

STEPS FOR FACILITATING SESSION THREE

Objectives: By the end of this session, participants will be able to...

- Analyze evidence-based strategies for addressing student persistence.
- Propose a list of practical ideas for addressing adult student persistence, motivation, and retention.
- Create a plan for addressing adult student persistence in their classrooms/programs.
- List advice that they would give other adult education practitioners and programs on persistence, motivation, and retention.

Time: 3½ hours

Preparation:



NEWSPRINTS (Prepare ahead of time: Underlined in the steps)

- ___ Session Three Objectives
- ___ Session Three Agenda
- ___ Analysis Questions
- ___ Making Connections
- ___ Next Steps
- ___ Sharing Learning with Others

Newsprints from Session One and Session Two:

- ___ Supports for Persistence
- ___ Ways Programs Might Support Students



HANDOUTS (Photocopy ahead of time: *Italicized* in the steps)

- ___ Strategies and Resources for Addressing Adult Student Persistence

- ___ Six Strategies for Addressing Student Motivation, Retention, and Persistence
- ___ A Program Framework for Addressing Student Motivation, Retention, and Persistence
- ___ Program Practices for Addressing Adult Student Persistence

MATERIALS

- ___ blank newsprint sheets
- ___ newsprint easel
- ___ markers, pens, tape
- ___ sticky dots,

Steps:

1. WELCOME, SESSION THREE OBJECTIVES, AND AGENDA (10 MINUTES)

- **Welcome participants** back to the study circle. If the group is more than a few people and a significant amount of time has passed since the last meeting, you may want to ask participants to re-introduce themselves and share the “good news” of the day.
- Ask participants to refer to the handout *Sample Ground Rules* from Session One and briefly review the ground rules. Remind participants that it is your job, as facilitator, to remind them of these ground rules if you see them being broken.
- **Post the newsprint Session Three Objectives.** Go over the objectives briefly with the group.

Session Three Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Analyze evidence-based strategies for addressing student persistence.
- Propose a list of practical ideas for addressing adult student persistence, motivation, and retention.
- Create a plan for addressing adult student persistence in your classroom/program.

- **Post the newsprint Session Three Agenda.** Describe each activity briefly. Ask if people have any questions about the agenda.

Session Three Agenda

- Welcome, Session Three Objectives, and Agenda (Doing)
- Strategies and Resources for Addressing Adult Student Persistence
- Jigsaw on Readings
- Making Connections
- Action Planning
- Final Evaluation

2. STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR ADDRESSING ADULT STUDENT PERSISTENCE


(20 MINUTES)

- **Remind participants that during the first session,** the discussion focused on the forces that hinder and support persistence and ways individuals might be supported— establishment of a goal by the student, self-efficacy, management of positive and negative forces that help and hinder persistence, and progress toward reaching a goal.

During the second session the focus shifted to groups of students and ways programs might support student persistence according to pathways. Explain that this session will focus on what the participants, as individual adult

education practitioners or as part of their programs, might do to encourage the students in their programs to persist.

Explain to participants that in this activity, participants will review the conclusions and suggestions the researchers made as a result of their findings. These suggestions are framed in three phases of program participation—Entrance into Services, Participation in Program Services, and Reengagement in Learning.

- **Ask participants to form two small groups by role—** program administrator/counselor or teacher/tutor.
-  **Distribute the two handouts** *Strategies and Resources for Addressing Adult Student Persistence* and *Six Strategies for Addressing Student Motivation, Retention, and Persistence* to the teacher/tutor group and distribute the two handouts *A Program Framework for Addressing Student Motivation, Retention, and Persistence* and *Program Practices for Addressing Adult Student Persistence* to the program administrator/counselor group.
- **Explain that, in this next activity, participants will review** a list of strategies they can use to address issues in the area of adult student persistence. This list is meant as an additional resource. Participants can modify it as they see fit based on their own experiences and newly acquired knowledge.
- **Give participants about 10 minutes to review** the materials, discussing with the group what they might add to the lists of strategies. Tell participants they may want to try out some of these strategies to address persistence.
- **Suggest to participants that they take the handouts home and look through them.** They will be most useful to them after they have heard from students in their own programs about forces that affect their persistence. Suggest to participants that they then use the strategies listed to identify activities or program structures that will help students increase their persistence

3. JIGSAW ON READINGS

(105 MINUTES)

- **Explain that, in this next activity,** participants will reflect on the readings for today's meeting. Ask participants to form small groups by areas of interest.
- **Post the newsprint Analysis Questions.** Explain that the groups will use these analysis questions to discuss the readings. They will have 15 minutes to spend on each article. Indicate that each group should be prepared to share the results of their discussions.

