



WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

Best Practices in Adult literacy program delivery during the
COVID-19 Pandemic



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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The views expressed in this presentation are those of the researcher, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province. The Government of Ontario and its agencies are in no way bound by any recommendations contained in this presentation.

TODAY'S AGENDA

- About this project
- Marketing
- Staying in touch
- Changing intake processes
- Supporting learners
- Learning both offline and online
- Assessing learner progress
- Supporting staff
- Program administration
- Supporting volunteers
- Preparing to return to in-person delivery, and for what may come next

THIS RESEARCH PROJECT

- Researcher: Jennifer Hewitt
- 39 surveys and 23 interviews with a variety of representatives from community, school and college-based literacy programs
- Changes and good practices in marketing, intake, delivery, resources, assessments, staff support and more
- Full report and tip sheets
- Thank you to everyone who participated in this research!

<https://www.quillnetwork.com/resources/resources/>

GETTING THE WORD OUT: MARKETING IN A PANDEMIC



MARKETING YOUR PROGRAM

- Tell familiar and unfamiliar organizations what you offer
- Advertise in your email signature
- Offer short-term targeted training
- Plan training in partnership with other programs
- Attract new learners who are already comfortable online
- Make it easy for others to share your message
- Go where your audience is
- Revise your fundraising

Download the “Marketing” tip sheet for more!

**STAYING
IN TOUCH**



AND ACCESSIBLE

STAYING IN TOUCH



- Remote phone systems (ex. VOIP)
- Voicemail-triggered email alerts
- Voicemails sent by email
- Masked or blocked personal numbers
- Texting programs/apps
- Mail pick-up or forwarding

CONSENT FORMS, INTAKE ASSESSMENTS AND SIGNATURES



CHANGING INTAKE PROCESSES

- Socially-distanced in person meeting
- Telephone intakes
- Consent by email, fillable forms, or photos/screen shots
- Intake assessments by phone, video chat, snail-mail, email
- Different, online-ready assessments
- Signatures by mail, signing on the learner's behalf, e-signatures or through photo/screenshots
- An accessible online location for blank learner forms
- Completed documents stored on an encrypted server

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CHANGING HOW WE WORK WITH ADULT LITERACY LEARNERS



IDENTIFYING LEARNER NEEDS

Perform a digital audit:

- What technology do they use, if any?
- How, when and where do they communicate?
- What programs and platforms are they comfortable with?
- Track what each learner is using
- Look for activities that work across multiple platforms
- Offer the same material in multiple formats and let learners choose what works for them

Download the “Communicating with Learners” tip sheet for more!

HELPING LEARNERS ACCESS TECHNOLOGY



- Refer learners to services offering free or low-cost technology or internet access
- Apply for funding or redirect current funding for technology and internet
- Loan technology to learners with material, apps, and support information already installed

Download the “Helping Learners Access Devices/Internet” tip sheet for more!

WORKING WITH LEARNERS ONLINE

Helpful platforms and tools:

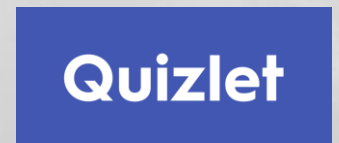
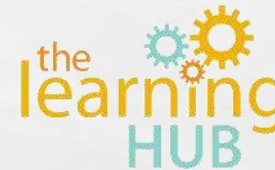
- Google Forms, Docs, Drive, Meet, Classroom and Jamboard
- Genius Scan
- Zoom
- Microsoft Teams
- Blackboard collaborate

Tips and tricks:

- Turn off cameras and mics
- Use virtual background for privacy
- Create lessons that are interactive and visually stimulating
- Provide tech support

RESOURCES FOR ONLINE LEARNING

- Create a “living document” listing online resources by category
- Digitize existing paper-based material
- Share digitized material between programs
- Use established online programs and resources



Download the “Learning Resources” tip sheet for more!

WORKING WITH LEARNERS OFFLINE

- Photocopy workbooks and activity sheets and set up a delivery and drop-off system
- Deliver one-on-one tutoring on the phone
- Set up “office hours” for learner calls
- Incorporate activities not based on technology, like journaling
- Provide call-in groups (ex. book club, creative writing, family literacy activities, help with homework)
- Peer support

ASSESSING LEARNER PROGRESS



ASSESSMENTS AND MILESTONES

- Send hard copies by mail for learners to complete and then mail, scan, or photograph and send back
- Administer assessments on the phone or via video calls
- Create projects where the learner can demonstrate their skills
- Use alternative quizzes and tests
- Create assessments using Google Forms
- Schedule in-person assessments
- Partner with e-Channel programs to administer Milestones



SUPPORTING LITERACY PROGRAM STAFF

SUPPORTING STAFF

- Do a work-from-home audit
- Expect some cost
- Provide training and professional development
- Host weekly meetings to share and brainstorm
- Provide emotional and mental health support for both staff and learners
- Policies:
 - Setting Boundaries
 - Sick Days

Download the “Professional Development” tip sheet for more!
Download the “Mental Health” tip sheet for more!

SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION



PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION



- The use of personal computers for work (security concerns)
- The use of work computers at home (insurance concerns)
- Bring in expert advice and support

ENGAGING AND SUPPORTING PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS



SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

- Expect non-technical volunteers to back away
- Offer training to those who stay
- Staff can support early online tutoring sessions
- Recruit new volunteers based on their technical comfort
- A volunteer coordinator can help

Download the “Engaging Volunteers” tip sheet for more!



**PREPARING TO
RETURN TO
IN-PERSON
SERVICE DELIVERY**

GETTING READY TO REOPEN

- Reorganize the space
- Remove or cover high-touch items
- Install Plexiglas shields
- Seek funding for safety supplies, sanitizing products and PPE
- Develop reopening procedures
- Schedule all staff and learners: limit the number of people on site and allow time for cleaning
- Create cohorts
- Provide self-screening tools
- Control entryways
- Ensure no supplies are shared



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- Create a “grab and go” kit of essential supplies and resources
- Store resources where they can be accessed remotely
- Ensure you have a virtual meeting platform
- Update policies
- Develop curriculum that can be delivered in multiple formats
- Build an understanding of online learning pedagogy
- Take into account the impact of stress on learning
- Help learners prepare to learn online

<https://www.llsc.on.ca/pandemic-planning-manual>

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- Create a plan with the Ministry
- Look at new ways to support those who cannot participate in online learning
- Work proactively and collaboratively to close the digital divide

Keep the “good stuff”

- Online and remote delivery
- Multiple and innovative ways of communicating with learners
- Working from home if desired

CONCLUSION

- How we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic provides rich learning we can use today, and in our plans for the future
- Thank you to all the adult literacy programs who shared their experiences
- “Best Practices in Adult Literacy Program Delivery During the COVID-19 Pandemic” report and the Tip Sheets
- Questions and comments?



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