

Never Too Late
Follow Up Report

Catholic Family Service

December 2011
Updated April 2012

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Never Too Late program provides academic, social and emotional support at no cost to adult students who want to complete their GED (General Education Development), an Alberta Education High School Equivalency Diploma. The Never Too Late program was founded in 2005 by Karen Banks and funded by United Way, with Catholic Family Services acting as fiscal agent. In 2008 the program was fully adopted by Catholic Family Services as part of their range of programs and services. The following evaluation is intended to provide a longer term view of Never Too Late outcomes, with feedback from program participants retroactive to 2005.

1.1 Evaluation Methods

The Never Too Late (NTL) program regularly collects demographic profile data on students as well as attendance, program completion, GED examination success rates and exit survey data. However, in order to capture the long term outcome data necessary to inform calculation of a Social Return on Investment, a follow-up study was commissioned. NTL students chosen as part of the follow-up sample were those students who had successfully completed at least 3 of the 5 required GED examination components. The follow-up evaluation first connected with as many past NTL students from the sample group as possible to garner consent for participation in an evaluation survey. Of the 70 students contacted, 54 completed telephone surveys for a response rate of 77%. The following report describes findings from the follow-up evaluation based on the 54 completed surveys. One of the survey participants was still involved in the NTL program at the time of the survey and therefore has been excluded in analysis of post NTL findings such as program impacts on employment. This report also includes the use of general program statistics on page 6 and Appendix A to illustrate the overall admission and completion rates for the program.

1.2 Never Too Late Program Goals

- 1) Low-income adults in Bowness, Montgomery, Greenwood Village and Ranchlands will be prepared for successful completion of the GED exam.
- 2) Adult learners in Bowness, Montgomery, Greenwood Village and Ranchlands will increase involvement in their community.

2.0 PROGRAM DESIGN

Working in four NW communities, Never Too Late gives low income adults an opportunity to complete their high school education. Completing a basic high school education is the norm in our society and those who have not completed high school are socially excluded from this mainstream educational experience. Never Too Late is not only an educational upgrading program but also includes a strong focus on community building and social inclusion. Never Too Late staff includes a Program Supervisor, one full time Community Coordinator, and two part time qualified Teachers. Since 2010 volunteers have been integrated into the program. Currently there is a volunteer tutor role, in-class and community volunteer roles.

2.1 Program promotion includes twice yearly advertising posters placed at the local grocery stores, Laundromat, liquor stores, Loonie store and community centre, inviting community members to apply for the new program semester. The program manager reports that “as soon as the posters go up, we start getting calls” from interested community members. Word of mouth plays a significant role in recruitment as past NTL students encourage friends, relatives and acquaintances to apply. Each semester incorporates a number of new intakes as well as a small percentage of continuing or returning students.

2.2 Never Too Late Program Admission Criteria

To be accepted into the Never Too Late program, applicants are pre-screened on the following admission criteria:

- Live in Bowness, Montgomery, Greenwood Village or Ranchlands
- At least 19 years old (at this age, students no longer qualify for Calgary Board of Education programs)
- Minimum benchmark 6 English (for students whose first language is not English)
- Out of high school for at least 10 months

Additional screening occurs through a home visit or community visit with each client, where the program coordinator explores with the applicant their reasons for wanting to complete their GED; any potential barriers (e.g. child care, transportation, housing stability); proposed plans to deal with these barriers; and an informal assessment of personal motivation, capacity (i.e. emotional health) and general readiness. The applicant and coordinator complete an intake form.

2.3 Capacity: Never Too Late currently accommodates 25 to 30 new and returning students per semester for a total of 50 to 60 students per year. Each semester runs for approximately 22 weeks. Program statistics for the eight semesters offered from Sept 2006 to June 2011 show a total enrollment of 244 students with an average 30 students per semester. Of this total, 175 were new students and 69 were repeating students.

Overall 76 students dropped out of the program sometime after initial enrollment for an average drop out rate of 31%.

2.4 Orientation: The first night of the program is an orientation that covers program expectations, guidelines for learning and some icebreaker activities to get to know the teachers, volunteers and other students. For this first night orientation, staff try to make the room as non-classroom like as possible, focusing mainly on community building, reducing anxiety and preparing participants for a return to a school environment.