Analysis Questions

- What did the author of the article do to increase adult student persistence?
- What impact did implementing this strategy have on student motivation and persistence? Discuss possible reasons for this impact.

- **After 15 minutes, prompt participants** to begin discussing the second article. Again, provide time for participants to review the article if necessary. After another 15 minutes, prompt participants to begin discussing the third article.
- **After 15 minutes, reconvene the whole group.** Ask one member of each group to give a five-minute summary of his or her group's discussion. Then facilitate a 20-minute discussion, using the following questions as a guide:

- ? *Why did the authors choose the strategies they did to improve student persistence or motivation (for example, on the basis of attendance patterns, on what students said)?*
- ? *How has your program chosen strategies for improving student persistence? What were the results?*
- ? *What do you think are effective ways of choosing?*

Another Idea

Ask participants if they have seen other material about the topic. Encourage them to share copies of other articles with the Study Circle group by bringing them to the next session.

BREAK (15 minutes)

4. MAKING CONNECTIONS

(15 MINUTES)

Another Idea

Conduct a brainstorming session with the entire group to generate this list of action steps.

- **Post the newsprint Making Connections. Explain to participants that this is a time to reflect on the study circle discussions** and begin to think about what it means for their own practice. Break participants up into pairs and have them discuss for about ten minutes the following questions.

Making Connections

- How might the discussions relate to your practice?
- How have the discussions contributed to the way you think about student persistence?

- Once the groups come back together, take about five minutes to share some of the thoughts and opinions from the group. The facilitator should **record these on newsprint**.

5. ACTION PLANNING

(30 MINUTES)

- **Post the newsprint Next Steps.**

Next Steps

- **Tell participants** that in this next activity they will be working towards developing a list of the next steps they would like to take for addressing adult student persistence in their classrooms and/or programs.

Explain that for some people the next step may be just to think more about alternative program structures or intake procedures. For others, it may include continuing to learn more about persistence, retention, and motivation. Or, it may be to have a discussion with other staff in their program about how to start. Some participants may have specific ideas about activities, techniques, or strategies they could begin to use in their classes or programs.

Another Idea

Conduct a brainstorming activity with the whole group to generate this list.

- **Divide the group into pairs or groups**, preferably pairing those who work in a similar context (e.g., two ESOL teachers, two GED teachers, two program administrators, etc.) or the same program whenever possible.
- **Explain that they will** have 10 minutes, working with their partner/group, to **make a plan** for the next steps or actions they will take to rethink instruction and participation in their work. Groups should make notes on paper. Remind them that they will be asked to share things from their plan with the other participants.
- **Post the newsprints saved** from Session One (Supports for Persistence) and Session Two (Ways Programs Might Support Students), as these lists may help participants reflect on the previous sessions.
- **After 10 minutes, reconvene the group.** Explain that you will go around from group to group collecting ideas one or two at a time. Ask the first pair/group to read aloud one of their ideas for next steps and write it on newsprint. (It may be necessary to paraphrase the ideas for the newsprint.) Ask the next pair/group to read aloud one of their ideas and add it to the newsprint list.

Continue around the group, going back to every pair until a list of all the ideas has been written on the newsprint.

- Have participants, as a whole group, **consider the help they may need to implement these next steps**, for example, materials, resources, contact with other teachers, etc. Encourage discussion about ways to get the supports they will need.

6. FINAL EVALUATION

(10 MINUTES)

- **Ask each person individually to comment** on the most useful idea or concept they will walk away with from this study circle.
- **Ask the following questions** to the group as a whole:

? *As a result of your involvement in this study circle, what suggestions or questions do you have for researchers?*

? *What additional research would be helpful to you as practitioners in adult education?*

- **Then ask if participants have suggestions** for improving the study circle. These suggestions may be related to:
 - *Process* (e.g., the activities, the way readings were organized, etc.)
 - *Content* (e.g., the specific readings chosen, the clarity or richness of the readings or handouts, the focus of the discussions, etc.)
- **Take notes** as people talk so that you can adapt or adjust the next study circle. Feel free to add your own suggestions.
- **Refer participants to** the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy's Web site (www.ncsall.net) for further information. Point out that most NCSALL publications may be downloaded for free from the Web site. Print versions can be ordered by contacting NCSALL at World Education: ncsall@worlded.org.
- **Thank everyone** for coming and participating in this study circle.

