

Our Voice

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Succession Planning—For the Future

Literacy Link South Central (LLSC) is a regional literacy network based in London (see www.llsc.on.ca). In 2010, LLSC developed an extremely practical and useful *Succession Planning Toolkit*. The kit is targeted to Literacy and Basic Skills agencies in Ontario. It includes a variety of tools, including an agency succession planning needs assessment, a succession planning policy template, a critical knowledge job diary template, an emergency succession folder checklist, an LBS key publications list, and many other helpful resources, tools and templates. The kit notes the first step in succession planning is to determine what you already have in place at your organization and then assess and fill the gaps.

As part of this project, Literacy Link South Central also hosted a regional network training event in which succession planning principles and tools were presented to the staff of regional literacy networks across Ontario.

This popular kit is available on the LLSC website under the resources tab at www.llsc.on.ca/about-us/resources.

In 2011, Literacy Link South Central received project funding from MTCU for a project called “*Succession Planning – For the Future*”. This project will build on the success and strength of the *Succession Planning Toolkit*. The new project will (a) update the *Succession Planning Toolkit*; (b) provide three in-person training events on succession planning around the province; and (c) create an online succession planning training module.

LLSC is partnering with Community Literacy of Ontario on this important project. CLO will develop the online succession planning training module and post it to our ever-popular *Literacy Basics* self study training website at: www.nald.ca/literacybasics/

Our members have indicated that succession planning is a critical issue for them, so CLO is delighted to serve as a partner in this project. The in-person training sessions will be offered in late fall 2011 and early winter 2012. The online training module will be available on the CLO website in January 2012.



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Community Literacy of Ontario is pleased to be delivering Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework Implementation training sessions in May and June 2011 for Anglophone community-based literacy agencies. CLO is delivering the two-day OALCF training at six regional sessions to allow for greater program participation. CLO has sent out information about these training sessions directly to community-based literacy agencies. Literacy programs in other sectors and streams will receive OALCF Implementation Training from their individual sector and stream networks.

The following is a list of CLO's training sessions dates and locations:

THUNDER BAY May 3 and 4	Anglophone community-based literacy agencies from the network region of Literacy Northwest
KITCHENER / WATERLOO May 10 and 11	Anglophone community-based literacy agencies from the network regions of Project Read, QUILL Network and Adult Basic Education Association of Hamilton/Wentworth
KINGSTON May 31 and June 1	Anglophone community-based literacy agencies from the network regions of Literacy Link Eastern Ontario, Literacy Ontario Central South, and Ottawa – Carleton Coalition for Literacy
TORONTO June 6 and 7	Anglophone community-based literacy agencies from the network regions of the Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy, Simcoe Muskoka Literacy Network, Literacy Network of Durham Region, Peel-Halton-Dufferin Adult Learning Network and Literacy Link Niagara
LONDON June 9 and 10	Anglophone community-based literacy agencies from the network regions of Literacy Link South Central and Tri-County Literacy Network
SUDBURY June 16 and 17	Anglophone community-based literacy agencies from the network regions of the Mid North Network and Literacy Network Northeast

NEW Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework WEBSITE!



The brand new OALCF website has just been launched!
Visit www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/oalcf/index.html to:

- ◆ Download the entire OALCF Curriculum Framework document
- ◆ Learn about the background and purpose of the OALCF
- ◆ Access select lists of learning materials commonly used by LBS practitioners
- ◆ Access a collection of select assessment resources

Guide to Effective Technologies for Providing Online Staff Development and Training

Community Literacy of Ontario has been funded under the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' Employment Ontario Network Development Fund for a project called "*Guide to Effective Technologies and Tools for Providing Online Staff Development and Training*". The goal of this innovative project is to research and write a resource guide on effective technologies to deliver online training to staff.

CLO is researching current technologies used for providing staff development and training particularly within the Employment Ontario delivery network, but also within the broader education and nonprofit sector. We are exploring various technologies for online staff training, for example, webinars, podcasting, online video training, web-based training modules, and several online learning platforms.

To date, we have held over 25 key informant interviews with diverse stakeholders, developed an online survey, and conducted print and Internet-based research.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES ARE:

- ⇒ Conduct research of effective technologies used currently for providing staff development and training within the Employment Ontario Employment and Training Network
- ⇒ Research effective technologies used currently for providing staff training with select organizations in the broader education and nonprofit sector
- ⇒ Research effective delivery technologies for staff training, for example, webinars, podcasting, online video training, web-based training modules, informal and mobile learning opportunities, and several online learning platforms
- ⇒ Write a resource guide that provides a summary of the research
- ⇒ Post the Guide on the CLO website in September 2011



RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

Community Literacy of Ontario would love to hear about your experiences with online staff training. Please share your responses to the following four research questions by **May 31, 2011**.

1. What types of online staff training does your organization provide?
2. What technologies does your organization use to provide online training to staff?
3. What do you see as the benefits and challenges of providing online staff training?
4. Are there any new technologies you are hoping to use in the future for providing online staff training?

