

Tips for Parents with Low Literacy Skills

Remember that the main objective is for parents to receive the information so they can learn the skills—they can see it (video), hear about it (from your presentation), and do it (through their practice role-play). So, these become the key areas to focus on when you're working with parents whose literacy skills are low.

Your goal as a facilitator is to keep the content constant but to find meaningful, engaging ways for parents to experience it.

How can you use the videos more fully?

- Pause after each technique and discuss
- Show clips a second time after you talk about them
- Set up more opportunities for the families to come in and view them independently or in small groups
- Let parents borrow the DVD and take it home to view

How can you use the presentation time more fully?

- Audio record the sessions so that the parents can listen again later
- Add extra examples of each skill
- Increase opportunities for parents to say the words they would use in implementing a skill

How can you use the role-playing more fully?

- Implement more practice and rehearsal opportunities
- Break the role-playing experiences up into smaller pieces of the skill and have teams practice smaller sections, then try the whole skill

How can you make materials more user-friendly?

- It may be helpful for non-reading parents to focus more on the illustrations or key words as reminders of what to do. Identify places in the workbook to draw their attention so that they can refer back to the visual display.
- If this is a group of concern in general in your organization, you could audio-record the materials—make an mp3 file and download it to iPods or burn a CD with the readings on it
- Make picture prompts of the key components of some of the most often used skills

So we keep the content the same but find different ways to deliver the content—keeping it engaging, meaningful, and memorable so that parents can use it most effectively. Remember the principle of minimal sufficiency—parents don't have to be experts on all the material or skills, just be able to use the ones that are most relevant to them.