Quick Reference Sheet for Facilitating Session Three	
1. Welcome, Session Three Objectives, and Agenda	<i>10 mins., WHOLE GROUP</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post newsprints; review. 	
2. Strategies and Resources for Addressing Adult Student Persistence	<i>25 mins., SMALL GROUPS</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form two small groups by role; distribute handouts by role; small groups discuss what they might add to the lists. 	
3. Jigsaw on Readings	<i>105 mins., SMALL GROUPS then WHOLE GROUP</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form small groups by topics chosen for readings; discuss each article using questions on newsprint as a guide (15 minutes for each article). • Whole group discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? <i>Why did the authors choose the strategies they did to improve student persistence or motivation (for example, on the basis of attendance patterns, on what students said)?</i> ? <i>How has your program chosen strategies for improving student persistence? What were the results?</i> ? <i>What do you think are effective ways of choosing?</i> 	
15–Minute Break	
4. Making Connections	<i>15 mins., PAIRS, then WHOLE GROUP</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form pairs to discuss questions on newsprint. • Reconvene whole group to share thoughts and opinions. 	
5. Action Planning	<i>30 mins., SMALL GROUPS, then WHOLE GROUP</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form pairs or small groups by context and role/program to make a plan for next steps or actions for rethinking instruction and participation; post the saved newsprints from Sessions One and Two as reminders (10 minutes in groups). • Reconvene the group; ask groups in round robin fashion to name one idea; write on newsprint; consider what help they may need to implement steps. 	

Quick Reference Sheet for Facilitating Session Three

6. Final Evaluation





10 mins., WHOLE GROUP

- Ask each individual to comment on most useful concept they got from study circle.
- Ask for suggestions (process, content) for improving study circle.
- Remind them of NCSALL Web site (www.ncsall.net); thank them for participating.

Materials to Hand Out in Session Three

CONTENTS

Handouts for Session Three

- Handout : *Strategies and Resources for Addressing Adult Student Persistence*
- Handout : *Six Strategies for Addressing Student Motivation, Retention, and Persistence*
- Handout : *A Program Framework for Addressing Student Motivation, Retention, and Persistence*
- Handout : *Program Practices for Addressing Adult Student Persistence*



Strategies and Resources for Addressing Adult Student Persistence

SAFETY

An environment in which students feel that it is OK to make mistakes, they are respected for what they know, and they are equally valued in the program, regardless of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, etc.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
Dialogue Journals: Using a process for students to share their concerns in a private way and for you to respond to those concerns	Greater communication about possibly unspoken barriers to participation that may exist and need to be addressed
Learning Histories: Using a technique for you and students to reflect on and discuss your educational experiences	Greater understanding of what students have faced in the past, or how this influences their present learning situation, and of the possible difference between your view of education and theirs
Affirming Diversity: Developing a plan of action, including staff training and possibly classroom activities, for addressing racism and other forms of oppression in the program	Greater respect for all students' needs and greater appreciation for the commonalities and differences among people in the program
Orientation to the Program: Developing a thoughtful, formal process for helping students understand what the program and class are all about	Greater understanding among students of what the program can and cannot do for them, their responsibilities, and the structure of the program and class
Policies and Protocols for Ensuring Physical Safety: Establishing clear rules and policies for ensuring privacy and a safe environment in which students can participate and learn	Greater comfort and assurance that students' concerns about privacy and physical safety will be respected and met

COMMUNITY

An environment among students, staff, and the larger community in which students feel that they are not alone, that they are needed by others, and that they can work together to solve problems.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
<p>Out-of-Class Activities: Organizing orientations, potluck, field trips, extracurricular activities that bring students together in different ways</p>	Greater understanding among students about each other and greater comfort when working together
<p>Project-Based Learning: Implementing a curriculum that helps students as a group identify and address community issues that are of concern to them (see “Accessibility” and “Quality of Service” for additional examples)</p>	Greater cohesiveness among students working together towards a common goal and enhanced belief among students that they can work together to solve problems
<p>Student-Run Activities: Providing opportunities for students to work together to lead activities inside and outside of the classroom</p>	Greater cohesiveness among students working together towards a common goal
<p>Small Group Instruction: Organizing class activities so that students work together rather than alone</p>	Greater sense of being needed by others and of having something worthwhile to share and contribute
<p>Ground Rules: Providing opportunities for students together to set the rules for the class</p>	Greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities for participating in class and in having a voice to improve the class
<p>Affirming Diversity: Developing a plan of action, including staff training and possibly classroom activities, for addressing racism and other forms of oppression in the program (see “Safety” for a description of activity)</p>	Greater feeling of community and inclusion for all people in the program

