

## What is new about Family Literacy Programs (formally Family Literacy) in the CALP Guidelines 2020

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Below is a list of changes to the family literacy programs mode of delivery in the [CALP Guidelines 2020](#) (Section 5.3.3. p 37-39)

**Change One:** Revised list of reasons why the family literacy programs mode of delivery may be considered a beneficial or appropriate mode (revisions in bold, below):

- Recognize that some adult learners are more likely to attend programming for the sake of their children – preparing them to attend kindergarten, helping them with their homework, and supporting them to improve social skills and self-esteem – **and leveraging that opportunity to focus on the adult's foundational learning needs.**
- Understand that adults tend to persist longer in family literacy programs than in other programs, and therefore have more opportunities to learn.
- **Recognize the opportunity to transition adult learners** into literacy and foundational learning opportunities offered through another mode of delivery.
- **Want to help adult learners** to build confidence, their ability to advocate for themselves and their families, and build their identity as a learner while practicing and/or developing skills in a safe and welcoming environment.
- **Recognize that the family literacy programs mode of delivery is an effective approach to identifying adults' skills gaps and to facilitate their participation in planned adult foundational learning experiences.**

CALP grant recipients should consider this list when choosing which mode of delivery will most effectively meet the foundational learning needs of adults in their communities.

**Change 2:** The subsection 'Responsive Learning Opportunities' was added to the family literacy programs mode of delivery.

Family literacy programs, including those based on predesigned models, must focus on the foundational learning needs and goals of adult learners, whether those goals pertain to adult learning or employment, or helping kids with their learning. If using a pre-designed family literacy program model to address adult learning, the program activities must be adapted, and be of sufficient intensity and duration, to address the adult foundational learners' needs.

As with all CALP-delivered programs and activities, family literacy programs provide grant recipients with the opportunity to help learners build a pathway to learning, employment, and personal success, which may include participating in other programs offered by the CALP organization, by a partner organization, or other adult learning providers.

**Change 3:** For all CALP-funded family literacy programs, fees must be charged unless the learner faces a financial barrier.

This change means family literacy programs are not, by default, free. Note that in CALP, only tutoring is free to the learner. Grant recipients can reduce or waive fees that would be a

barrier for foundational learners to attend an Literacy and Foundational Learning (LFL) (or CCB) family literacy program. Please also note, however, that all adult learner participants in CALP family literacy programs must be foundational learners, as defined in the CALP Guidelines 2020 (just like any learner who participates in an LFL learning opportunity). It is often the case that foundational learners will have a financial barrier, which can be addressed with the CALP grant by reducing/waiving fees, subsidizing childminding, and/or subsidizing transportation costs.

**Change 4:** The requirement that CALP-funded family literacy programs be directed towards the parents of children up to six years of age has been removed.

This change means that adults with children of all ages from birth to eighteen can attend family literacy programs. The removal of this requirement provides family literacy programs with the opportunity to incorporate foundational activities (e.g. literacy and numeracy) at the upper elementary, junior high, and high school competencies and skills levels into their programs to the benefit of adult learners, who acquire the knowledge and skills foundation they require to help their children. This change broadens the program possibilities in family literacy programs, which has the potential to enhance family participation in literacy and foundational learning activities in everyday life.

**Family Literacy FAQs from the CALP Portal** <https://calp.ca/about-the-calp-grant.html>

**How will I know if my family literacy program will be a fit in one of the categories of the Literacy and Foundational Learning (LFL) programming area?**

As with any mode of delivery, a learning opportunity delivered through the family literacy programs mode of delivery may be categorized in Literacy and Foundational Learning (LFL) only if it meets two criteria:

The family literacy program serves foundational learners as defined in the CALP Guidelines 2020.

- If so, the learning opportunity should be categorized in one of the LFL categories (Adult Literacy, Numeracy, Skills for Learning, Basic Digital Skills, or English Language Learning).
- If not, the family literacy program may be a better fit in Community Capacity Building or in some cases, should not be considered a CALP-funded program.

The primary intended learning objective (PILO) of the learning opportunity aligns with the PILO of one of the LFL categories.

- If so (the family literacy program serves adult foundational learners AND focuses on a PILO of one of the LFL categories), the family literacy program should be categorized in LFL.

- For example, a family literacy program should be categorized in Skills for Learning if it supports foundational learners to build the skills and habits of learning that are needed to set and achieve their learning goals, be successful in further learning, and increase confidence in their ability to be a more self-directed, independent learner
- If not, (the family literacy program does not focus on a PILO of one of the LFL categories), the family literacy program may be a better fit in Community Capacity Building or in some cases, should not be considered a CALP-funded program.