2.5 Class Structure: At the second class, students receive their free textbooks, and a donated backpack of school supplies. Students complete an entry test which provides a baseline in all subjects, which helps the teachers to assess the student's basic starting point and learning needs.

Classes are held twice a week at the local Bowness High School for 3 hours per session. Class size is kept small with approximately 10 to 15 students. Each session is divided between two teachers, one of whom focuses on Math and Science and the other teaching English and Social. The group is also divided into two, with each half of the group working on one subject area for the first 1.5 hours and then the two groups switch teachers and work on the other subject area for the second 1.5 hours. For each session the student receives approximately 1 hour of homework.

2.6 Tutoring and study group is provided by a volunteer tutor one night per week at the local library. These are usually small group tutoring sessions (up to 5 students), but one on one tutoring is also available.

2.7 Community partners are invited to make presentations to the class periodically. The Calgary Public Library consistently makes a presentation and provides **free library cards** for all students. Other partner presentations may include Bow Valley College, Career Connections, etc.

2.8 Learning Assessments: Each semester, the program administers a cognitive learning assessment for each student. The results of this assessment are utilized to determine which students would benefit from a one-on-one, comprehensive assessment to diagnose learning disabilities. These individual assessments are administered by a psychologist and provided to five students per year at no cost. The program utilizes the results of these assessments to access accommodations during the GED exam for the students with learning disabilities. The coordinator is involved throughout the entire assessment and accommodation process to assist students in processing their diagnosis.

2.9 Student Support/Community Coordinator Role: The cornerstone of Never Too Late is the social/emotional support provided by the Community Coordinator. From a social inclusion perspective, the Coordinator's role is to help participants realize that they are capable and deserving of pursuing an education. The Community Coordinator works side-by-side with the students to help identify and overcome any barriers to completing Never Too Late. The Coordinator usually comes about an hour before class in case students want to talk to her about any challenges or issues they may have. These can include issues related to their financial situation (e.g. need for food bank referral), housing stability (e.g. inability to pay rent or utilities, eviction notices, etc.), or personal issues such as family violence, addictions, parenting dilemmas, etc. The Coordinator's role is to support and assist students to decrease any potential barriers to completing their GED. In addition to the informal availability, the Coordinator schedules monthly check-ins with each student in the community, and follows up on any class absence with a phone call or visit. The Coordinator's role could be likened to an orchestra conductor who facilitates the group process in order to encourage the best result or output from both the individual members and the group (orchestra) as a whole. Individual members of the group are encouraged not only to support one another but also to develop their own skills, abilities and leadership potential and to pursue their own individual career goals.

2.10 Basic Needs Support: Never Too Late has a small basic needs fund provided by an anonymous donor, used to support students in times of need, including getting I.D. for students, bus tickets, gift cards for groceries (emergency food supplies in conjunction with food bank referral), and in very rare circumstances may include support for emergency utility/disconnection. In addition the basic need fund covers the cost of healthy snacks for one halfway party each term and for one meal, healthy snacks, water and coffee during the GED examination which requires a full day and a half of exam writing.

2.11 Volunteerism and Community Building is considered an important process for supporting students, building confidence and engaging students in their broader community in order to increase social inclusion and decrease social isolation. A simple example of this community building is the coffee club. Each week one student is responsible for making and setting up the coffee service for the other students. Students are encouraged to volunteer as a group in their local community. At Christmas, students wrote return letters from Santa to local children as a way of practicing their writing and at the same giving back to their community.

2.12 GED Examination: Prior to the GED examination, students receive a presentation on test writing and test anxiety. The Coordinator helps students to get their AB Learning number and registers those students who are ready for the GED exam which consists of examinations in the 5 key subject areas (Math, Science, English – reading; English – writing; Social Studies). The Never Too Late program pays the \$210 GED test fee for all students wishing to write their GED exam. Within two to three days after writing the

exam, marks are posted online. The coordinator phones students as soon as the marks are posted. Following the GED exam, one more Never Too Late class is held to debrief with the students. Those students who do not pass all five components of the exam are encouraged to continue their studies and re-write those subject areas. Never Too Late continues to provide education, support and exam fees for all students who wish to continue.