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
<p>Student-to-Student Dialogue Journals: Pairing students to write and share thoughts, feelings, and/or accomplishments with each other (see “Safety” for a description of activity)</p>	<p>Greater communication between students</p>
<p>Creative Writing: Using teaching techniques that allow students to express themselves</p>	<p>Greater communication and understanding among students</p>
<p>Buddy System: Establishing a process whereby students can work in pairs to help each other address issues of concern to them, possibly between new and returning students</p>	<p>Greater bonding between students and greater connection to the program</p>
<p>Student Address Lists: Developing a contact list (with students’ permission) and encouraging students to contact each other if one of them has “stopped out” to follow up and provide help</p>	<p>Greater likelihood that students stopping out will feel a connection to the program and return at some future date</p>

SELF EFFICACY

A belief by students that they can be successful when attempting new activities as students, workers, family members, and members of their communities.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
Student Leadership: Providing opportunities for students to take a leadership role through conducting peer orientations, peer teaching, serving on program board, advocating in the community, etc.	Greater commitment among students to the program and a greater feeling that their participation is needed by the program and community
Learning Histories: Using a technique for you and students to reflect on and discuss your educational experiences (see “Safety” for a description of activity)	Greater understanding by students of how their educational history affects them and of what they have already achieved
Assessment: Changing assessment strategies to involve students more e.g., portfolio assessment, conferencing, goal-setting activities, etc.; (see “Clarity of Purpose” for a description of activity)	Greater understanding among students about their progress
Dialogue Journals: Using a process for students to share thoughts and feelings about their accomplishments and setbacks with you, and for you to provide encouragement	Greater understanding among students of the natural process of learning through reflection about their achievements and difficulties and a greater appreciation for their strengths and future possibilities
Recognition: Establishing formal mechanisms for students to be recognized for their achievements (e.g., graduation ceremonies, end-of-the-month class celebrations, etc.)	Greater feeling of accomplishment by being recognized for their achievements

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
<p>Student-Generated Materials: Using a technique for students to write and publish their learning histories or to read other students' writings about their educational progress</p>	<p>Greater understanding of their own and others' path toward reaching their educational goals</p>
<p>Adult Multiple Intelligences: Applying the theory of multiple intelligences in your classroom using alternative techniques (e.g., learning through music, art, movement, etc.) that help students capitalize on their strengths (see "Quality of Instruction" for a description of activity)</p>	<p>Greater feeling of their strengths and accomplishments</p>

QUALITY OF SERVICE

High-quality instructional and program practices and structures that are driven by the needs of the students and that are engaging, supportive, and relevant to their daily lives.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
Mail Activities for Students: Developing a system for sending fun and challenging activities to students after “stopping out”	Greater likelihood that students will remain involved in learning and re-enter the program
Small Group Instruction: Using an approach to instruction that supports students to teach each other and not learn in isolation	Greater feeling of belonging and assistance from peers
Follow-up: Developing a system for contacting students after they have “stopped-out” or dropped out to see if the program can help them resolve issues that might have lead to them dropping out	Greater feeling of belonging by students to the program and greater likelihood that students may be able to return
Relevance of Instruction: Using curriculum that corresponds closely to the lives, needs, and goals of the students in your classroom (not just the generic student)	Greater sense by students that the costs of attending the program are worthwhile in helping them meet their short- and long-term needs
Counseling Services: Providing chances to all students to receive support and advice on careers, lives, and further learning	Greater likelihood that students will articulate, focus on, and be able to reach their goals
Enrollment and Attendance Policies: Instituting policies that are both flexible to students’ needs and encourage students to commit to attending the program on a regular basis	Greater consistency in the classroom and better understanding by students that what is expected of them is realistic

