Breakout Workshop C: Language Programs - Increasing capacity to support non-traditional language learning
Welcome

Jennifer Cummins
AMSSA
Housekeeping

- Cell phones – turn off ringer / turn on vibrate, take calls outside.
- All meeting documents will be sent out electronically after the meeting
- Recording Sessions
Innovative Literacy Programs to Support Syrian Refugees

Sandhya Ghai & Jill Berezowski

MOSAIC
Empowering newcomers to fully participate in Canadian society

Innovative Literacy Programs to support Syrian Refugees

Sandhya Ghai     Jill Berezowski

MOSAIC
• 40 years
• 300 staff
• 450 volunteers
• 32 sites
MOSAIC Services

- Settlement Programs
- Language Programs
- Employment Programs
- Children and Family Program
- Specialized Family Programs
- Interpretation and Translation

mosaicbc.org
MOSAIC Literacy Programs

- Enhanced Literacy Program – Burnaby
- Family Literacy Program - Surrey
Enhanced Literacy Program - Burnaby

• Gaps
  – literacy classes
  – childcare – for babies and children
  – settlement support

Funded by: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Financé par : Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
Enhanced Literacy Program - Burnaby

• **Description** - LINC instructor, 4 volunteers, settlement worker, childcare (Burnaby Family Life), transportation assistance

• **Outcomes**
  - to overcome the main barriers to language training – childcare, transportation
  - to create a safe, supportive and welcoming space for Syrian refugees to begin learning how to learn a new language.
  - to support evolving settlement needs through weekly follow up
  - to increase the capacity of the volunteers to support literacy development.
Family Literacy Program - Surrey

- Gap - Integrated services for family settlement

Refugee Families (1 to 1 service)

- Literacy Classes, Child Minding and Family Literacy
- Information Workshops
- Homework Club
- Youth Group Activities
- Conversation Circle for Men
- Drop-in Family Hour (Open Group Format)

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Financé par : Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
Family Literacy Program - Surrey

• **Description** – LINC instructor, CA, ECE, child minding volunteer, Arabic speaking settlement worker

• **Outcomes**
  - To provide high needs newcomers and their children (aged 0 to 6) integrated services and support in a warm, welcoming environment with a focus on family settlement - childcare, transportation assistance, referrals, etc.
  - To increase confidence in using English by participating in Literacy classes.
Enhanced Literacy Program - Burnaby

• Challenges
• Intake process
• Literacy stream - Multi-level
• High level of students needs
• Readiness of some students to participate

• Successes
• Babies in the classroom
• Integration of volunteers
• Use of Arabic in the classroom to quickly address needs
• Anecdotal
Family Literacy Program - Surrey

• Challenges
  ▪ Student Retention
  ▪ Diverse Needs
  ▪ Multi-level class
  ▪ Babies in the Classroom

• Successes
  ▪ Increased Community Awareness
  ▪ Student Autonomy
  ▪ Student Satisfaction and Appreciation
Main Barriers to Language Acquisition for Refugees  Burnaby

• Lack of Time

- Learners who have settlement, literacy and trauma issues need time.

- Osama- success story, but...
Main Barriers to Language Acquisition for Refugees - Surrey

- **Health and Wellness**
  - “I have a severe headache.”

- **Readiness Level**
  - “I can’t do this right now.”

- **Family Responsibilities**
  - “I need to take care of my mother.”

- **Culture Shock**
  - “I have never done that before.”
Instructors working with ESL learners with literacy need:

1. a solid understanding of ESL literacy needs and how they differ from those of mainstream ESL learners.

2. support to deliver ESL literacy training that effectively accommodates the diversity of learners ...

3. training designed to support them working with ESL learners with literacy needs.

4. to be adaptable, supportive, knowledgeable, and aware of the various challenges learners may face in the real world.
Best Promising Practice – Burnaby
Support Leaners

Recognize trauma in your classroom.

- Irritability, anger, depression and anxiety
- Gaps in memory and difficulty focusing
- Long absences from class, demands for undivided attention, and inability to organize and plan
- Physical health issues, such as chronic pain can exacerbate these
Best Promising Practice – Burnaby
Support Leaners

• Accommodate the impact of trauma

  ▪ Relax the rules for lateness, absences etc.

