

The expression of learning needs is a key element of this policy. Managing the demand for education and training well involves, first, creating the conditions for the expression of learning needs in all their diversity and, second, ensuring that the supply of training corresponds to the individual and collective aspirations expressed.¹

The gap between the recognition of the importance of adult learning and continuing education and the actual numbers of Québec adults participating in education programs reveals a need for action aimed at promoting a broader expression of adult learning needs.²

¹ Ministère de l'Éducation. *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2002), 5.

² Québec, Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *En éducation des adultes, agir sur l'expression de la demande de formation : une question d'équité*, brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports (Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 2006) Abridged English version: *Promoting the Expression of Adult Education Needs: A Question of Social Equity* (Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 2006), 5.

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INTRODUCTION

The expression of learning needs constitutes a key element of the *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* (2002).³ According to the Policy, we must take appropriate measures to promote the expression of needs, and also provide training adapted to the specific needs and situations of adults. In short, we must adapt supply to demand.

Reception, referral, counselling and support services (SARCA) staff play a major role in the decisions and training process of adults without a diploma or qualifications, who often require support in order to undertake a learning plan/ adapted to their needs. Many of them are seeking a path or a new direction, or need better qualifications in order to obtain more recognition. If they are to achieve sociovocational integration or reintegration, adults with little formal education need help choosing training that meets their needs. This role should not, however, be the exclusive responsibility of SARCA staff members; to obtain significant and lasting results, all those who work with these adults must pool their efforts. It is essential to foster adults' involvement by adopting a collaborative approach and taking proactive measures based on partnership.

This document, based on research and practices in the community, proposes strategies and actions that promote the expression of adults' learning needs, especially those of adults with little schooling.

It is intended for all those involved in the various aspects of the expression of adults' learning needs:

- Directors of adult education centres, of adult general education centres and of vocational training centres
- People in charge of SARCA services
- People responsible for facilitation in the community, client recruitment in school boards or autonomous community groups.

The first part of the document defines the concept of the expression of learning needs and explains how it relates to proactivity. It provides statistics on the literacy level of Québec's population and cites research on the challenges to be met and the strategies to be used in bringing to light adults' learning needs.

³ Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* (Québec: Ministère de l'Éducation, 2002).

The second part outlines the three steps staff members should take to help adults express their learning needs:

1. Reaching out to the adults
2. Promoting and facilitating the expression of adults' learning needs
3. Supporting the adults' decision to seek assistance from the appropriate services and to complete their learning plan

Each step presents strategies, with examples of actions to take and expected results. The suggested actions are based on experience in the community and on the proposals of a working group established specifically for the development of this document. The directory of electronic activities posted by SARCA centres provides examples of actions carried out by school boards.⁴

Many elements of this document are directly based on work done in target communities. They are presented here as part of the process of the expression of learning needs, in order to make this concept less abstract and thus identify the challenges it involves.

The Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport would like to thank all those who contributed to the publication of this reference document on actions that promote lifelong learning.

⁴ <http://www2.recitfga.qc.ca/SARCA/> (accessed April 15, 2013).

PART ONE

1.1 The expression of adults' learning needs and proactivity

The *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*, stressing the importance of the expression of learning needs, calls for a change of outlook: it is not sufficient to provide services; the first step is to reach out to adults with little schooling to help them express their learning needs. Since the publication of the Policy, several studies have focused on the concept of the expression of learning needs.

The aim is to reach the largest possible number of adults who, for whatever reason, feel excluded from the training process. Various research studies, including some associated with SARCA, have demonstrated the importance of reaching out to these adults and helping them express their needs. A proactive approach, which SARCA staff are already expected to use, represents a promising avenue for exploring ways to encourage adults to express their needs. It is within this framework that we present the following definitions of the expression of learning needs and of proactivity.

The expression of adults' learning needs entails “a process by which individuals, groups or organizations assess their situation, set a goal, become aware of the gap that learning may bridge, and identify and define a need for education to achieve the goal.”⁵ This process requires that the centres carry out facilitation and awareness-raising activities based on openness to the adults' social network and to the community, and on partnership work.⁶

Proactivity involves using new approaches or means to reach out to adults, with an awareness of the characteristics of the target populations and their life situations, and the challenges they face. A proactive approach seeks to reduce the obstacles (related to temperament, situations, information or institutions) that prevent adults from contacting educational services. Often, it is only possible to achieve this through partnership.

