

Workforce Literacy and the Deaf Stream Literacy Classroom

A picture of literacy programs' workforce activities

Research and report compiled by Sarah Stephenson

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HIGHLIGHTS

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This study, *Workforce Literacy and the Deaf Stream Literacy Classroom* was created as a result of discussions among Deaf stream practitioners about their challenges with meeting the individual needs of learners with employment goals; their comments about the importance of working toward independence goals in the classroom; and G.O.L.D.'s own lack of understanding about the importance and weight of workforce literacy activities in the Deaf stream literacy classroom.

G.O.L.D conducted this project in tandem with, *Young Deaf Adults: Perceptions of Career Planning, Goal Setting & Literacy* (G.O.L.D., 2003), which aims to gain an understanding of young Deaf adults' attitudes toward finding and keeping employment in relation to their own literacy skills. This project:

- Explores the workforce realities and popular job types currently held by Deaf¹ individuals in Ontario;
- Outlines employment goals of current Deaf and Deafblind Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) learners;
- Creates a baseline of current workforce literacy² activities performed and resources used in the Deaf and Deafblind literacy stream classrooms.

To meet the objectives above, G.O.L.D. interviewed Deaf stream practitioners and collected learner goals from several literacy programs. Practitioners discussed their current workforce activities and their use of workforce resources³. They commented on their tendency toward flexible programming, their challenges to incorporate employment themes into the classroom, their use of work-related forms, special presentations, volunteering and their general attitudes toward workforce literacy. Practitioners also talked about their goal setting practices. They said they sometimes put aside long-term goal setting. Practitioners' attitudes toward the challenges that their learners face to find and keep employment, their perceptions of their own role as teachers and their overall understanding of workforce literacy all seem to influence the work-themed activities in the Deaf stream literacy classroom.

¹ The word Deaf, with an upper-case "D," refers to the culture and community of Deaf people, while the word deaf, with a lower-case "d," refers to the audiological lack of hearing (Barnett, 2001, pg.14).

² Workforce literacy focuses on making LBS-funded services more responsive to the workplace, so that learners are better prepared for entering or remaining in the workforce.

³ For the report, a resource is understood to mean any assistance that a literacy practitioner draws upon to assist with literacy work. Such assistance includes but is not limited to print and visual materials in various media, library support services and networking supports.

KEY OBSERVATIONS AND MAIN FINDINGS

The following observations and recommendations are based on consistent feedback from Deaf and Deafblind stream literacy practitioners and commonalities among learner training plans.

Program Design

Observation:

Practitioners say that their literacy programs are flexible, changing and adapted daily to meet learner needs, interests and motivations.

Recommendation:

Develop flexible workforce resources with adaptation options and templates. The media of the resources should also allow for this flexibility.

Program Content

Observation:

Practitioners spend a significant amount of time giving learners a sense of the world around them. Everyday events are important topics in the classroom. Practitioners want to provide context for literacy learning.

Recommendation:

Create workforce materials that provide practitioners with discussion opportunities. These workforce materials should allow practitioners to step outside of more structured activities.

Learner goals

Observation:

Of the goals received from participating programs, almost 90% of goals were from Levels 1-3. Forty percent of learners in these lower levels have employment goals.

Recommendation:

Emphasis of future workforce resource development needs to be on the majority of learner literacy levels, predominantly Levels 1 – 3.

Goal setting

Observation:

Setting goals is a difficult concept for learners to understand and for practitioners to teach. When learners first enter literacy programs, goal setting is often delayed or put aside. Practitioners say learners need to spend some time in a program before goals are identified.

Recommendation:

Provide goal setting professional development to practitioners that addresses goal setting concepts, and the relevance of the exercise to adult learning.

Employment / Independence goals

Observation:

Employment and independence goals seem evenly split among literacy learners. Many lower-level learners have both employment and independence goals.

Recommendation:

Develop materials that incorporate independence and work. Explore activities that incorporate self-management and self-direction outcomes into work-themed activities.

Learner long-term goals

Observation:

Practitioners emphasize that teaching learners the basics of language is the main focus in their programs. Long-term goals are often put aside in order to focus on the basics of math, ASL and English. Some practitioners do not feel that the long-term goal is part of Literacy and Basic Skills programming.

Recommendation:

Provide professional development that shows how long-term goals can be incorporated into short term learning activities.

Workforce activities

Observation:

Practitioners say their instruction is focused on the basics of language and does not focus on employment. These same practitioners also list learning activities they do with learners that are work related.

Recommendation:

Coordinate the gathering of workforce best practices. Provide professional development support for those practitioners already relating activities to a work theme and share successes. Demonstrate current examples of work-themed activities.

Practitioner Attitudes

Observation:

Practitioners express skepticism about the learners' ability to be employed. Practitioners stress that the road to employment is very long.

Recommendation:

Compile success stories of learners who have succeeded in reaching their goals of employment. Demonstrate to practitioners how work-themed activities created for LBS Levels 1-3 can benefit their learners.

Adaptation of materials

Observation:

Practitioners constantly adapt existing workforce resources in order to meet the needs of their learners.

Recommendations:

1. Provide practitioners with professional development on how to adapt resources.
2. Provide practitioners with resources designed for program flexibility.

Workforce resources

Observation:

Practitioners emphasize the workforce resources used in the classrooms are chosen based on their adaptability and cost.

Recommendation:

Communicate the strengths of AlphaPlus' borrowing services. Develop a system for AlphaPlus to gain feedback from the stream on which resources should be housed at the centre.

Collection of resources

Observation:

Workforce materials come from a variety of sources. Practitioners tend to use personal, employment, and literacy connections to gain access to resources.

Recommendation:

Encourage the continuation of networking already occurring in the literacy field. Establish a more formal environment for this networking and sharing of workforce resources.

Ideal workforce resource

Observation:

Ideal workforces represent "real-life"; focus on the needs of lower level learners and are visual.

Recommendation:

Create a database of workforce resources that incorporate a "real-life" focus and are aimed lower level literacy learners. These resources should incorporate the use of visuals and plain language content.

Work-themed Forms

Observation:

Practitioners state that their current use of workforce-related forms is sporadic and time-consuming. Forms related to learner' work goals require practitioners to contact employers and visit their locations.

Recommendation:

Incorporate a standardized template of forms into the development of workforce resources to be used in the Deaf/ Deafblind stream.

Volunteering and Partnerships

Observation:

No formal volunteer partnerships or programs exist in order for learners to gain workforce experience. Practitioners' work with employment services is based more based on referrals and gathering workforce resources than ongoing partnerships.

Recommendations:

Develop a literacy service model that incorporates ongoing formalized partnerships between literacy agencies and stakeholder agencies (employment, etc.).

Classroom Presentations

Observations:

Practitioners say that presentations are popular in their classrooms but that these presentations focus more on life skills than employment.

Recommendations:

Identify Deaf and Deafblind individuals who can present on various employment experiences and perspectives.

METHODOLOGY

Under this research project, G.O.L.D paints a picture of current Deaf stream workforce literacy activities. The intention of this work is to:

- Develop a summary of the workforce realities and popular job types held by today's Deaf workers in Ontario based on existing studies;
- Develop a summary of employment-related goals identified by today's Deaf and Deafblind literacy learners;
- Paint a picture of current workforce literacy activities and resources used in today's Deaf stream literacy classrooms.

To meet these objectives, we designed our research methodology as follows:

Workforce realities and popular job types

To create a summary of both workforce realities for Deaf workers and typical jobs chosen by Deaf individuals, G.O.L.D. reviewed provincial studies written within the past eight years. We also asked various employment agencies to provide us with a list of placements filled in the past year and compiled a list of employment goals taken from literacy learners' training plans. These findings, summarized in this report, are intended to give a picture of the typical employment types desired by literacy learners and some typical jobs filled by Deaf workers in the past 24 months.

LBS learners and work-related goals

G.O.L.D. asked all literacy programs within the Deaf and Deafblind literacy stream for a list of learners' goals as recorded on learner training plans. Of those programs, six practitioners forwarded their learner goals. These goals were recorded, analyzed and summarized to give a picture of typical employment-related goals and how often employment goals are cited as opposed to independence or further education goals.⁴

Workforce literacy learning activities and materials

With the help of Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and AlphaPlus Centre, G.O.L.D. collected a representation of the popular workforce teaching resources used in the four LBS literacy streams. We asked Deaf stream literacy practitioners to comment on their use of the materials on the list and to add their own suggestions⁵. They were also asked to identify gaps. G.O.L.D. staff met with practitioners individually. Interviews were conducted in either ASL or English, depending on the language preference of the practitioner. Comments are summarized in this report.

