

PRESS RELEASE

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Reading Ladies Read Enjoy Analyse Discuss

The highly successful 'First Steps – New Opportunities' joint project between Birmingham based company Go-Woman! Ltd and Adderley Children's Centre, Birmingham, has added a new dimension to the series of taster workshops already underway. As part of 'learning for pleasure' innovation spearheaded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) the joint project "First Steps – New Opportunities" is one of over 300 winning projects and engages adults, particularly women, in learning, through taster sessions in a variety of subjects, helping to fulfil the recommendations of the Governments Learning Revolution for informal adult learning

Held mainly at the Adderley Children's Centre, the sessions are up to 3 hours long and are providing women of all ages and backgrounds an exciting opportunity to find out what is on offer, and encourage engagement with learning establishments. In particular, encouragement is being given to seek out further opportunities in learning via colleges, local centres and support agencies. Local women have been learning about skills for sewing, hair and beauty, First Aid for children and IT, with some sessions being heavily oversubscribed, extra ones have had to be provided.

Out of the workshops came the demand from women to improve their English language skills and so the idea for the Reading Ladies (R.E.A.D - Read, Enjoy, Apply, Discuss) was born. Yasmin Akhtar from Go-Woman! said "We have had a tremendous response from the local community to our taster sessions. One thing that was evident was the support needed to improve the spoken English language. Many had already undertaken some form of English course yet lacked the confidence to speak so the idea for Reading Ladies was born." she added.

"Reading Ladies meet once a fortnight as a small group and read through a book together, Participants then discuss the book together, thus practising reading and speaking skills whilst gaining confidence to use English in their everyday lives. It has been very rewarding to see how the Reading Ladies session's has helped the local women who have been so keen to learn – they just need the right opportunity" commented Yasmin.

Shazia Akhtar who has been attending the Reading Ladies said "I came to one of the Pre-NVQ Childcare taster session which was very good and I found out about the Reading Ladies. It is just what I need to help me. It is so friendly. We all help each other to improve our English"

The taster sessions will run until the end of March 2010. Learner's achievements will be recognised during the celebration event.

"There are a few sessions that have a limited number of places left and we can also help with crèche facilities for those that need them – booking is essential" commented Yasmin

Anyone who want to find out what sessions are available or book to use the Internet Café, should contact the Adderley Children's Centre directly on 0121 464 4183

E N D S

For further information please contact:

Yasmin Akhtar at Go-Woman! Ltd on 0121 270 6133 or 07782309251

Notes to Editors

1. For more information about the Transformation Fund visit <http://www.dius.gov.uk/transformationfund>

Go-Woman! Ltd is a company that offers information, support and events to assist women thinking of starting up or who are, running their own business. With its extensive knowledge of working with women's enterprise and network of role models it exists to help to inspire women from all backgrounds and ages. It publishes a magazine Go-Woman! giving help and advice on running a business. See www.go-woman.com

Adderley Children's Centre, based in Saltley, Birmingham is a fully integrated Children's Centre, which provides early education, care, and family support for children aged 0-5 years. In addition it provides adult education and crèche provision and is a training centre for early years practitioners. An appointed Early Excellence Centre in 2002 the centre has a Family and Learning Support Unit which now has it's own designated team. See <http://www.addleyn.bham.sch.uk/home.htm>