Thus it is clear that the relationship between the expression of learning needs and proactivity is a complementary one. The object is to use a proactive approach to maintain an active role in the community (in order to foster lifelong learning), while approaching the targeted expression of learning needs from a changed perspective, that of adjusting the services offered to the needs expressed.

⁵ CSE brief (abridged) *Promoting the Expression of Adult Education Needs: A Question of Social Equity*, 2006, 7.

⁶ Paul Bélanger and Brigitte Voyer, *L'aide à l'expression de la demande éducative en formation générale et l'accueil de cette demande dans les commissions scolaires du Québec* (Montréal: Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche et développement sur l'éducation permanente, Université du Québec à Montréal, 2004), accessed April 22, 2013, <http://www.treaqfp.qc.ca/103/PDF/Expression.pdf>.

1.2 Relationship between a low level of literacy and proactivity

Depending on the context, the term ‘literacy’ may have different meanings. It may, for example, refer to:

- the ability to understand and use written information in various life situations
- an overview of the reading, writing and mathematical competencies of a population
- the teaching and learning process—the process of becoming literate
- the measurement of a person’s writing competencies, as defined in the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

This document focuses on people with a low level of literacy in a general sense.

PIAAC⁷ is a survey carried out by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to assess the competencies of the population between the ages of 16 and 65 in the participating countries. This survey measures reading skills, numeracy and problem solving skills in technology-rich environments, all of which are part of literacy.⁸

The results for the Québec population aged 16 to 65 show that:

- In literacy, 53.3% scored at the lowest levels, that is “below 1, or at level 1 or 2,” out of 5 levels.⁹
- In numeracy, 56.2% of the same population also scored “below 1, or at level 1 or 2,” out of 5 levels.¹⁰
- In problem solving in technology-rich environments, 49.6% of this population scored “below 1 or at level 1” out of 3 levels.¹¹

The results of the PIAAC show that individuals with more schooling have greater proficiency in each of the competencies evaluated. Those without a secondary school diploma have lowest results.

A low level of competency is an obstacle to full integration into the labour market, to education, training and participation in social and civic life. It also has an impact on

⁷ Government of Canada, *Skills in Canada: First Results from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)*, 2013.

⁸ The descriptions of each proficiency level may be found on pages 16-20 and 25 of the following document: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-555-x/89-555-x2013001-eng.pdf>.

⁹ Ibid, 80 (Table B.1.2).

¹⁰ Ibid, 82 (Table B.1.4).

¹¹ Ibid, 84 (Table B.1.6).

health.¹² Inequality with regard to competencies thus creates inequality in several areas of life. Individuals with little schooling or fewer competencies are also at a disadvantage when it comes to seeking help. This underscores the need to be proactive with this population.

1.3 Main steps in the expression of learning needs

Building on surveys and research, this document proposes strategies and actions that are associated with the expression of learning needs and proactivity, and that also take into account the obstacles to participation.

1.4 On the obstacles to participation in education

One cannot discuss the expression of adult learning needs without considering the obstacles to the process, which keep adults with little schooling from participating in educational activities. A study conducted at the l'Université du Québec à Rimouski¹³ describes these obstacles as follows:

- **Obstacles related to the adults' situation:** precarious living conditions, working conditions, family responsibilities, distance from training centres, use of time
- **Obstacles related to personal attitude:** as regards reading and writing, difficult experiences at school (hence, negative perception of education), negative self-perception with regard to learning, age and the long-term benefits of education, absence of a culture of education
- **Obstacles related to information:** inadequate message, lack of meaningful information
- **Obstacles related to institutions:** restrictive support measures, formalism of the education system, inappropriate andragogical context (educational approaches sometimes unsuitable), gap between political promises and political practices

These obstacles shed some light on the sort of strategies that should be implemented with regard to the expression of adults' learning needs.