⁴ We were confronted with a challenge when collecting learner goals. Agencies identified their learner goals in different ways. For example, some learners' training paths list more than one main goal path. All goal types were recorded in these cases. Pertinent charts indicate this.

⁵ All reviewed learning materials were text-based.

CURRENT STUDIES

What are the workforce realities and popular job types held by today's Deaf and Deafblind workers living in Ontario? It helps to first paint a picture of Deaf people's experiences in the workforce, including barriers to employment, wages and popular job types.

Deaf people in the workforce

Over the last few years, much research on the Deaf community has focused on the employment rate, or rather the unemployment rate of Deaf Canadians. Several studies have shown that a large percentage of Deaf individuals are unemployed as compared to their hearing counterparts. A 1998 study, *Employment and Employability of Deaf Canadians* (Roots and Kerr, 1998) suggested that 37.5 percent of Deaf people across Canada were unemployed and 41.9 percent are underemployed. That same year, the Government of Canada reported that 8.1 percent of the general (hearing) population was unemployed.⁶

These statistics are certainly discouraging and the challenges extend to employment agencies, whose mandate it is to try to better such numbers. At least one Ontario study (The Employment and Employability Needs of the Deaf Community in the Peel and Halton Regions, 2002) shows that employment counselors have some frustrations of their own. They seem discouraged by the employment expectations of clients, clients' lack of awareness about current labor market realities, confusion about the role of the employment agency and clients' lack of clearly outlined goals upon arrival at their office. One counselor discusses the challenge. "I feel a lot of times clients come in and they want a job NOW. They are not ready to do the preparation plan beforehand. I understand that they need money and they need to find a job, and that it's frustrating. But they cannot expect me to help them without doing the planning strategies first."⁷

Barriers to Employment

Research conducted on the high rate of unemployment of Deaf individuals suggests many reasons for such dismal statistics. Factors such as lack of accessibility, communication barriers, social attitudes and stereotypes, literacy and education levels are all identified. "The roots of Deaf unemployment lie in the medicalization of deafness, which has led to inappropriate educational methodologies, the internalization of low expectations, and a social resistance to the removal of barriers."⁸

Various studies discuss barriers to employment in depth. The Peel study mentioned above identifies low levels of literacy, skills development and training, educational experiences, and employer attitudes and perceptions of the capabilities of Deaf people as key examples of challenges facing Deaf workers.

⁶ Roots & Kerr, 1998, pg. 18

⁷ The Employment and Employability Needs of the Deaf community in the Peel and Halton Regions, 2002, pg. 30-31

⁸ Roots & Kerr, 1998, pg. 5

There's no question that young Deaf adults face many hurdles as they begin their career paths. Their own perceptions of and attitudes toward both employment barriers and literacy are worth further exploration.⁹

Wages

Some statistics show almost three quarters of the Deaf population in Canada are living below the basic income level.¹⁰ "Deaf and hard of hearing individuals are less likely to be employed and they earn less on average than other Ontarians."¹¹ These low wages seem consistent with the typical kinds of employment acquired by Deaf individuals. No current research clearly outlines percentages of Deaf individuals receiving Ontario Disability Supports or assistance from Ontario Works.

Popular job types

Deaf individuals have traditionally been employed in the industrial, community, services, and educational sectors. *The Employment and Employability Needs of Deaf Canadians (1998)* cites the industrial sector as the top-ranked sector for Deaf workers.¹²

More recent numbers seem to indicate an interest in the service sector. G.O.L.D. reviewed a list of 68 jobs obtained by Deaf consumers over the past year as compiled by two Ontario employment agencies.¹³ Seventy-five percent of those jobs were forwarded from the northern region of the province while the remaining 25 percent were from the southwestern region. A high number of the 68 placements were in the services sector (42 percent).¹⁴ Twelve percent of jobs placed were industrial work. The remaining nine percent were clerical.

Interest in the service, clerical and industrial sectors seems evenly split among current LBS literacy learners, at least according to the long-term employment goals listed on training plans.¹⁵ Twenty-six percent of learners recorded employment goals to work in the service sector. Twenty-one percent hope to find clerical jobs. The same percentage aims to gain industrial-type employment.

The employment goals of 34 young Deaf adults are noted in the G.O.L.D. research project, *Perceptions of Young Deaf Adults Toward Literacy and Work (G.O.L.D., 2003)*. The employment goals of the study's participants seem relatively evenly divided among employment sectors. Thirty-nine percent of young adults interviewed state employment goals related to the services sector while 33 percent show interest in the technical sector. The industrial sector ranks third among the young adults at 17 percent. Eleven percent express an interest in the educational field.

⁹ Goal: Ontario Literacy for Deaf People has also published *Perceptions of Young Deaf Adults Toward Literacy and Work*. This publication explores barriers to work as perceived by Deaf and hard-of-hearing young adults.

¹⁰ Roots & Kerr, 1998, p. 37

¹¹ Canada's Innovation Strategy, 2002, p.2

¹² Roots & Kerr, 1998, p. 41

¹³ See Appendix A -- Job Types Obtained By Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals Connected to Employment Agencies in Ontario

¹⁴ Our collection of job placements is not large enough to be statistically reliable.

¹⁵ See Appendix B – Breakdown of Main Goal Paths

GOAL SETTING AND EMPLOYMENT

Goal Setting, Work and the Literacy and Basic Skills Program

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs offer learner-centred literacy services. That is to say that training plans for learners are designed with the goals of the individual learner in mind. Given that learners' employment goals tend to be longer-term, it's worth noting below how LBS-sponsored programs view short-term and long-term goals and their respective roles in daily programming.

Defining short-term and long-term goals

Jane Barber, in her publication, *Assessing Up, Designing Down* (2001), defines both short-term and long-term goals as follows:

Long-term goal: what a learner eventually wants to be able to do. Successfully reaching the long-term goal most likely will not happen in the timeframe of the LBS program but knowing what the goal is will help in identifying the kinds of tasks the learner will eventually need to be able to do and in that way will contribute towards shaping the kinds of learning activities the instructor will develop for the training.

Short-term goal: what the learner wants to be able to do on leaving the program, that can be successfully achieved within the timeframe of the learner's involvement in the program. The learner's LBS program will focus on successfully reaching one's short-term goal. A good way to express the short-term goal is: (David)'s short-term goal is to develop reading, writing, speaking and listening, and numeracy skills necessary to be ready to move ahead to the next step of his goal of (personal independence, further education, or employment) at level __. ”¹⁶

The Literacy and Basic Skills Program - Guidelines (2001), requires that agencies maintain a file for each learner who uses LBS program services. Each file includes a learner profile, which describes:

- Short-term goals: skills that may be learned at the LBS agency;
- Long-term goals: goals that the learner wants to work toward after leaving the program.¹⁷

¹⁶ Barber, 2001, pg. 14

¹⁷ LBS Guidelines, 2001, pg. 5

Setting Short-term and Long-term Goals

Setting goals under the LBS program is an important part of a learner's participation in literacy training. Literacy and Basic Skills Program – Guidelines highlights this importance of placing literacy development into a larger context: "Literacy may be only part of the training that learners need in order to meet their long-term goals or may be only part of the continuum of learning."¹⁸

Literacy and Basic Skills programs highlight the importance of working toward short-term goals with learners while keeping learners' long-term goals in mind. This is documented in Goal-Directed Assessment: An Initial Assessment Process: "Short-term goals have long-term value. They are the first steps to the learner's long-term goals."¹⁹

The work, Learning Outcomes Project, explains why setting short-term goals within the context of long-term goals are so valuable for learners. "Big goals can seem so far away that you may doubt you'll ever reach them. You do need these big, long-term goals to help you plan your life, but your day-to-day concern should be the small steps that will gradually bring you within range of your big goal."²⁰

Main Goal Path

The Literacy and Basic Skills Program itself is operated under a number of program principles including learner-centred training. This principle includes supporting learners in developing achievable personal goals related to 1) further training 2) employment or 3) independence. These are called main goal paths. All short-term goals and long-term goals are considered to fall under one of these main goal paths.

¹⁸ LBS Guidelines, 2001, pg. 4

¹⁹ Goal-Directed Assessment, May 1997, pg. 56

²⁰ Learning Outcomes Project, 2002, pg. 19

Work Goals of Deaf and Deafblind Stream Literacy Learners

Below is an overview of a collection of 83 learner goals, including short-term and long-term goals, and main goal paths. We will discuss these goals in terms of employment, learners' gender, region and literacy level.

Of the 83 learner goals that G.O.L.D. received from participating literacy agencies, 34 percent were from male learners and 46 percent were from female learners. The remaining 20 percent were not identified as either from a male or female learner.

