

Reaching a critical mass – 4 suggestions from NALA experience

John Stewart, NALA
Vilnius, 8 December 2013



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OECD Adult Skills Survey 2013

Almost **18%** of Irish adults are at or below level 1 of literacy – 525,000 people.

25.3% of Irish adults are at or below level 1 of numeracy – 754,000 people.

42% of Irish adults score at or below Level 1 on the problem solving scale – 825,000 people.



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A question of critical mass

Adult literacy budget in Ireland **€30M**

57,000 attend adult literacy services in ETBs.

- Represents 10.6% of those at or below PIAAC level 1 literacy.

Further education and training budget in Ireland **€900M**

270,000 places in further education and training.



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NALA suggest 4 policies to reach a critical mass

1. Embed literacy into other policies – for example, Activation, Youth, Digital strategies.
2. Integrate literacy & numeracy into all learning.
3. Provide more flexible services to meet needs and demand.
4. Mass awareness and advertising campaigns.



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1. Embed literacy into other policies

- National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for Children and Young People – family literacy (example below)
- Health Promotion – health literacy
- Activation – literacy development (current)
- Public information – Plain English



Website for parents

www.helpmykidlearn.ie



Aim of website is to give parents fun ideas how they can help their child.

It is part of National Literacy & Numeracy Strategy for children.

Nearly 67,000 unique visitors in it's first year.

Nearly 1,000 subscribers to monthly newsletter.



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Family literacy: Effects of parents and schools on children's achievement

Achievement	Parental effects	School effects
Age 7	0.29	0.05
age 11	0.27	0.21
age 16	0.14	0.51

From Sacker et al 2002

Desforbes to EFLN conference 2009

http://www.efln.eu/assets/sept09conference/Charles_Desforbes_EFLN_Pres.pdf

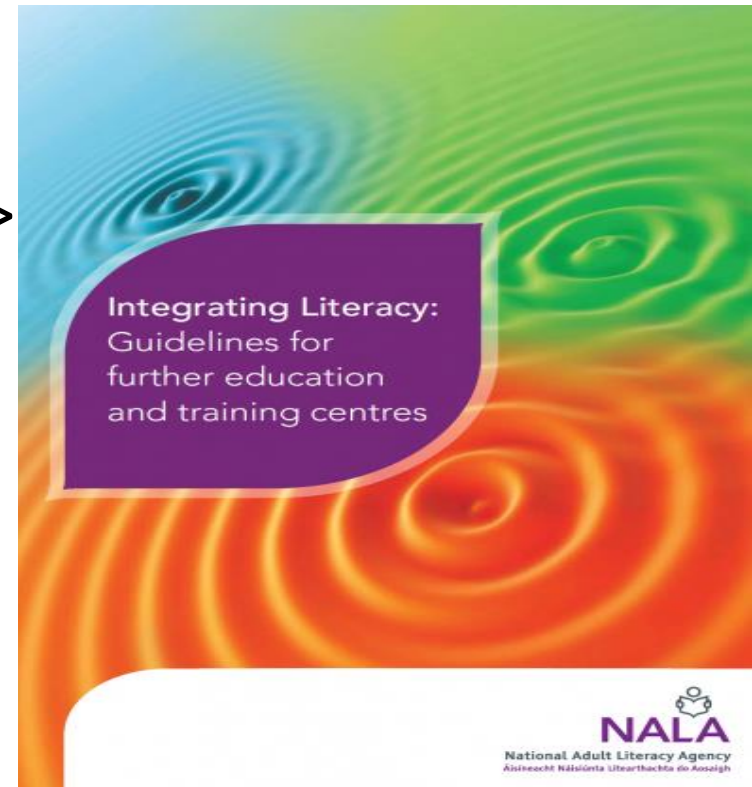


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2. Integrate literacy, numeracy & ICT development into all learning

- Evidence from Ireland, UK (NRDC) and Australia
- NALA experience is that getting political buy in from providers is complex.
- NALA Guidelines for providers >
- Explicit objective of new ETB programmes at levels 1-4 of EQF



3. Provide more flexible services

- Support more intensive learning, for example through **blended learning**.
- Provide **Recognition of Prior Learning**.
- Provide **self directed and distance learning**

www.writeon.ie.