¹² Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Un engagement collectif pour maintenir et rehausser les compétences en littératie des adultes*, Brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports and the Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, September 2013, 37

¹³ Nathalie Lavoie et al., *Obstacles à la participation des adultes peu scolarisés à des activités de formation dans un cadre d'éducation formel et non formel: Rapport de la recherche (abridged)*, (Rimouski: Université du Québec à Rimouski, 2004), accessed April 22, 2013, http://www.bv.cdeacf.ca/documents/PDF/rayonalpha/2005_04_0005.pdf

1.4.1 On the expression of adults' learning needs

The survey of the Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche et développement sur l'éducation permanente, *L'aide à l'expression de la demande éducative en formation générale et l'accueil de cette demande dans les commissions scolaires du Québec*,¹⁴ and the brief of the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Promoting the Expression of Adult Education Needs: A Question of Social Equity*,¹⁵ are among the studies that have laid the groundwork on the expression of learning needs.

Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche et développement sur l'éducation permanente

The authors of the study carried out by the Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche et développement sur l'éducation permanente surveyed mainly activities that provide information, facilitate or raise awareness, considered as means of reaching out to clients or fostering demand. These activities require that the centres be open to the adults' social network and the community and that they approach them as partners. Among the factors that promote the expression of learning needs, the research emphasizes administrative flexibility and getting closer to the community. These factors generally take the form of funding for activities prior to training.

In terms of facilitation activities in the community, the study describes three types of approaches adopted by adult education centres:

- making the adult education centre a welcoming place, where adults have a sense of belonging, and ensuring that it is known to people who clearly need it, especially immigrants.
- establishing a partnership with organizations in the community, such as businesses, with the aim of developing training services adapted to the needs expressed.
- addressing the concerns of target populations and developing, where applicable, training projects as part of a permanent community facilitation approach. "In this way, not only do the adult education centres take the leadership in educational projects, but they also become citizens of their community by participating in the social networks."¹⁶

¹⁴ Paul Bélanger and Brigitte Voyer, *L'aide à l'expression de la demande éducative en formation générale et l'accueil de cette demande dans les commissions scolaires du Québec*, accessed April 22, 2013, <http://www.treaqfp.qc.ca/103/PDF/Expression.pdf>.

¹⁵ Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, *Promoting the Expression of Adult Education Needs*, <http://www.cse.gouv.qc.ca/fichiers/documents/publications/Avis/50-0450-01A.pdf>.

¹⁶ Paul Bélanger and Brigitte Voyer, *L'aide à l'expression de la demande éducative en formation générale et l'accueil de cette demande dans les commissions scolaires du Québec*, accessed April 22, 2013, <http://www.treaqfp.qc.ca/103/PDF/Expression.pdf>), 47.

Conseil supérieur de l'éducation

The brief by the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation begins with a definition of the expression of learning needs: “a process by which individuals, groups or organizations assess their situation, set a goal, become aware of the gap that learning may bridge, and identify and define a need for education to achieve the goal.” The Conseil describes four challenges that this orientation poses for the providers of adult education services:

- reaching out to potential clients (meeting with, listening to and mobilizing adults, communities and organizations)
- promoting demand (intervening to make adults see that education can be useful)
- facilitating the expression of learning needs (supporting the decision to acquire an education by removing the obstacles to doing so)
- supporting the development of the adult's needs (provide accompaniment to help adults become familiar with the learning plan)

In its brief, the Conseil observes that many organizations have so far responded rather timidly to the first challenge, that of reaching out to potential clients. The great majority of educational institutions rely primarily on the services they offer, which generally determine the demand.

These challenges are not intended to convey a linear view of the process of expression of learning needs, but propose a set of conditions that may facilitate the expression of needs. The challenges noted by the Conseil are addressed by the strategies proposed in the second part of this document.

1.4.2 On proactivity

The proactive approach that SARCA staff are expected to practise permits the diversification of ways to facilitate the expression of learning needs and is related to the community approach. In 2006, the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport prepared a document presenting the conceptual framework of the proactive approach and describing ways to practise it.¹⁷ It requires that SARCA staff members foresee social events, anticipate the needs of the potential clientele, predict the changing characteristics of this clientele, and become informed about any trends that could have an economic impact in a knowledge-based society. Moreover SARCA services “occupy a strategic position between a community and educational services. Some of their functions may only be properly executed if permanent links are established with this milieu.”¹⁸

¹⁷ Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport du Québec, *Proactivity: Principles of Action Based on Experiential Knowledge* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2009).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

The document defines six components of proactivity, which have also served as the bases for strategies proposed here. They are defined as follows:

- **visibility**, to make SARCA services known and constitute a link between educational services and the community
- **increasing community members' awareness** of their own educational needs
- **collaboration with the community**—concerted action, partnership or coordination of resources, both within and outside school boards and organizations that work with the target population
- **characteristics of social groups**, so that the initiatives taken with these groups are based on their specific characteristics
- **organizational culture**, so that proactivity can develop in an organization that promotes it
- **community outreach**, which is the essence of proactivity, both promotes the integration of the school board into its community and enables it to contribute to the development of the community

PART TWO

2.1 The three basic steps in the expression of learning needs

The process described in Part Two is based on the three challenges already defined by the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation with regard to the expression of learning needs. However, their designation and definition have been adapted for the purposes of this document.

First challenge (Step 1): Making an effort to reach out, listen to and mobilize adults, communities and organizations

Second challenge (Step 2): Promoting and facilitating the expression of adults' learning needs, helping adults take stock of their needs and express them, and providing services appropriate to their situation

Third challenge (Step 3): Supporting the adults' decision to seek appropriate services and helping them deal with obstacles in order to succeed in carrying out their plan

The aim of this process is to seek out people with little education where they live to meet with them, get to know them, integrate into their community, pay attention to what's happening and ensure that they express their needs. Services that can address their needs are then presented. Finally, to make the services more accessible, they are adapted to the needs and characteristics of the adults in question.

To help the adults meet these challenges, SARCA staff members provide support informed by an understanding of the adults' potential and capacity to change their situation. They guide the adults during the work on their learning plan.

2.1.1 Step 1 – Reaching out to clients

Establishing contact with clients who have little education is a priority and represents a challenge for SARCA services in the school boards. For some of these clients, especially in the outlying regions, the geographical distance between the educational services and the clients is a major difficulty. Close networking with community action organizations is thus necessary in order to reach this population.

Another difficulty is that some potential users of SARCA services are not familiar with these services. A concerted effort to promote the services must be carried out in and among the school boards in order to optimize SARCA's effectiveness.

To reach out to clients, it is necessary to use strategies and measures that anticipate the services that will be required and to uncover the learning needs of adults with little schooling. In many cases, major organizational change is required to modify the orientations and action plans of school boards' adult education centres and autonomous community organizations working in the field of literacy. This decision must precede the adoption of other strategies.

A proactive approach is necessary in implementing ways to get to know the target populations, their characteristics and their living situations. It can also be useful in discerning the challenges faced by a community and in facilitating the successful completion of learning plans.

In addition, it is important to use ingenuity and imagination to contact, listen to and mobilize adults in their living environment.

Reaching out to clients thus involves maintaining an active presence in the community by forming various types of connections with organizations that work with the target populations and showing respect for the clients' fields of interest and for different and complementary cultures, in order to promote actions that serve the needs of the populations. The execution of this step helps consolidate or create partnerships with the organizations and the main players in the community and makes it possible to interact with them, for proactive purposes.

The following table suggests strategies, aims, examples of actions and expected outcomes related to the first challenge.

Step 1: REACHING OUT TO CLIENTS
Strategy 1: Involvement

Make an explicit decision to reinforce or modify actions to promote the expression of adults' learning needs. Make changes to the orientations, strategic planning and success plans of educational organizations so that they reflect this aim. This strategy precedes all others.

