

## INTRODUCTION and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Introduction to the Research and Researchers

---

The initial development and implementation of these Health Literacy Materials, experimentally tested using a randomized design, was the direct result of competitive federal funding for adult literacy research. These materials meet both the need of adults to enhance their literacy skills as well as their need to navigate the health care system and begin to achieve better health care for themselves and their families. They integrate literacy skills and practice with pertinent health information. This type of work helps to support a significant public health need given the potential for higher annual healthcare costs and lower long term health outcomes for this group. According to the AMA Foundation (2007), adults with low literacy skills experience up to four times the annual healthcare costs of those with higher literacy.

In a scientifically-based research environment, use of these materials led to increased participants' literacy scores on standardized tests used to validate literacy gains. And, equally as important for these adult learners, it significantly increased health literacy and knowledge. The study experimentally tested and worked with 1,946 adults in Illinois programs over a period of 5 years. The research team (listed below) and I are proud that the National Institute for Literacy, its LINC'S Region III Resource Center, and Meg Schofield have expanded and enhanced the usability of the materials for the instructor and learner, created an Instruction Guide to further assist adult educators, and made the free dissemination of this work possible. All of us are looking forward to the wide use of these materials and guide. *Susan R. Levy, Principal Investigator*

#### **Principal Investigator:**

Susan R. Levy, Ph.D., FASHA, Professor, Institute for Health Research & Policy (IHRP), University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

#### **Co-Investigators:**

Sue Rasher, M.Ed., OER Associates LLC, Wilmette, IL

Michael Berbaum, Ph.D., Biostatistician, IHRP, University of Illinois at Chicago

Laura Bercovitz, M.A., Adult Learning Resource Center, Des Plaines, IL

Jan Mandernach, Ph.D., OER Associates LLC, Wilmette, IL

Rodrigo Garretón, Ph.D., OER Associates, LLC, Wilmette, IL

#### **Project Director:**

Sarah Deardorff Carter, MPH, CHES, IHRP, University of Illinois at Chicago

**Project Staff UIC:** Yingyu Chen, Ph.D., Lesley Maradik, MSW, Yoonsang Kim, MPH, MS

**Project Staff OER:** Rebecca Goold, M.A., Elizabeth Johnson, Ph.D., Mary Suddarth, Ed.Sp., Bonnie Hemmati, B.A., Shari Sacks, B.A.

**Project Staff ALRC:** Laurie Martin, M.A.

**NICHD Grant HD043761 Funded from October 1, 2002 until August 31, 2008 by:**

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)

Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)

National Institute for Literacy (the Institute)

## Acknowledgements

---

LINCS Region III Regional Resource Center would like to thank Meg Schofield for her revision and expansion of these materials and for the creation of a very user friendly Instruction Guide to accompany it. Meg’s extension of the existing work to include more evidence-based practices for improving reading skills clearly expanded the depth of these very needed and valued materials. Her dynamic video demonstrations of the basic skill building exercises enhance the materials and their use for the average instructor and learner. (For more information on the “Tutoring Techniques” DVDs, contact [megschofield@yahoo.com](mailto:megschofield@yahoo.com) .)

Thanks also to Dr. Carole Talan who reviewed and edited both the materials and Instruction Guide on an ongoing basis and who served as the project manager.

## Credits

---

The original (print-based) Health Literacy materials were developed through a grant from The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to Susan Levy, University of Illinois for the Testing Impact of Health Literacy in Adult Literacy and Integrated Family Approach Programs research project. Grant Number: HD043761. This project was funded through a federal partnership which included The National Institute for Literacy, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education of the US Department of Education, and the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

The web-based materials were revised under National Institute for Literacy Grant No. X257T060004 with the LINCS Region III Resource Center by Meg Schofield, and edited by Dr. Carole Talan. Revisions to the Beginning Level ABE version were field tested by Literacy Action Inc. of Atlanta, GA, and instructor Ryan Hall. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the National Institute for Literacy, the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute for Child Health and Human Development, or the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise is intended or should be inferred.

**Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development** (NICHD) conducts and supports research on all stages of human development, from preconception to adulthood, to better understand the health of children, adults, families, and communities. The mission of the NICHD is to ensure that every person is born healthy and wanted, that women suffer no harmful effects from reproductive processes, and that all children have the chance to achieve their full potential for healthy and productive lives, free from disease or disability, and to ensure the health, productivity, independence, and well-being of all people through optimal rehabilitation. A major part of this mission is behavioral and social sciences research, including research on all aspects of literacy and learning disabilities.

**The National Institute for Literacy**, a federal agency, provides leadership on literacy issues, including the improvement of reading instruction for children, youth, and adults. In consultation with the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services, the Institute serves as a national resource on current, comprehensive literacy research, practice, and policy.

**The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Vocational and Adult Education** administers, coordinates, and recommends policy for improving quality and excellence of programs that are designed to prepare students for postsecondary education and careers; provide opportunities to adults to increase their literacy skills; and promote identification and dissemination of effective practice in raising student achievement in high schools, community colleges and adult education programs.