2.13 Graduation: A formal graduation ceremony is held for those students who have successfully completed their GED. All family members are invited to attend with the graduating student in order to celebrate the success as a community and reinforce the sense of accomplishment. In addition, the graduation ceremony provides a visual reminder of what's possible. Children view their parents or older siblings completing their high school diploma, reinforcing the value of education. New students attend the graduation for the previous student group and participate in the graduation ceremony to help increase their confidence and motivation. Each graduating student offers words of encouragement to the new students.

3.0 BEST PRACTICES

Program managers identified what they consider to be best practices in the Never Too Late program as follows:

- Community Coordinator to support students
- Social/emotional support provided to the students reduces barriers and keeps up motivation
- Free/no cost program and examinations
- Community accessibility is ensured by locating the classes within the local community and scheduling classes in the evening
- Strong teacher relationships with students provide encouragement, support and motivation
- Attendance monitoring with positive reinforcement for those attending and timely follow up and encouragement when students are absent
- Social networks help to support and motivate students. Students describe NTL as feeling “like a family”. Past students act as volunteers creating an opportunity to express generosity and reciprocity within their community.
- Graduation – an authentic graduation experience that celebrates student achievement and includes family and community members

One of the unique features of the Never Too Late program is the use of community development techniques within a service delivery program to enhance program outcomes by developing the group as a community; developing group as well as individual strengths; and integrating both the group and individual skills back into the broader community through volunteer experiences and leadership development.

4.0 PROGRAM STATISTICS

Looking at the overall Never Too Late program statistics (not just the 54 students surveyed), we find that between September 2006 and June 2011, 106 residents completed preparation classes and wrote their GED exam, averaging about 11 students completing per semester or 22 per year. When repeating students are included, the average number of active students in any given year rises to 40. Almost half (48%) of students pass the GED on their first try, and another 31% of students pass four out of five sections of the GED examination on their first try. Those students who do not pass all five sections of the examination often return to continue their studies and retry a particular exam component. (See Appendix A)

4.1 Student Demographics

The following student demographics are based on the 54 students who were surveyed as part of this study. Never Too Late students in the evaluation sample ranged in age from 20 to 69, with 22% of students in the 20 to 30 age range, 34% in the 31 to 40 age range, 28% between 41 and 50, and the remaining 16% over 50 years of age.

Age	#	%
20-25	5	10%
26-30	6	12%
31-35	9	18%
36-40	8	16%
41-45	8	16%
46-49	6	12%
50-59	7	13%
60-69	2	3%
	51	100%

Almost three quarters (72%) of the students were female, and the other 28% were male.

Gender	#	%
Female	39	72%
Male	15	28%
	54	100%

Four of the students surveyed were of Aboriginal identity (2 First Nations; 2 Metis), and 26% of students were not born in Canada. Countries of origin included Pakistan, Iran, China, Philippines, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Switzerland, Germany, Slovakia, South Korea, Venezuela and USA. Five of the foreign born students indicated they had been in Canada less than ten years.

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Country of Origin	#	%
Canada	36	67%
Canada First Nations/Metis	4	7%
Other	14	26%
	54	100%

Most students (71%) were married or living common law, with slightly less than one third (29%) of students who were single or separated/divorced.

Marital Status	#	%
Single	13	24%
Separated/Divorced	3	5%
Married	29	54%
Common-Law	9	17%
	54	100%

Most students (72%) were employed when they started their GED. Four students (7%) were unemployed, and the remaining 19% were involved in unpaid work such as household work or caring for children without pay. One student reported being retired.

Employment Status	#	%
Employed	39	72%
Unemployed	4	7%
Household work or caring for children without pay	10	19%
Retired	1	2%
	54	100%

Only four students (7%) reported receiving Employment Insurance in the period immediately prior to starting their GED and two of the students interviewed (4%) said they were on Social Assistance for some time prior to starting their GED.

The majority of students (82%) have children in the home. In total there were 86 children reported by 45 NTL students.