Aims	Examples of actions	Expected outcomes
<p>To make sure that the organization supports the actions to be carried out with a view to promoting the expression of adults' learning needs</p>	<p>Holding meetings:¹⁹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to familiarize staff members with the concept of the expression of adults' learning needs ▪ to define the work context of the activities to promote the expression of adults' learning needs and the involvement of each level of the organization in the activities <p>Recording the commitments made in the organization's orientation documents, and revising them as needed, while the process is under way</p>	<p>A shared understanding of the parameters of the expression of adults' learning needs</p> <p>A work process characterized by clarity regarding roles and responsibilities</p> <p>A collective involvement in the organization</p> <p>Orientation documents that record the expression of adults' learning needs</p>
<p>To take into consideration that an approach promoting the expression of adults' learning needs will entail the collective definition of changes in the organization, particularly in the implementation of educational services</p>	<p>Establishing a communication and referral structure permitting the creation of a network promoting the expression of adults' learning needs</p> <p>Having the staff members concerned approve the possibility of adapting services to take into account feedback from the target populations during activities to express the adults' learning needs</p> <p>Taking measures to list and record all actions taken and results obtained to ensure continuity in the process for the expression of adults' learning needs</p>	<p>Fluid information flow regarding the implications of the actions taken for partnership and referral organizations</p> <p>A staff that is flexible and open to the adaptation of the services to take into account requests from target populations</p> <p>A logbook recording the evolution of the process for the expression of adults' learning needs</p>
<p>To mandate a resource person to implement the process for the expression of adults' learning needs</p>	<p>Developing a detailed and organized work plan that defines the roles and responsibilities of the staff members concerned and of partners</p> <p>Presenting the work plan to all the staff members and informing them about possible collaborative activities</p>	<p>A work plan in keeping with the process for the expression of adults' learning needs</p> <p>Consistent information for all personnel and a preview of possible collaborative activities</p>

¹⁹ The number of meetings may vary depending on the time frame for the expected outcomes.

Step 1: REACHING OUT TO CLIENTS
Strategy 2: Partnership and knowledge of the community

Get to know the target population in order to establish a partnership with the organizations and major players in the community and to interact with them.

Aims	Examples of actions	Expected outcomes
To find out about the characteristics of the target population	Consulting data banks and various reports that provide information about the target population, such as Statistics Canada censuses ²⁰ and the data warehouse of the Canadian Council on Learning ²¹ Consulting existing social profiles for that area	An exhaustive portrait of the target population
To identify the partners who are most involved with the target population and closest to it	With the staff members of organizations (autonomous community action groups that work in literacy and with school boards) that provide reference services, making an inventory of existing partnerships, such as those with committees and referral organizations Establishing a list of partners of regional county municipalities, local development centres, cities and municipalities Identifying new partnership possibilities	A list of partners who already work with the organization The establishment of a networking mechanism A complete list of possible new partners
To recognize the expertise of partners regarding their actions in the community and to establish complementary links	Meeting with preselected organizations in the community to learn more about their services and the population they serve and presenting the process for the expression of adults' learning needs Defining the mechanisms for collaboration with the partners: roles, responsibilities and human and physical resources Establishing forums where partners can exchange information on their experiences and form complementary ties Holding regular meetings with partners and establishing an effective communication system Offering to sit on the board of directors of certain organizations in the community	Familiarity with the missions and services of partners and the populations they serve The establishment of mechanisms for collaboration with the partners Designated places for exchange and discussion and participation in some of the partners' activities

Note: As a result of these actions, it may be necessary to establish a committee of partners. However, participating in existing round tables may be sufficient.

²⁰ <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm> (accessed October 11, 2013).

²¹ <http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Home/index.html> (accessed October 11, 2013).

Step 1: REACHING OUT TO CLIENTS
Strategy 3: Presence in the community

Ensure a continuous presence in the community by innovative means suited to its characteristics.

Aims	Examples of actions	Expected outcomes
To be present in collective activities held in the communities of the target population	Participating in activities held in areas where people with little formal education live (e.g. meeting with parents in elementary schools in disadvantaged areas) Going to workplaces, communicating with the unions (e.g. union meeting) Participating in community, popular and municipal activities (popular celebrations, open house days, etc.)	First contacts with the target population to begin the process for the expression of adults' learning needs.
To take into account isolated segments of the population that have more difficulty than others in formulating their needs	With the help of partners, targeting adults in situations of social exclusion and, depending on the region, organizing activities that make it possible to reach them Defining actions to take and establishing a work plan	A list of adults who are difficult to reach The establishment of activities that make it possible to reach them

2.1.2 Step 2 – Promoting and facilitating the expression of adults’ learning needs

Once the adults have been contacted in their community, it is important to encourage and facilitate the expression of their learning needs. This involves providing assistance with the identification and expression of their needs and addressing the personal and information-related obstacles that prevent them from using educational services, such as a lack of self-confidence, fear or embarrassment.

SARCA staff members and staff of other school board services have to work closely to provide support, first, at reception, by taking into account the adults’ feelings, fears and hopes and then by helping them to view this experience within the larger whole that is their life. Staff must also remind the adults that they were the agents of their previous successes and help them analyze what they did on those occasions that helped them succeed.

