



Parenting Education and Interactive Literacy Activities

*Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education
Division of Adult Education Policy*

Subject: **Parenting Education and Interactive Literacy Activities**
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POLICY STATEMENT

All families must participate in a minimum of five hours per week of parenting education and documented Interactive Literacy Activities (ILA) that are designed so that language and literacy development are taught ~~or~~ and modeled during the sessions.

PURPOSE

Parenting education and ILA are critical components of family literacy programs. Parenting education provides hands-on learning offered in a supportive environment in which participants are afforded the opportunity to learn techniques to promote language and literacy development, practice with peers to develop understanding of concepts, and then to receive constructive and supportive feedback after completing the ILA with their own children. ILA is an extension of the parenting education curriculum, and ILA activities must be held in conjunction with parenting education. Parents/caregivers and children who share positive language and literacy focused interactions learn together and are true partners in education. Parents/caregivers who learn and play with their children as a family unit contribute to their children's success in school and in life.

GUIDANCE

Parenting education and ILA are complementary instructional components in family literacy. As such, parenting education and ILA must be offered concurrently.

Programs have flexibility in how parenting education and ILA are provided to participants, as long as families receive a minimum of five hours a week. For example, in some programs, adult education and early childhood education classes are co-located, and parents/caregivers and children can work together at the program site. In such cases, programs are encouraged to provide an equal balance of on-site parenting education and ILA. In cases in which opportunities are limited for parents/caregivers and children to work together on-site, e.g., off-site early childhood education or school-age children, programs should designate a greater portion of the required five hours to parenting education with less time spent in on-site ILA.

ILA should be conducted in the presence of a qualified staff person, whether program staff or collaborating partner. Parents/caregivers should be encouraged to engage in ILA with their child at home; however, off-site ILA may not replace regular, structured ILA provided under the supervision of a qualified staff person in the classroom (or at home if the program offers home visits). Programs may not depend on “take home packets” to fulfill the requirements of ILA instruction, but the packets may be used to help parents to apply and practice the techniques learned during the ILA session at home. Off-site ILA conducted by parents/caregivers without staff facilitation/supervision must be documented (e.g., use of home packets, workbooks) and be discussed during a scheduled parenting education session.

Programs may also use one of the approved parenting education/ILA distance learning curricula. When implementing these distance learning curricula, programs must follow the course guidance for counting the hours of participation. These curricula may be used regardless of whether the student is engaged in distance learning for the other components; however, they may be used only to supplement and not replace regularly scheduled ILA. (Reference Division Policy D.130 Distance Learning)

Parenting Education and ILA must be:

- Regularly scheduled center-based sessions with an opportunity for parents/caregivers to learn and support child development through structured play with their children as a family.
- Scheduled to allow parents/caregivers to practice activities in the presence of qualified staff. When staff is not present, parents/caregivers must be provided an opportunity to share and receive feedback on ILA skills practiced outside of the classroom.
- Designed so that language and literacy development are taught during the session. The topics can include, but are not limited to, oral language, interactive communication, building vocabulary, emergent literacy skills, phonological awareness, and rhyming. Programs have access to resources, such as the *Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory* (ACIRI) lessons to guide instructional content.
- Monitored by program staff, including when off-site ILA and/or approved distance learning curricula are used to supplement regularly scheduled ILA. This ensures that students have understood and practiced the language and literacy concepts being taught
- Demonstrated or modeled by teachers to increase this language and literacy development. Teachers are expected to observe families practicing these techniques and to support family success in applying them.
- A time when staff members help parents/caregivers learn how to support children’s learning through language and literacy-based activities that are culturally responsive and occur in meaningful settings and routines.
- Fully integrated with the other components of the family literacy program. Parents/caregivers increase their own literacy levels during adult education classes. They learn the theory behind child development and learning behaviors during parent education classes, and practice related concepts and techniques. ILA are based on those concepts and techniques and serve as a laboratory in which parents can apply what they have learned under the supervision of an instructor. Parents/caregivers then discuss and process the ILA experience during a follow up group parenting education session.
- Administered according to these guidelines if provided by a collaborating partner. Programs should communicate the expectations of the ILA component to their partners and be familiar with the content provided by these collaborators.
- Assessed as appropriate, depending upon the age of the child, by using the *Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory* (ACIRI). See Policy D.160 for details.