

GOOD HEALTH BEGINS AT HOME

A guide for literacy tutors



Laubach Literacy International



Good Health Begins at Home

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About this book

Good Health Begins At Home is a guide for literacy tutors. It links family health and literacy.

This edition of *Good Health Begins at Home* is a collaborative project of the Thrasher Research Fund, Laubach Literacy and Operation Upgrade of South Africa. Using the FAMA approach to learning and the Thrasher Family Health Manual, Dr Lynn Curtis of Laubach Literacy International developed a generic family health educator guide for parents and health professionals around the world.

Operation Upgrade is one of the adult literacy NGOs asked to develop the manual further for adult basic education tutors. Our brief was to produce a manual for use by our adult educators, so that they could use it to help learners in their Zulu literacy and English classes.

The generic tutor guide was adapted in a workshop of Operation Upgrade tutors and trainers:

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Introduction

Why has the GHBH guide been developed?

As an adult basic education tutor you know that many of the learners in your class are parents, mothers and fathers. They worry about the health of their children. Sometimes children's sicknesses go untreated until it is too late, because the parents do not know how to treat the illness themselves. For example, while many people know how to treat diarrhoea, still many other parents do not have this knowledge. Their children could die from untreated diarrhoea. You as the tutor can use this manual to give parents important knowledge about

- * preventing disease in the family through building good health
- * treating sickness in the family

"Good Health Begins at Home" (GHBH) is an Operation Upgrade with Laubach tutor guide that you can use to help parents become home health providers. Working with the guide, you can show learners how to develop good health in themselves and their families, so that sickness keeps away, and you can show them how to treat common illnesses.

The outcomes you would hope for in working with GHBH are that your adult learners will:

- a) make a personal commitment to building good health in their families
- b) provide their families with a balanced diet
- c) protect family food and drinking sources against harmful germs
- d) protect their families against harmful drugs
- e) protect their families against dangerous illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and cholera
- f) prevent home accidents
- g) prevent violence in the home
- h) treat common illnesses at home
- i) take action on community health problems.

The teaching approach in the GHBH guide

GHBH is a participatory health-literacy guide with a picture kit, that teaches reading and writing skills and health management through discussions based on learner's experiences and through knowledge shared by the tutor with the learners. The guide uses two teaching approaches:

- a) the FAMA approach
- b) the Language Experience approach

The FAMA approach

Pictures on various health topics are used for class discussion. The tutor shows the pictures to the learners, and asks KEY questions. The guide has copies of each picture, and a list of the key questions that should be asked in the discussion about each picture. The questions have been carefully designed to follow the FAMA approach. The learner group discusses each question, and learning about health happens as part of the discussion. You as the tutor need to know quite a lot about the topic of each discussion,

so that you can guide the discussion and give information to the learners. You will find some of the important information on the page opposite each picture in the guide, but you will want to get more information from pamphlets, books and community health workers.

In the FAMA approach, four kinds of questions are asked to get learners thinking about a problem:

1) **FACT** questions to seek the basic facts about the picture, e.g. *What do you see in this picture? What is happening in this picture?* This is the groundwork for the rest of the discussion.

2) **ASSOCIATION** questions to help the learners to share the feelings of the people in the picture and their own feelings about the picture, e.g. *What do you think the mother is feeling? Have you ever had such feelings?* These questions make the subject of the picture real for the learners.

3) **MEANING** questions help learners think about what the message of the picture really means for them. These questions ask the learners to consider the causes of problems, the impact of behaviour or information, solutions to problems and the values and principles they think are important. Examples: *Do you think it is important for pregnant women to have special nutrition? Why? How do you think parents can discipline their children without being violent?*

4) **ACTION** questions to encourage learners to use learning from the discussion in their daily lives and to help them to plan to accomplish specific objectives. These objectives can be individual, or community-action. Examples: *How do you think families can protect themselves from AIDS? What can people do about street rubbish?*

***F**acts

***A**ssociation with the situation

***M**eaning for the people in the discussion

***A**ction needed

- this is called the **FAMA** approach.

The Language Experience Approach

As an adult basic education tutor you will want to include literacy work as well as health objectives in each lesson. Use FAMA for the health outcomes, and Language Experience for the literacy outcomes.

For Stage 1 and 2 learners, you can do this by using **the language experience approach** for literacy learning just after each picture discussion. Use sentences spoken by the learners in the discussion to teach sentences and word and syllable building. Follow this with reading and writing practice. You will know more about this approach if you have attended the Operation Upgrade First Language Literacy Tutor's Course.

For Stage 3 learners, you can write a paragraph with them about the topic, give them written work about the health topic, or read pamphlets with them with more information about the topic. You could also prepare a special exercise or activity for them about the topic, to give them practice in problem-solving.

For all learners, you could invite a guest speaker from the health department to talk to the learners.

Please note: we have included a full lesson outline to teach learners about the existence of germs. We felt that because you cannot see germs, learners might not really understand how they can make us ill. Understanding the effect of germs is very important when you are trying to keep your family healthy. The first lesson about germs, Unit 5, uses a FAMA discussion and a story and some practical demonstrations, to help you teach your learners that germs exist and they spread disease.