Learner goals were collected from various regions around Ontario. Forty-eight percent of learner goals received were from Toronto; 16 percent from Hamilton; 12 percent from Oshawa; 10 percent from Thunder Bay; and the remaining 8 and 6 percent were from Niagara and Sault Ste. Marie respectively.

Figure 1: Goals Submitted By Literacy Level

The chart below shows the goals received by literacy level. Learners in the LBS literacy Levels 1-3 account for 88 percent of goals received while Levels 4 and 5 represent 12 percent of the goals collected.

LBS Literacy Level	% Of Learners	Total
Level 1	36	88 %
Level 2	33	
Level 3	19	
Level 4	11	12 %
Level 5	1	
Total	100	100%

Summary of main goal paths

Recall that the LBS Guidelines categorize main goal paths as 1) independence, 2) employment and 3) further education and training. In at least 16 cases, agencies recorded more than one main goal path on a learner’s training plan.

Figure 4: Main Goal Paths

The chart below summarizes the main goal paths recorded.

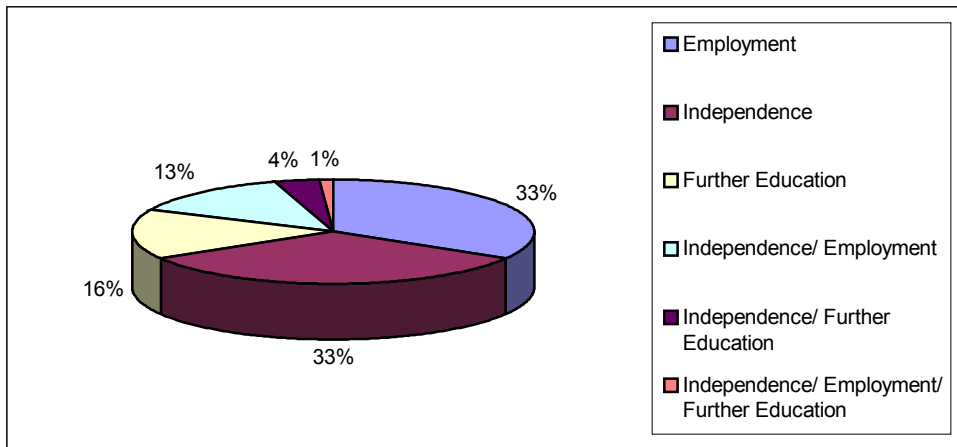


Figure 5: Main Goal Paths by Literacy Level

The chart below shows the number of learners in each literacy level with a given main goal path.

Learner Main Goal Path

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Total
Employment	10	9	5	3	1	28
Independence	15	6	3	3	0	27
Further Education	2	3	6	1	0	12
Independence/ Employment	2	8	2	0	0	12
Independence/ Further Education	1	0	0	2	0	3
Independence/ Employment/ Further Education	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	30	27	16	9	1	83

Short-term Goals Submitted

Short-term goals are not recorded consistently from one agency to the next. As such, categorizing the short-term goals submitted by agencies proved to be challenging.²¹

The most common short-term goal recorded on training plans is to improve writing skills. Thirty-seven (37) learners share this goal. Thirty-two (32) learners want to improve their reading skills. Twenty-five (25) learners wish to better their numeracy skills.

On nine training plans, English was recorded as a skill that learners wanted to improve on while in the program. This goal was not broken down any further. On seven training plans, self-management and self-direction was recorded as a short-term goal. These goals were also not broken down.

Long-term Goals Submitted

Practitioners submitted 63 examples of learner long-term goals.²² Five learners were unsure of their long-term goals. Fifteen (15) training plans list one or more of the three main goal paths (employment, independence or further education) but do not list a specific long-term goal.

1) Employment goals

Twenty-eight (28) learners listed long-term employment goals on their training plans. The majority of these employment goals fell under three sectors: service, clerical, and industrial. Close to half of the employment goals identified were jobs that would be considered “hands on.” Examples of these employment goals include sewing machine operator, mechanic, and housekeeper.

2) Independence goals

Twenty-seven (27) learners recorded independence goals. These long-term goals tended to be things such as: communication skills in both ASL and English, basic computer skills and increased independence and feelings of self worth.

3) Further Education

Thirteen (13) learners had long-term further education goals. The majority of learners (10) plan to attend college in order to reach their goal of further education while three learners plan to attend university. A variety of college courses were recorded on the training plans, including Fashion Design, Travel and Tourism and Community Work.

²¹ See Appendix A: List of Learner Goals

²² Appendix C: A List of Learner Goals

Goal Setting Activities, Work and the Deaf Stream LBS Program

Goal Setting Activities

To best understand how learners move closer toward their work goals via LBS literacy programs, an understanding of practitioners' attitudes toward goal setting and workforce literacy is important. Below, practitioners discuss the process through which their learners set employment goals and how practitioners help learners subsequently analyze what is necessary to achieve a given employment goal.

About 40 percent of the learners' long-term goals we recorded are related to employment. Yet many practitioners stress that before they turn toward such a long-term goal with their learner, learners first need to learn "the basics" of reading, writing, and numeracy. Working on employment goals, say practitioners, is often not a priority in their goal setting or daily classroom activities.

"We have one learner who has a goal of becoming employed. This learner has no language base. We put aside his goal of working and, instead, focus on language skills."

"Most of the learners cannot communicate with their families, let alone their bosses. They come to this program to learn English."

"We are practitioners, not employment counselors. Practitioners should keep learners' long-term goals in mind but focus on the level of literacy (of a learner)."

We also asked practitioners to explain their process of setting employment goals with their learners. Practitioners say goal setting is the most complex task to perform with learners because most have difficulty understanding the concept of a goal. In fact, goal setting is sometimes set aside altogether. Other challenges that practitioners express with regard to setting employment goals include learners' low literacy and lack of a first language.

G.O.L.D. asked practitioners to explain how they approach learners to discuss the feasibility of chosen goals. Practitioners say they work through this process carefully as to not discourage learners from chosen goals. Some prefer to take a more hands-off approach, letting the learner determine the realism of a particular goal. This study collected no in-depth examples of how a practitioner might take a learner through this process.

"With learners who are not fluent in ASL, goal setting is a hard concept to explain. First we focus on other priorities such as communication in ASL and English and put aside the idea of goal setting for awhile."

“I let the student enter the classroom first and interact with other learners. I like to give them time to open up before we talk about their future goals.”

“Goal setting can be a very long process. Most learners do not know what they want to do, only that they want a job.”

“Some of our learners cannot set goals; therefore, we usually have to wait and put that on hold until they are at that point. It’s tough because a goal is such an abstract concept for our learners.”

“Goal setting does not work for Deaf learners. I would say goal setting does not work in general. Who knows their goal?”

“When a learner enters our program without a clear goal we don’t explore goals. There is just no time and there are too many students with different goals.”

“Some learners don’t understand goals and have not had goal setting experience in the schools for the Deaf. Therefore, it is a very difficult for practitioners to get learners to identify and express their goals. How can we make goals a visual concept for learners?”

Goal Setting Materials

In our interviews, practitioners also discussed the materials they use to assist with goal setting and the gaps they have noticed in such existing resources.²³ Practitioners discuss the need for materials that help them articulate goal-setting concepts for the learners in Levels 1 to 3.

“We do not use any goal setting resources, it’s all done through our hands (Informal discussion in American Sign Language).”

“I am tired of using the LBS resource related to goal setting. What we need is a resource that explain the concept of *goals* in a different way.”

“Goal setting is too difficult for my learners because they do not understand the concepts of *future* and *goals*. We need more resources aimed at Level 1 and 2 learners.”

“It would be helpful to have a resource that explains what the word *goal* means.”

²³ For a complete list of goal setting resources used by practitioners in the Deaf literacy stream, see Appendix G.

Discussion

Given the variety of ways practitioners use record short-term goals, it appears that they have different ideas about what short-term goals look like and how they should be recorded.

Twenty-eight (28) of the goals we received were particularly broad or vague. For example, one learner's training plan lists the short-term goal as, "To gain LBS Level 1 skills." Such a goal raises the question of how a practitioner would develop a focused training plan and learning activities to support this goal. Because we did not view all training plans in their entirety, it's difficult to comment on practitioners' strategies for designing their training plans to support broad or vague short-term goals. One might surmise the more focused the short-term goal, the easier the work to design training activities to support this goal and the better the training plan supports the goals of the learner.

In the case of many training plans we received, the short-term and long-term goals had no obvious connection. For example, on one plan, the short-term goal is listed as "Level 2," while the corresponding long-term goal is, "basic computer skills." If we take the attitude that the "day-to-day concern should be the small steps that will gradually bring you within range of your big goal,"²⁴ the vastness of the short-term goal listed above (Level 2) makes it difficult to see clearly the day-to-day steps a practitioner would take to assist the learner toward his or her long-term goal of increasing computer skills.