- Support **family learning**

www.helpmykidlearn.ie.

- Addresses barriers to participation
- Learner decides what & when to learn
- Enhances learning & progression
- Enables more people to develop their basic skills



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Blended learning

NALA experience suggests benefits:

– For learners:

- Facilitates learning in different ways and styles.
- Learners may require more support than you can traditionally provide.
- Integrates literacy and numeracy into other learning needs.

– For providers:

- Expands learning time and optimises learning and tutoring resources
- Supports learning to meet the needs of a particular learner.
- Shares content rather than reinvents the wheel every time.
- Provides for certification and RPL

– For policy makers

- Can provide greater outcomes and achievement
- Optimises resources



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NALA's



Distance Learning Service



Over 34,000
learning
accounts on
www.writeon.ie

www.writeon.ie

- Provides for self directed learning plans
- Provides certification at EQF levels 1-2
- Acts as stepping stone to further learning
- A blended learning resource for providers
- Cost effective, quality assured.



Recognition of Prior Learning - RPL

- Integral part of www.writeon.ie.
- Initial, formative and summative assessment against national standards.
- Provides RPL at levels 1 and 2 of EQF.
- Only RPL system at these levels in Ireland.
- Example: Activation project for NEETS uses RPL to support aims and qualifications.



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4. Mass awareness and advertising campaigns

TV Series

TV Series 2000 – 2013

- The Family Project (2013)
- A Story with Me in it (2011-2012)
- Stuck for Words (2010)
- Written off? (2008 – 2009)
- A really useful guide (2006-2007)
- Read Write Now (2000-2005)

Aim is to:

1. Raise awareness of adult literacy issue; and
2. motivate people to return to education



Ratings

200,000 - 300,000
watched TV
programmes each
week !!



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Advertising Campaigns

Take the first step



Call 1800 20 20 65

2007 – 2013

- 3 people
- 3 stories
- 3 reasons for improving their literacy
- 20,000 calls and texts



A mother who wants to help her child with homework
<http://bit.ly/197AISL>



An older man who used to have problems reading and writing
<http://bit.ly/ImP0rG>



A younger guy who turned his life around
<http://bit.ly/liPu2n>



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Strategies for Improving Participation in and Awareness of Adult Learning

European Commission, 2012



NALA listed as one of top 16
case studies for “Written Off” -
TV series and distance learning



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Reach more. Serve better.

1. Motivate people to engage in lifelong learning e.g. TV ads.
2. Integrate literacy and numeracy development into further education and training provision.
3. Provide distance learning www.writeon.ie
4. Support family learning www.helpmykidlearn.ie
5. Support more intensive learning through blended learning and Recognition of Prior Learning.



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Further information

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Website: www.nala.ie

Plain English website: www.simplyput.ie

Distance learning website: www.writeon.ie



<http://facebook.com/nalairreland>



<http://twitter.com/nalairreland>



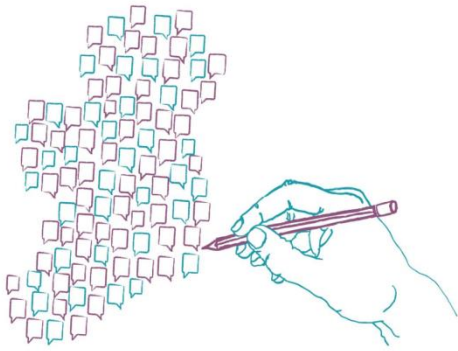
<http://www.youtube.com/user/nationaladulterac>



