

Project Details

Location

Saskatchewan

website

<https://www.princealbertliteracy.ca/>

Contact

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Community

Urban

Scope of Project

Local

Target Audience

First Nations, Métis, Youth (15-30 yrs), Adults (31-49 yrs)

Initiative Impact

What is the overall impact of the initiative and how is this measured?

- Participants had increased self-confidence

- Over 60% of participants in the last program intake were employed in the industry
- Improvement in participant's literacy test scores
- Participants and their families reported "pride" in personal/family member's accomplishments and achievement in completing the Certificate Program
- The culture of learning developed through the program was extended to the community and families of participants
- Participants reported that they felt they had become better parents as a result of their learning in the program
- Employers reported that they had access to a ready labour force and were able to grow their business
- As a result of participating in the program, the education partner (SIAST) integrated a new learning model into its Early Childhood Education Department and reached a new group of students who would not typically attend PSE.

Outcomes were measured by Dr. Chad Nilson, a local evaluator, who used interviews, program surveys, a focus group and a collection of assessments, tests and program data to measure the program outcomes.

For both the pilot and subsequent ECEOS program, evaluation reports were published at the completion of each program period.

What challenges have you faced and how were these overcome?

- Lack of financial support (no PTA provided) made it difficult for students to cope with all of the challenges that came up.
- We were able to provide bus passes, but the routes are not always easy to access and the buses are not always on time, etc. The weather was bitterly cold many days.

- Child care for participants was a challenge since they were not sponsored by anyone – most did the best they could but it did affect their attendance at times.
- Extreme chaos in the lives of the students was always an issue – relationship issues, poverty, family dynamics, addictions, etc.
- We were provided with used laptops by an organization, but we had constant technical problems – making it very hard for students once they were finished the prep course and were trying to work at home.

What are 3 key lessons you learned from developing or delivering your initiative? What advice from those lessons would you share with others?

1. Take a team approach to program coordination
2. Keep the focus of your project on the local community for the benefit of the learners and employers
3. Use consistent work placements for each participant, and space placements throughout the program

What have participants, stakeholders and partners thought, felt and/or said about your initiative?

“Those that I’ve hired from the program seem to take the initiative to do the work versus having to be told what to do at every stage.” – Jeanette McKay, Director, West Flat Community Pre-School

“... having a local program like this, with its innovative approach, also shows

the province they can be creative to find local solutions.” – Donna Strauss
(Executive Director, Family Futures)

Incorporation of Essential Skills

Which Essential Skills are covered by the initiative?

Reading Text

Document Use

Numeracy

Writing

Oral Communications

Working with Others

Thinking Skills

Computer Use

Continuous Learning

How are the Essential Skills integrated into your initiative?

The program developers infused ES training into the learning objectives of the

curriculum. They used the ES Occupational Profile of Childcare Worker and the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences (SIAST, now Saskatchewan Polytechnic) curriculum to build content and experiential activities to help participants build the ES needed for the job. The ES were integrated into simulated workplace tasks expected of a childcare worker as a way for participants in the program to build these skills through experiential learning.

How do you assess participant Essential Skills?

Applicants were assessed by our assessor to determine eligibility for the program and then assessed post program. Evaluation tools were developed by Dr. Nilson.

Project Components

What are the components of the initiative?

Occupation-specific skills training

Occupational certifications and/or licensing

Work-integrated learning (i.e., internships, co-ops, work placements, etc.)

Life skills

Career and/or educational planning

Cultural, language, and tradition awareness and/or training

How do you support participant success in the program?

Transportation allowance

How was Indigenous culture integrated into the program content or delivery?

Understanding First Nations Culture and Traditions is central to training for those wanting to work in the child care industry in Prince Albert as many of the families with children in the child care centres will be of FN/Metis ancestry. We employed an Aboriginal Elder to deliver 15 components that she had prepared to give students a comprehensive overview of FN/Métis Culture and Traditions in the context of the modern family - impacts.

What do you think are the most important competencies and attributes for staff involved in this initiative to have?

Experience in developing programming, strategic thinking, relationship building, autonomy to coordinate program elements, and capacity to operationalize multiple components while remaining accessible to program participants.

Who are your partners, and what is their involvement in the initiative?

Family Futures Inc. - Primary industry partner; Program development, job shadowing and hiring of students post-classroom.

Saskatchewan Institute of Technology - Partner

Prince Albert Apostolic Church - Course venue & Resources provider

Computers for Schools - Supplier of computers and internet access

Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority - Tuition provider

Prince Albert Community Networking Coalition (225 members) - Marketing & Promotional partner

Prince Albert Community Schools (11 schools) - Marketing & Promotional partner

West Flat - Bernice Sayese Community Centre - Work experience provider & job shadow site

Read Saskatoon - training partner

React & Respond - training partner

Prince Albert Parkland Heath Region - Training partner and health provider

City of Prince Albert - Transportation provider (bus passes)

Prince Albert Police Services - No charge for criminal record check

Action Printing - Provided discount printing services for course materials