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Parent Education and Interactive Literacy Activities

*Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education
Division of Adult Education Policy*

Subject: **Parent Education and Interactive Literacy Activities**
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POLICY STATEMENT

All families must participate in Parent Education and Interactive Literacy Activities (ILA) that are designed to increase the language and literacy development of children.

PURPOSE

Parent education and ILA are critical components of family literacy programs. Parents/caregivers and children who share positive language and literacy focused interactions learn together and are true partners in education. Parents/caregivers who learn and play with their children as a family unit contribute to their children's success in school and in life.

GUIDANCE

Parent education and ILA are complementary instructional components in family literacy and must be fully integrated with the other components of the family literacy program. Parents/caregivers increase their own literacy levels during adult education classes. In parent education, they learn the theory behind child development and learning behaviors, learn techniques to promote language and literacy development, practice with peers to develop understanding of concepts, and receive constructive and supportive feedback after completing the ILA with their own children. During ILA, they implement and practice the knowledge, strategies, and techniques they acquire in parent education.

Programs have flexibility in how parent education and ILA are provided. When possible, parents/caregivers and children should participate in parent education and ILA in person at the program site or other suitable location under supervision of the program. However, when in-person participation is not possible, programs may use a distance option. Whatever the structure and timing of the components, agencies must ensure that their family literacy program is of sufficient intensity to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the program.

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Parent Education

- Parent education sessions should be regularly scheduled to provide opportunities for parents/caregivers to work with instructors to learn the skills they need to support children's learning through language and literacy-based activities that are culturally responsive and occur in meaningful settings and routines.
- Lessons must be standards-based and include content and strategies to assist parents/caregivers to recognize the National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) Predictors of Later Success.
- Parent education should introduce the purpose of ILA and teach the skills needed to implement ILA. ILA is an extension of the parent education curriculum, and ILA activities must be held in conjunction with parent education.
- For parents whose children are in school, programs should customize parent education to support the content and skills the children are learning in their classes.
- Sessions can be scheduled in person or remotely.

Interactive Literacy Activities

- ILA sessions should be regularly scheduled to provide an opportunity for parents/caregivers to learn and support child development through structured play with their children as a family.
- Activities should be introduced and modeled by an instructor, either in person or remotely. Instructors are expected to observe families practicing these techniques and to support family success in applying them. Parents/caregivers should also engage in ILA with their children at home.
- Sessions with an instructor present may be conducted in person or remotely.
- Lessons must be designed so that language and literacy development are taught during the session. The focus should be on helping children excel at the NELP Predictors of Later Success. Programs have access to resources, such as the NCFL lessons and the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) lessons to guide instructional content.
- At home activities help parents to apply and practice the techniques learned during the ILA session. Off-site ILA conducted by parents/caregivers without instructor facilitation/supervision must be documented and be discussed during a subsequent parent education session.
- Programs may also use computer-based ILA distance learning resources. Programs must follow the resource guidance for counting hours of participation. They may only be used to supplement and not replace regularly scheduled ILA.
- Parent and child interaction must be assessed as appropriate, depending upon the age of the child, by using the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI). See Policy D.160 for details.