

# NEVADA

# Connections

*Produced by Community College Southern Nevada to connect resources for Nevada's adult workforce*

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## **New Initiative targets 18- to 24-year-olds**

Alarmed by Nevada's low ranking for high school completion — only Arizona's rate is lower — nearly three dozen key stakeholders in the state's education community recently kicked off an Initiative to increase the number of 18- to 24-year-olds who have earned a high school diploma or GED.

Superintendent of Schools Jack McLaughlin introduced the Initiative, which is backed by a Letter of Endorsement from Governor Kenny Guinn. Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa, Board of Education Members Jan Biggerstaff and Marcia Washington, and County Superintendents Carlos Garcia and Jim Hagar committed their support at the initial meeting. Representatives from UNLV, apprenticeship programs, various state and local agencies and education providers, and other adult education experts also attended.

The Initiative consists of a three-pronged plan that includes building on existing local infrastructure, coordinating at State level with other agencies, and partnering with business and industry in a joint collaborative.

The following state agencies are working with the Department of Education (NDE): the Governor's Office; the Commission on Economic Development; the Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation; the Department of Human Resources; and the University and Community College System.

The local infrastructure includes but is not limited to: service providers in Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, GED preparation, and Adult High School Diploma programs through school districts, community colleges, and community-based organizations; the local Workforce Investment Boards, Nevada Works, and the Southern Nevada Workforce Investment Board; and the One-Stop Centers. Both the Las Vegas and the Reno-Sparks Chambers of Commerce and many small and large businesses across the state are partners in support of the Initiative as well.

Frankie Sue Del Papa chairs the Collaborative Oversight Committee, which will provide support, expertise, and guidance to the Initiative, including review and approval of system processes, policies, and procedures.

Representatives from NDE and UNLV have formed a work group that will serve as staff to the Committee.

The initiative will continue through July 2003, when an evaluative report will be posted on the Nevada Department of Education's web site, [www.nde.state.nv.us](http://www.nde.state.nv.us).

*I wholeheartedly endorse this Initiative as a means of enabling Nevada to effectively compete in the world marketplace with a strong, educated and trained workforce.*

*—Kenny C. Guinn, Governor  
April 22, 2002*



*Frankie Sue Del Papa*  
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# Nevada Family Literacy Initiative implemented

—Emmy Bell, Project Coordinator

The Nevada Even Start Statewide Family Literacy Initiative was created to accomplish the following four goals and all four goals have been satisfactorily completed. They were to:

- Establish permanent, ongoing communication and collaboration among all potential state and local agencies and programs involved in family literacy services.
- Facilitate local collaborative family literacy efforts.
- Improve the skills for family literacy service providers.
- Standardize terminology and evaluation indicators for family literacy.

More importantly, the Nevada stakeholders found the process valuable enough to voluntarily continue the efforts beyond the Nevada Even Start Statewide Family Literacy Initiative grant. Although the federally funded planning grant for the Nevada Even Start Statewide Family Literacy Initiative ended on June 30, 2002, the efforts to communicate, coordinate, cooperate and collaborate will continue.

A plan for sustainability, the *Nevada Family Literacy Services Plan, 2001-2006*, was developed and approved by the Consortium.

## Two groups to head efforts

The two groups that have assumed leadership for continuation of the majority of the efforts are the Nevada Literacy Coalition (NLC) and the Nevada Certified Literate Community (NCLC) Projects. Both NLC and NCLC receive State Leadership funds from the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, coordinated by the Adult Education Office of the Nevada Department of Education.

The Nevada Literacy Coalition, under the leadership of Susan Graf at the Nevada State Library and Archives, will maintain the literacy directories, databases, literacy calendar, resource clearinghouse (State Literacy Resource Center), Web site, and listservs. NLC will also conduct an annual literacy awards ceremony; coordinate the training of literacy volunteers/tutors, especially in rural Nevada; and monitor the activities of the Family Literacy Training Team (47 people from 38 agencies in 13 counties).



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The Nevada Certified Literate Community (NCLC) Project, under the leadership of Vicki Newell at the Northern Nevada Literacy Council, will coordinate the six subcommittees of the Literate Nevada Committee. NCLC will develop a system to collect consistent, reliable data and will expand their newsletter to a broader audience.