It's worth noting that learner levels in no way appear to correlate with the types of goals learners are likely to present. For example a Learner in Level 1 is just as likely to have employment goals as a learner in Level 4. In fact, many learners in Levels 1 to 3 have employment goals. The challenge for practitioners seems to be the reconciliation of these goals with the reality of learners' skill-sets and their immediate need for independence-type work. Future practitioner training sessions and teaching materials should be designed with this in mind.

Goal setting is arguably one of the most important components of the Literacy and Basic Skills Program because it sets the track for the learning that follows. Yet it's a component on which practitioners continue to require support.

The very exercise of goal setting with literacy learners appears to be a complicated one, both for learners to understand and for practitioners to demonstrate. This complexity, combined with the time demands on practitioners and the numbers of students for which practitioners are accountable, means that goal setting is sometimes delayed or put aside altogether. Such a delay raises questions about the focus of learner training plans and subsequent learning activities, including how the learner's training plan supports his goals.

²⁴ Learning Outcomes Project, 2002, pg. 19

Goal setting practices are inconsistent from one Deaf literacy stream program to the next. In fact, some practitioners working in the Deaf literacy stream have gone so far as to question the benefits of goal setting with learners at all.

As difficult as the initial goal setting process is for practitioners, the follow-up discussions that need to happen once a goal has been established are also challenging.

When we look to the activities of the larger Deaf community for assistance with goal setting, particularly with regard to work, we seem to fall short of success. Recall the frustrations of the employment counselors recorded in *Employment and Employability Needs of the Deaf community in Peel and Halton Regions (2001)*. The counselors felt that clients' goals are not well planned and this lack of planning prevents counselors from helping clients find work. These comments, in combination with the concerns of practitioners about their own role with regard to work goal setting, seem to indicate a gap among goal setting assistance for Deaf adults.

Further study

The comments noted in this report raise questions about the extent of the role of the practitioner with regard to helping a learner move toward his goals. At what point does this move from being a literacy exercise and cross over into career or life planning? On the surface, there is currently a gap in goal setting services to which Deaf adults have access and this gap seems to be hindering employment-seeking efforts.

Training and Teaching Materials

Professional training for practitioners that articulates the connection between short-term and long-term goals will benefit the field. Such training will need to sell the importance of setting short-term goals in the context of longer-range planning. Any such goal setting training needs to be mindful of the numbers of literacy learners in Levels 1-3 and should address the challenges particular to these levels such as the need for basic self-direction and self-management skills.

Teaching materials should be designed with the recognition that many learners are in Levels 1-3 and that, consequently practitioners struggle to reconcile work goals with the need for independence-related work and the basics of English, math and ASL. Going forward, practitioner training will need to recognize the complexities of goal setting and practitioners' challenges with the exercise. Such training will also need to market goal setting to practitioners who might not fully understand or agree with the impact that exercise has on a learner's journey through a literacy program and beyond.

WORKFORCE ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES – A BASELINE

Activities

G.O.L.D. interviewed ten practitioners in the Deaf and Deafblind literacy stream who are currently working with learners with long-term employment goals. During these interviews, practitioners discussed instructional design, the focus of their classroom activities, the incorporation of work themes, using forms in the classroom and supplementary activities such as volunteer programming and guest presentations.

Instructional design tends to vary among programs. But in keeping with the direction set out by Literacy and Basic Skills, program content is designed to match individual learner goals, abilities, and motivation. Learning activities are consistently learner-centred and flexible. Below are some practitioners' comments that reflect this emphasis on flexibility and attention to the learner-centred approach.

“The government requires us to focus on each individual learner goal. We are not supposed to focus on general topics.”

“What we teach in our classroom really depends on the individual needs of our learners.”

“What we teach our learners varies from day-to-day based on which learners show up for class.”

Practitioners say they spend a significant amount of time not only teaching toward individual learner goals, work or otherwise, but also providing learners with a sense of the world around them. Practitioners tell us that this time is extremely important to give learners a context for their learning in order to prepare them, not only for the workforce, but for everyday living.

“When events happen I will discuss them with the learners. For example we discussed the space shuttle blowing up and vocabulary words related to that.”

“Some days, like today for example, we began by working on what I had planned but then we got off topic and discussed something else that is important that is going on in the world.”

Practitioners were asked if and how they incorporate work themes into their learning activities. Several practitioners responded that they do not incorporate work themes into the classroom but, when prompted further, went on to provide examples of work-themed activities. Their responses seem to indicate that no consistent understanding of what constitutes a workforce activity exists among the field.

The kinds of work-related learning activities that practitioners list when asked seem to be on foundational skills, such as vocabulary building and using the TTY properly. Practitioners seem very much aware of the kind of foundational training that their learners require. Whether or not this foundational learning is then placed in the context of a learner's long-term goal, such as employment, varies among practitioners. Below are some comments that reflect how practitioners incorporate work-themes into their activities, including learning materials like work-related forms.

“They need to learn how to write back and forth to their boss and use the TTY so that they can call in to work if they are sick.”

“One learner has a goal of becoming a cook. We started out by teaching math that applies to cooking, such as measurements. Next we taught the learner words related to cooking and how to write recipes. We teach just the basics after that then we refer the learner to a training program.”

“I develop my own activities related to my learners' goals. For example, I ask learners to look in a magazine and identify certain objects that they would need to have in order to do a particular job. Once they have done that then I get them to write down the name of each object.”

“We have one learner whose goal is to become an ASL literacy instructor. In order to relate an activity to her goal we asked her to research information on clouds, give a presentation and do a hands-on activity to show how clouds are formed.”

“Today for example, we talked about important abbreviations that they would possibly see in a place of work.”

“We have one learner who wants to work in a restaurant. With that learner we work on vocabulary related to that job.”

“One learner had an employment goal of working as a sewing machine operator. With that learner we work on things like measurements, filling out forms and activities to show her how to follow instructions.”

Work-related Forms

“We have used real-life forms in the past but not now. We just don’t have the time to contact different companies and ask them for their work forms.”

“I approach employment counselors here and ask them for forms from different companies.”

“I use the forms from within our agency. These forms are available and I don’t have to drive around and pick them all up.”

“There is no time to go to companies and ask them for forms. I collect what I can on my own time.”

Practitioners encourage their learners to volunteer but, presently, no Deaf stream literacy agencies reported to us that they have set-up formal, ongoing volunteer/co-op/apprenticeship programs or partnerships with employment agencies or companies. To provide their learners with a sense of the workforce, practitioners say they coordinate guest presentations and site visits when they can. But they feel their efforts are limited by funding and employer site restrictions.

“I just don’t have the time to find learners places to volunteer.”

“There are no volunteer opportunities through this program but most of the learners volunteer part-time on their own.”

“One learner volunteers in an office. He needed to get out and widen his experience to know if that’s what he wants.”

“Higher-level learners with more communication and motivation are encouraged to apply for volunteer positions themselves.”

“It is very hard to have people come in and present to our learners. The issue is money; we need to pay them for their time.

“We have had quite a few presenters come to our program. We try to show an employment perspective but we are able to do that less because many of these places have insurance policies which prevents us from taking tours.”

Practitioners tend to work informally with individuals and companies in order to obtain information about the current realities of today's workforce. Practitioners rely on personal contacts, the mainstream media, and quick research to develop activities that match the realities of today's workplace and to develop their own awareness of what skills employers are looking for in an employee.

"We get our activities off the Internet or by reading magazines and newspapers."

"I access information from co-workers as well as through my community contacts."

Many practitioners say that learners in Level 1 – 3 are not ready for work themes in their daily learning activities. Practitioners comment that without a basic understanding of language (ASL or English), learners are not able to work successfully toward employment-type goals.

"We don't relate our classroom activities to each individual learner goal."

"We are not employment counselors, we are teachers. We can provide learners with resources to reach their goals of employment but we refer them if it goes beyond us.

"I do not relate activities to a work theme. My learners are struggling with words related to the computer."

"We are just teaching the basics. What we are teaching is not employment specific."

"What we are teaching is not different for learners with employment goals. We teach primarily independence activities here."

"We teach learners life skills that can be used on the job."

