

Beyond the ACSF

Measuring the Whole Learning Experience

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LINC Tasmania

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- Provides a range of literacy services, including
 - 1:1 tutoring
 - Small group classes
 - Literacy practice embedded in community learning style courses
- Usual attendance 1 hour per week
- Major KPIs in number of clients and increases in ACSF levels
 - Progress across ACSF levels slow
 - Large proportion of low level learners

Not progressing?

- At LINC, we know (anecdotally) that learners:
 - Increase in confidence, decrease in anxiety
 - Increase connections to other services
 - Improve relationships within the community and family
 - Take more care with personal hygiene, appearance
 - Engage successfully in and complete courses
 - Help kids with homework
 - Improve organisation in everyday life: keeping appointments, letting LC know when they can't come to appointments, cope with bills
 - Increase self-advocacy e.g., negotiating with landlord/Centrelink

Beder, 1999

- Gains in employment
- Gains in earnings
- Continued education
- Improved self-image
- Increased involvement in their children's education
- Increased *perceived* skills, but not *actual* skills

Confidence

- Increases in confidence is the most commonly reported outcome of literacy learning (Beder, 1999; Eldred et al., 2004)
- E.g., Tett and Maclachlan's (2007) study of 613 adult learners in Scotland:
 - Confidence in one's own abilities
 - Confidence in one's ability to do learning specific activities
 - Confidence to participate in activities outside one's literacy lessons (e.g., socialising), and
 - Confidence in oneself as a worker

Social Capital

- Collective value of all social networks (i.e., who people know) and norms of reciprocity
- Adult literacy and numeracy training is embedded in sociocultural and economic activity of the community in which the training is taking place (Balatti, Black & Falk, 2009)
- Greater ability to reach out to, communicate with and become involved with others (Centre for Literacy of Quebec, 2010)
- Balatti, et al. (2006): 80% of participants reported social capital outcomes

Literacy Practices

- Participation in basic skills programs has no relationship with proficiency gains (Beder, 1999; Reder, 2011)
- However, strong relationship between participation in programs and literacy *practices* (Reder, 2011; Purcell-Gates, 2002)
- Literacy Practices: Engagement in everyday reading, writing and maths activities
- Engagement in Literacy Practices enhanced by authentic literary tuition (Purcell-Gates, 2002)
- Practice Engagement Theory: Long-term engagement in practices leads to long-term gains in proficiency

LINC Projects

- Catching Confidence
- Exploring collection and analysis of qualitative data, including the use of N'Vivo

World Café

- Small group discussion
- 3 rounds of 15 minutes
- Write, doodle, draw key ideas on the table-cloths
- One person stays behind as the table host – be prepared to share
- Others move on to new tables (not with the same people) when the bell rings

Café Etiquette

- Focus on what matters
- Contribute your thinking
- Speak your mind and heart
- Listen to understand
- Link and connect ideas
- Listen together for insights and deeper questions
- Play, doodle, draw
- Have Fun!

Is proficiency the *most* important outcome of our work?

What other important changes do you see in learners? How do you know?

How can we encourage policy makers to value outcomes that are not based in proficiency?

What are the three most important points for
you?

Thank You

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