Research Scan: December 2011

Articles and Reports

Certification and Qualifications

Christine Smith and Ricardo Gomez (2011). *Certifying Adult Education Staff and Faculty*. Council for the Advancement of Adult Education. Accessed at http://www.caalusa.org/certteach.pdf

Forrest Chisman (2011). Closing the Gap: *The Challenge of Certification & Credentialing in Adult Education. Council for the Advancement of Adult Education*. Accessed at http://www.caalusa.org/Closing.pdf

In early 2011 the Council for the Advancement of Adult Education released two reports coming following a 2010 project on the state of adult education certification and credentialing in the United States. The first, *Certifying Adult Education Staff and Faculty,* looks at the adult education certification and credentialing systems for teachers and staff currently in use in the U.S., the possible benefits of a comprehensive certification system, and how such a system could be developed. *The Challenge of Certification* summarizes a roundtable discussion of experts held in New York City on June 22, 2010 and sets forth findings from that meeting and other CAAL research. It recommends that states, programs, professional associations and other policymakers set up systems for establishing and applying performance standards for teachers as well as providing them with more opportunities for professional development.

Keywords: Adult education; Council for the Advancement of Adult Education (CAAL); Credentials; Teacher standards

Learning and Technology

Donna M. Chovanec and Amy Meckelburg (2011). *Social Networking Sites & Adult Literacy Learning: Raising the Issues.* AlphaPlus. Toronto, ON. Accessed at http://www.alphaplus.ca/en/about/alphaplus/annual-reports/cat_view/66-social-networking-sites-and-adult-literacy-learning.html

The latest in a series of AlphaPlus reports on adult literacy and digital technology looks at how adult literacy learners use social networking sites (SNS), and how those sites could be used to facilitate adult literacy learning. The researchers studied adult literacy learners in Edmonton, AB, through observation and group interviews, and conducted a literature review. They found that adult literacy learners use SNS for social purposes but in the process informally acquire literacy, technical and social skills. However, few are using SNS to their full potential due to lack of access or of technical know-how. The report also suggests that literacy programs could help learners safely and effectively use SNS.

Keywords: AlphaPlus; Canada; Digital technology; Social networking sites

National Surveys

2011 Skills for Life Survey: Headline findings. [UK] Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/0-9/11-1367-2011-skills-for-life-survey-findings.pdf

This report presents the initial headline findings from the UK's 2011 Skills for Life Survey, which is a follow-up to a survey in 2003. The survey measured adult literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. It found that 57% of respondents attained Level 2 or higher scores in literacy, compared with 44% in 2003, while 15% were at "Entry Level 3" or below. Numeracy scores showed a slight decline.

Note that the "levels" mentioned here are not equivalent to those of IALS or its successor international surveys. In England, there are five levels: three "entry" levels (1-3) below Level 1, and Levels 1 and 2.

The National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) reacted to the release of this report by pointing to the recommendations from their recent Inquiry into Adult Literacy in England *(see p. 3 of our September 2011 research scan)*, most notably a call to recognize the importance of family literacy, the need to improve teacher qualifications and professional development, and the need to engage those with the poorest skills as opposed to focusing on moving those with intermediate skill levels "up" a level.

Keywords: Adult literacy; Adult numeracy; Digital technology; Information and Communication Technology (ICT); National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE); Skills for Life; United Kingdom

Numeracy

Forrest P. Chisman (2011). *Facing the Challenge of Numeracy in Adult Education*. Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy. Accessed at www.caalusa.org/NumeracyChallenge.pdf

The final report in CAAL's two-year Adult Numeracy project says that math education for adults is neglected and deficient , and argues for shifting from traditional math instruction in adult education to instruction in a more comprehensive set of math skills.

Keywords: Adult education; Adult numeracy; United States

Policy

Caroline Law and Yola Jacobsen (2011). Learning providers' awareness of changing provision for adult learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and implications for provision. National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE). Accessed at http://www.niace.org.uk/sites/default/files/Provision%20for%20LDD%20learners%20in%20FE%20survey%20-%20Summary%20Report.pdf

NIACE conducted a survey in response to concerns raised by learning providers about the changing provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, especially the funding for Foundation Learning programs. NIACE developed and distributed a questionnaire to the 687 members of NIACE's learning difficulties network. 101 people from 64 organizations completed it. The researchers found that many providers were not aware of current government policies and did not receive clear information on options for provision and subsidy. They recommend that the government and senior management teams of providing agencies communicate information about policy and guidelines to teachers.

Keywords: Communication; National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE); Policy; Teachers; United Kingdom

Mary Hamilton and Kathy Pitt. (2011). Challenging Representations: Constructing the Adult Literacy Learner over 30 Years of Policy and Practice in the United Kingdom. *Reading Research Quarterly 46* (4), pp. 350-373.