Workforce-related Teaching Materials

Under this project, G.O.L.D. collected a list of workforce-themed teaching manuals and workbooks currently used by LBS-funded agencies in Ontario and recommended by AlphaPlus and QUILL (Quality in Lifelong Learning).²⁵ We forwarded this list to Deaf stream practitioners and asked them to comment on the list and to also discuss their own workforce resources, their perspectives on the ideal workforce resource and gaps in existing text-based and alternative media resources.²⁶

Practitioners list a number of books they use to conduct workforce-related activities. Although practitioners list resources such as Workwrite Series, the Goal Requirements Handbook, Essential Skills Profile, and the Career Explorer Search website, no single resource is commonly used among practitioners. In fact, the books of choice vary from one program to the next.

Practitioners tell us their choice of teaching materials is influenced by 1) the ease in which the English text can be adapted and by 2) the budget constraints of their program. For these two reasons, practitioners welcome the opportunity to try resources before purchasing them.

“We were told that we should purchase the *Workwrite Series* but I do not want to spent any more of our budget on resources that are not useful for our learners.”

Practitioners consistently comment that they either create from scratch or adapt from existing materials most of the workforce teaching materials they currently use in the classroom. This work, they say, is a time-consuming and cumbersome task.

“We prefer to develop or modify our own resources because most of the available resources use words that are very complex.”

“It is hard to develop lesson plans because they must match their literacy level. I have to spent time adapting resources so the learners understand it.”

“I spend a lot of time finding the right resource that matches the literacy levels of my learners. Once I have found one, then I have to adapt it.”

Practitioners gather their workforce materials from a number of sources, including community contacts, AlphaPlus Centre, or other local hearing literacy agencies and networks. Personal contacts seem to be a major source of information for practitioners.

“Everything we do is in our hands. That is the main resource we use in our classroom. We simply sit down with our learners and communicate with them.”

²⁵ Appendix D – Recommended Resource List

²⁶ A complete list of teaching manuals and workbooks commonly used by Deaf stream literacy practitioners is charted in Appendix E.

“To find workforce materials I go through catalogues. As well I have a good connection in the literacy council where we have meetings and share resources.”

“I usually contact Job Connect or a woman through the local Training Board to get resources related to the workforce.”

“I use my own connections as resources. I feel that those contacts are the best resources we have as practitioners.”

“Most of the time we collect our resources by meeting people on the street and find out what they do. From there we evaluate whether or not it would be of interest for our learners.”

“I really have to search for any resources that I use. The library here is not up to date so I constantly have to ask other literacy programs and AlphaPlus Centre to send me resources.”

Practitioners discussed the need for materials that represent real-life options to Deaf learners, materials that suit learners in Levels 1-3 and teaching materials that meet the visual needs of Deaf and Deafblind learners with employment goals. Practitioners also talked about the lack of current and accessible workforce materials available to the Deaf and Deafblind literacy stream. Among the gaps, videotapes, materials with Canadian content and materials for learners in LBS Levels 1-3 were cited.

“An ideal workforce resource has to involve things that are reflective of a *real work* situation. It should include communication tools consistent in the workplace.”

“We need more resources that are appropriate for learners in Level 3 and under.”

“An ideal resource should include visuals. As well, it should include communications skills that are used in the workplace.”

“We have a few videotape resources in ASL but there are still not enough in our stream.”

“Where are the resources that are Canadian and not American?”

“There is a sequence in learning that everyone needs to follow. For example, we cannot teach someone multiplication if they can't count by two's and four's. We do not have a resource that allows us to walk our learners through the necessary steps.”

“What we really need is a resource that is a *one-stop shop*. We have access to resources but most of these resources were made for the Anglophone stream.”

These resources are not beneficial for our stream because the English is too complex for our learners.”

Discussion

Common understanding of workforce literacy

When asked, practitioners say they do not lead many workforce literacy activities with their learners. Yet, these same practitioners also go on to list learning activities they do with learners that do have work themes. Their responses seem to indicate a lack of common agreement in the field on what constitutes workforce literacy in a Literacy and Basic Skills program. Certainly, future training events in the Deaf literacy stream will need to establish this common language and common understanding. Indeed, practitioners will need this understanding before can then move forward to explore the role of workforce literacy within their own daily programming.

Workforce literacy as a continuum

Practitioners stress that the road to employment for their learners is very long. And besides this, practitioners emphasize that immediate classroom priorities are not on workforce themed activities, rather on self-direction, self-management. For this reason, any future effort toward supporting practitioners with their workforce activities, whether through training or resource development, will need to be presented to practitioners as a learning continuum. That is to say, making the connection between self-direction/self-management activities and workforce literacy will be an important part of any future training event and teaching aids. Workforce literacy should not be presented to practitioners as a piece of learning that is separate and distinct from independence goals. Instead, such workforce and independence learning must be shown to take place on the same continuum of lifelong learning. This teaching approach will be particularly beneficial for learners in Levels 1 to 3, who have significant interest in employment but who are still developing important self-direction and self-management skills.

Documenting success factors

Practitioners express concerns about the challenges their learners will face as they seek and attempt to maintain employment. Along with this, practitioners use a variety of methods, mostly informal, to gain a better understanding of the realities of the workplace in order that they can best meet the goals of their learners and address any barriers that learners will face along the way. No doubt, learners face barriers to work that are outside of their own immediate control or that of literacy practitioners, including the job market and employer discrimination. And the role of the practitioner only extends so far. Other agencies, including employment service providers, play a key role in assisting learners with employment goals. That being said, practitioners and their learners would benefit significantly from a better understanding of the qualities that employed Deaf adults possess. Such case studies, should they provide analysis of a given success quality, would provide invaluable assistance to practitioners as they design and implement their workforce literacy activities.

Partnerships

Moving forward workforce literacy efforts in the Deaf stream will require a consolidation of stakeholders and information sharing. Formal partnering would provide practitioners with a better understanding of the paths that learners take to arrive at a literacy program

and the journeys they take upon leaving. Such partnering would also open up volunteering or coaching opportunities that could complement the work for the literacy classroom. Literacy agencies can neither work in isolation nor rely on informal partnerships to help learners with their employment goals. Such partnering among key agencies requires a strategy and buy-in.

Workforce materials in context

Interestingly, Deaf stream practitioners don't seem to draw from a small, common list of workforce literacy resources. This might indicate a difference in learner needs, or teaching approaches. Alternatively, it may demonstrate the need to give practitioners a context and support for existing workforce literacy teaching aids. At past training events, without exception, practitioners have said they tend to reject new materials if they receive them without training or explanation. These comments should be heeded. In order to best move forward workforce literacy efforts in the Deaf stream, practitioners training should sell the benefits of particular teaching aids for given learners. This training approach will allow practitioners to explore materials and make informed decisions about what is most useful in their classroom.

Adapting current materials

The adaptation of current teaching materials is a significant part of a literacy practitioner's work. Practitioners express frustration about this time-consuming task. Although they ask for more applicable resources, the ability to adapt current materials is an important part of teaching. Future training opportunities need to provide opportunities for practitioners to discuss adaptation practices.

Design of teaching aids

Practitioners have emphasized the need for teaching materials that are culturally relevant. Along with this, practitioners will benefit from materials that consider the self-direction and self-management needs of learners with work goals. As well, any materials that incorporate real-life case studies, not simply as examples of success, but also as models for skills development, will benefit the field tremendously.

Conclusion

As the Deaf and Deafblind literacy stream works to meet the needs and goals of its learners, there is much that support agencies like G.O.L.D. and AlphaPlus Centre can do to support workforce preparatory efforts.

Perhaps the most significant hurdle to the field's moving ahead with workforce literacy is the need to reconcile the close to forty (40) percent of learners with long-term work goals with the evident need to help these same learners with the basics of math, English and American Sign Language.

Practitioners don't yet seem convinced of the benefits of work-themed activities for their lower-level learners. These same practitioners perceive from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities a pressured emphasis on employment goals to the detriment of their learners' independence goals. This perception has resulted in skepticism toward the benefits of workforce literacy in the classroom.

As efforts are made to assist practitioners with workforce literacy, a common understanding of the parameters and benefits of workforce literacy will first need to be established. This shared understanding in the field will go a long way to ensuring that learners have the best supports necessary to achieve their work goals.

Glossary

Deaf stream

The Ontario literacy field is composed of four streams: Anglophone, Deaf, Francophone and Native.

Deaf versus deaf

The word Deaf, with an upper case "D," refers to the culture and community of Deaf people, while the word deaf, with a lower-case "d," refers to the audiological lack of hearing.

Literacy Resource

For the purposes of this report, a resource is understood to mean any assistance that a literacy practitioner draws upon to assist with his or her literacy work. Such assistance includes but is not limited to print and visuals materials in various media, library support services and networking supports.

Main goal path

The Literacy and Basic Skills program is operated under a number of program principles including learner-centred training. This principle includes supporting learners in developing achievable personal goals related to 1) further training 2) employment or 3) independence.

