



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



PATHWAYS TO LITERACY

Youth, Family, and Community Engagement

BY THE NUMBERS

2014 Pathways to Literacy students received:

- 3,065 hours focusing on literacy development and student support programming.
- 465 hours of English as a Second Language (ESL) and technology training.
- 4,113 hours of combined literacy development, student support programming, ESL, and technology training.
- 245.85 hours of voluntary community tutoring and program support in 2014, a 339% increase over the previous year.

2015

ISSUE

Literacy opens the door to social conventions that, for many, are the norm. The ability to read to your own children and grandchildren, assist with homework, get a library card, study and pass the written driver's license exam, apply for employment, seek advancement in employment, leave a note for a family member, understand communication from children's teachers and schools, keep track of spending, or simply sign your name, are everyday activities that are difficult and stressful for individuals who lack proficiency in their literacy skills.

In 2006, 5% of Washington's total population, or approximately 268,853 people, were English language learners (<http://wsipp.wa.gov>). In Franklin County, 34% of the population was considered deficient in basic prose literacy skills, which includes proficiencies in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This group also includes those not tested due to language barriers. In comparison, 9% of Benton County and 24% of Yakima County were deficient in these skills (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003).

RESPONSE

Pathways to Literacy (PTL) students are provided one-on-one instruction to begin primary level association with letters and numbers. Students progress through several levels of reading, language, and grammar development with testing after each subject to measure progress. Once students meet proficiency goals at the primary (primaria) level, they progress to the secondary (secundaria) level with writing and advanced mathematics through Algebra II. Students are provided voluntary community tutors to support their learning. The tutors provide one-on-one help in areas that have become a challenge for our PTL students. This allows students to keep up with the class and to meet their personal progress goals. Once students complete the secondary level and are proficient in reading, writing, and math skills, they are encouraged to take the GED at their local community college.

PTL is an approved and certified Plaza Comunitaria program through a partnership with the Mexican Consulate. It provides literacy and educational advancement in Spanish for Spanish-speaking adult learners and their family members. It is through the Consulate's MEVyT educational model for life and work (Modelo Educacion para la Vida y el Trabajo) that students can obtain educational certification through a Plaza Comunitaria such as Pathways to Literacy.



QUOTES

"Estoy muy contenta de que ya puedo cuidar el dinero de mi familia porque ya aprendí a hacer cuentas y le ayudo a mi esposo con su negocio de camionero." - "I am very happy that I am now able to take care of my family's finances because I learned how to do math and can help my husband with his trucking business."

"Desde que empecé a estudiar mi primaria subió mi autoestima. Me ayudo a estudiar para sacar mi ciudadanía, y mi escritura y lectura a mejorado. Ahora leo mas de antes estar en Pathways." - "Since I started to study for my primary education my self-esteem has improved. It has helped me study and obtain my citizenship. My reading and writing have improved and now I read more than when I started at Pathways."

2014-2015 PROGRAM PARTNERS AND SUPPORT

- Women Helping Women Foundation of Tri Cities: \$10,000
- Mexican Consulate IME Becas: \$5,000
- GESA Credit Union Title Sponsor for International Women's Day-2015: \$3,000

The PTL program's adult basic skills education is delivered using adult learning principles within the context of real life. Scenarios used to work through mathematical sequences include household budgeting and grocery planning. Students may choose from several modules to meet their personal development electives. These modules include communication skills in the family domain, speaking to their children about personal health and wellness, learning to bank, starting a new business, financial literacy, and opportunities for civic engagement within the community.

With the support of our community partners, monthly presentations are available for all PTL students and are free of charge. Examples of monthly presentations include learning about the local library system and registering for their own family library card, which provides them access to many library activities and events free of charge, and information on health insurance and screening programs for family members.

PTL students receive information on important local opportunities such as the Summer Safety Fun Fair, where families learn about water and bicycle safety with the local fire and police departments in a fun-filled program sponsored by local organizations.

IMPACTS

At the end of 2014, the first year statistics were collected for the program, Pathways to Literacy had served more than 175 Latino adults, youth, and children through a variety of programs offered to families and the community. Five students passed their primaria certification and currently are working on their secundaria. They likely will test their proficiency at this level in summer/fall 2015. Four former PTL students have taken the GED and three have passed.

Based on parent feedback, PTL will offer an EARLY START program beginning in fall 2015 for families with preschool- to middle school-aged children. The EARLY START program will focus on developing school-ready skills for preschool children and reinforcing reading comprehension development for children through middle school.