

**Strategies for Turning Referrals into Enrollments
Identified by Participants of
the Dollar General Referral System Expansion Project
ProLiteracy America October 7, 2006**

Between January 2005 and November 2005, nine program partners representing the American Library Association, the Commission on Adult Basic Education and Literacy USA worked with local programs in eight states to examine and improve their referral strategies. Programs tracked and reported on how they handled referrals, especially those made through the Dollar General student referral initiative coordinated by ProLiteracy America.

Note: Project participants cited strategies in italics most frequently

I. Contact Strategies

A. Reactive

Wait for person to contact program after receiving referral

B. Proactive

A student or former student calls person after receiving referral

A staff member or volunteer calls person after receiving referral

Send print information about program and make follow-up phone call after receiving referral

Send print information about program with invitation to contact program after receiving referral

Make reminder phone calls about interview/intake appointment

Make phone calls to people who missed initial appointment

Make contact as soon as possible after receiving referral

Spanish speaker makes contact, if referral card was in Spanish

II. Provision of Services Strategies

Place person on waiting list and call when requested instruction becomes available

Offer other services immediately while person waits for requested instruction

Offer requested instruction immediately

III. Administrative Strategies

Respond to referral cards within a set time period, preferably less than one week

Track how referral cards are handled & monitor system

Provide volunteers or paid staff who work with referrals w/ training in importance of responding quickly and effectively to requests for services

IV. Community Networking Strategies

Make more appropriate referral to another program if agency doesn't provide requested services or if agency can't provide requested services immediately

Have working knowledge of community and its needs and assets

Create and maintain "Community Referral Binder" listing programs, services, contact information, schedules, directions- *keep it current*

Participate in regular meetings of literacy providers with community's referral network and systems as topic for discussion and evaluation

Establish referral partnerships with agencies that provide the same or similar services and those that provide services for people with special needs

Post list of referral agencies on each agency's website