Workforce literacy

The Workplace Preparation Branch of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has introduced the Ontario Workplace Strategy. The strategy has two parts, workplace literacy and workforce literacy. Workforce literacy focuses on making LBS-funded services more responsive to the workplace, so that learners are better prepared for entering or remaining in the workforce.

Workplace literacy

The Workplace Preparation Branch of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has introduced the Ontario Workplace Strategy. The strategy has two parts, workplace literacy and workforce literacy. Workplace literacy focuses on making LBS-like services available to the workplace on a fee-for service basis.

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Appendix A:

Job Placements for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals as provided by Employment Agencies in Ontario

In order to identify the popular job types that Deaf people are obtaining in Ontario, G.O.L.D. contacted various employment agencies that serve Deaf and hard of hearing people in Ontario. Our aim was to collect the types of jobs that Deaf people had over the past year or currently hold now. Two employment agencies in Ontario sent G.O.L.D. sixty-eight position titles.

Northern Region

IT Website/Office Manager
Employee at a major bank
Big Box Store - Shipper / Receiver
Cook
Assistant Cook (2)
Dishwasher (2)
Groundskeeper
Chambermaid
Cashier (3)
Lube Technician
Bank (ABM money counter)
Prep person (auto body)
Car Cleaner
Delivery Driver
Hearing Care Counselor
Office Assistant
Banquet Caterer
Auto body Repairer
Construction Labourer
Shift Manager - Fast Food Outlet
Adult Instructor - Computers
Receptionist
Self employed (2)
Door Manufacturer

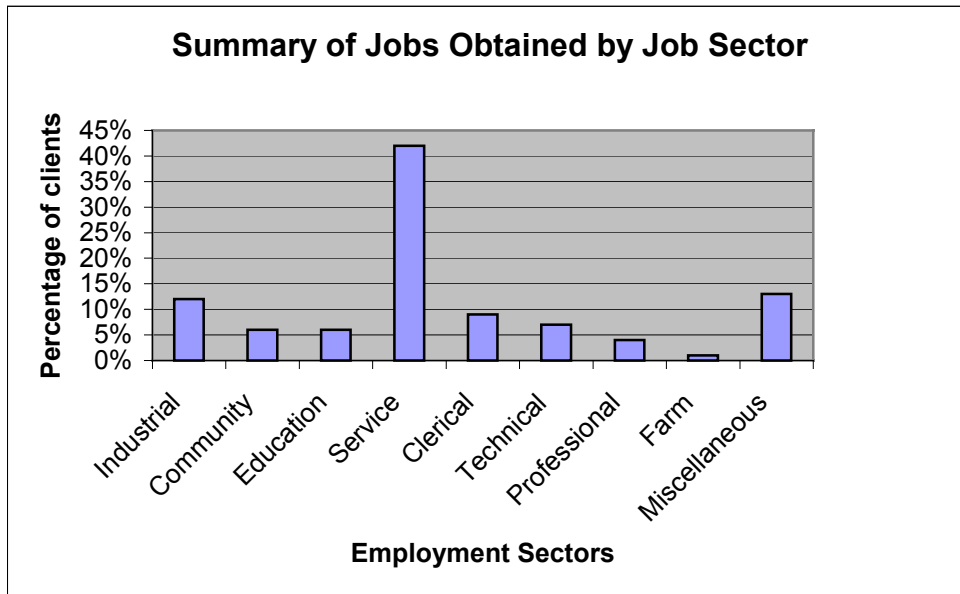
Kitchen Help
Psychometrist
Security Tenant
File clerk - doctor's office
School bus driver
Furniture manufacturer
Wood/ceramic floor estimator
Museum Curator
Income Tax preparer
IT researcher
Sign Language Teacher
Silk Screener
Industrial Sewer
Seamstress
Welder
Child Care Assistant
Personal Support Worker
General Cleaner in an old age home
Data Centre - Room prep. person
IT Assistant
Lumber Yard Labourer (promoted to an office job)
House Cleaner (2)
Mall Cleaner
Rig assistant (for a Diamond driller)

Southwestern Region

Delivery Driver
AZ Truck Driver
Graphic Designer
Mail Room Clerk
Family Support Worker
ASL Teacher
Room Attendant
Cleaner
Dental Lab Technician
Automotive Production Associate
General Labourer
Machine Operator
Data Entry Clerk
Farm Worker

Typical Employment Sectors

Below is a summary of these placements listed on the previous page according to employment sectors.



Industrial includes: machine operators, mechanics, and general labourers

Community includes: personal support workers, hearing care counselors

Education includes: ASL teachers, adult instructors

Service includes: cleaners/ janitors, restaurant workers, bank workers

Clerical includes: file clerks, receptionists, data entry clerks

Technical includes: graphic designer, IT web site designer

Professional includes: Psychometrist, dental lab technician

Farm includes: farm worker

*Miscellaneous includes*²⁷: self-employed, rig assistant

²⁷ Roots & Kerr, 1998, pg. 41 (Sectors taken from popular job list)

Appendix B: Breakdown of main goal paths

The following is a list of learner main goal paths as submitted by practitioners. Each main goal path is categorized per LBS literacy level.

Literacy Level	Employment	Independence	Further education and training
Level 1	Math teacher	Manage personal finances	Cooking course at George Brown College
	Cleaner/ janitor	Learn how to drive a car	Attend art classes at local college
	Cook	To buy a house	College: Fashion Designer program
	Forklift operator/ dishwasher	Learn ASL (2)	
	Sewing machine operator	Basic computer skills (2)	
	Job in the printing industry	Increase feeling of self worth	
	Housekeeping	Increase independence	
	Factory	To communicate with other people	
	Unknown (3)	Unknown (2)	
Level 2	Computer worker	To be able to operate a computer	National Technical Institute for the Deaf
	Auto mechanic (Tool & Die)	Basic computer skills	Fashion Program at George Brown College
	Office worker or web designer	To own a computer	Community Worker course
	Office worker/ housekeeper	Communicate better with people	
	Computer repair technician	Personal development/ independence	
	Assembler		
	Work in a restaurant		
	Work in tourism		
	Computer engineering		
	Teacher/ own art business		
	Actor and short order cook		
	Unknown (6)		
Level 3	Community worker	To own a car	College: Travel and Tourism
	General clerk in accounting field	Unknown	University
	Computer engineering		Photography course
	Educational assistant		York University: Psychology
	Office clerk		Hairdressing program
	Business administration		College; Social worker program
	Early Childhood Education Teacher		
Level 4	Office clerk		March of Dimes, "Diskovery Program"
	Unknown (2)		Health and Science program
Level 5	Sex Therapist	Upgrade English and math skills	Ontario Secondary School Diploma

Appendix C: List of learner goals

Gender	Level	Short-term goal	Long-term goal	Main Goal Path
F	Pre-Level	Level 1	Independence	Independence
F	Pre-Level	Other country – first language	Learn ASL	Independence
F	1	Increase reading, writing and numeracy skills at Level 1 to move closer to her goal of further education and training in the field of Culinary Arts	To take a cooking course at GBC	Further Education and Training
F	1	Increase her reading, writing and numeracy skills at Level 1 in order to move closer to her goal of personal independence in day-to-day living	To be able to manage her personal finances	Independence
M	1	Increase reading, writing and numeracy skills to Level 1 in order to move closer to his goal of increasing his employment options	To find a job as a forklift operator or a dishwasher	Employment
F	1	Increase her reading, writing and numeracy skills at Level 1 in order to move closer to her goal of increasing her employment options	To find a job as a sewing machine operator	Employment
M	1	Increase his reading, writing and numeracy skills at Level 1 in order to move closer to his goal of increasing his employment options	To find a job in the printing industry	Employment
F	1	Increase her reading, writing and numeracy skills at Level 1 in order to move closer to her goal of increasing her employment options	To find a job as a sewing machine operator	Employment
	1	Improve reading, writing and math skills to learn how to use a computer	To take art classes at a local college	Independence, Further Education and Training
M	1	Improve reading, writing and math skills. Brush up on employment and computer skills	To be ready for future employment	Employment and Independence
M	1	Improve his English skills in order to enter the social environment	Unknown	Independence
F	1	Wants to be able to write sentences on her own, to have the ability to understand the topic on order to help her children with their homework	To be able to communicate with other people on her own	Independence
	1	Improve numeracy skills to Level 1	Independence	Independence
F	1	To gain computer, ASL, English, numeracy and pre-employment skills to Level 1	Continue education and become a math teacher	Employment
M	1	To gain ASL, English, math, pre-employment and computer skills to Level 1	Self-employment: cleaning business (caretaker/janitor)	Employment

