



How to Start a Family Literacy Program

The following topics and questions can be used as a guide to help get you started...

Community Needs

- What are the educational and non-educational needs of families in your community?
- Have you completed a community or neighborhood assessment?
- What programs are currently addressing these needs?
- Are there gaps in service delivery or any duplication of services to families?
- How would a family literacy program fit into your community network of family services?
- What family literacy model best suits the needs of the community based on the assessment?
- What resources will be necessary to support this program?

Collaboration/Advisory Committee

- Have you established an advisory committee to help guide and support your program?
- Who are the key organizations (adult literacy/ABE programs, schools, libraries, social service agencies, business, funding agencies, government, etc.) that must buy into the program to ensure its success? Are they members of your advisory committee?
- What steps need to be taken to ensure that your collaboration/advisory committee is an active partnership?
- Who are agencies that will assist in the delivery of services for your program?
- How will you increase awareness of family literacy issues and your program's goals and needs among your partners and the community?
- What can be done to lay the groundwork for continued funding and expansion?

Program Outcomes/Evaluation

- What are the specific outcomes you expect for the family members who enroll in your program?
- How will you measure each outcome?
- Who will be responsible for data collection and reporting to funders?
- How will results be used with program participants, collaborators, others?

Program Planning

- How will team planning be encouraged? Does the budget accommodate time for weekly team planning for staff and home visits to families?
- How will you accommodate the interaction among all family literacy sites in your city, town and region?
- How will you determine the daily and weekly schedule of participants and staff?

Recruitment and Retention

- What are the recruitment strategies you plan to employ? What will be the ongoing plan for recruitment?
- How will practitioners be involved in recruitment?

Management and Staff Selection

- Has the program coordinator been determined or will that position be a newly hired one? (This needs to be determined as soon as possible.)
- What are the steps necessary in hiring staff for this program?
- How will you determine whether potential staff members are team players?
- How will the project coordinator be involved in hiring staff?

Site Selection

- What criteria will you use for selecting sites for the program?
- What needs to be accomplished to prepare the physical environment for the program?
- As you think of the basic components of family literacy (adult education, early childhood education, parent support, parent-child interaction), what are the specific needs for preparing the site?
- What needs to be accomplished to assure the acceptance and support of other staff members at the facility?

Staff Development

- How will you prepare your staff for their roles in the program?
- How will you respond to ongoing staff development needs?

Transportation/Day care/Meals

- What will be your participants' needs in areas of transportation, day care and meals? How will the program respond to these needs? Funding?
- Which partners can work with the sponsoring agency in these areas?

Equipment and Materials

- What existing equipment and materials will be used?
- What needs to be ordered? What organization or agency can provide these?
- What time frame should be established that assures delivery of materials and equipment prior to program opening?

(National Centre for Family Literacy – Kentucky)