judging and using research in their classrooms and programs. By the end of this interactive workshop, participants will be able to:

- Discuss their own attitudes about research and its connection to practice and policy
- Define some basic concepts and terminology about research design and methodology
- Describe the connection between evidence-based practice and program/classroom improvement
- Describe what empirical evidence looks like and how it can be integrated with professional wisdom to make decisions about instruction and services for adult students
- Implement a plan for improving reading instruction in their programs utilizing evidence-based practices
- Cite strategies they can use to continuously access, understand, judge and use research to make decisions about practice in their classrooms or programs

The half day workshop does not include time for as extensive discussion, as many exercises, and the creation of plan for improving reading instruction by the participants.

C. Reading Workshops

Teaching Adults to Read: A Research-based Practices Workshop (3 days)
This three-day workshop presents research-based practices for adult reading assessment and instruction in order to increase participants' awareness, knowledge, and use of research-based practices for reading assessment and instruction. Its goal is to bring together the research on adult literacy instruction and the recommendations for instruction based on this research from two resources, the book, *Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults,* and the website, *Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles: Research-based Assessment Practices for the Adult Education Classroom.*

Participants will learn about teaching specific aspects of reading—alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Portions of the Teaching Adults to Read workshops lend themselves to shorter conference-length sessions and ½-day trainings.

1. ***Research on Reading Instruction and Assessment** (75-90 min.)
   Participants gain an understanding of how their practices should relate to the existing research on reading assessment and instruction. The session will focus on key findings from the research review conducted by the Adult Literacy Research Working Group for the National Institute for Literacy and summarized in *Teaching Adults to Read: A Summary of Scientifically Based Research Principles,* and the results of the Adult Reading Components Study, conducted by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL). The four components of reading—alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—are introduced.

2. ***Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles** (75-90 min. or double session; computer lab required)
   This session introduces, demonstrates, and provides practice in using the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles website, supported by the National Institute for Literacy and built on NCSALL's Adult Reading Components Study. Participants will learn how to navigate the website and use the Make a Match feature to access reading profiles that they can use to assess their individual students' reading strengths and weaknesses and target instructional needs. In this hands-on session, participants review the research and assessment tools, learn how to use the site and profiles, and see how the profile results help with instruction.

3. ***Profiles and Classroom Dynamics** (1/2-day)
   Participants use profiles generated from the *Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles* website to plan reading instruction for groups of students in classroom setting.

4. **Components of Reading:** What is it? Why is it important (the research)? Who needs it (assessment results)? What kind of instruction? The answers to these four questions are explored for each component of reading. *Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults* is distributed as a resource. (Each is a 1/2-day workshops)

   a. ***Fluency**: This session opens with an instructional practice—"repeated readings"—that improves fluency. The research indicates that teaching fluency increases reading achievement. Participants will look at other aspects of the research and practice using tools for measuring fluency. They will also discuss the characteristics of fluent reading and practice two approaches to guided repeated oral reading.

   b. ***Alphabetics**: Participants will learn about alphabetics research with adults and some important research with children that supports and extends the research with adults. They will practice using assessments for phonemic awareness, word recognition, and word analysis. Finally, participants will develop an

understanding of and familiarity with structured programs for learners with limited reading skills and plan instruction for intermediate-level readers who have "gaps" in their decoding skills.

c. ***Vocabulary**: The research on vocabulary is limited both for adults and in K-12; a few trends provide some direction. Two basic formats for assessing vocabulary knowledge will be reviewed and discussed for the purpose of informing instruction. Participants will learn about approaches for identifying vocabulary words that should be taught and will practice making instructional decisions about vocabulary.

d. ***Comprehension**: After learning about the research on comprehension and how to use the *Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles* website to assess comprehension, participants will use< i>Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults to learn about and practice methods for teaching reading comprehension to their adult students.

D. Facilitated online courses

Three facilitated online courses are available through the Regional Resource Centers only. There will be limited free offerings of the 12-hour courses; however, additional offerings are possible for a fee. There are optional CEUs offered for participants (1 CEU per course.)

1. **Assessment Basics for Adult Education:** This online course is designed for teachers, program administrators, professional development providers, and state adult literacy and basic education staff who want to understand fundamental assessment information necessary for quality in test use, administration, and design; alignment of goals, curriculum and assessment; and using alternative forms of assessment. The course surveys the currently most prominent tests and resources in use today.

   Participants will study and explore the points outlined below, share their own understanding and experiences with the group, and subsequently be able to apply new learning and skill to their practice.
   - fundamental assessment information and terminology
   - various assessment tools and frameworks
   - benefits and limitations of different types of assessments
   - quality in test design and administration
   - developing and using assessments for the classroom
   - the importance of aligning student goals, curriculum, and assessment

2. **Integration of Technology into the Adult Education Classroom:** Have you ever tried to blindly put a puzzle together without knowing what the final picture will look like? This may be what is happening to you when you are trying to integrate computer technology into your classroom. This course will provide quick access to educational resources, lesson plans, activities, tools for evaluating educational software, information about purchasing educational software, and knowledge to help you utilize a variety of

software applications and web-based activities in the classroom. Emerging technology for education is overviewed and many Internet resources are introduced with examples of how these resources are now being used in the classroom. Online activities, discussion boards and assessments will keep you engaged.