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
<p>Teacher Evaluation: Developing a system whereby teachers receive clear and constructive feedback from all stakeholders (e.g., supervisors, students, other teachers, etc.)</p>	<p>Greater opportunities for improvement in curriculum, instruction, and support to students</p>
<p>Professional Development: Participating in activities that help teachers and other staff to question their assumptions and adopt new attitudes and new practices</p>	<p>Greater ability of staff to deliver high-quality, relevant instruction and services to students</p>
<p>Program Development Process: Adopting and following an on-going, inclusive process of defining annual priorities and goals for program improvement and working as a program towards such goals</p>	<p>Greater quality of service across the board and greater likelihood that program will meet students' needs</p>

ACCESSIBILITY

A program structure and system that ensures that all the services students need (e.g., flexibly-scheduled classes, day care, transportation, etc.) are available.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
<p>Project-Based Learning: Implementing a curriculum that helps students address both life and societal barriers that keep them from attending class (e.g., day care, transportation, changes in welfare policies, etc.) while they work to affect personal and community change (see “Community” and “Quality of Service” for additional examples)</p>	<p>Greater ability of students to attend class if project-based learning results in successfully addressing the particular accessibility barrier</p>
<p>Intake Process: Using a mechanism for finding out what potential hindering forces may be and providing assistance (directly or through referral) for students to address those forces</p>	<p>Greater consistency in helping students access program and other services that reduce hindrances to attendance</p>
<p>Support Services: Changing program structure to include resources for day care, transportation, etc. and network with community agencies to provide needed services for students which the program is not able to offer.</p>	<p>Greater possibility of meeting students’ needs so they can attend class</p>
<p>Enrollment and Attendance Policies: Changing policies to reduce chaos in the classroom resulting from constant entering and exiting of students</p>	<p>Greater consistency of attendance and sense of community, stability, and routine in the classroom</p>

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
Flexible Scheduling: Changing class schedules to accommodate students' needs	Greater likelihood that students will be able to attend when it is most convenient for them (e.g., Saturdays)
Advocacy: Engaging in actions that promote adult literacy funding	Greater resources for providing direct services to students (e.g., day care, transportation, etc.) that increase the accessibility of the program

