



# Adult and Family Literacy Today

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

# **Research to Practice**

### **Empowering Through Social Emotional Learning (SEL)**



In recent decades, research on experiential and embodied learning has shown how emotions convey a deeper connection to our experiences and to one's meaning-making of the world. Emotions are crucial for contributing to and expressing one's current mental state, and the overall identity and sense of self for both adult learners and practitioners. In adult and family literacy programs, instructors can be guiding lights for emotional growth. By integrating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into their teaching, instructors can craft environments rich with tools to support emotional awareness, emotional navigation, and empathy for the emotions of others to equip learners with essential life skills.

As stated in the <u>SEL 3 Signature Practices Playbook</u> (2019, p.53), "SEL is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, work together, and make responsible decisions." The importance of identity, agency, belonging, collaborative problem-solving, and curiosity is highlighted by enhancing five **fundamental skills**: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (<u>CASEL website</u>). Moreover, effective SEL programs improve academic performance and communication skills and reduce internalizing and externalizing disorders (<u>Greenberg et al., 2003</u>). Most SEL research is focused on outcomes for children, but some studies**prove its effectiveness among adults**. For example, "research on SEL and employability skills has shown positive outcomes for adult learners over the past three decades" (<u>Wisniewski & Foster, 2020</u>).

#### How can practitioners integrate SEL principles into their daily practices?

Before embedding SEL into instruction, adult education programs should also foster a supportive environment for teachers and staff to support their own SEL competencies. It is also important to encourage staff reflection on personal SEL skills and strengthen relations with other community services to identify

opportunities for supporting SEL. Teachers can embed SEL strategies into their lessons by using:

- 1. Welcoming and inclusion activities to set the tone
  - 2. Engaging strategies for sense making, transitions, brain breaks
  - 3. Optimistic closure for reflecting and looking forward

If you are working with adults from different cultures, it is important to recognize and address their diverse backgrounds. The activities promoted in the <u>SEL 3 Signature Practices Playbook</u> are built upon and aligned with the principles of adult learning, including Restorative Justice (RJ), Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and trauma-informed practices.

Check out more activities to inspire adult learnershere.

#### Additional SEL resources:

SEL in Interactions with Students and Families
Hear from Parents: Real Stories, Real Families
An Introduction to Social and Emotional Learning
Penn State Research on Teacher Professional Identity Development

# **Literacy Around the World**



# How literacy educator Rita Rani Sarker transforms lives of adult learners

Rita Rani Sarker, along with 65 other literacy educators, participated in this eight day online and in-person training organized by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, the UNESCO Dhaka Office, and Rangpur's Non-Formal Education Resources Team.

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### Reengaging with the international adult learning and education community

With its acceptance as the 194th member of UNESCO this past July, the United States is poised to engage officially with governmental and civil society partners from around the globe. As officials reestablish the U.S.

position in UNESCO after a six-year absence, and in observance of International Literacy Day on September 8, U.S. adult educators will want to catch up with the latest news from the global adult learning and education community.

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### Have fun learning as a family with UIL's new online course

The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) has just launched a microlearning course aimed at parents and caregivers called Fun with Family Learning. Online and self-paced, this program of short modules aims to provide parents and caregivers with support and fun ideas for learning with their children at home.

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# **AEFL Week in Review**



# National Adult Education & Family Literacy Week

From captivating discussions to resourcesharing, the <u>National Adult Education &</u> <u>Family Literacy Week</u> from September 18-22 was a resounding success. Celebrating the impact of literacy across generations, the week underscored the importance of continuous learning in our communities.

During the week, COABE aired special daily **podcasts**. Top experts, led by Dr. Jeffrey Abramowitz, shared valuable insights. If you missed them, it's not too late to tune in here!

### Resources



**Health Literacy Spotlight!** 

Learn to navigate health factors and turn your program into a health-literate hub with this handy guide. Also, check out key tips and resources as you support health outreach in your community here!



**Genre Joy: Boosting Family Literacy!** 

Reading with children enhances their language skills, but the variety of books matters. Different genres stimulate unique conversations and learning depths. Read more about how to diversify your child's reading experience in this article.

### What's new at the Institutes?

New Director of Workforce Development at the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy



Chrissie Klinger, M. Ed., boasts 20+ years in K-12 and adult education, from tutoring to administration. Currently the Workforce Development Director at Penn State University's Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, she guides projects supporting Pennsylvania's adult education initiatives. Klinger contributes as a LINCS moderator, has published in COABE journals, and sits on the National Coalition for Literacy board. She holds a master's in Learning, Design, and Technology from Penn State and is certified in offender workforce development and global career facilitation.

### The Goodling Institute welcomes three new Graduate Assistants



Erika Mazzoli has been



Jaeung Kim, with a B.A.



Mai Atta is a writer and

teaching German and Italian as a Second Language at the public school for adult learners, CPIA Ferrara, for six years. He previously worked at She has also served as an assistant principal, coordinator of literacy teaching staff, European projects and the school self-evaluation team. Currently, she is studying for a Ph.D. in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education at Penn State. where she is focused on international adult education policies, and family literacy. Erika obtained her Ed.M. in English and German from the University of Bologna, and her German Teaching Degree from the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia.

and M.A. in Education from Seoul National University, South Korea, has a strong educational background. Korean national institutions for adult education. including the National Center for Adult Literacy Education (NCALE) and Korea National Open University (KNOU). Currently, Jaeung is pursuing a Ph.D. in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education. His research interests are critical pedagogy, social movement education, and education governance.

educator with a Bachelor's degree in Marketing & International Business from the Arab Academy for Science and Technology in Cairo, Egypt. Her expertise spans research, data collection, curriculum development, and facilitation. She's passionate about social movement learning, youth development, resilience in conflict, culture, identity, and evidence-based interventions. Mai is currently a Doctoral Candidate at the Adult Education and Lifelong learning program at Penn State.

# **Spring 2024 Online Certificates**

Check out the Penn State Spring 2024 Family Literacy and Adult Basic Education Online Certificates.

□ 12-credit hours □ Fully online □ Scholarships available

Elevate your education and career from anywhere!

More Information

# **Upcoming Events and Conferences**

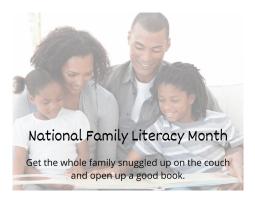


### October is Health Literacy Month

Every October, we celebrate Health Literacy Month - a time to recognize the importance of making health information easy to understand and the health care system easier to

navigate.

Get Involved!



### **November is Family Literacy Month**

Family Literacy Month highlights and reminds us of the importance of taking time to read, learn, and have fun together as a family. So, gather the family. Snuggle together. Read. Play a game together. Take a walk and explore your community. Draw a family portrait. Tell stories and sing songs. Just take some time to be together. Check with your local libraries for more activities.

Get Involved!



### **PAACE - 2024 Conference Pittsburgh**

Pennsylvania Association for Adult Continuing Education (PAACE) will hold the 2024 conference in Pittsburgh from April 14 to 16. The conference will provide adult educators with great opportunities to explore the potential of adult education as a bridge to a solid future.

Register



Goodling/ISAL | 405 Keller Building, University Park, PA 16802

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