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ACAL eNews **September 2009**

ACAL eNews is the electronic newsletter of the Australian Council of Adult Literacy (ACAL) and is distributed free to people interested in adult literacy and numeracy. See below for subscription details or to unsubscribe.

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1. ACAL Conference 'From Strength to Strength'

The conference is following its name and is building from strength to strength. Numbers are very strong.

More details at <http://www.waalc.org.au/O9conf/>

'Painfree percentages and other 'in the head' numeracy strategies'

There has been a late change to the Conference Program. Beth Marr has agreed to present a session at the conference on Saturday, after we had a late withdrawal. Beth's workshop will be an activity-filled double session entitled '**Painfree percentages and other 'in the head' numeracy strategies'**. There will be games and activities to build essential strengths for 'in the head' calculations and estimation. The workshop will draw on strategies developed during recent workplace training in East Timor; ideas from a new US resource series as well as some old favourites.

Forum 'Whadaya mean Close the Gap? October 1

More details at <http://www.waalc.org.au/O9conf/preconf.htm>

ACAL AGM

The 2009 Annual General Meeting, Friday 2 October at 5.15 pm at the Esplanade Hotel, Cnr Essex Street and Marine Terrace, Fremantle, WA.

More details at <http://www.acal.edu.au/>

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2. National English Curriculum

ACAL was represented by Cheryl Wiltshire and Jan Hagston at a recent meeting hosted by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in Melbourne to discuss the first proposal for the new Senior Years English Curriculum. Four courses are proposed. One of these is *English for Life and the Workplace*. ACAL identified a number of problems with the draft proposal and is arguing that this English course should focus on the user's repertoire of language skills and the application of these in real life, authentic contexts. To achieve this, the curriculum writers will need to have particular skills. Further down the track, to ensure that this course is effectively taught, recruitment and professional development issues will need to be addressed.

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3. SACAL state conference

"Better skills, better lives: new horizons for LLN practice"

Friday 30 October, Education Development Centre, Adelaide,

The 2009 SACAL state conference - coinciding with World Teachers Day celebrations in South Australia - will provoke dialogue about the changing nature of LLN provision, the new opportunities available to educators, organisations and learners as a result of contemporary funding and policy change and so also the challenges these new opportunities present. The day will start with a keynote panel focusing on recent developments in health literacy.

Health Literacy and LLN provision: A new fad? Business as usual? Opportunities to seize?

Assoc. Prof. Robert Adams, University of Adelaide and Chair, SA Health Literacy Alliance; Mr Warwick Cheatle, ACE & Community Partnerships Unit, DFEEST; Ms Genevieve Haskett, Vocational Preparation and Equity, TAFE SA.

Panel speakers will explore the connections between health literacy, healthy lives and LLN provision. Issues for discussion include: how health literacies can be identified and improved; how they shape differential access to services; integrating health and literacy services; funding and professional development challenges; and, the challenges of inter-agency co-operation and networking required to achieve some of these goals.

Other sessions will explore how educators and organisations are responding to the demands associated with changing policy and practice opportunities in the vocational and ACE sectors.

Registration details and early bird registration before 15th October - email ceasa@ceasa.asn.au for details.

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4. Inaugural TCAL Annual Conference in Tasmania

Saturday October 17th

8:30 am - 3:30 pm at the Phillip Smith Centre, 2 Edward Street, Glebe, Hobart.

The conference is for people interested in connecting and developing adult literacy

and numeracy skills in the community.

Free for members, \$15 for non members.

Keynote Speaker 'Literacy Throughout Life' is Geraldine Castleton, Assistant Professor, Head of School, Faculty of Education, UTAS.

Contact Wendy Stothers or Liz Webster at (03) 6233 7323. Register on the day of the conference when you attend.

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5. QCAL 2009 Annual State Conference

New literacies, New contexts, New learners

5-6 November 2009

Details and registration at <http://www.qcal.org.au>

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6. New resource - *It's easy being green*

Adult language literacy and numeracy activities for environmental life skills

This is an engaging resource which builds adult language, literacy and numeracy skills in a purposeful manner in the context of environmental sustainability. It was developed with funding from the Adult Literacy National Project administered by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. (DEEWR)

The resource consists of a series of activities around the themes of:

- Water
- Energy
- Transport
- Waste and recycling
- Shopping (Consuming)
- Green steps (Carbon footprints)
- Model texts (annotated models of written texts to support activities in the resource)

A limited number of copies (250) have been distributed as a print resource and a CD. Activities can be photocopied directly from the print resource, or downloaded and printed from the CD. The CD contains the same materials as the print resource with the addition of a sound file and set of images. The images can be printed out or projected onto a screen to focus whole group discussion. The resource will be made available for download by DEEWR on the *literacynet* site <http://www.literacynet.dest.gov.au>

As well as developing literacy and numeracy skills, adult users of this resource will

- develop understanding and knowledge of underpinning concepts related to the environment in order to become active participants in the environmental debate.
- develop the knowledge and skills to use personal strategies to live more sustainably

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7. New resource - *Give it a go! Help a literacy learner*

A new resource is about to be released to benefit adult literacy across Australia.

Give it a go! Help a literacy learner, is a DVD and CD Rom package to assist

people who help literacy learners so they can be more effective in their supporting role. The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) administers the Adult Literacy National Project which funds Innovative Projects in the field of adult literacy. The Adult Basic Education (ABE) section of TAFE NSW- Western Sydney Institute, OTEN secured this funding to develop the resource.

Learning literacy skills as an adult is itself a challenge but even more so for people who cannot attend classes due to various circumstances or living in remote areas. Sometimes they need a little help from family, friends or associates. Via its work with distance literacy students and their helpers, OTEN ABE recognised a real need to provide a relevant package for people who work as supporters of literacy students.

Give it a go! Help a literacy learner DVD and CD Rom aims to inform and support people as they encourage and help these learners to keep on track and gain skills. It will be available soon from either the ABE section at OTEN or will be able to be downloaded on the **Literacynet** website <http://www.literacynet.dest.gov.au>.

For more information contact the ABE section on either: **1300 355 531, (02) 9715 8554**, or oten.abe@tafensw.edu.au

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8. Family Literacy – success stories from South Africa and beyond

Tuesday 13 October

VALBEC is delighted to be hosting the visit to Australia of Snoeks Desmond, early childhood development and family literacy specialist who has worked in the early childhood development and family literacy sector in South Africa over many years. She founded, and for seven years directed a non-governmental project aimed at strengthening the love of reading and books in families in rural KwaZulu Natal. She is joint editor of "Family Literacy: Experiences from Africa and around the world" published by UNESCO and reviewed recently in Fine Print.

Snoeks will share the story of the South African-based Family Literacy Project highlighting the challenges and successes of supporting adults to develop their own literacy skills and to be role models for their young children. This project will have resonance for adult educators and practitioners in early childhood and family support programs across Victoria.

More details <http://www.valbec.org.au>

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