You can send your answers to these questions via our online survey at:

www.surveymonkey.com/s/ResearchingOnlineStaffTraining or you could email your responses to Joanne Kaattari, at kaattari@bellnet.ca.

Best Practices in Online Learning for Adult Literacy Students Learning at the Lowest Levels of Literacy

Community Literacy of Ontario received funding from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for a project called *“Best Practices in Online Learning for Adult Literacy Students Learning at the Lowest Levels of Literacy”*.

Ontario’s Literacy and Basics Skills programs are leaders in providing online instruction to adult learners through e-Channel, ACE Online, program-developed online learning resources, and through various instructional resources available over the Internet.

Due to their very low reading levels, the learner group often hardest to serve online is adults with the lowest levels of literacy (levels 1 and 2). However, many Ontario literacy agencies have had success in delivering online instruction to this group of adult learners.

In our project, *“Best Practices in Online Learning for Adult Literacy Students Learning at the Lowest Levels of Literacy”*, Community Literacy of Ontario is researching how online learning for adult learners at the lowest literacy levels is being delivered in Ontario’s community literacy agencies. We are also assessing the benefits, barriers, strategies and best practices.

We then will develop a resource guide that summarizes the research and best practices. This guide will be circulated to community literacy agencies, literacy networks, and MTCU. We will prepare a web formatted document and post it on CLO’s website for free access by any interested party. Given that this will be groundbreaking and innovative research, CLO’s guide will be widely promoted throughout the Employment Ontario delivery network and beyond. We will also develop an annotated online listing of helpful online instructional resources as identified by literacy instructors during the research. These resources will be available on the CLO website in December 2011.

WORK COMPLETED TO DATE INCLUDES:

- ⇒ Research questionnaires were circulated via email and an online survey link to LBS agencies, regional, sectoral and provincial literacy networks, and external stakeholders
- ⇒ 25 telephone interviews have been held with LBS delivery agencies and networks to date
- ⇒ A highly successful online *Resource Fair* took place on April 20th with over 20 literacy practitioners participating
- ⇒ Ongoing print and Internet-based research is occurring
- ⇒ Sites visits by CLO staff to over 20 LBS programs, literacy networks and external organizations in diverse regions of Ontario will be held in spring 2011
- ⇒ Site visits or telephone interviews with E-channel providers are scheduled for spring 2011
- ⇒ One-to-one interviews or focus groups will be held in spring 2011 with 25 adult learners
- ⇒ A focus group will be held with the CLO board in June 2011 on online resources, tools and strategies



If you have strategies or resources to share, we would appreciate hearing from you. Please contact the CLO office, or fill out this brief online survey by May 31, 2011:

www.surveymonkey.com/s/bestpracticesonline

CLO's Online Resource Fair We Came, We Saw, We Shared....

Community Literacy of Ontario was pleased to host its first ever *Online Resource Fair* on April 20, 2011. We are happy to report that it was a **great** success.

Resource Fairs have long been a popular feature at conferences . Not only are community-based literacy practitioners very generous when it comes to sharing resources, but they like to go home with new resources as well. It's a win-win situation all around.



CLO's online Resource Fair was no different. Over the course of 90 minutes, over 20 community-based literacy practitioners from across the province met on CENTRA to learn about and share resources related to online learning for adult students. CLO staff shared websites and online tools that could be used for instructional purposes and to engage students in the learning process. Participants shared the online resources that they find helpful in their programs.

In the anonymous evaluation, all of the participants reported that they were very satisfied (80%) or satisfied (20%) with the online Resource Fair. Here are just a few of their evaluation comments:

- ⇒ *This fair was exceptionally helpful in sharing online resources. It can become overwhelming when researching for adequate sources. Identifying what other agencies around the province are using will definitely be helpful. Thank you!*
- ⇒ *Please offer more. This is a wonderful chance to connect and learn from other practitioners. THANK YOU.*
- ⇒ *The resource fair taught me a lot and gave me new ideas.*
- ⇒ *Very useful websites and information. Very valuable information.*
- ⇒ *I think it was great. Thank you for researching so many sites beforehand.*
- ⇒ *This was our first Resource Fair and we found it to be very helpful.*

CLO staff will be using the information gathered from the online Resource Fair to compile an extensive, annotated list of useful websites and other resources. This will form part of CLO's "*Best Practices in Online Learning for Adult Literacy Students Learning at the Lowest Levels of Literacy*" project resource guide.

If you know of any great online websites or other learning resources for adult students, please send them to Vicki Trottier at Vicki.trottier@gmail.com

The Government of Ontario has passed the “*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*” (AODA). This Act (Bill 118) calls on the business community, public sector, and not-for-profit sector to develop, implement and enforce mandatory accessibility standards. Accessibility standards are the rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario will have to follow to identify and remove barriers to accessibility.

The first standard to come into effect is the Accessibility Customer Service Standard.