In this step, proactivity means forming partnerships to determine the actions to be taken and the forms of intervention that correspond best to the characteristics of the community and the needs expressed by the adults. It is often necessary to modify practices, adapt services or even develop new services to meet their needs. Services prior to education or training should also be used, such as information, guidance, the exploration of learning and the recognition of prior learning and competencies. The adults must carry out their own plan, based on their own situation, not based on the services provided by the organization.

In addition, the proactive approach aims to increase the community’s awareness of its own needs and thus promote a culture of ongoing education. Strategies for raising community awareness should focus on pivotal organizations and players, who are the eyes and ears of the community.

The following table suggests strategies, aims, examples of actions and expected outcomes related to the second challenge.

Step 2: PROMOTING AND FACILITATING THE EXPRESSION OF ADULTS' LEARNING NEEDS
Strategy 1: Formulation of needs and establishment of a plan

Help adults formulate their learning needs and choose a learning plan based on their own situation and not on the services provided by the organization.

Aims	Examples of actions	Expected outcomes
<p>To help adults take stock of their own needs and find appropriate solutions</p>	<p>Using activities in the community (community kitchens, homework assistance, etc.) to determine the adults' needs and fields of interest</p> <p>Encouraging adults with little schooling to speak out in order to promote the expression of adults' learning needs</p> <p>Exploring with the adults the best ways to meet their needs and carry out their learning plans. Building on their prior learning</p> <p>If the adults' plan is to take courses, helping them with that process. If the plan relies on other resources, referring the adults to the appropriate organizations and providing support if the adults want it</p> <p>Suggesting activities likely to interest the adults, such as theatre or knowledge or competency exchanges, depending on the community, to promote the desire to acquire education</p>	<p>Effective integration in the activities in the adults' community</p> <p>A clear formulation of needs by the adults</p> <p>An exhaustive exploration, with the adults contacted, of the available ways to meet their needs and carry out their plans</p> <p>Sustained support for adults beginning the process of meeting their needs</p> <p>Use of the project-based approach in some educational activities</p>

Step 2: PROMOTING AND FACILITATING THE EXPRESSION OF ADULTS' LEARNING NEEDS
Strategy 2: Adaptation of the services offered to the demand

Raise awareness about the services provided by the organizations that can meet the needs expressed.

Aims	Examples of actions	Expected outcomes
To demonstrate the relevance of education and training services to some of the needs expressed	Developing a communication plan focused on the fields of interest and needs of the target population, using reinforcement strategies showing the advantages of education and training	A communication plan about services provided that meet the needs expressed
To take into account the characteristics and realities of the target population in all communication	<p>Consulting adults with little schooling who are already taking courses before preparing communication measures, in order to adapt these measures to the characteristics of the target population</p> <p>Using plain language in communicating with the target population and checking frequently that the message has been understood²²</p> <p>Using local networks or information formats suited to the target population: word of mouth, testimonials, networking, etc.</p>	<p>A communication plan adapted to the characteristics of the target population</p> <p>Communication networks known and used by adults with little schooling</p>

²² See works on communicating in plain language, such as: *PlainTrain* online training, accessed October 18, 2013, <http://www.plainlanguagenetwork.org/plaintrain/index.html>.
 Also: Table des responsables de l'éducation des adultes et de la formation professionnelle des commissions scolaires du Québec (TREAQFP), *Saviez-vous que? L'écriture simple pour joindre efficacement les adultes faiblement scolarisés* (Québec, September 2008).

Step 2: PROMOTING AND FACILITATING THE EXPRESSION OF ADULTS' LEARNING NEEDS

Strategy 3: Services prior to education or training

Increase the number of services or activities prior to education and training in locations other than that of the organization

Aims	Examples of actions	Expected outcomes
<p>Extend the delivery of services prior to education or training to other settings</p>	<p>Offering exploration of learning activities in locations other than that of the organization</p> <p>Inviting partners to collaborate in the exploration of learning and to add to the information available on the education and training services provided</p> <p>Providing services other than education or training, such as help with writing a CV and with preparing a tax return and holding workshops on various topics (automobile mechanics, electricity, self-esteem, the psychology of adolescence, etc.) in places frequented by the target population</p> <p>Extend activities to new audiences, such as businesses, unions, cultural communities or Aboriginal communities, by presenting activities prior to education or training that correspond to the adults' situation</p>	<p>Identification of places and contexts in which exploration of learning and of information services could be provided</p> <p>The establishment of a directory of activities or services to carry out before education or training, in locations other than that of the organization</p>

2.1.3 Step 3 – Supporting the adults’ decision

Supporting the adults’ decision to seek appropriate services and complete their plan involves primarily helping them overcome situations and institutional problems that stand in their way. The third challenge seeks to address the difficulties and give the adults access to the services provided or enable them to carry out their plan.