F	1	To gain LBS Level 1 skills	Continue education, go to college and become a fashion designer	Further Education and Training
M	1	To gain LBS Level 1 skills	Employment	Employment
M	1	To gain LBS Level 1 skills	To buy a house	Independence
F	1	To gain LBS Level 1 skills	Employment: to become a cook in a restaurant	Employment
F	1	Level 1	Independence	Independence
M	1	Level 1	Independence	Independence
M	1	Level 1	Basic computer skills	Independence
M	1	Level 1	Basic computer skills	Independence
	1	Increase self confidence, improve reading, writing and, math skills and to understand the clock, money (ATM) and how to buy items	Undetermined	Independence
F	1	Increase reading, writing and ASL expression skills to Level 2	To obtain a job as a housekeeper	Independence/ Employment
F	1	Increase her English and computer skills to Level 2	To increase her feelings of self worth	Independence
F	1	Increase reading, writing and numeracy skills	To obtain a job in a factory	Employment
F	1	Increase her reading, writing and computer skills to increase independence	To increase her independence and to one day work as an RN	Independence
F	1	Increase reading, writing and computer skills to Level 2	Unsure of long-term goal	Employment
M	1	Increase reading, writing and numeracy skills to Level 2	To improve ASL, vocabulary and communication skills (email, MSN, TTY)	Independence
F	2	Increase her reading, writing and numeracy skills at Level 2 in order to move closer to her goal of personal independence	To learn how to drive a car	Independence
M	2	Increase his reading, writing and numeracy skills to Level 1 in order to move closer to his goal of Further Education and Training in the field of computers	Attend the National Technical Institute for the Deaf	Further Education and Training
	2	Improve reading, writing and math skills to learn how to use a computer	Independence and Employment	Independence and Employment
M	2	To learn how to use the computer to improve grammar and writing	Personal development and independence	Independence
F	2	Improve grammar and reading comprehension, increase vocabulary, to improve personal and business letter writing skills, become computer literate, improve knowledge of world and Canadian geography for travel, technology skills for communication	Work in tourism, obtain a volunteer job with working with developmentally handicapped deaf or deafblind children possible at BRDC in Toronto	Employment

		and to read for personal use		
F	2	Improve her English and knowledge of cooking symbols, learn measurements and learn about employability skills	Wants to work in a restaurant	Employment and Independence
F	2	To learn how to use computers	To be able to operate a computer	Independence
	2	Improve writing skills to Level 2	Independence and Employment	Independence and Employment
M	2	High Level 2	Employment related to computers/ hand work	Employment
M	2	Level 3	College: Travel & Tourism/ ASL Instructor	Further Education and Training
M	2	High Level 2	Employment: Auto Mechanic, Tool & Die	Employment
M	2	Level 3	Employment: work at home	Employment
M	2	High Level 2	Fashion program at GBC	Further Training and Education
M	2	Take grade 12 math	Computer Engineering	Employment
F	2	High Level 2	Find employment	Employment
F	2	High Level 2	Find employment as a secretary in a business office or Web Designer	Employment
F	2	Learn different children's stories	Employment: support family	Employment
F	2	Level 3	Community Worker (GBC course)	Further Education and Training
F	2	Level 2	Deaf culture and work in an office or as a housekeeper	Employment
F	2	Level 2	Basic computer skills	Independence
	2	Learn how to operate a computer	To own a computer	Independence
M	2	Increase his reading and writing skills at Level 2 to move towards his goal of improving self-management/direction skills. To obtain a driver's license for employment and to become a Canadian citizen	Wants to become a computer technician and repair computers	Employment and Independence
M	2	Increase his reading and writing skills to Level 2 to move towards his goal to obtain employment and improve self-management/ direction skills	To obtain employment as an assembler	Employment and Independence
F	2	Increase reading and writing skills to Level 3	To become a teacher and own her own art business	Independence/ Employment
M	2	Increase his English reading, writing and computer skills	To learn how to communicate with people better	Independence
F	2	Increase reading, writing and computer skills to Level 3	Unsure of long-term goal	Independence/Job
	3	Improve numeracy skills to Level 3	Independence	Independence
	3	Improve reading skills to Level 3	Independence	Independence
M	3	Level 4 (Hearing)	College: Travel & Tourism or Payroll	Further Education and Training

M	3	Level 4 (Hearing)	University: Gym teacher	Further Education and Training
M	3	Level 3	Computer Engineering	Employment
F	3	Level 4 (Hearing)	Photography course	Further Education and Training
F	3	Learn how to write essays	Business Administration	Employment
F	3	Level 3	Community Worker	Employment
F	3	Level 3	Social worker: College program	Further Education and Training
F	3	Level 3	York University: Psychology	Further Education and Training
	3	Improve reading and writing skills. Improve grammar and math skills so she can work with children	To become an Educational Assistant	Employment
	3	Obtain driver's license so that I can drive to work. Improve reading and writing skills so I can work in an office environment	To become an office clerk and own a car	Employment Independence
	3	Improve reading, writing, math and computer skills so that I can attend hairdressing courses at college	To own a beauty shop and become a hairdresser	Further Education and Training
F	3	Improve her English and math skills at Level 3 on order to help her children with their school work	Unknown, wants to move to California to lead a new and better life for her kids	Independence
M	3	Increase his English and numeracy skills to Level 3 to work towards his goal of obtaining employment and improve self-management/ direction skills	To obtain employment as an actor and short order cook	Employment, Independence, Further Education and Training
F	3	Increase her ASL expressive and receptive skills, English reading and writing skills and computer skills to Level 4	To become an ECE teacher	Independence/ Employment
M	4	Upgrade skills to Level 4, successful completion of the CAAT, develop practical computer skills, improve budgeting skills for further independence and improve communication skills and learn how to use technology for communication purposes	Further Education and Training, Independence Admittance into March of Dimes "Diskovery Program" for computer software application	Further Education and Training, Independence
	4	Improve writing skills to Level 4	Employment	Employment
	4	Improve reading and writing skills to Level 4	Employment	Employment
	4	Improve writing skills to Level 4	Independence	Independence
	4	Improve self-management skills to Level 4	Independence	Independence
	4	Improve reading, writing, math and computer skills so I can work in an office environment To take a typing course	To become an office clerk	Employment
	4	Improve reading and writing so I can attend a Health Science, first aid and CPR course	To become a Nursing Home Attendant	Further Education and Training

F	4	Increase her English and numeracy skills to move towards her goal to obtain employment and improve self-management/direction skills	To obtain employment as a general clerk in the accounting field	Employment
F	5	Increase her English and numeracy skills to Level 5 in order to move towards her goal to obtain diploma, further education and training and improve self – management/ direction skills	To obtain her Ontario Secondary School Diploma	Independence and Further Education and Training
M	5	Increase his English and numeracy skills to Level 5 to move towards his goal to improve self/management/direction skills	Upgrade English and math skills	Independence
F	5	Increase her reading an writing skills to Level 5 to move towards her goal to obtain a diploma and employment	To obtain her Ontario Secondary School Diploma and to gain employment as a sex therapist	Employment

Appendix F: Recommended Workforce Resource List

The list below was compiled by AlphaPlus and QUILL (Quality in Lifelong Learning).

ABC Canada Resource Centre. *Workplace/workforce literacy: Trends & issues in 1993*: a paper presented to the Ontario Workplace/Workforce, Ontario: W. Johnston, 1993.

Abram, Mike. *Employability skills portfolio*, Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Guidance Centre, 1994.

Adult Preparatory Programs Articulation and Personal and career development. Ontario.

Alberta. *Alberta Advanced Education and Career Workability handbook*. Edmonton: Information Development and Marketing, Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, c1996.

Barber, Jane. *Goals requirements handbook: pathways to success*. Toronto, Ontario: Toronto District School Board, 2000.

Belcher, Bruce. *Deaf Empowerment Program: employability skills curriculum*, Hamilton, Ontario: Mohawk College, 1997.

Belcher, Bruce. *Deaf Empowerment Program: employability skills curriculum. Lesson plans*, Hamilton, Ontario: Mohawk College, 1998.

Bond, Judith. *CanadaWorks*, Toronto, Ontario: WTS Workplace Training Services, 2000.

Bond, Judith. *Through the looking glass: a workbook for learners (LINC 4/5)*, Toronto, Ontario: Workplace Training and Services, Toronto District School Board, 2002.

Bond, Judith. *Through the looking glass: CanadaWorks: a workbook for learners (LINC 4/5)*, Toronto, Ontario: Workplace Training and Services, Toronto.

Bourgeois, Beth. *Pre-employment curriculum*, Toronto: Canadian Hearing Society, 1998.