The Ontario government is also developing future standards in the areas of:

- ⇒ Employment
- ⇒ Information and communications
- ⇒ Transportation
- ⇒ Built environment (buildings and other structures)



You can learn more about the Ontario government’s “*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*” by visiting this link: www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/accessibility/index.aspx

THE ACCESSIBILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

The Accessibility Customer Service Standard will come into force for Ontario’s not-for-profit organizations and businesses on January 1, 2012. This standard is fundamentally about understanding that customers with disabilities may have different needs, and finding the best way to help them access your services.

You can learn how to meet the requirements of the Accessibility Customer Service Standard by visiting this website: www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/accessibility/ComplyingStandards/customerService/index.aspx

An excellent online AODA “*Tips & Tool Kit*” has been prepared by the Ontario Community Support Association (thanks to CLO board member Sue Davidson for sharing this wonderful resource!). The “*Tips and Tool Kit*” provides you with all the information you need in one handy reference guide. It includes a work plan, an audit checklist, and templates for you to download to adapt for your organization’s policies and procedures manual. It’s available in Word, PDF and HTML formats. The kit is available online at: www.ocsca.on.ca/accessible_ontario/en/tips-and-toolkit.html

The government has prepared helpful online training on understanding and implementing the Accessibility Customer Service Standard at: www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcsc/serve-ability/FLASH_Eng/index.html Training is a requirement under AODA and this training could be offered to staff, volunteer tutors, board members and other interested stakeholders. The training is offered via a series of high quality online videos. It covers topics such as:

- ⇒ The purpose of AODA
- ⇒ The requirements of the Customer Service Standard
- ⇒ The components of the Customer Service Standard
- ⇒ Serving customers with disabilities

In addition, the government has created some practical online training videos that you can access here: www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/accessibility/tools/index.aspx

In order to learn more about agency needs, Community Literacy of Ontario consulted with community-based LBS agencies in order to assess what supports they will need to implement the Ontario Government's mandatory "Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act" (AODA).

Accordingly, CLO held a focus group with our 12-member provincial board. We also surveyed all community literacy agencies in Ontario regarding this issue in February and March 2011. In total, 50 community-based LBS agencies shared their feedback on the key supports they need to develop and implement AODA.

In priority order, here were the most important supports identified by community-based LBS agencies in order to implement the Ontario Government's "Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act".

- ⇒ Depending upon the requirements of the "Built environment" standard of AODA, community-based LBS agencies will need funding from the provincial government in order to make the necessary building modifications to suit the needs of people with physical disabilities (ramps, washrooms, automatic doors, wider hallways for electric wheelchairs, overall accessibility, etc.). Alternatively, agencies would need additional funding to relocate to fully accessible office locations (where rents are typically higher).
- ⇒ Community-based LBS agencies need access to high quality, free and accessible staff training on how to implement the "Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act".
- ⇒ Depending upon the requirements of the "Information and communications" standard of AODA, community-based LBS agencies would need access to funding from the provincial government for adaptive technology, assistive devices, voice-activated technologies, and other resources. Agencies would also need government funding for website re-design to meet the requirements of the Act (for example, changing the font size of their websites, incorporating e-readers, adding videos and captioning, etc.).
- ⇒ Community-based LBS agencies need support to revise agency policies and procedures to meet the requirement of AODA.
- ⇒ Community-based LBS agencies need access to clear, high quality and accurate information and resources to increase their awareness of the requirements and expectations under AODA.

CLO has shared this program feedback with MTCU. We are also working to provide support to our members by sharing information in this newsletter on the requirement of AODA, available training, and sample policies. We are also further assessing what supports CLO could provide to member programs.

Please email any sample AODA policies and procedures your agency has developed to clo@bellnet.ca. We will share them out in a future CLO E-Communiqué.



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FUNDER

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Increased Funding for Literacy in the Ontario Budget 2011

It is with great pleasure that Community Literacy of Ontario recognizes the exciting announcement from the Ontario government's 2011 budget, which includes an investment in literacy and basic skills of \$44 million over the next three years. This translates into a \$13M annual increase to the Literacy and Basic Skills budget. It is welcome news indeed.

Of this 13M, the ministry will distribute \$9M to the base budgets of all LBS service delivery organizations in all streams and sectors. A portion of this \$9M will be used to establish a baseline funding level of \$100,000 for all LBS service providers. The remaining \$4M will be used to introduce stable funding for the e-channel stream.

In addition to the 13M, the ministry will provide a further one-time allocation of \$5M that will be used to support implementation of Employment Ontario Information System (EOIS), the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF), and research and development.

Community Literacy of Ontario and many other literacy programs and networks have worked hard to increase awareness about the critical need for additional funding for literacy. We are pleased and grateful that the provincial government has recognized this need in the 2011 budget.

Barbara McFater, Chair of the Board of Directors of CLO states that: *"We are very grateful for this funding and for everyone's hard work and professionalism. However, given all of the work that lies ahead of us, for example, the implementation of the OALCF and the EOIS, I am hopeful that MTCU will allocate some of the \$5M one-time funding directly to programs".*

CLO will continue to monitor the funding needs and impacts on member programs.