Age of Children	#	%
Age 0 to 5	34	40%
Age 6 to 10	21	24%
Age 11 to 17	23	27%
Age 18+	8	9%
	86	100%

5.0 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SUCCESS

The following discussion looks at student motivations, barriers and other factors related to student involvement and success.

5.1 Motivation to Join Never Too Late

Students were asked why they decided to sign up for the Never Too Late program. Following are the reasons in order of frequency given by the students who were interviewed.

Reasons for Taking Never Too Late N=54	#	%
Employment	12	22%
Children	12	22%
General Life Improvement	12	22%
Degree not equivalent in Canada	7	13%
Free	7	13%
College	3	5%
Improve English	2	3%
	55	100%

Employment: Many students viewed getting their GED as an opportunity to improve their employment situation. *“The program can open doors for employment.”*

College: Three students needed their GED in order to apply for further education programs at college or university.

Educational Equivalency: Seven students found their educational qualifications from their home countries were not considered equivalent to a Canadian diploma and wanted to upgrade their educational status.

Children: Many adult students wanted to demonstrate the value of an education to their children, to act as a positive role model. *“I wanted to get my diploma. I wanted to show my teenaged daughter that if you set your mind to something you can accomplish anything.”*

Life Improvement: Many students felt having their GED would improve their life or prove to themselves that they were capable of doing it. Two students used the GED training as an opportunity to improve their English. *“I thought my English wasn’t good and wanted to improve English to get a better job.”*

Free: Although only seven students noted the free program as a primary motivator for signed up for NTL, almost half of students (48%) indicated that the cost of taking a course (other than NTL) would have been prohibitive for them.

5.2 What If The Program Was Unavailable

When students were asked what they would have done if the NTL program had not been available to them, 65% said they would not have taken upgrading courses. Some students (22%) said they would have taken GED or high school upgrading courses elsewhere at locations such as Bow Valley College or Chinook College. Two students indicated they would wait until they really needed to get their high school diploma (one already had a trade certificate), and one said he would have studied on his own. A few others (7%) said they didn't know what they would have done with the Never Too Late program.

Without Never Too Late N=54	#	%
Would not have taken upgrading	35	65%
Taken GED or high school upgrade elsewhere	12	22%
Other – put on hold or study on own	3	6%
Don't know	4	7%
	54	100%

5.3 Barriers to Upgrading Education

The main barriers identified to accessing education upgrading without NTL were the cost, and people's busy schedules.

Cost: 59% of NTL students interviewed said that the cost of GED preparation would have been prohibitive for them without NTL.

Convenience: 20% of NTL students noted that convenience (located within their community) played a role in their ability to participate in the Never Too Late program. Their busy schedules would have made it difficult to take other courses.

5.4 Length of Time In The Program

Each semester of Never Too Late runs for 22 weeks or approximately five months. Most of the students surveyed (66%) had completed their GED within one semester. However, overall program statistics would suggest that approximately 48% of first time students successfully graduate after one semester.

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Length of Time in Program	#	%
5 months or less - one semester	36	66%
6-12 Months – two semesters	9	16%
13-18 Months – three semesters	1	2%
18-24 Months – four semesters	2	3%
Data Missing	6	11%
	54	98%

Most students in the survey sample (75%) were able to pass their GED examination on their first try. The following chart illustrates student success in GED examinations. A few students take longer to successfully complete their GED examination, often as a result of a learning disability. Five students (10%) received an assessment for a learning disability. The Never Too Late Coordinator can arrange examination “accommodations” for those students with a verified learning disability.

Number of Times GED Exam Written	#	%
Once	40	75%
Twice	9	17%
Three times	3	6%
Four times	1	2%
	53	100%

5.5 Success in The Program

Eighty-five percent of NTL students surveyed had “graduated” passing all five of their GED examinations. Another 13% passed three or four of the five segments of their GED examination. One survey participant (not included in this analysis) is still currently enrolled in the NTL program.

GED Examination Success	#	%
Passed all 5 sections of exam	45	85%
Passed 3 or 4 sections of exam	7	13%
Did not pass exam	1	2%
	53	100%

5.6 Program Components Most Valued by Students

Based on an open ended survey question asking participants which aspects of NTL were particularly helpful, participants provided the following feedback.