  ▪ Don’t apply extra pressure to people under extreme pressure by going quickly. Repeat, review and recycle material

  ▪ Be flexible – accommodation may take unexpected forms
Best Promising Practice - Surrey

• For Coordinators:
  ▪ Have a strong support system in place to overcome challenges as they emerge

• For Language Teachers:
  ▪ Go with the flow
  ▪ Provide a welcoming environment
Thank You!
Moving Ahead Program Literacy Workshops: An Innovative Language Training Program

Crystal Mcfeetors

DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society
Moving Ahead Program Literacy Workshops: an innovative language training program

Crystal McFeetors
Literacy and Essential Skills Guide for the Moving Ahead Program
cmcfleetors@dcrs.ca
www.dcrs.ca
What?

- *Moving Ahead Program* Literacy & Essential Skills Workshops
- Structured, supportive, sensitive learning environment
- Multi-leveled (Pre-Lit to L5), smaller classroom sizes
- Start-up material
- Targeted language support
- Transportation support and child minding
Why?

Age
Health Issues

Ethnicity

Trauma
Single parents

Cognitive style

Ability (mental, physical, learning)

Classroom anxiety

Lack of education

Complex issues

Economic background

Mental Health Issues

Attendance barriers

Large Families with

Physical

Lack of education

Mental Health Issues

Sexual orientation

Physical limitations

Low self-esteem
Diverse learning environments affect learners’ attitudes, self-esteem and achievements.
How?

• Upon intake, each learner is assessed and sets language learning goals with the Literacy and Essential Skills Guide
• Individual Learning Plans are designed for each learner
• Volunteer Teaching Assistants help students one-on-one
• Targeted Languages (Arabic, Swahili, Farsi, etc) are spoken by some volunteers
DIVERSEcity
Community Resources Society

New Directions for New Canadians
Literacy and Essential Skills Outcomes Model: “LINC Prep” and “Literacy Success”

• Promotes and facilitates literacy skills
• Highly supportive learning environment reduces anxiety and promotes self-efficiency
• Allows for a transition period to prepare for LINC setting
• Increases individual’s literacy skills by using learning activities with real life and meaningful context for the individual
• Learners develop self-assessment and goal setting skills
• Learners increase awareness of their individual learning styles
“LINC Prep” and “Literacy Success”

Community Integration Impact:

• Increased capacity with social and connection skills
• Informal networking with other participants
• Increased knowledge levels about community resources
• Learned information regarding settlement-related issues is practiced (e.g. employment, housing, health, transportation, etc.)
• Multi-barriered refugees can obtain basic literacy skills to begin road towards independence
• Transition to other learning environments and programs
Program Impact:

Instructors:
• Recognized the value of co-facilitating with volunteers
• Embraced more individualized lessons, within the main curriculum

Learners:
• Improved general confidence, attitude and self esteem
• Increased speaking and reading levels, and comprehension
• Increased feelings of connection to volunteers and peers

Volunteers:
• High sense of satisfaction re: “giving back and sharing skills
• Gained better awareness about newcomers’ aspirations and goals
• Gain Canadian workplace experience for future employment
Challenges?

- Multi-leveled so lesson planning is time consuming
- Maintaining pool of volunteers
- Attendance barriers
- Undiagnosed learning disabilities
- Child minding for those with large families
Barriers for Syrians in MAP?

• Low literacy levels
• Trauma which affects learning
• Large families (housing, medical, child minding)
• Health issues previously undiagnosed, esp cancer
• Need for Arabic language support
Success

• Most go on to work or other community Language programs
• Gain in confidence in learning ability
• Able to meet individualised goals
• Make connections with other learners & volunteers
Volunteer Classroom Assistants

- Life and learning experiences and skills
- Connection and relationship building
- Find work in similar field
- Use individual strengths and abilities
- Targeted languages used
Best Practises for VIPP Literacy Success

• Assess individual strengths & gaps
• Create Individual Literacy Plans
• Be inclusive and adaptive
• Recognise individual support is instrumental in reducing barriers
Thank You!
Questions?

Language Training & Literacy Programs
http://www.dcrs.ca/services/language-programs/
Key Insights and Wrap-Up

• What will you take back to your organization today from today’s presentations?
• Do you think some of what was presented today can be applied to programming at your organizations?
• What was a key learning from today’s session?