

National Coalition for Literacy

**Communications Handbook for  
Organizations Participating in National  
Adult Education & Family Literacy Week**

Resources to Help Plan, Prepare, and Promote  
Adult Education & Family Literacy

2012



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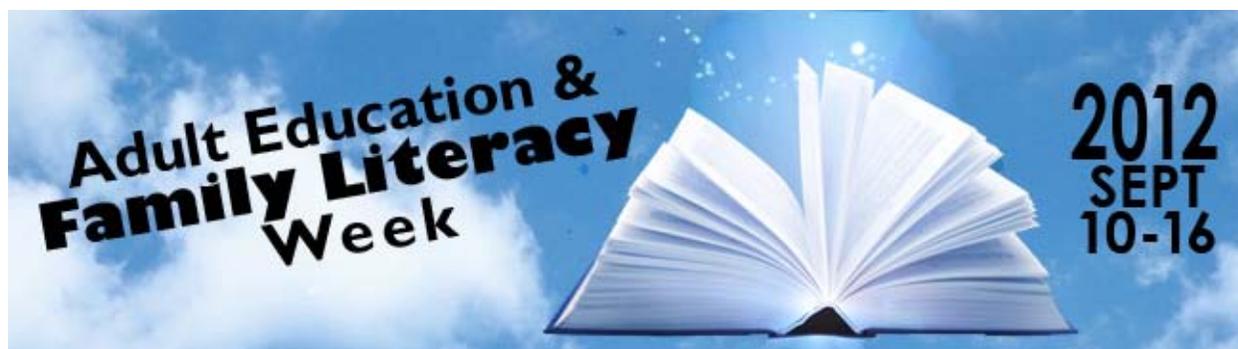
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Edited by Jackie A. Taylor, Member of the Board

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## Communications Handbook for Organizations Participating in National Adult Education & Family Literacy Week

September 10-16, 2012

### Introduction

The National Coalition for Literacy (NCL) works with legislators, practitioners, and the general public, to raise awareness of adult education & family literacy and its impact on economic growth and opportunity in the United States. Each year, NCL works with Congress on House and Senate resolutions to dedicate the second week in September as National Adult Education & Family Literacy (AEFL) Week. The purpose of AEFL Week is to work side-by-side in every state, territory, and district, to heighten public awareness, strengthen alliances, and increase the number of people who understand the vital role adult education & family literacy plays in our nation's well-being.

### Instructions

Use this Communications Handbook to organize, prepare, and promote adult education & family literacy during AEFL Week. Throughout this handbook, you will see NCL's goals and strategies, as well as resources and templates we will provide for you over the upcoming months. Throughout the Handbook you will see prompts where you can jot notes and draft your participation plan.

### Communications Goals

NCL's communication goals are to:

- Involve 200 local, state, and national organizations across the country in campaign activities;
- Leverage three stories in national media outlets;
- Increase NCL's membership by 20%;
- Increase Congressional champions for adult education and family literacy by 25%; and
- Recruit and involve ten national partners from outside of NCL in the campaign.

By doubling the number of local, state, and national organizations involved in campaign activities, we aim to double the impact and reach states that have not previously participated in AEFL Week 2012. By

increasing NCL's membership and strengthening alliances across sectors, we continue to push toward a critical mass of organizations working closely to improve public policies and increase resources for adult education and family literacy.



What are your local or state communications goals? How many local media outlets will you engage? Will you grow your organization, leverage resources for your program, engage or increase local or state champions?

**Notes:**

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## Strategic Approach

Our strategic approach is to:

- Partner with adult education & family literacy programs and others to support them in creating their own communications plans and campaign activities that advance our communications goals.
- Build relationships with top-tier media outlets that will support NCL's efforts to be recognized as a leading voice and authority in advocating for public policies that advance adult education & family literacy.
- Work with Members of Congress to create national resolutions and grow the House Adult Literacy Caucus, our Congressional champion-base.

The following action plan outlines specific activities that will build on each other to culminate in achieving these goals for AEFL Week 2012.

## Developing a Compelling Message

Developing and articulating consistent and compelling messages is key to our success. NCL is creating messaging templates for you to use with traditional print media, web-based news outlets, and social media channels. By participating in this campaign, you will strengthen your organization's position as the leading community voice on the following issues:

- Adult education and literacy
- Family literacy
- Adult education, jobs, and the economy
- Adult education funding

Messaging that NCL develops for the campaign can also be used as talking points with local policy makers, media, and community outlets.

## Traditional Media Outreach

### *National Media*

The National Coalition for Literacy will draft and distribute a national press release about National Adult Education & Family Literacy Week. The goal of the national press release is to secure three unique stories in top-tier media outlets, which include, but are not limited to:

- *Associated Press*
- *Chicago Tribune*
- *L.A. Times*
- *The New York Times*
- *The Washington Post*

### *Niche Media*

NCL has also identified and targeted national education outlets to pitch during the campaign. Some of the targeted niche media outlets include, but are not limited to:

- Ed Daily
- Ed Week
- The Chronicle of Higher Education
- Fritzwire
- ECS e-connection
- Inside Higher Ed
- Adult Education Quarterly
- Education Digest
- Education for All (blog)
- Education Leader
- Education Review
- Education Report
- Education Today
- The Employment and Training Report

### *Local Media*

***In addition to national media outreach, NCL will provide local organizations with a local press release template, which organizations can modify, distribute, and release to local and regional media outlets.***

When distributing the local press release to the media, you should send it to PK12/Education, workforce, or business reporters, since they traditionally cover this topic.