Many other agencies and organizations, as well as business and industry, are supporting the sustainability of family literacy efforts in Nevada. Nine of the groups involved have established Web sites dedicated to current activities and progress.

For information, and for a complete copy of the Nevada Even Start Statewide Family Literacy Initiative's *Final Report* as well as copies of the *Quality Indicators for Program Delivery and Program Outcomes*, visit the Community Connections' Web site at [www.nvcommunityconnections.com](http://www.nvcommunityconnections.com).



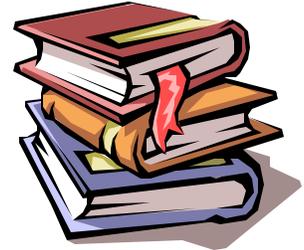
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# The cognitive benefits of pleasure reading

—Reprinted from *The Buzz*, June 2002, Correspondent Sheree Goss

Reading research reported in *Laubach LitScope* (Winter 2002) underscores the importance of encouraging reading for pleasure outside of tutoring or teaching sessions. Some insights from the research:

- People learn to read by reading. Skill building is important, but without practice putting all the skills together learning is slowed down.
- Quantity and intensity matter. Frequent practice reading for longer periods of time pays off in fluency and ability to use skills automatically.
- Increasing competence is motivating, and increased motivation leads to more reading. When students can see their own progress, they want to read more.
- Pleasure reading has psychological benefits. Students use their imaginations to explore new possibilities while they escape real problems and tensions. Without the pressure of “getting it right” in a tutoring session or real-life need, they can relax and focus on personal interests and enjoyments. Pleasure reading builds self-confidence through a growing sense of competence.
- Pleasure reading has cognitive benefits. It improves skill and strategy use, builds fluency, enlarges vocabulary, and builds a student’s knowledge of the world.
- An in-class focus on outside reading can help students to read more outside of class. When tutors and teachers set aside time for pleasure reading as part of their instruction time, students are more likely to read for pleasure on their own.



## Are we closing the digital divide?

—Source: *Thursday Notes* (U.S. Department of Education), July 4, 2002

Folks with less education, those in rural areas, and minority individuals are gaining computer access, says recent research summarized in the *Washington Post*.

- UCLA researchers found that in 2000, 60.4 percent of adults responding who had not completed high school said they used the Internet, but 64.8 percent of them said they used it in 2001. Internet use by high school graduates increased from 53.8 percent to 59.5 percent in that period.
- A U.S. Commerce Department study showed that in 2001 more than half of the total population — and a similar portion of the rural population — had Internet access.
- A Pew Research Center analysis showed that in 2000 Internet access for African-Americans spiked 13 percent to 36 percent, while the number for whites grew 8 percent to 50 percent.

The divide still exists when measured by income, according to the Commerce Department analysis, especially if only home access is counted. UCLA researchers say there are significant differences in the skill levels of new users and those already online. For additional information, see <http://www.washingtonpost.com>. Click on Technology (along the left) and search for “digital divide,” specifying a search start date of June 1.

## *Connecting resources for Nevada's adult workforce*

### **Civics Web site provides free curriculum**

—*Judy Barron, CCSN EL/Civics Coordinator, 702.651.4266, [judy\\_barron@ccsn.nevada.edu](mailto:judy_barron@ccsn.nevada.edu)*



California Literacy, Inc. is conducting an online field test of an excellent civics curriculum. It incorporates thoughtful grammar and pronunciation exercises in each unit and would be good for high beginning-low intermediate students. The work is timely: unit 7, (Emergencies and Disasters), for example, even tells what to do in the event of an Anthrax Attack! The curriculum is free; the group asks only that those using it print out and use the cover page.

There are not a lot of pithy civics materials published for high beginning and low intermediate students, so teachers and tutors may want to check it out: <http://www.caliteracy.org/education/PEACE/curriculum.html>.

### **Save this date for dinner!**

The annual Southern Nevada International Literacy Day Dinner will be held September 5 in Las Vegas. For more information, contact chairperson Ronna Timpa, Workplace ESL Solutions, 702/873-3520, [rtimpa@yahoo.com](mailto:rtimpa@yahoo.com)

