

Skills for Disease Prevention and Screening

OVERVIEW *and*
PREPARATION
for **SESSION ONE**

HEALTH LITERACY
STUDY CIRCLES⁺
HALL/NCSALL 2007

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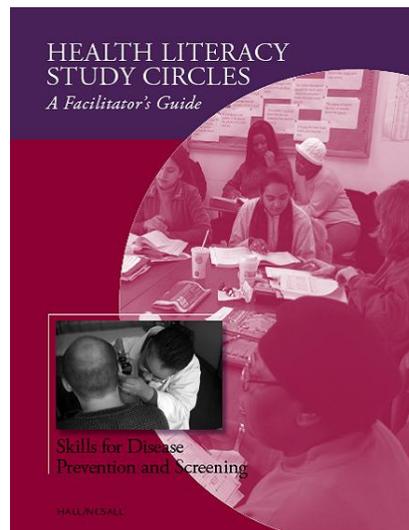
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Copies of the Health Literacy Study Circle+ guide, *Skills for Disease Prevention and Screening*, can be found online at www.ncsall.net.

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OVERVIEW and PREPARATION for SESSION ONE

**HEALTH LITERACY STUDY CIRCLES+
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About This Study Circle+ Guide

As a facilitator of this Health Literacy Study Circle+, you will be engaged in a professional development course that has been well received. This guide is designed to be a training manual and a resource for facilitators who will conduct the Health Literacy Study Circle+ with a focus on Skills for Disease Prevention and Screening.

This Health Literacy Study Circle+ is based on five sessions. Each session is planned for approximately three hours (1/2 day). This notebook contains all the information you will need to conduct each of the sessions. Each session has been formatted as a bound booklet so that you can easily carry it to the session and return it to the notebook. Behind each booklet (including this one), you will find materials such as background reading, handouts for activities, and materials for work between sessions. These materials are in loose-leaf format so that you will be able to make copies for each participant.

The topic of disease prevention and screening is important because research findings show that adults with less education are less likely to engage in prevention and screening activities. Literacy skills are critically important to enable adults to make decisions and take actions toward prevention and screening. Adults need to be able to:

- Make sense of and act on public health recommendations.
- Take disease prevention steps, such as quitting smoking or using sunscreen.
- Make informed decisions about participating in screening tests.
- Ask questions to understand screening results and take appropriate follow-up actions.

During the five sessions of this study circle, you will ask participants to identify literacy skills that their adult students need in order to participate in disease prevention and screening activities. Participants will discuss

issues and ideas in small and in large groups, and experiment with teaching methods that they may use in their own classrooms. Participants will have the opportunity to teach sample lessons and create their own lesson and unit plans focused on helping their students develop health literacy skills. This approach to health literacy enables adult educators to focus on building skills related to reading, writing, oral communication, and math using health-related examples.

Who should use this guide?

This Health Literacy Study Circle+ guide was developed to help you facilitate a learning experience for adult educators. If your state education department, community organization, or adult education program is looking for a professional development tool on the topic of health literacy, this guide provides you with a manual and a resource for training adult educators.

Who should attend this Study Circle+?

The Health Literacy Study Circles+ are designed for practicing adult educators who are interested in learning about health literacy and ways that they can integrate health literacy skills into their classroom teaching. We use “adult educator” to refer to practitioners working in adult basic education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED), and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) programs.

Important activities take place between study circle sessions. Participants are asked to try out activities with their students and share their teaching experiences and ideas with other participants. For this reason, it is important that participants have easy access to classrooms (ideally, their own) for the duration of the study circle sessions.

Adult educators who participate in this study circle are not asked to become health care experts. Instead, they are encouraged to use their expertise to help their students improve their reading, writing, math, and communication skills and apply these skills to health materials and tasks.

How can I avoid being cast in the role of a health educator?

Participants may look to you for expert advice on health-related issues. To insure that this does not happen, you should be careful to avoid talking about your own health care beliefs or decisions. Instead, be comfortable noting that you, like them, do not have a health background.

