

Kingston Literacy & Skills OLES Project

Family Literacy and Essential Skills: Foundation for Social Inclusion

UPP Pilot Programs

Kingston Literacy & Skills (KL&S) received funding from OLES for a project entitled *Building Family Literacy and Essential Skills: Foundation for Social Inclusion* which runs between August 2009 and June 2011. As part of this project, KL&S will select two LBS programs to provide the UPP family literacy curriculum starting in October 2010. One urban and one rural program will be chosen to provide UPP.

Another posting will take place soon which will offer the opportunity for rural programs (three will be chosen) to apply to provide three hours per week of teacher support for students who take the UPP program on-line.

About Kingston Literacy & Skills

Kingston Literacy & Skills (KL&S) offers Essential Skills upgrading for adults in both one-to-one and small group environments. We provide training in reading, writing, math and computers at three sites in the Kingston, Hartington and Napanee region.

Beginning in 1989, KL&S expanded its focus to include the literacy needs of families, particularly ones with young children. We know that helping parents to upgrade their skills, while showing them concrete ways they can work with their children, can help break the inter-generational cycle of low-literacy skills. We offer a number of family literacy workshops and programs including: RAPP (Reading And Parents Program); Bookmaking Workshops; Music Circles for Parents and Children; and UPP (Upgrading for Parents with Preschoolers).

In addition to adult and family literacy services, KL&S has completed a number of research projects, run various pilot projects and developed many learning resources that have benefited the literacy community at large. Some of our more recent products include UPP On-Line and RAPP On-Line.

Project Background

This project continues the work of the Centre for Expertise in Family Literacy (CEFL) which developed a family literacy curriculum called Upgrading for Parents with Preschoolers during its first phase (2006-2008). A goal of this project is to assess and evaluate the different ways the UPP curriculum can be integrated into existing LBS-LES service delivery in Ontario. Hence, a research component has been designed which will evaluate student outcomes and compare approaches. UPP family literacy practitioners will become informal mentors to others in the province who wish to provide UPP after this project is finished.

The UPP curriculum is made up of nine themes which are related to family life and literacy learning. Parents learn how to budget, how their children learn to read, how to create a safe home environment, about nutrition and so on. Instructors use this important parenting information and the specific activities developed to use with UPP so students gain reading, writing, numeracy and essential skills while they learn about important parenting topics.

Goals of the Project

- To further the development and growth of adult and family literacy in Ontario
- To provide low-literacy adults with a program that will enable them to further their education, employment, participation in communities, increased independence and enhanced family life
- To demonstrate that students can develop transferable essential skills through the UPP curriculum

Main Deliverables

Provide UPP for six months – October to March

The programs chosen will use the UPP curriculum which can be found online at www.familyliteracyexpertise.org. Successful programs will be required to provide the UPP program for up to 6 months. The UPP program runs two times per week for 2.5 hours and the total number of student hours will be at least 100. Facilitators will also add their own lessons, depending on the needs of their participants.

Research

UPP program participants/students will be taking part in a research process. This includes two pre and post questionnaires that pertain to student/parent's own reading habits and family literacy in the home and a pre and post test online PDQ which is about 1.5 to 2 hours in length each time it is taken. As well, a program evaluation questionnaire for participants will be used at the end of the program.

Student Engagement

Programs interested in applying for funding must be able to engage a sufficient number of students who are parents of young children. We are committed to engaging 50 parents and children in the project. Programs must have good computer capacity.

Children's Program

Programs selected must be able to provide childcare or a children's programming option for parents who have young children. This could be a children's program that is part of the literacy program or the ability to enrol young children, free of charge, in a childcare program for the duration of the project through partnerships with childcare programs, Ontario Early Years Centres and so on.

Instructor Interaction - Communication

UPP instructors/facilitators will be asked to maintain communication with other UPP instructors in the project; to share ideas and lend each other support. This will be done through electronic media such as a blog and through Centra meetings online.

Funding Outline

Onsite UPP Pilot program funding (2 sites) will be provided for:

- Staff costs for preparation and delivery of the UPP curriculum
- Materials costs to do the program
- Costs to augment childcare such as some staff time, materials and snacks

UPP Pilot sites will send monthly financial and narrative reports to KL&S.

Please note:

Due to funding constraints, programs that are chosen to do the UPP Pilot must be located within a 500 kilometre radius of Kingston, Ontario.

If your LBS program is interested in applying to be an UPP Pilot Site, please fill out the "Application to Serve as UPP Pilot" available at:

Kingston Literacy & Skills website www.kingstonliteracy.com

OR

Centre for Expertise in Family Literacy website www.familyliteracyexpertise.org