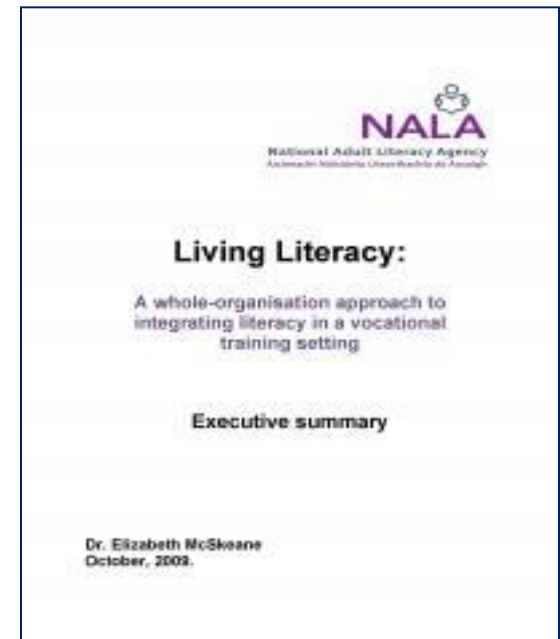
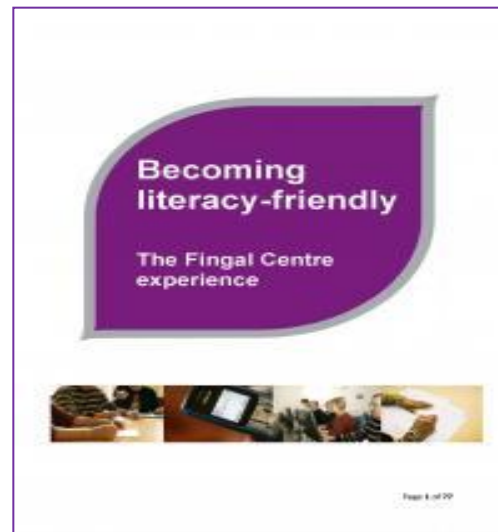
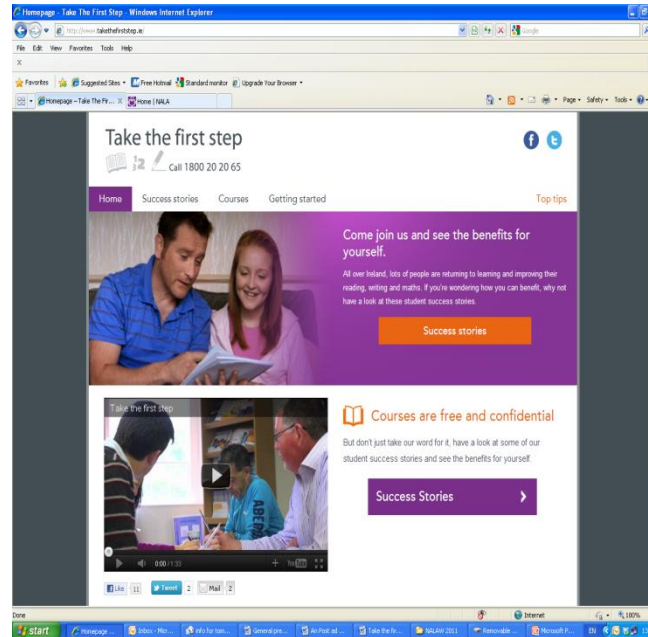
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Supplementary information



Plain english conference
Dublin October 2015



Information on NALA

National, independent membership-based agency.
Funding from Department of Education and Skills
and other sources.

All our work is about:

**Ensuring people with literacy difficulties can
fully take part in society and have access to
learning opportunities that meet their needs.**



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What we do



Advocacy and policy development



Promotional Campaigns

Simply
Put.

Practice development



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Some recent NALA achievements

- Secured adult learner seats on 16 Education and Training Boards;
- National adult literacy and numeracy strategy enshrined in law;
- Provide a way to recognise prior learning - at EQF Levels 1 and 2;
- Recognised internationally for using television to increase awareness of adult literacy issues and to support literacy learning;
- Delivered successful promotional campaigns and information resources, for example, www.helpmykidlearn.ie aimed at supporting parents support their children's learning.



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Support teaching and learning

- 57,000 enrolled in ETB adult literacy services in 2012.
- 1,350 paid tutors in ETB adult literacy services, and 2,735 volunteer tutors.
- NALA works in partnership with the ETBs.
- NALA provide promotional and awareness campaigns, referral, research and evidence based supports, CPD, and learning resources.



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