Similarly, adult educators who participate in this study circle are not expected to become health experts on diseases and screening procedures. Instead, they should focus on health-related literacy tasks. Teachers may choose to invite health experts into their classes if their students are

interested in particular diseases, preventive measures, or screening tests. This study circle was not designed for teachers to focus on health content or to become health experts. Instead, teachers are encouraged to use their expertise to help their students improve their reading, writing, math, and communication skills and apply these skills to common health activities.

For more information and advice about one's role as an adult educator in health literacy education, you may wish to visit the Web site for the Virginia Adult Education Health Literacy Toolkit at:

<http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/publications/healthlit/index.shtml>.

This Web site features a section titled *Addressing Teachers' Concerns about Teaching Health*, which addresses several important questions frequently asked by teachers who are considering teaching health literacy. You might also recommend this site to the participants in the study circle.

How should this guide be used?

This study circle guide was developed for professional development experts, and it contains notes for the facilitator, agendas, and all the printed materials and handouts you will need to facilitate each of the sessions. The guide was designed in a recommended format, but the designers expect that facilitators will review the material and adjust the format and activities to best suit the needs of the participating educators.

No matter how much experience you have as a facilitator or with study circles, we strongly recommend that you read this entire guide. It includes directions, all needed materials, guidelines for preparing materials, suggestions for working within the existing parameters of adult education programs, and facilitating tips for each session.

What outcomes do we anticipate from this Study Circle+?

The anticipated outcomes of the Disease Prevention and Screening Study Circle+ will be threefold:

1. **Outcomes for adult educators:** This Study Circle+ for Disease Prevention and Screening (DPS) will offer teachers a

deeper understanding of health literacy, health literacy research, and health literacy skills.

The activities used in these sessions feature a range of group discussion methods that teachers might want to try out in their classes. We hope that activities, such as small group discussions, use of “triggers,” and “brainstorming,” will expand the teachers’ repertoire of cooperative learning tools.

This study circle will serve as a “jumping-off point” for adult educators to help them develop ideas and activities to improve their adult students’ ability to participate in disease prevention and screening activities. This study circle also gives teachers an opportunity to form support groups and networks of colleagues so that they can continue to discuss and share their experiences teaching and evaluating health literacy activities.

2. **Outcomes for the field of adult education:** This study circle will provide opportunities for links between adult education programs and public health programs, and between adult education programs and health care providers. The health goals and objectives for the nation, delineated in *Healthy People 2010*, include the goal of improving health literacy. The health field cannot do this without both the important contribution of adult education experts and a partnership with the adult education field. This study circle highlights the expertise of adult educators by focusing on critical health literacy skills.
3. **Outcomes for adult learners:** We hope that this study circle will lead to positive changes in adult learners’ abilities to interact with health care systems and professionals. The sample lessons offer opportunities for adult learners to acquire health literacy skills and improve their ability to perform critical tasks. Some of these tasks include keeping a family medical history, describing symptoms, understanding mathematical statements about health risks, making decisions about prevention and screening activities, and understanding an informed consent document. As a result, adult learners will increase their confidence in their ability to engage in disease prevention and screening activities, and will gain new skills in order to meet the

many challenges involved. We believe that improvements in our adult learners' health literacy skills and their health outcomes are the most important measures of success of all the Health Literacy Study Circles+.

We welcome your comments and advice on how you have adopted and/or adapted the Health Literacy Study Circles+, and we look forward to hearing about your experience using this guide. In the future, we hope to post your suggestions and examples of the work done in your groups on our Web site.

Please feel free to contact us.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rima E. Rudd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "R".

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Organization of the Health Literacy Study Circle+ Guides

The guides for the Health Literacy Study Circles+ consist of two parts. The first is a spiral-bound book titled *Introduction: Overview, Planning, and Facilitation Tips*. The second is the *Facilitator's Guide* itself, prepared in notebook format, containing all the information needed for each of the three Health Literacy Study Circles+. The three Health Literacy Study Circle+ guides in the series are Skills for Health Care Access and Navigation, Skills for Chronic Disease Management, and Skills for Disease Prevention and Screening.

