

## Decoda Presentation

### Welcome and Introductions and Group Agreement Blanca and Morie

In this workshop would you please move around – so different organizations/programs sit with different people

Let's review the Group Norms (get consent to proceed)

Morie: Acknowledge Unceded territory

Activity – explore a challenge, barrier or concern you are having in your program. Explain our agenda for the hour.

1. Ask the participants to respond on the sticky note to the following question:  
What challenge, barrier, concern are you experiencing in your program that is limiting its successful delivery? (in this case – could you look past any funding barriers for now and focus on program delivery and sustainability) – list them!
2. Now prioritize them – start with one as the most important to 4 which is the least important. You will not be sharing this with the whole group – but you will be sharing this within your own group as we go through this hour.
3. Review the Active Listening Guidelines
4. Within your group
  - a) Pick a note taker. One person will share their #1 challenge or problem and the rest will practice active listening. #1 also explains why they think this challenge or problem exists. The other members of the group practice active listening. (Morie and Blanca might add some strong suggestions here like “ save any fixes, suggestions or comments – at this time from the other members”
  - b) What were the common threads for the problems and challenges that were shared by the group? Using the 11 X 17 sheet – have the people at the table list the challenges that were shared by the group. Active listening reminder to the group.
  - c) **List the ‘why’s’ you think this challenge or problem exist.** Reminder: no fixes or solutions – watch your emotions – you are making a list and focusing on thinking. Blanca show an example at the front.
  - d) We are now going to tap into the shared knowledge of all the people at your table – this is synergy – this is why a problem solved at the individual level is solved better by a group than at the individual level. **Look at the challenge or concern on your group sheet – and together discuss this question first (and list?) : What have you done in the past that has worked to solve this type of challenge, within your current program or**

**another experience from your past? Try to give priority to the person or people who listed this challenge.** Reminder: active listening so that you allow the person with the challenge to go into their own memory or experience. Blanca show an example.

- e) Start a new sheet 11 X17 title it Creating Strategies 1) create a list of strategies or steps that you can borrow from the above list that you can apply in your program to address this challenge 2) prioritize this list from more likely to less likely and 3) set a time frame for testing or trying this strategy that you chose that will most likely help with your challenge, problem or concern.

Transition to Morie Speaking

Up to now this activity has been helpful to show you how you can work through a challenge or concern – this is one way to engage to engage learners, staff, any stakeholder or even your own family to find a solution within yourself.

Now I will pass to Morie who will provide an overview and give some of the key strengths that have led to the success of the Family Literacy Outreach Program at Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House. As well, please hold on to your stickie as we share about our program.

## FAMILY LITERACY OUTREACH PROGRAM – Morie’s part

The Family Literacy Outreach Program at Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House was established in 2015. We are entering year 3 of the program. Vancouver Community College ran it as the Homefront Literacy Program for over 20 years, but there was need to hand it over to a Neighbourhood House where so it would be closer to the community.

The program services immigrant and refugee families with young children (age 0-5 years old) by bringing a learning environment into the home where adults and their children can learn together. We focus on families who are homebound because they face poverty, childcare needs, health or other barriers. The participants in this program often fall below the radar of any services. We support these families with a volunteer tutor who focuses on helping with English, and integrate into their new life in Vancouver.

Our overall budget for this program is about \$45, 000 with the main expense being the salary for the coordinator – me! Funding comes from: Department of Advanced Education, Decoda and two recent Foundations – ELF and the Wish Foundation.

Families are referred to the Family Literacy Outreach Program by Community Health Nurses, Settlement Intake Workers, or counselling services for immigrants and refugees throughout Vancouver.

In our first year we supported 30 families, and in our second year we expanded to support 35 families - reaching over 90 children each year. This year we hope to serve over 40 families.

We will train three times this year – 40 volunteer tutors. The profile of the volunteer tutor is interesting – so that within this group the past year we have had 4- 5 Social Workers or Mental Health Worker, 2 final year Med students, several teachers, a couple of IT specialists, 2 legal aid workers, including a lawyer. We have an immigration consultant from Holland (who is learning English herself) In fact, we have several volunteer tutors who are learning English themselves. Recruitment has mostly been through a poster which I distributed to community libraries, mosques, schools, and banks. Tutors commit to 2 hours each week.

We provide a 10 hour training program, in-services, and ongoing support from myself to all volunteers.

Lessons are NOT prescribed – but based on the needs of the mothers (this is very important and tutors learn to ask mothers questions, and co-create and adjust accordingly – We follow the CALP benchmarks as a guideline to English – and do an informal assessment first and last sessions.

The program has been a huge success – we hear it from all the stakeholders, but the settlement workers and public health community.

What makes this program a success? There is no ONE answer – there are several strands that weave together as though we are a very flexible basket. Im going to highlight some of the things that do.

- a) We are all ears - always listening to what learners need. I draw your attention to NASRIA and NICOLE – Nasria could not focus on learning English. She had a sick brother in Afghanistan – he had a stroke and was caregiver to 5 children. Embassy listen to volunteers too  
ALL EARS TO TUTORS - ecommunication newsletter with lesson plan and posters for community resources
- b) Our tutors bake the cake – we encourage them to not only talk about stirring, mixing sprinkling but actually bake the cake. Take field trip – here are some bus tickets for the learners.  
CINDY and ALICE picture. Tutoring has stopped.
- c) Recruitment: We look for volunteers in some unusual places – face to face with bankers and in shops like physio. Spoke to librarians and they referred people...we accept all people even unusual people– NAFSIA and AVA
- d) we start with where they are at – TALITA and MANJINDER - first session - no library books
- e) FLEXIBLE and ADAPTABLE – adapt from one to one to group classes – not giving up with belief – could have adapted the program and we didn't THE LEARNER HOLDS THE CURRICULM

Back to Blanca: Look back at your stickie and see if there is something you heard here in this hour that can provide you with a strategy to look at your concern, challenge or problem. Can you see something that you can do – write it down – you will not be asked to share it. Make sure you put a time line on it if you can.