

# News

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## **LVSA and Head Start Join Forces to Improve English Language Skills**

*Wilmington, DE {Monday, April 18, 2011}*. Literacy Volunteers Serving Adults (LVSA) of Northern Delaware announced today a new initiative of English language literacy classes in conjunction with Wilmington Head Start, Inc. (WHS). The Parents Learning English at School (PLEAS) program represents yet another extension of LVSA's mission to collaborate with other organizations to promote a more literate Delaware.

Fifteen families are involved in PLEAS with a waiting list formed. Classes meet Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 9-11:00 a.m. Parents bring their children to school at Wilmington Head Start and then proceed upstairs to their English class. As a partner with LVSA, WHS provides child care for siblings not of age to be enrolled in the Head Start program. Lessons integrate the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing with contextualized activities. Curriculum topics center on the everyday English these mothers need to function in their communities.

The 2010 Census shows that Delaware's Hispanic population rose by 96.4%. In Wilmington, the Hispanic population grew from 9.8% to 12.4% respectively. WHS, located at 1725 W. Eighth Street, serves seventy non-English speaking families (mainly Hispanic) out of 118 families in that particular Head Start Program. LVSA, through their Parents Learning English at School program at WHS, is able to provide the opportunity for parents to learn English to become more self-sufficient and productive workers, engaged parents, and involved community members. Classes are free for the learners.

"Non-English speaking parents often find it difficult to work with their child's teacher. Not knowing the English language to be able to communicate effectively causes feelings of confusion, frustration, and helplessness," said Cindy Shermeyer, LVSA Executive Director. "This is an exciting opportunity for both organizations to serve an unmet need in the community," Shermeyer added.

Literacy Volunteers Serving Adults, an independent, nonprofit organization, is an accredited affiliate of ProLiteracy Worldwide. LVSA trains volunteer tutors to work with some of the most vulnerable residents of the community -- those adults who are nonreaders or have a literacy level below the fifth grade as well as English language learners with limited education and/or lower oral proficiency. Headquartered in the Wilmington Library for more than 25 years, LVSA serves learners throughout Northern Delaware. The organization is dedicated to helping adults improve their literacy skills and thereby reach their potential to become confident, self sufficient and productive employees and community members.

For more information, call 302-658-5624, or visit [www.litvolunteers.org](http://www.litvolunteers.org).