Introduction: Overview, Planning, and Facilitation Tips

Introduction: Overview, Planning, and Facilitation Tips has been structured for use with all three Health Literacy Study Circles+. This spiral-bound book accompanies all Study Circle+ guides, provides background information about each of the three study circles, and offers important guidelines for planning, organizing, and facilitating the study circles. Please read this book first, in full.

Facilitator's Guide: Skills for Disease Prevention and Screening

The facilitator's guide contains six booklets. The first of the six is titled *Overview and Preparation for Session One*. This booklet offers an overview of Skills for Disease Prevention and Screening and contains study circle variations, preparations for Session One, and materials to be sent out before Session One.*

* You will need to send out materials for Session One **at least** TWO WEEKS before the session begins. The flow of Session One is dependent on the reading assignment.

Session Booklets

Each session booklet offers a step-by-step guide for conducting the session activities, with suggested time frames. All of the materials needed for each session are provided as well. These materials, in loose-leaf format, consist of mailings to participants, background readings, handouts for the sessions, and information and tools needed for work between sessions. The following bulleted list offers an overview of each session.

- **Session One: Introduction to Health Literacy and Disease Prevention and Screening**

Participants develop a shared definition of “health literacy,” discuss different types of activities related to disease prevention and screening, and identify barriers that make it difficult for people to engage in those activities. Participants also prepare to conduct a needs assessment activity with their students after Session One.

- **Session Two: Identifying Disease Prevention and Screening Tasks and Underlying Skills**

Participants share the results of the needs assessment activity and then compile a list of specific health tasks and underlying skills that can be addressed with their classes. Participants also review and prepare to teach one or more sample lessons between Sessions Two and Three. These lessons all focus on skills related to disease prevention and screening activities.

- **Session Three: Integrating Health Literacy Skills into Instruction**

Participants discuss the experience of teaching sample lessons and define key health literacy skills that they wish to focus on within their own classes. They also begin to create new health literacy lessons and consider what a health literacy unit would look like. Between Session Three and Session Four, participants complete and teach their own health literacy lesson(s) and develop outlines for units.

- **Session Four: Planning Lessons, Units, and Evaluations**

Participants share their teaching experiences and discuss options for health literacy units. They also consider how to define and measure their students’ health literacy skills. After Session Four, participants use a planning template to outline a unit with an evaluation component.

- **Session Five: Developing Strategies for Success**

Participants share and analyze their plans and consider how they will incorporate health literacy skills development into their programs. They identify and examine barriers and supports for such work. Study circle participants also determine how they might stay in touch with each other and work together in the future. Note that

there is an option for expanding Session Five to include a meeting with a public health professional to discuss disease prevention and screening activities or issues in your local area.

Each session in the *Facilitator's Guide* follows the same general format and contains the following sections:

- **Notes to the Facilitator:** Offers brief descriptions and explanations of the activities and the discussion methods that will be used throughout the session. It offers a rationale for the focus and structure of the session's activities.
- **Introductory Activities:** Contains the session objectives and agenda, and sets the stage for the session.
- **Discussion & Analysis Activities:** Provides directions for helping participants define health literacy skills related to the study circle topic.
- **Planning Activities:** Describes the activities that participants will complete in their own classrooms between sessions.
- **Closure Activities:** Provides an opportunity for participants to consider a range of discussion methods used during the session that might be useful for their own teaching. The evaluation activity offers participants an opportunity to summarize and evaluate both content and methods.
- **Materials:** Contains all the readings and handouts needed for each session.

Study Circle+ Expanded Session Five

You may want to consider conducting an expanded Session Five *if* you and the participants agree to turn that final session into a full-day meeting. This expansion would center on a meeting between participants and a local public health official who works on prevention and screening issues. The point of this exchange would be to share information across the literacy and public health domains and to promote continued linkages between educators and public health officials beyond the Study Circle+ experience. The expanded session activities are described in full at the end of Session Five.