### **Why is assessment important in the delivery of a family literacy program?**

Family literacy programs are one of four modes of delivery used by grant recipients to address adult foundational learning needs. To ensure that adult foundational learning needs are being addressed, all LFL programs, delivered through any mode of delivery (including family literacy programs), must respond to the adult participants' learning needs. To understand those needs, and the skill levels the adult learner participants are currently at, some level of assessment is required. Assessment can be a conversation, observation or tool. The purpose of gathering the information is to co-create a successful learning experience with and for that learner. Advanced Education does not mandate or prescribe which type(s) of assessment CALPs should engage in, and leaves it up to individual CALPs to determine how to better understand adult foundational learner needs and skill levels.

### **Can assessment in family literacy programs be ongoing throughout the program instead of a more formal intake/initial assessment – post assessment approach?**

Yes, assessment in family literacy can be ongoing throughout the program. Although learner needs can be assessed through informal and/or formal processes, many CALP practitioners prefer informal approaches because it is less threatening to participants who may have had negative learning experiences in the past. Assessment is an ongoing process that helps practitioners to develop learning opportunities that respond to learner needs that emerge throughout the program. The family literacy programs mode of delivery provides a safe space for adults, who might otherwise hesitate, to re-engage in learning and to begin to see themselves as learners who can achieve the learning, employment, and personal goals that are important to them.

### **Can an organization change the focus or mode of delivery of a family literacy program if that change might better address learner needs?**

A CALP grant recipient is expected to be responsive to learner needs. So, if a CALP finds that a proposed program or mode of delivery is not addressing learner needs, then the organization should make the adaptations or modifications required to do so. Ongoing assessment may be used to inform the change to another program or mode of delivery. In such instances, a program delivered through the family literacy programs mode of delivery can build on knowledge and skills previously acquired by learners and target skills areas that learners find challenging. Mindfully building on prior knowledge and skills, using the technique of 'scaffolding,' helps learners to experience a meaningful sense of competence, which, in turn, leads to increased confidence in oneself as a learner.

### **Why would all family literacy programs not be categorized as Skills for Learning (Formerly Foundational Life Skills)?**

Categorization of learning opportunities is determined by the primary intended learning objectives (PILOs) of each opportunity. Not all learning opportunities offered through the family literacy programs mode of delivery have the same PILOs as the Skills for Learning category. For example, learning opportunities in the English Language Learning category using the family literacy programs mode of delivery may be focused on one or more of the following PILOs: reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. The PILO should be improving English language skills (which may include one or more of the above).

It is also important to note that the PILOs of the new Skills for Learning category are skills and habits that are not exclusive to that category. Skills for Learning, will **primarily** focus on developing the following skills and learning habits:

- Recognizing oneself as a learner;
- Taking risks in learning;
- Actively engaging in the act of learning;
- Developing learning strategies;
- Building collaboration skills in learning;
- Strengthening communication skills in learning.

... while other categories of Literacy and Foundational Learning will continue building those skills and habits, but **not as the primary** intended learning objective.

### **Do family literacy program practitioners need to be trained in Models?**

Models training is not mandatory for the delivery of CALP-funded programs using the family literacy programs mode of delivery. If interested in taking family literacy program models training, a CALP grant recipient should contact the organization that delivers the models training to do so. If offering a program based on a model, the grant recipient must determine that a family literacy program is the best mode of delivery option, and then ensure that the facilitator has the skills required to adapt the pre-designed content and activities of models to address the learning, employment, and personal goals of the adult participants.

### **The following training is required for CALP-funded programs using the family literacy programs mode of delivery:**

**Introduction to Adult Foundational Learning** is mandatory for all staff involved in LFL program oversight and delivery. As well, grant recipients are responsible for ensuring that contracted instructors, facilitators, tutors, and volunteers who work with adult LFL learners are highly familiar with the central themes of Introduction to Adult Foundational Learning, including adult learning principles and application of the CALP Guidelines in a practical context.

In addition, all staff responsible for the oversight and direct delivery of family literacy programs, including contracted facilitators and instructors and volunteers, must complete **CALP Essentials for Family Literacy Programs** within the grant term, preferably prior to the start of the program. New staff should take the training in their first year of employment.

Grant recipients that use family literacy programs as a mode of delivery should base those programs on the promising practices of the family literacy field. AE encourages grant recipients to access the substantial amount of research and resources available on promising practices on the delivery of Literacy and Foundational Learning, including family literacy programs, much of which is located on the CALP Portal ([www.calp.ca](http://www.calp.ca)).

**Adult Literacy and Learning (A.L.L.) in Family Literacy Programs** is designed to be a practical companion to CALP Essentials for Family Literacy Programs.

Grant recipients are encouraged to connect with their Regional Support Staff or Professional Development Specialist about access to CALP Essentials for Family Literacy Programs or A.L.L. in Family Literacy Programs.