

# Adult and Family Literacy Today

Updates on adult and family literacy research, policy, and practice

Volume 12: March 4, 2024

## Research to Practice

### **Bridging the Digital Divide: Supporting Adults' Digital Literacy Growth**



In today's dynamic digital world, mastering digital literacy is not merely a convenience, it is essential for navigating the complexities of modern life. Individuals who participate in adult education understand this reality all too well (Cacicio et al., 2023). From basic device operation to navigating software programs and critically evaluating online information, digital literacy encompasses a broad array of skills crucial for success in personal and professional spheres. But how do we bridge the gap between research findings and practical strategies to foster families' digital literacy through adult education?

The collaboration between the [Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy and Digital Promise](#) has yielded a comprehensive resource guide titled "[Promoting Digital Literacy for Adult Learners](#)." This guide offers evidence-based strategies and practical tools for meeting the diverse needs of adult learners. Grounded in research, the guide equips educators and practitioners with the resources and strategies they need to support adult learners to navigate the digital landscape with confidence and competence. However, the importance of assessing the digital literacy proficiency of learners and focusing instruction on their needs cannot be overstated. Learners need a structured framework to evaluate their digital literacy skills and identify areas for growth.

This guide offers many resources and strategies for practitioners to support digital literacy development by creating a supportive learning environment.

Suggestions include:

- [Providing hands-on training](#): Offer practical, interactive lessons that allow adults to gain experience with digital tools and technologies. For instance, host workshops where adults learn how to create and edit documents using word processing software or navigate online platforms for career exploration and networking with peers, or have a digital literacy focus in adult classrooms.
- [Addressing digital skills gaps](#): Identify areas where learners may lack proficiency in digital skills and tailor instruction to effectively address these gaps. Conduct assessments to determine learners' existing knowledge and skills, and then design customized learning plans to meet their individual needs. Provide tailored support, resources, and scaffolding to empower learners to overcome obstacles and build confidence in their digital competencies.
- [Incorporating real-world applications](#): Adult learners benefit from contextualized learning opportunities that are relevant to their professional contexts and instructional needs. Practitioners should design learning experiences that allow learners to apply digital literacy skills directly to their work with children and families, fostering meaningful connections between theory and practice. For example, organize group projects where learners collaborate to research and present information on topics relevant to their lives or communities.
- [Promoting critical thinking](#): Teach adults how to critically evaluate online information to discern credible sources from misinformation and fake news.
- [Offering ongoing support](#): Provide resources and support services to help adults continue to develop their digital literacy skills beyond the classroom. This could include access to online tutorials and webinars, peer mentoring programs, and referrals to community resources for additional support.

By harnessing the wealth of resources available and adopting innovative teaching strategies, educators can cultivate a culture of digital literacy, enabling adult learners and their families to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

Resources:

- [Parent and Family Digital Learning Guide](#)
- Using [educational video games](#) to level up learning: a guide for parents.
- [WATCH](#): Teaching the Skills That Matter, Digital Literacy in Action.
- [Digital Storytelling in Adult Basic Education and Literacy Programming](#)
- [Issue Brief: Digital Literacy](#).
- [Webinar: Digital Literacy Competencies for ABE/GED Teaching](#) from January to March on Thursdays from 1.30 to 2.30 PM.

# Literacy Around the World

## UNESCO International Literacy Prizes 2023 Awarded



UNESCO International Literacy Prizes were awarded in September 2023 and six outstanding literacy programs were selected by an international jury. The theme was “Promoting literacy for a world in transition: Building the foundation for peaceful and sustainable societies.” The UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize recognized programs that focused on mother language-based literacy development (Finland, Pakistan, and South Africa), and the UNESCO Confucius Prize for literacy focused on functional literacy with digital tools to support adults in rural areas (Bangladesh, Dominican Republic, and Uganda).

[Read more](#)

## Resources



### Read anytime, anywhere

The Barbara Bush Foundation created some free resources for families and family literacy programming.

[ReadLife BookSmart](#) allows adults, families, and children to read stories in English or Spanish for free on a digital



### Parent-educator engagement to support early literacy

Dr. Jacqueline Lynch and Dr. Esther Prins published an article on *Literacy Today* (2024) centered on the importance of parents and educators collaborating to support early literacy.

device. [Download the app!](#)

**Sharing Stories** is a wonderful list of [books](#) for parents and caregivers to explore with children. Each title has a Parent Guide in English and Spanish. All the books are in print and should be available at local libraries or bookstores. To help you choose, you can read the chart [Which Book is Right for my Child Right Now?](#)

**Story Time Podcast.** [Mrs. Bush's Story Time](#) is a podcast for families that brings to life former First Lady Barbara Bush's commitment to family literacy and lifelong learning for a whole new generation.

The Barbara Bush Foundation offers [valid book guides](#) to support family literacy engagement in collaboration with Penguin Random House.

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When parents and schools work together, students of all ages can achieve better academic outcomes. In particular, schools can have a greater impact on children's reading and writing skills when they collaborate with parents and other caregivers.

[Read the Article](#)

## What's New at the Institutes?

### Upcoming Conference Presentations

In March, members of the Institutes are presenting at the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) and at the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) conferences. Here is a short overview of the topics they will discuss.