If you and participants agree to do the expanded session, be sure to plan for a six-hour meeting (e.g., a 9:00 to 3:00 day). The additional three hours are designed to include a one-hour break for lunch and two hours of activities in the afternoon.

If you do the expanded session, you will need to do some preparation well in advance of the session in order to arrange a visit from a public health official (or officials). Suggested steps for preparing for the expanded session are provided in this booklet after the section on Preparation for Session One.

Preparation for Session One

First, note the set of handouts following this booklet. These handouts should be sent to participants in advance of the first session meeting. Some of the readings in this packet were included to provide a context for the focus on Skills for Disease Prevention and Screening. Other readings will help prepare the participants for the overall Health Literacy Study Circle+ experience and will serve as the foundation for the discussions in Session One.

Next, read the information below. It and the accompanying checklist offer detailed preparatory steps to help you get ready for Session One.

About the Welcome Letter to Participants

Before you send out these materials, you need to customize the **Welcome Letter to Participants**. This letter is designed as a template to help you create your own welcome letter for study circle participants.

Place this letter on top of all the materials when you send them out.

- Be sure to include the date, time and location for each study circle session.
- Tell participants that they should plan to attend all sessions. If anyone anticipates problems with the scheduled dates, he or she should let you know before Session One so that you can discuss the feasibility of his or her participation. Note that attendance at all sessions is essential.
- Ask participants to bring to the first session all the materials you sent out.

Summary Checklist

PLEASE CHECK

- Have you created your own version of the **Welcome Letter to Participants** indicating the date, time, and location for each study circle session?

Background Materials for Session One

Background materials for Session One should be sent out to participants at least two weeks before the session begins.

- Be sure that you have a complete set of all materials for Session One.
- Copy all of the handouts and readings on three-hole paper.
- Send out the materials for Session One to all participants.
- NOTE: We suggest that you send out only the materials needed by participants to prepare for Session One. We do not recommend that you send out materials for all sessions at this time.

Summary Checklist

- Do you have a complete set of background materials for Session One? (See the list of materials to be sent out before Session One).
- Did you make copies of the materials for Session One on three-hole paper?
- Did you place the **Welcome Letter** and the **Participant Expectations** sheet on top of the background materials you are sending out to participants?
- Did you send out the background materials for Session One to all participants at least *two weeks* prior to Session One?

Note about Participant Expectations	Summary Checklist
<p>It is important to give participants an opportunity to convey their own expectations for this study circle. Although you may not be able to make changes to accommodate all expectations, knowing what participants expect will give you some insight into participants' thinking about the experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ask participants to complete and return the Participant Expectations sheet to you before Session One begins so that you can review them ahead of time.▪ When you send out the materials for Session One, be sure to include a self-addressed envelope or your address so participants can complete and return the Participant Expectations sheets to you.▪ During Session One, you will have time to review participants' expectations and note those that will be addressed during the course of the study circle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Have you included a self-addressed envelope with the materials so participants can return the Participant Expectations sheets to you?

Facilitator Preparation

It is important for you to review the study circle guide and read all the handouts for each session well in advance. You will need to prepare all the materials for each session and for follow-up assignments (copy handouts and prepare newsprints).

For Session One, make a few extra copies of background materials in case participants misplace those they received before the start of the study circle.

Summary Checklist

- Have you read all the Session One background materials that you sent out to the participants?

- Have you read all the information in Session One?



National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy

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The National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) is a collaborative effort between the Harvard Graduate School of Education and World Education. The University of Tennessee, Portland State University, and Rutgers University are NCSALL's partners. NCSALL is funded by the Educational Research and Development Centers program, Award Number R309B60002, as administered by the Institute of Education Sciences (formerly Office of Educational Research and Improvement), U.S. Department of Education. The contents of this publication do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Institute of Education Sciences, or the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.