At this point, the adults have identified their needs and formulated their plan. It is important for them to deal successfully with this third challenge, to avoid new frustrations that might discourage them from undertaking any other education or training plan.

In this step, proactivity means implementing measures to promote the participation of adults in services and education or training activities that reduce obstacles related to their life situations, such as precarious material conditions, working conditions, family responsibilities or living far from places where education and training are provided.

A proactive approach can also support the adults’ decision to turn to the appropriate services by helping ease administrative rules or management practices to meet the adults’ needs and facilitate their access to services.

The following table suggests a strategy, aims, examples of actions and expected outcomes related to the third challenge.

Step 3: SUPPORTING THE ADULTS' DECISION TO SEEK THE APPROPRIATE SERVICES AND COMPLETE THEIR PLAN

Strategy 1: Accessibility

Implement measures that promote the participation of adults in services and education or training activities to reduce obstacles related to their life situations

Aims	Examples of actions	Expected outcomes
<p>To help the adults manage their resources and time so that they are able to participate in education or training activities</p>	<p>Identifying, with the adults, obstacles they may encounter, and targeting potential solutions offered by their network and existing resources</p> <p>Referring the adults to organizations that can enable them to carry out the steps in their learning plan. Taking care to refer them to a specific person and to accompany them if they express the need for this</p> <p>Targeting significant individuals in the network of adults with little formal education who can help them and offer support</p>	<p>Clear identification of obstacles</p> <p>Effective referral mechanisms</p>
<p>To find ingenious ways to reduce obstacles related to the adults' situation</p>	<p>Providing daycare</p> <p>Providing services in places that are close to the adults with little schooling</p> <p>Providing transportation or adapting the schedule to the existing transportation services</p> <p>Establishing agreements with employers in the area to facilitate the return to school of adults with little schooling and the reconciliation of work and studies</p>	<p>Appropriate services that reduce the obstacles related to the adults' situation</p> <p>If appropriate, clear agreements with local employers that facilitate access to education and training</p> <p>Education- and training-friendly policies that take into account the adults' situation</p>
<p>To ease the administrative and management rules</p>	<p>Adapting the schedule of education or training services</p> <p>Reducing the number of adults per class</p> <p>Diversifying the places where courses are offered</p> <p>Allowing part-time enrollment without financial penalties</p> <p>Establishing cooperation agreements with local organizations</p> <p>Monitoring the effectiveness of the agreements established</p>	<p>A flexible schedule adapted to the needs of the adults</p> <p>Class sizes adapted to the characteristics of the adults and their need for individual attention</p> <p>Settings and educational approaches adapted to the needs of the adults</p> <p>Effective cooperation agreements</p>

CONCLUSION

In the course of their lives, adults with little schooling may have to overcome obstacles, face self-doubt and sometimes experience periods of instability. It is therefore important to reach out to them and meet them in their immediate living environment to give them access to services that can help them achieve new personal and career goals.

To encourage these adults to undertake learning plans, proactive intervention is essential; it enables adults with little schooling to go from knowing that education and training services are available to expressing their own learning needs, and ensures their active participation beginning with the first contact. The adults' involvement in the process facilitates their successful completion of new life projects.

SARCA services act as a driving force for the implementation of learning plans by people with little formal education. However, the reach of these services depends on solid collaboration with partners working in the immediate environments of adults who live far from where education and training services are offered. Thus, to ensure the success of efforts to promote the expression of the learning needs of people with little schooling, school boards, community organizations and various players in the community are encouraged to share their resources and knowledge and work together. In addition, of course, it is important to take into account the time factor: each situation imposes its own rhythm. In other words it is necessary to "take the time to take the time."

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