A comparison of British policy documents over 30 years (*A Right to Read*, 1974, and *Skills for Life*, 2001) shows that the discourse surrounding adult literacy and learning has changed from one emphasizing social participation to one emphasizing social (mainly economic) inclusion achieved mainly through paid employment, according to this article. *A Right to Read*, published by the British Association of Settlements, launched the first modern adult literacy campaign in the UK, while *Skills for Life* started the implantation of the British Labour government's adult literacy and essential skills strategy of the same name, which involved billions of pounds in public investment. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)*, the authors find that the differences between the two documents reveal much about changes in policy discourse around adult literacy from the early 1970's to 2001. Page 354 includes a table of key documents of adult literacy in the U.K. from 1970-2001

*Critical discourse analysis analyzes texts as they relate to the working of a social order. It looks for indications of the power relations and ideology that underpin that social order.

Keywords: Adult literacy campaigns; Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA); Policy; Skills for Life; United Kingdom

Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills

Learning and Skills Improvement Service (UK). (2010).Making it work: A practical guide to effective delivery of Skills for Life in workplace learning Skills for Life Support for World Class Skills: Effective Practice Projects. Accessed at http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/271743

This guide is based on research done about effective practices used by 38 colleges and training providers who delivered Skills for Life provision to employers through the workplace program Train to Gain (discontinued by the British government in 2011). It includes case studies, and sections on employer engagement, effective assessment and individual learning plan (ILP) processes, flexible ways of delivering learning, adapting teaching and learning approaches and resources to particular workplace contexts, and professional development for workplace instruction.

Keywords: Assessment, Guides, United Kingdom

James Parker (2011). *Doing Business Together: Adult Education and Business Partnering to Build A Qualified Workforce.* Council for the Advancement of Adult Education. Accessed at http://www.caalusa.org/Doing.pdf

This report is the result of a CAAL project based on two surveys and an invitational roundtable of selected state and national leaders who shared experience, discussed key issues in practice and policy, and considered recommendations for future action. The report also draws on 2007 and 2010 surveys of 20 states to learn about their experience in workforce and workplace education programming, and particularly their collaborations with businesses. The report discusses the essential elements of successful partnerships, exemplary service models, how federal and state policy can support the development of partnerships, and factors that can facilitate or impede such partnerships.

Keywords: Council for the Advancement of Adult Education (CAAL); Employers; United States; Workforce education; Workplace learning

Keywords

Aboriginal peoples	Funding
Adult education	Government policy
Adolescents	Guides
Apprenticeship	Health education
Arts	Health literacy
Assistive technology	Health literacy curriculum
Book donations	Immigrants
Book reviews	Informal learning
Call for proposals	Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
Case studies	Labour education
Certification and qualifications	Learning and technology
Children's development	Language learning
Children's literacy	Learning disabilities
Communication	Learning transfer
Community literacy	Libraries
Conferences	Literacy organizations
Credentials	Literacy proficiency
Digital skills	Literacy promotion
Digital technology	Longitudinal studies
Disabilities	Mental health
Easy to Read materials	Newsletters
Embedding	Numeracy
Employers	Online portals
E-learning	Periodicals
English as an additional language (EAL)	Phonemic Awareness
Essential skills	Pilot projects
Evaluation	Policy
Events	Portfolios
Family Literacy	Post-secondary education
'Financial literacy'	Prison
Fluency	Professional Development
Funders	Professionalization

Program Assessment

Publications

Reading

Reading assessment

Seniors

Social capital outcomes

Social networking sites

Socioeconomic conditions

Teacher standards

Teachers

Transformational learning

Vocabulary

Vocational education

Webinars

Workforce education

Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills (WLES)

Workplace learning

Workshops

Youth

Name keywords

ABC Life Literacy Canada

Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALL)

Alberta

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC)

Australia

British Columbia

Canadian Apprenticeship Forum

Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment

Canadian Council on Learning (CCL)

Canadian Library Association (CLA)

Canadian Society for Training and Development (CSTD)

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)

Centre for Workplace Skills

China

Collaborative Development Approaches (CODA

CMEC

Community Literacy Ontario (CLO)

Council for the Advancement of Adult Education (CAAL)

English Longitudinal Study of Aging (ELSA)

Family Literacy Day (FLD)

Frontier College

Good Reads [series]

Grass Roots Press

Health Literacy Missouri (HLM)

Health Literacy Month

Health Literacy Out Loud (HLOL)

Learn Canada 2020

Learn@Work Week

Learning Progressions series

Lifespeak Inc.

LINCS

Literacy Now

Manitoba

National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)

National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

The Centre for Literacy
Le centre d'alphabétisation

**2100 Marlowe, Suite 236
Montreal, QC
www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca**

New Brunswick

Northeast Edmonton Literacy Network

Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES)

Ontario

Ontario Literacy Coalition (OLC)

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Prince Albert Literacy Network

People, Words & Change

Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

Skills Funding Agency (SFA)

Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC)

United States