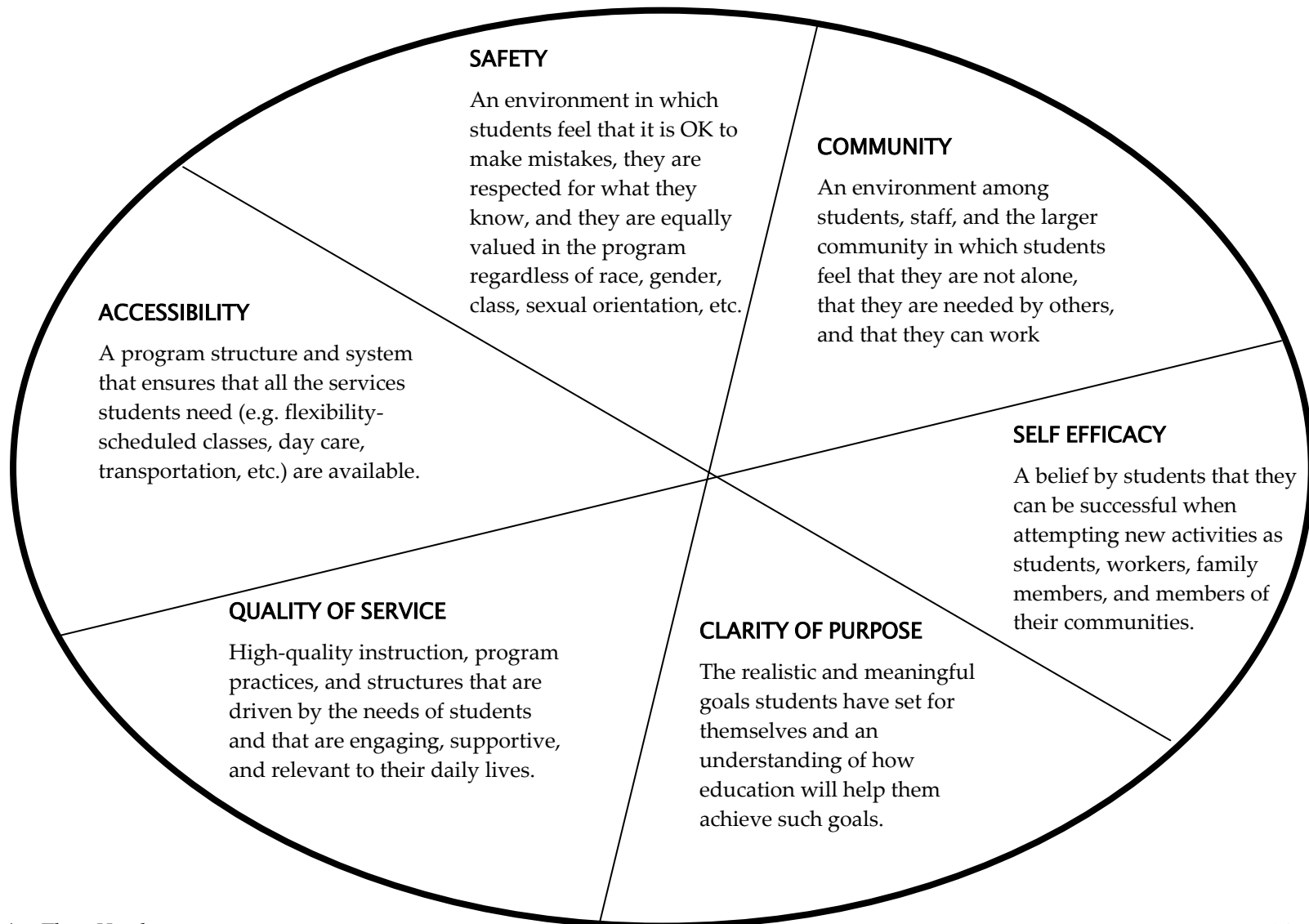
CLARITY OF PURPOSE

The realistic and meaningful goals students have set for themselves and an understanding of how education will help them achieve such goals.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
Goals in Envelopes: Asking students to state their goals and thoughts at the beginning of cycle, in order to present them again at end of cycle for them to reflect on their progress	Greater feeling of accomplishment by seeing how they have progressed towards the goals they set for themselves
Fears and Hopes: Using an activity to help students articulate their fears and expectations related to learning	Greater ability among students to talk about internal barriers that may be preventing them from reaching their goals, and greater likelihood that you may be able to reduce their fears and meet their expectations
Goal Setting through Metaphors: Using a classroom technique for students together to articulate their individual goals and the steps needed (including education) for reaching them	Greater clarity of goals students have and increased ability to set up a plan for reaching goals
Assessment Strategies: Using a variety of assessment strategies to inform teachers and students of the progress students are making	Greater feedback to students about their real progress towards the goals they have set
Conferencing: Establishing a process for you and individual students to meet periodically to discuss goals and progress	Greater likelihood that students will be able to set realistic goals based on the progress they are making
Dialogue Journals: Using a process for students to share their accomplishments and setbacks in a private way and for you to provide encouragement	Greater understanding by you of the sense of purpose students have and of what you can do to help them believe that they are able to set and reach their goals

SAMPLE ACTIVITY	EXPECTED RESULT
<p>Intake Process: Developing a comprehensive process for finding out what students' goals, skills and needs are as they enter the program</p>	<p>Greater ability by staff to understand how to help students set clear goals</p>
<p>Learning Histories: Using a technique for you and students to reflect on and discuss your educational experiences</p>	<p>Greater ability of students to articulate goals for further education based on an understanding of their past</p>
<p>Student Mentors/Testimonials: Establishing a process for more experienced students to talk with new students about their educational path</p>	<p>Greater sharing among peers about the different options available as a result of acquiring further education</p>
<p>Equipped for the Future: Using the EFF framework to help guide students in clarifying their goals as workers, family members, and community members</p>	<p>Greater match between curriculum and what students identify as their goals (what they want to know and be able to do)</p>
<p>Creative Writing: Using teaching techniques that allow students to express themselves</p>	<p>Greater communication and understanding of their accomplishments and challenges</p>
<p>Bridge to Next Steps: Providing opportunities for students to become familiar with options for further education or work (e.g., field trip to community college, intern program with local company, etc.)</p>	<p>Greater likelihood that students will clarify long-term goals by understanding the options available to them</p>

