The Power of Partnerships: Adult Literacy and Libraries

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Objectives

• Introduce the Open Door Collective and its Public Libraries Issues Group and advocacy paper
• Explore the Adult Literacy through Libraries Action Agenda, online course, and supporting resources
• Share findings and partnerships in practice from the American Dream Literacy Initiative
Watch this short video to see how poverty and low adult literacy are related:

[Video]

Open Door Collective Video from David Rosen on Vimeo.

READINGS, RESOURCES AND MORE

http://www.opendoorcollective.org
• Reducing Poverty
• Building Partnerships
Open Door Collective
Task Forces and Issues Groups

- ABE and Health
- Safety Net Services
- Public Libraries
- Immigrant and Refugee Education and Integration
- Digital Inclusion
- Criminal Justice Reform
- Workforce Development and Labor Issues
- Public K-12 Education and Intergenerational Literacy
- Well-being of Older Adults
Why Public Libraries and Adult Basic Education Programs Should Advocate for and Partner with Each Other

• Library – literacy connection
• Equity of access
• Libraries as community anchors, safe spaces
• Adult learners as ideal population to reach
• Leverage additional resources
Memphis Public Library and Literacy Mid-South

• Mutually beneficial partnership was developed
  • Helped alleviate transportation barriers
  • Library increased total number of visitors
  • Cost-effective
• Other library systems adopted a similar model
Asuza City Library

Break out from traditional thinking

Health Literacy Learning: English language and health literacy/wellness

Library, Neighborhood Wellness Center, University
Adult Literacy through Libraries Project
Phase 1: Adult Literacy through Libraries: an Action Agenda

- Published in 2014
- Available for download at no cost
- Intended to help literacy providers, librarians, and library workers develop and advocate for accessible and innovative adult literacy services and resources
Key Recommendations

• Raise awareness
• Create connections
• *Adult Literacy through Libraries: an Action Agenda*
Adult Literacy through Libraries Project
Phase 2: The Online Course

- Free online course
- Free resources to download
- Ten modules long, approximately 5 hours to complete
- Corresponds with the Action Agenda priority areas and recommendations
- Examples from other libraries and literacy providers

www.proliteracy.org/literacy-through-libraries
ALL Action Agenda. Priority Area 3: Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships

- Increase awareness of potential models for collaboration
- Create/expand number & types of partnerships
- Recognize benefits of collaboration
- Establish shared processes & strategies
- Seek/define new/nontraditional community partnerships
Santa Monica Public Library
Action Plan

• **Priority Area**: Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships
• **Rationale**: Strategic focus of “Library as Community and Cultural Connector”
• **Outcome 1**: Establish relationships and new partnerships with OPCC to assist the homeless they serve to increase digital and print literacy and develop life skills for obtaining housing, jobs, and social services.
• **Timeline**: June through October 2016
• **Action step**: Meet with OPCC to create curriculum
• **Action step**: Create four-week series of digital literacy classes for residents of OPCC’s Cloverfield facility
Where are they now?

- Santa Monica Public Library is now offering adult literacy services. Their program became active in March 2017
- They receive funding from the California Library Literacy Services Grant
- Their Action Plan helped them determine the next direction of their literacy services
- Earlier this year they received additional funding for family literacy services!
Program History

7 rounds

230 grants
to urban, suburban, and rural libraries

200 libraries
In 35 states

More than $1.8 million
granted to libraries
Libraries as Community Centers

Top 6 Reasons English Language Learners Access the Library

1. Employment
2. Support children in school
3. Language acquisition
4. Computer/internet use
5. Education
6. Citizenship
Building Sustainable Partnerships

Grantees that developed partnerships were 7 times more likely to have sustained their ELL services.

More than 65% of libraries reported that the grant funding improved networking with community partners and other libraries.
Literacy Toolkit and Clearinghouse

This site brings together resources from across the American Library Association (ALA) and beyond that promote literacy across the lifespan.

**LITERACY FOR ALL**
Adult Literacy through Libraries

Strategies and Resources from the American Library Association's Committee on Literacy and Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services

**ALALiteracyClearinghouse**
Accessing the Resources

- Adult Literacy through Libraries: an Action Agenda
- Adult Literacy through Libraries Online Course
  www.proliteracy.org/literacy-through-libraries
- ALA Literacy Clearinghouse literacy.ala.org/
- Literacy for All Toolkit https://bit.ly/2HXM7Rf
- American Dream Literacy Initiative ala.org/americandream
- Open Door Collective www.opendoorcollective.org
Provide leadership and coordination; Create functional framework; and

Collaborate!