Brennan, Stephanie. *Employability skills instructor's manual*. Burlington, Ontario: Centre for Skills Development & Training, 1999.

Brennan, Stephanie. *Employability skills manual*, Burlington, Ontario: Centre for Skills Development & Training, 1999.

British Columbia. Ministry of Education. *Adult basic education: employment preparation curriculum guide*. Victoria: Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training and Ministry Responsible for Science and Education, 1989.

Canada. Human Resources Development Canada. *What works: career building strategies for special needs groups*. Edmonton, Alta.: Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development, Career and Labour Market Information, c1999.

Canada. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. *Aboriginal workforce participation initiative: AWPI employer toolkit*. Ottawa: Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1998.

Cappelli, Peter. *Self-assessed skill needs and job performance*, Philadelphia, PA: National Center on Adult Literacy, University of Pennsylvania, 1995.

Chaban, Arnold. *An Annotated bibliography of employability materials*. Mass.: SABES, between 1994 and 2001.

Coates, Joseph F. *Future work*, Bethesda, Maryland: World Future Society, c1991.

Colette, Marian. *Getting there: a curriculum for people moving into employment*. Knoxville, Tenn.: Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee, 1996.

Conley, Jean. *Customer service workshop: a guide to customer service for the adult literacy learner*, Kingston, Ontario: Literacy Link Eastern Ontario, c1995.

Cooper, Denise. *LINC literacy employment resource, 2000: a support document for the LINC literacy component*, Toronto, Ontario: Toronto Catholic District School Board c2000.

Geraci, Karen. *Workwrite. [Book 1]. Organizing information*, Toronto, Ontario: Preparatory Training Programs, c2001.

Goldhar, Lou. *Impact-ASL pre-employment curriculum topical outline for levels 1, 2 and 3*. Toronto, Ontario: Canadian Hearing Society, 1998.

Himmelstein, Rosely. *Success at work. Teacher's manual*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Globe Fearon, c2000.

Himmelstein, Rosely. *Success at work*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Globe Fearon, c2000.

Ibey, Deborah. *Trails to literacy: 'positive pathways to a brighter future'*. Ontario: North Frontenac Literacy Program, 2001.

Jukovy, Linda. *Work matters. Workplace skills*, Chicago, Ill.: Contemporary Books, c1997.

Lavalley, Peter. *Making it work (at work)*. Regina, Sask.: Wascana Institute, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science & Technology, 1996.

Majerovich, Roberte. *Career modules as an approach to literacy and numeracy development*. Kapuskasing, Ontario: Kapuskasing-Smooth Rock Falls and District Board of Education, c1996.

Manning, Garth. *Working words: employment skills for aboriginal youth*, Native Education Centre, 1998.

Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy. *I don't even know where to start: creating routes to an employable future for adult literacy learners*. Toronto: Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy, 1994.

Moniz-Lecce, Sandy. *EmployAbility: job search strategies for students with disabilities: a facilitator's manual*. Surrey, B.C.: Kwantlin College; Edmonton, Alta: Literacy Services of Canada Distribution, 1999.

Onda, Stephen. *Working out [videorecording] : people with disabilities in the workplace*. Regina, Sask.: Heartland Motion Pictures, Inc., c1993.

Rowen, Norman S. *People over programs: some characteristics of more integrated planning and delivery of employment*, Toronto, Ontario: Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy, 1999.

Shohet, Linda. *Issues in workplace/workforce literacy in 1992*, Montréal, Québec: L. Shohet, 1992.

Strumpf, Lori. *Essential skills for the workplace. Level one, Using forms and documents*. Beth Chicago, Ill.: Contemporary Books, 1993.

Ward, David. *Good day! How may I help you?* Dryden, Ontario: Dryden Literacy Association, 2000.

Workwrite. [Book 2]. Schedules, Toronto, Ontario: Preparatory Training Programs, c2001.

Workwrite. [Book 3]. Information forms; Toronto, Ontario: Preparatory Training Programs, c2001.

Workwrite. [Book 4]. Workplace communications. Toronto, Ontario: Preparatory Training Programs, c2002.

Literacy and Basic Skills programs in the Anglophone stream have used the following resources in their classrooms and noted that they are beneficial:

Hodges, Vivienne, *Critical Reading for Work (Levels E, M & D)*, New York. NY: Educational Design, Inc., 1995.

Lobb, Nancy. *150 Ways to keep your Job*, Portland, ME: J Weston Walch, c 1994.

Perrin, Carl. *Survival Writing Skills for the Workplace*, Portland, ME: Walch, c 1997.

Robinson, Catherine, Jenise Rowekamp, *Speaking Up at Work*, Network: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Writing it Down: Writing Skills for Everyday Life. Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press, Publishing Division of Laubach Literacy International, c1989

Quality in Lifelong Learning (QUILL) has identified the following books as valuable that have been on loan from AlphaPlus:

Bell, Lynda. *Work Matters. Human Relations on the Job*, Chicago, Ill., Contemporary Book, c 1997.

Getting a Job and Keeping It, Paramus, NJ: Globe Fearon Educational Publ., c 1994.

Grecki, Sue. *Writing at Work*, Burnaby, B.C.: Skill Plan, B.C. Construction Industry Skills Improvement Council, 2003.

Hutchinson, Nancy Lynn. *Succeeding with the Interview*, Scarborough, Ont: Nelson Canada, 1994.

Lynam, Sandy, Margaret Brown. *Interview!* Milton Keynes: The Chalkface Project, 1991

Lefkowitz, William. *The Janus Series: Employability Skills Program; Understanding Schedules; Budgeting and Buying; Using the telephone*. Upper Saddle River, N.J: Globe Fearon, c 1994.

Parsky, Larry M. *English for Employment*, New York: Educational Design, 1994.

Ringel, Harry. *Key Vocabulary for a Safe Workplace*, Syracuse N.Y.: New Readers Press, c 2000.

Starkey, Carolyn. *Essential Life Skills Series: Reading signs, directories, schedules, maps, charts and graphs*. Lincolnwood, Ill.: National Textbook Co., c 1994.

Tessier, Angels. *The Job Seeker's Handbook: A Supporting Guide for Literacy Instructors*. Winnipeg: Employment Projects for Woman, 1997.

Appendix E:

Chart – Workforce Resources Used in the Deaf/Deafblind Literacy Stream

Resources Used in the LBS Classrooms by the Deaf/ Deafblind Stream	Number of Programs Using Resource
Employability skills manual	4
Workwrite (Book 1) Organizing Information	4
Workwrite (Book 2) Schedules	4
Workwrite (Book 3) Information forms	4
Workwrite (Book 4) Workplace Communications	4
Impact–ASL pre-employment curriculum topical outline for Levels 1,2 and 3	3
Pre-employment curriculum	3
Deaf Empowerment Program: employability skills curriculum -Lesson Plans	2
LINC Employment (2000)	2
Goals Requirements Handbook: pathways to success	2
EmploAbility: job search strategies for students with disabilities: a facilitator’s manual	1
Day By Day (English for Employment Communication)	1
Deaf Empowerment Program: employability skills curriculum	1
Employability skills instructor’s manual	1
Career modules as an approach to literacy and numeracy development	1
Essential skills for the workplace: Level 1, using forms and documents	1

Appendix F:

Chart – Workforce Resources Recommended by Individual Practitioners in the Deaf/ Deafblind Literacy Stream

The following list of workforce resources was compiled from practitioners' comments. These resources did not appear on the list of recommended workforce resources but are currently being used in the classroom.

Workforce Resource	# Of Agencies Using Each Resource
Breaking Down the Barriers – Join the Workplace	1
Knowing How to Fill Out Forms (BRCD Adult Education Program)	1
Job Wanted	1
“Get-it!” Getting employment through interview training	1
Finding a Job: Language Skills and Strategies for ESL Learners	1
Real Life Reading and Writing on the Job – Teacher’s Guide	1
Real Life Reading and Writing on the Job – Workbook	1
English Language Activities for a Changing World of Work	1
Attitudes on the Job – Life Skills	1
Getting a Job – Gallaudet	1
Meetings That Work – Business Skills Express Services	1
10 Essential Skills to Get That Job – An Employment Guide for People with Visual Impairments (HRDC, Halton, Peel and Dufferin Regions)	1

Appendix G:

Chart – Goal Setting Resources Used in the Deaf and Deafblind Literacy Stream

Goal Setting Resource	# Of Agencies Using Each Resource
A Dream That Walks	3
Goal Setting for Learners	3
Working with Learning Outcomes in Adult Literacy – Goal Prompt Cards	2
Inside Outcomes the Sequel: What's Your Goal?	2
Goal-Directed Assessment	1