Six Strategies for Addressing Student Motivation, Retention, and Persistence



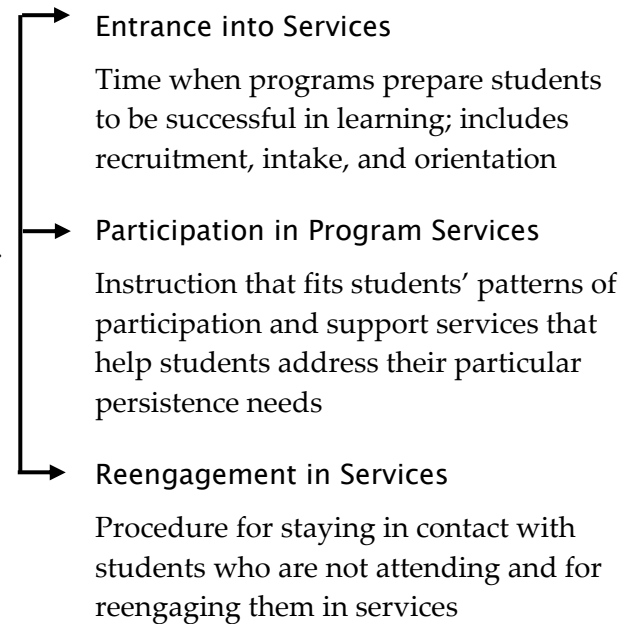
A Program Framework for Addressing Student Motivation, Retention, and Persistence

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY OF STUDENT PERSISTENCE

A message to students that the program and staff are committed to student success and that student persistence is an important measure in program accountability, which means a...

...PROGRAM DESIGN

That develops and implements services that help adults persist in their learning and reach their goals. Three critical phases are...





Program Practices for Addressing Adult Student Persistence

Create a Vision for Student Persistence...

A message to students that the program and staff are committed to student success and that student persistence is an important measure in program accountability

Consider:

- Committing to student success
- Committing to support students to attain program completion
- Stating the value of student persistence
- Supporting students who are currently not attending (or are “stopping out”)
- Stating that the program and staff value student persistence
- Adopting policies aimed at supporting student participation and persistence
- Measuring student persistence (not retention)
- Defining program completion (outcomes) for those students who don’t fit the GED/ diploma mold
- Addressing student needs at the individual level
- Organizing and operating the program to achieve better student persistence
- Forming student persistence teams whose purpose is to plan and implement the program’s student persistence vision
- Gathering information from students on what helps them to persist

Ask:

- What other considerations might be added?
- What are the implications for policies and/or procedures?
- What might be the associated needs for professional development?

ADULT STUDENT PERSISTENCE

- Establishing a system for monitoring student persistence
- Analyzing program data on persistence and using that information for continuous program improvement

Design a program ...

That develops and implements services that help adults persist in their learning and reach their goals. Three critical phases are entrance into services, participation in program services, and reengagement in learning.

FOR ENTRANCE INTO SERVICES

The time when programs prepare students to be successful in learning (recruitment, intake, and orientation)

Consider:

- Assuming that all students are in the intermittent pathway and planning for “stopping out”
- Making sure that every student determines a clear learning goal, or a limited set of learning goals
- Constructing a learning plan with each student that addresses instructional and support services
- Planning for transitions to other programs
- Helping students plan for managing the positive and negative forces that will support or hinder their participation
- Assisting students in identifying and/or building sponsors—family, friends, teachers/tutors, caseworkers, and so on
- Referring students to agencies/services for assistance with non-academic needs
- Counseling “try-out” students in eliminating critical barriers to participation before placement in instructional services
- Screening students for learning disabilities or other special needs, and making referrals as appropriate

Ask:

- What other considerations might be added?
- What are the implications for policies, procedures, and/or practices?
- What might be the associated needs for professional development?
- What might need to be changed in the program for this phase?

ADULT STUDENT PERSISTENCE

- Providing potential students with enough information that they can make an informed decision about enrolling
- Instituting a comprehensive orientation process
- Hiring an intake specialist
- Building a trusting, respectful, and caring relationship amongst program staff and students from the beginning
- Clarifying mutual expectations for students, instructors, and the program
- Implementing managed enrollment and/or limiting open enrollment
- Maintaining confidentiality of student records and staff-student conversations
- Instituting a case management model for all students

FOR PARTICIPATION IN SERVICES

Instruction that fits students' patterns of participation and support services that help students address their particular persistence needs

Consider:

- Improving the quality of instruction
- Building self-efficacy through vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and addressing physiological and emotional states
- Showing progress toward reaching student's goals
- Creating successful first classes
- Ensuring continuous success
- Encouraging instructor/student collaboration
- Creating a student-centered (not teacher-centered) classroom
- Offering relevant instruction
- Using authentic materials and activities
- Establishing trust and cooperation
- Giving productive and immediate feedback regarding student learning
- Providing clear explanations of content
- Accommodating the variety of adult multiple intelligences and "ways of knowing" (adult development stages)
- Using instructional activities that promote active learning
- Planning strategies for "plateaus of progress"
- Establishing an environment of "community"
- Implementing project-based learning
- Using a variety of instructional groupings, such as large group, small group, one-to-one, peer-to-peer, and so on
- Developing students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- Utilizing student feedback to assess teacher/tutor approaches

- Offering a challenging, organized curriculum that addresses the needs and goals of the students
- Adhering to adult learning principles
- Scaffolding instruction and providing for reinforcement and practice of skills
- Developing a culture of acceptance and support
- Fostering a safe learning environment
- Offering a multiplicity of instructional modes
- Expanding hours of services to accommodate changes in students' schedules
- Offering alternatives to classroom instruction, such as distance learning, computer-assisted instruction, drop-in instruction or activities, conversation or book clubs, peer learning groups, and enrichment classes
- Offering accelerated courses, workplace education, health literacy, family literacy, etc.
- Expanding services to off-site locations, students' communities, etc.
- Establishing a lending library of books on tape, videos, software, workbooks, etc.
- Coordinating with other adult education and literacy programs for alternative and transition services, such as tutoring, career planning, distance learning, etc.
- Increasing duration and intensity of instruction to match learning needs of students and their learning tasks
- Maintaining appropriate staff-to-student ratios, which are informed by instructional goals and the characteristics of the student population
- Placing students in classes according to tracks, such as employment and academic (GED), or according to levels (beginning, intermediate, etc.)
- Supporting self-study

- Establishing learning plans for those who must stop instruction
- Assessing progress of students upon return for changes and starting instruction there
- Providing counseling/referral services when students are not able to meet their instructional schedules
- Offering counseling services
- Providing educational, personal, and career planning services
- Helping students overcome embarrassment at returning to school
- Building self-confidence
- Addressing situational and dispositional barriers to attendance
- Referring students' to agencies/services for non-academic needs
- Assisting students to develop effective coping strategies
- Providing transition services
- Identifying students at risk of dropping out early
- Building commitment from student to achieve goals
- Offering stress reduction classes
- Improving information and referral to outside agencies
- Expanding support services
- Ensuring privacy and a safe environment for learning
- Providing on-site childcare, transportation assistance, and other social services
- Celebrating student achievements; recognizing students who accomplish goals
- Providing opportunities for student involvement and leadership
- Holding regularly-scheduled conferences with students to talk about goals, review learning plans, and update their progress
- Initiating activities for students that include families, children, and other "sponsors"

ADULT STUDENT PERSISTENCE

- Encouraging students to support each other's efforts
- Assigning a student mentor/"buddy" for first weeks of instruction
- Fostering cultural awareness and affirming diversity
- Adding informational strategies or community presentations to address student's needs on such critical topics as violence prevention, nutrition, hygiene, etc.
- Assisting with job placement or offering job readiness courses

Ask:

- What other considerations might be added?
- What are the implications for policies, procedures, and/or practices?
- What might be the associated needs for professional development?
- What might need to be changed in the program for this phase?

FOR REENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING

Procedure for staying in contact with students who are not attending and for reengaging them in services

Consider:

- Implementing a formal system for staying in contact with students
- Formulating a student communication plan for no-shows and absenteeism
- Creating peer telephone support system
- Talking to students about “stopping out” and making plans for that event
- Engaging students in leadership roles
- Bridging students to next steps, furthering education or becoming employed
- Transitioning students to another adult education or literacy program
- Changing perceptions that it’s okay for students to be “stopping out,” (not “dropping out”)
- Using former or current students to address reengagement in learning with students who are not attending
- Reallocating resources to institute program procedures to support formal systems for staying in contact with students who are not attending
- Intervening for problem absenteeism
- Forming graduate support groups
- Hiring former students as follow-up counselors

Ask:

- What other considerations might be added?
- What are the implications for policies, procedures, and/or practices?
- What might be the associated needs for professional development?
- What might need to be changed in the program for this phase?

ADULT STUDENT PERSISTENCE

- Collaborating with other educational and support providers to form one-stop, comprehensive programs