3. **The Path of PD Evaluation:** This online course is designed for teachers, administrators, and other adult education staff who are responsible for developing professional development at the local or state level. **It is appropriate for both novices and those with more experience** in the field. The focus is on how to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of professional development activities, events, or programs.

   The course will utilize text, a discussion board, online readings, and an individual pd project of the participant's choice. There will also be additional resources included for those wishing to pursue further in-depth study of the topic. The Facilitator and a Tech Partner will be available online to provide one-on-one support as needed.

   Participants will study and explore the following topics:
   - the fundamentals of evaluation
   - how evaluation fits into the "big picture" of professional development
   - the five levels of pd evaluation and implications for practice
   - pros and cons of the different data collection methods
   - how to construct an evaluation framework

E. **Customized Training:** Based on the Needs Assessment and Mapping Surveys, Regional Resource Centers can talk to states about their needs and how the Institute can assist in providing professional development

II. National Institute for Literacy Publications

Full text documents and information on ordering print copies available at
http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/publications.html

Regional Resource Center can arrange to provide an exhibit booth at a state conference where Institute publications will be distributed free.

III. National Institute for Literacy Collections

The new *LINCS* Resource Collections will be online subject-oriented collections of high quality instructional resources, including multi-media resources, informed by research, especially scientifically based and other rigorous research, for use by adult education and literacy educators.

The Resource Collections are focused on three main areas: Basic Skills (Reading, Writing, Mathematics/Numeracy), Workforce Competitiveness (Workplace Literacy, ESOL, Technology), and Program Planning (Program Improvement, Assessment, Learning Disabilities). The new Collections will be available in April 2008.

Note**:** Funds from the Institute were used in part for the development and maintenance of Special Collection websites from 2001-2006. Although, the Institute is no longer providing funding for this project, the LINCS Special Collections websites are being retained for informational and reference purposes only.
(http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/collections.html**)**

IV. National Institute for Literacy Online Discussion Lists

Established in 1995, the National Institute for Literacy online discussion lists give thousands of literacy stakeholders opportunities to discuss the literacy field's critical issues; share resources, experiences, and ideas; ask questions of subject experts; and keep up-to-date on literacy issues.

Each discussion list is moderated by a national organization with expertise in the topic area. The current Institute sponsored discussion lists can be reached at:
http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/discussions.html

V. Other Information

A. A Health Curriculum for Beginning Level ABE Students: Available Fall 2008

Curriculum Background: The original curriculum and materials were developed through a five year research grant from The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to Susan Levy, University of Illinois for the Testing Impact of Health Literacy in Adult Literacy and Integrated Family Approach Programs research project. (Grant Number: HD043761) It was funded through a federal partnership which included The National Institute for Literacy, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education of the US Department of Education, and the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. It was revised in 2008 under National Institute for Literacy Grant No. X257T060004

Health Literacy Content
- Health Professionals
- Emergency Care
- Self-care & Preventive Care
- Physical Activity & Good Nutrition
- Making and Keeping Appointments
- Talking to Health Professionals
- Medical Tests and other follow-up care instructions
- Medical History Forms
- Medications – drug groups, warnings, dosage & directions
- Paying for Health Services, and MORE…

New! Updated On-Line Version: The original research version of the curriculum has been updated and enhanced with more material for Beginning Level ABE students, including

- Supplemental Vocabulary
- Multi-sensory Sight Word Practice
- Phonemic Awareness Activities
- Phonics and Word Analysis Activities
- Highly Readable Stories (GE 2-3) on health-related topics
- Fluency and Comprehension Reinforcement

New! On-Line Instructor Manual: Information for literacy instructors on how to use the Health Literacy Curriculum, written by Literacy Consultant and Trainer, Meg Schofield. Based on research-proven best practices, the manual includes video clips from Meg's "Tutoring Techniques" DVDs, as well as links to other useful resources.

B. Webcasts: The Institute periodically sponsors webcasts on topics related to its research. The webcasts are archived on the Institute web site after the event. Recent webcasts include:

- From Assessment to Practice: Research-Based Approaches to Teaching Reading to Adults (http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/webcasts/assesspractice/webcast0928.html)
- From Assessment to Practice: Research-Based Approaches to Teaching Reading to Adults Part 2: Specific Instructional Strategies for Fluency and Vocabulary (http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/webcasts/assesspractice2/webcast0111.html)

Information on future webcasts will be distributed over Institute discussion lists and Regional Resource Center discussion lists. Current information is always available on http://www.nifl.gov.

C. America's Literacy Directory: An updated version of the directory is available at http://www.literacydirectory.org/. State organizations can coordinate with the Institute to have access to state specific data and can use the ALD database as their primary state directory.