The goal of the local press release is to secure one unique story in a traditional media outlet. Local stories should mention or quote both NCL and your organization's leadership, but may also quote or mention other NCL member organizations. Engaging with the local media will increase your organization's overall visibility and position your leadership as the leading topic experts.



What are your goals for traditional media coverage? Which media outlets will you target in your outreach efforts? How will the stories position your organization as a local or regional authority on adult education and family literacy?

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## Social Media Outreach

***The National Coalition for Literacy will create sample templates for you to use on Twitter, Facebook, and other social media venues to elevate awareness of adult education & family literacy.*** NCL will also provide you with strategies and tips on how to effectively use the communication and social media tools to elevate adult education & family literacy.

The Coalition is currently active on the following social media channels:

- Twitter via [@NCLAdvocacy](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Linked In](#)
- [Google +](#)
- [Flickr](#)
- [E-newsletters and alerts](#)
- [Advocacy Blog](#)

Along with social media outreach, NCL will reach out to and engage with bloggers who blog about adult literacy-related topics, including:

- Educators
- Parent activists
- Children's literature
- Social Innovators
- Local policy

NCL will provide you with detailed blogger outreach roadmap, which will include the following: how to reach out, with what information, sample outreach messages, and a targeted blogger lists.

## Third-Party Outreach

The National Coalition for Literacy plans to recruit and partner with other adult education- and literacy-related organizations in order to:

- Raise the overall awareness of adult education and family literacy week
- Learn about and coordinate joint outreach efforts
- Establish new relationships in order partner on future events and announcements

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<http://ncladvocacy.org/aefl.html>

We encourage you to do the same at the local and state levels, and reach out to organizations such as:

- The National Skills Coalition
- The Coalition on Human Needs
- The Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce
- Jobs for the Future



Potential new partners may already be making plans to raise awareness during this campaign. Be proactive. Reach out to them to learn if they have plans and how you might work together in the campaign. For example, you might partner to hold a local fundraising event or host a legislative visit. Who will you contact?

**Notes:**

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### Recommended Timeline

We know every organization is different and faces different circumstances, such as being closed for part of the summer, or starting back up in September. But here is a general timeline that illustrates what you can expect to happen, and when you may want to plan time to participate or develop your own campaign.

National Campaign Activity	June	July	August	September
<b>Spotlight on Achievement:</b> A new NCL and VALUEUSA initiative to collect adult learner success stories, publish them, and share them with legislators.	NCL and VALUEUSA launches.  Choose an adult learner from your program who you would like to nominate.	NCL reviews stories as they are submitted.	Prepare your press release; template available.  NCL publishes stories.	Arrange for the adult learner to meet with his or her legislator when the legislator is home on break.

National Campaign Activity	June	July	August	September
<b>NCL's 2012 Literacy Leadership Awards</b>	<p>NCL releases call for nominations.</p> <p>Nominate someone who has demonstrated extraordinary leadership at local, state, and national levels.</p>		<p>Awardees announced.</p> <p>Press release template available.</p>	<p>Awardees honored at a Hill event.</p>
<p><b>Case Studies</b></p> <p>NCL publishes case studies of various activities previously conducted by local programs. It outlines simple steps you can take in gearing up for the campaign.</p>	<p>Review and plan for local campaign activity.</p> <p>Share your plans on NCL's blog. You may get new ideas by reading others' plans. Troubleshoot difficult areas.</p>			<p>Implement local campaign activity (ies) and document outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Resolutions</b></p> <p>NCL works with House and Senate leaders on resolutions dedicating National Adult Education &amp; Family Literacy Week.</p>		<p>Ask your Congressional leaders to speak on behalf of supporting adult education when resolution(s) are introduced on Floor.</p>	<p>Work with policymakers to create local and/or state resolutions.</p>	
<p><b>House Adult Literacy Caucus</b></p>	<p>NCL publishes list of potential Congressional champions and engages field in inviting these champions to join the Caucus.</p>		<p>New fact sheets sent to Caucus Members.</p>	<p>Action alert to House Members: Join the House Adult Literacy Caucus.</p>

National Campaign Activity	June	July	August	September
<b>Media and Partnership Outreach</b>	<p>Add campaign logo to your website, email communications, and other publications.</p> <p>Include messaging and new fact sheets in campaign activities.</p>	<p>Leverage existing partnerships and identify new partners to collaborate on joint press releases and campaign activities.</p> <p>Identify your media, including education media, to target.</p> <p>Include messaging and new fact sheets in campaign activities.</p>	<p>Use press release templates to generate media attention in your local media market.</p> <p>Use social media templates to engage your networks online.</p> <p>Use NCL's blogger outreach lists to invite bloggers to participate.</p> <p>Repurpose sample blog articles, or publish your own.</p> <p>Include messaging &amp; new fact sheets in campaign activities.</p>	<p>Participate in guest blog discussions.</p> <p>Leverage Labor Day, International Literacy Day, and back-to-school news hooks.</p> <p>Include messaging and new fact sheets in campaign activities.</p>
<b>Outcomes</b>			NCL launches website to capture campaign activities nationally.	Share campaign outcomes, such as photos and press coverage with NCL.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Keep track of your media hits, social media following, etc.	Keep track of your media hits, social media following, etc.	Keep track of your media hits, social media following, etc.	<p>Keep track of your media hits, social media following, etc.</p> <p>Participate in online evaluation of the campaign and make recommendations.</p>