

WE LEARN
Women Expanding Literacy Education Action Resource Network

Empowering Women Through Literacy

A Statement of Visions & Values

Mission Statement

WE LEARN is a community promoting women's literacy as a tool that fosters empowerment and equity for women.

Vision Statement

WE LEARN seeks to build a just society and healthy communities. Therefore, we focus on education, specifically the basic literacies women need to gain access to systems of power and to achieve personal and community empowerment. Women's pursuit of multiple literacies gives visibility to our experiences as women, sustains our on-going desire to learn, encourages critical thinking, and provides the support and information necessary for reflection, understanding, and action to change our current situations.

WE LEARN engages a diverse membership community of adult basic education and literacy learners and alumni, educators, researchers and professional women, community activists and anyone dedicated to moving our mission forward.

Values Statement

WE LEARN members hold these values inwardly reflective of our networking organization and outwardly active to the communities we reach.

I. WE LEARN is Women-Centered / Women-Positive

WE LEARN focuses on the issues, needs, concerns, viewpoints, strengths, and wisdom of women.

1. We value women's voices, experiences, and viewpoints.
2. We seek to empower all women through personal growth, self-determination and community participation.
3. We cultivate women's ways of knowing that nourish the mind, body, and spirit. We recognize that learning happens in every aspect of women's lives, not just in the classroom.
4. We believe women need safe and healthy spaces to share their stories and experiences and to use these as a basis for learning and action.
5. We believe that *all* women, regardless of education or literacy achievement, must have accessible resources about women's lives and issues.
6. We value the development and use of women-centered and women-positive curriculum and lessons. Women literacy learners and educators deserve resources that reflect positive views about their strengths, achievements, and creative possibilities.
7. We support and celebrate women's successes, both small and large, both personal and academic.

II. WE LEARN Supports Social Change

Investing in women's education is a necessary step to ending all women's oppression and creating equitable communities.

1. We believe that women's literacy and basic education are key sites for social change and building *inclusive* movements.
2. We believe that *all* women, regardless of educational achievement, can contribute to leadership and vision in the movement for women's equity and justice.
3. We promote opportunities for women in literacy and basic education to develop their own skills and personal self-esteem in order to more effectively contribute to systemic social change.
4. We believe creating learning environments that make use of women-positive/inclusive materials and methods supports movement building, fosters women's leadership, and involves women more directly in the development of theory *and* action related to social change movements.

III. WE LEARN Works towards Justice & Equity

Social justice is about sharing power, creating equity (vs. equality), and moving with a collective, shared sense of responsibility. Social justice involves doing rather than being done to. We believe that all people can act to identify, understand, and address social injustice and inequality, challenging the dominant dialogue/norms.

1. We encourage and support anti-oppression movements (especially those addressing sexism, racism, heterosexism, and classism) to consider basic literacy/education as a factor for full participation in movement building.
2. We support feminist/womanist perspectives that demand equity and justice for women and girls in all matters of self, family, community, and society.
3. We believe that all people are both learners and teachers; we look for the promise and potential in everyone.
4. As we advocate for women learners, we also believe women ABE educators must also have opportunities for self-determination and full participation. Women educators should have quality work places, equitable compensation, and continued professional development.

IV. WE LEARN Acts through Participatory Practices

WE LEARN bases our mission, vision and values on the needs, perspectives and interests identified and decided upon by our membership.

1. We believe in the inherent wisdom of every individual to transform themselves and their world through the duality of their existence as both learners and facilitators of knowledge, literacy, and language, inside and outside classrooms.
2. We support collaboration rather than competition and interdependence rather than isolated independence.
3. We are committed to analyzing and working towards balancing power inequities within all aspects of WE LEARN and our communities.
4. We support and utilize various holistic approaches for decisions and activities that are based on the collaboration and equal participation of all members in any educational and working setting.