



Adult Literacy Programs: Your Partners in Employment Success

with Summer Burton, Literacy Link South Central



Literacy Link South Central

We are a regional literacy network supporting adult literacy programs across six counties. We:

- Coordinate adult literacy services for community-based programs, school boards and colleges
- Work with employment agencies, labour unions, social services, businesses, and small business centres to help their employees and clients learn about and access upgrading programs
- Provide information sessions about adult literacy, earning high school credentials, and other elements of adult education

Today we will look at:

- What literacy is (in today's world)
- Adult literacy programs: what skills they teach and how they help people achieve their employment, apprenticeship and other goals
- Clues that your client may have literacy issues
- How to get a referral / recommendation for a client
- Educational Interviews for OW clients

What is literacy?

- When people hear that word, they often think **“illiterate”**
- It’s so much more than reading and writing
- The word has evolved, and so have the skills it represents

Adult literacy programs:

What is taught in an adult literacy program? The **Skills for Success**, including:

- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Digital technology
- Problem solving
- Communication
- Creativity and innovation
- Collaboration
- Adaptability

Also: learning, studying and test-taking skills.

Adult literacy programs:

- Are funded by Employment Ontario
- Are offered in English, French, Braille and Sign Language
- Are not like a traditional classroom. Lessons are unique to each student and the skills they want or need to learn
- Can be found at 9 different organizations in London
- Are available in-person (COVID dependent), online, and through a hybrid / combination of both
- Are **free**

To attend an adult literacy program, clients must:

- Be 19 years of age or older
- Live in Ontario *
- Speak and listen at a Canadian Language Benchmark of 6 or above in one of Canada's two official languages
- Demonstrate a need for literacy and essential skills upgrading (through an intake assessment) *

* Immigration status and citizenship are **not** factors in eligibility to attend a literacy program as long as the client is legally able to work in Ontario (have a SIN)

* Current education level is **not** a factor in eligibility to attend a literacy program

Adult literacy programs help people who:

1. Want to earn a high school credential or equivalent (the OSSD, GED or ACE)
2. Are preparing for College or University
3. Need to practice for the hands-on or in-school parts of **apprenticeship** training
4. Are working to be independent
5. Have to develop skills to be successful at **work**

Supporting Employees and Apprentices

Adult literacy programs can provide contextualized activities to build and practice:

- Measuring
- Estimating (time, material and costs)
- Extracting information from documents and instruction manuals
- Filling in forms
- Writing reports, invoices and other communications
- Working with others / teamwork

What might indicate my client has a literacy issue?

- Frequent job turn-over, especially during times of change
- Multiple interruptions in education
- Forgetfulness (pen, eyeglasses)
- Sudden illness or injuries that prevent reading, writing or filling in forms
- Not having received the paperwork you sent
- Referencing other documents while filling out new ones
- “Something came up – I’ll take it home and bring it back”

Getting help for your clients

- Frame the help as a means to an end (employment, apprenticeship, etc.)
- Don't use the word literacy
- Remember, LBS and ES services can be coordinated
- Let's chat! We  "small r" referrals
- If you work with OW clients, consider an Educational Interview

Educational Interviews

- A one-on-one conversation with an adult education specialist
- Educational and employment history
- Self-assessments and activities
- Short and long-term educational and employment goals

Educational Goal Report

- Summarizes the interview
- Includes a step-by-step plan for educational upgrading leading to the client's employment goals
- Goes to the client, to OW, and to others supporting the client (by request)

Want more information about literacy,
a “small r” referral, or to request an
Educational Interview?

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