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CIES - Miami, March 10 - 14

**Family and intergenerational learning and literacy policies: A dozen questions to guide critical policy analysis.**

Presenter: Esther Prins

Dr. Esther Prins will be chairing a panel discussion featuring authors of four chapters from Dr. Prins and Dr. Rakhat Zholdoshaliyeva's forthcoming edited book, *Family and Intergenerational Literacy and Learning: International Perspectives* (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning). The book will be the first to examine family literacy in lower- or middle-income, non-Anglophone countries.

The panel discussion will include:

(1) "The study of children's household and community contexts as the base for an intercultural and bilingual early literacy program in Argentina" (Celia Rosemberg); (2) "A case study of an intergenerational and family literacy

program in Egypt” (Huai-Ming Sanchez et al.); (3) “Challenging epistemic exclusion: Creating a space for understanding Caribbean family literacy practices” (Zoyah Kinkead-Clark & Charlotte Hardacre); and (4) “Enhancing young children's home literacy through digital books: A Türkiye case study” (Burcu Sarı Uğurlu & Adriana Bus).

Dr. Prins will present on her forthcoming book chapter, “Family and intergenerational learning and literacy policies: A dozen questions to guide critical policy analysis.” The chapter, co-authored with Dr. Alexis Cherewka (former Goodling Institute GA and Ph.D. student in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education), Dr. Carol Clymer, and Dr. Rakhat Zholdoshalieva, is the first to focus on international family literacy policies.

Time: Wed, March 13, 2:45 to 4:15pm, Hyatt Regency Miami, Floor: Terrace Level, Azalea A

Time for the panel discussion: Wed, March 13, 6:30 to 8:00pm, Hyatt Regency Miami, Floor: Terrace Level, Gardenia C

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COABE Nashville, March 17 - 20

### **Results of a Four-year Family Literacy Evaluation**

Presenters: Carol Clymer and Jungeun Lee

The Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State University completed a four-year evaluation funded by the William Penn Foundation with five family literacy programs in Philadelphia. This session will report on the statistically significant evaluation findings related to caregiver and children’s reading practices and interactions and caregiver engagement with schools and the community. The session will also include information about program implementation and strategies for serving multicultural families.

Time: Session 3 on 3/18/24 From 2:00 to 3:10 CST in Delta Island C the presentation will be virtual and in-person

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COABE Nashville, March 17 - 20

### **Leveraging LINCS to Access Career Pathways and Postsecondary Transitions and Program Management Resources**

Presenters: Chrissie Klinger, Kathy Olesen-Tracey and Cherise Moore

This interactive session will help participants learn about free, high-quality evidence-based professional development resources from LINCS that are focused on Career Pathways, Postsecondary Transitions, and Program Management.

Time: March 18, 2024 at 11:50 am.

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COABE Nashville, March 17-20

### **Workforce and Academic Skills in Harmony: An Introduction to the PA Foundation Skills**

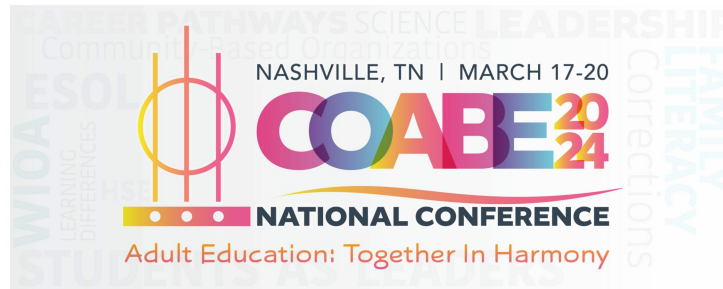
Presenter: Chrissie Klinger, Chuck Klinger, Destiny Simpson, and Christine Houck

This session will provide an introduction to the PA Foundation Skills resources and competency-based checklists. Participants will leave with strategies and materials that support contextualized lesson planning, career navigation, and Integrated Education and Training (IET) programming.

Time: March 18 at 2 pm.

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## Upcoming Events and Conferences

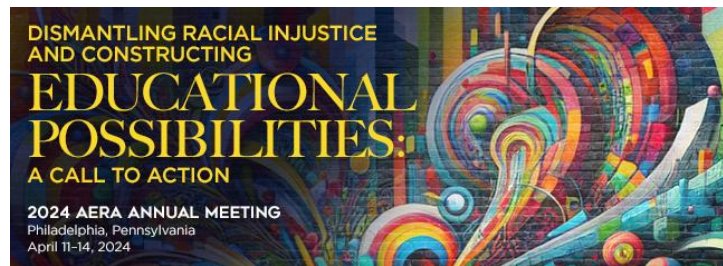


### Coalition on Adult Basic Education Conference

This year the COABE National Conference will take place in Nashville, TN from March 17 to 20. Find out more about the conferences and events on their website below.

[Find out more!](#)

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### American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting

AERA is excited to host its annual meeting on April 11-14, 2024 in Philadelphia. This year's theme asks researchers, practitioners, and policy makers to imagine boldly what education spaces free of racial injustice can look like.

[Register](#)

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# Adult Education Research Conference

The 2024 Annual Adult Education Research Conference (AERC) will be hosted by the University of Georgia and held at the UGA Gwinnett Campus June 13-15, 2024. AERC is an annual North American conference that provides a forum for adult education researchers to share their experiences and the results of their studies with students, other researchers, and practitioners from around the world.

Get Involved!

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