Most Valued Program Elements N=54	#	%
NTL Teachers and Staff	42	78%
Free program, supplies, exams	14	26%
Length of program	5	9%
Tutoring	5	9%
Class size, approach, environment	5	9%
Other students (support, friends)	3	6%
Other supports (flexibility, food bank referrals, materials provided, location)	4	7%

“The staff were awesome. So uplifting. They impacted my life and gave me strength. They were so supportive.”

“The program being free was crucial.”

“Great length of program. I felt prepared for the exam but it wasn’t so long as to feel discouraged.”

“The classroom approach was great. Teachers walking you through the work. It would be much harder to work through the book on your own. I bought it and it sat on my shelf for 5 years (before NTL).”

“Flexibility in terms of family situations – being understanding of these situations.”

6.0 PROGRAM IMPACTS

The Never Too Late program not only students’ employment and career options, but also impacts the students’ personal lives in many other ways, including financial wellbeing, community involvement, confidence and self esteem. Program impacts may even extend to the students’ children, family and friends.

6.1 Impact on Employment and Career Options

For 40% of the NTL participants, the program created a significant change in their employment or educational status. The percentage of participants employed increased by 15% after the Never Too Late program. Half of those previously unemployed were able to find employment. Most of the change in employment occurred for participants who had previously been at home caring for children.

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Employment Situation	Before NTL		After NTL		% change	
Employed (full or part time)	38	72%	46	87%	8	15%
Going to School (1 also working PT)	0	0%	2	4%	2	4%
Unemployed	4	8%	2	4%	2	4%
Homemaker/caring for children	11	21%	2	4%	9	17%
Other (retired)	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%
	53		53		22	42%

Participants described a number of ways in which their employment situations improved since completing the NTL program.

- 63% reported higher wages
- 42% had more job stability
- 27% had better benefits
- 35% were able to work more hours
- 27% felt their new employment was safer
- 19% said their new employment was “easier on the body”
- 17% experienced less harassment

Other participant comments reflecting employment improvements include:

“My work is more fulfilling.” (Support Worker for developmentally disabled)

“My self esteem increased.” (Real Estate Agent)

“I am able to utilize my experience and expertise more. There’s lots of creative freedom. It’s nice to be able to come to work with people who believe in my vision.” (Manager)

“I have more time with my family, and more money in the bank, all while working less hours.” (Heavy Equipment Operator)

6.2 Impact on Financial Situation

An analysis of available pre/post income reported by participants showed that **58% had increased their income** after graduating from Never Too Late (based on 31 participants reporting). Median income for those for whom information is available rose from \$26,208 before the program to \$30,116 after NTL. However, when considering only those participants whose income rose after graduation, the average increase in income was approximately \$17,000 above their pre-GED income level. Some of the survey respondents, who did not report an increase in their income, were already earning a reasonable income prior to completing their GED. Others reasons for no increase in income included those who chose to work less than full time and those who preferred their current employment situation or career choice even though it was a lower wage position.

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Many NTL participants also reported decreased financial stressors, including:

- 50% decrease in need to use food bank
- 40% decrease in inability to pay phone or utility bills
- 50% decrease in the number of participants unable to pay their rent or mortgage
- 63% decrease in number of participants who had to move for financial reasons
- 25% decrease in reliance on friends and family for financial support
- 16% decrease in participants getting further into debt each month

Use of Community Services	Before NTL		During NTL		After NTL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Needed to use a food bank to obtain groceries for your household	14	25%	9	16%	7	12%
Had your electricity, gas , or telephone turned off because you were unable to pay the bill	10	18%	7	12%	6	11%
Were unable to pay your rent or mortgage.	10	18%	6	11%	5	9%
Had to move for financial reasons.	8	14%	1	1.8%	3	5%
Had to rely on help from family and friends to get by financially	20	37%	15	27%	15	27%
Were getting further into debt each month	19	35%	17	31%	16	29%
Took part in any program that offers help on how to find a job	8	14%	4	7%	9	16%
Took part in any program providing help or support in developing or improving your money management skills	5	9%	1	1.8%	3	5%
Took part in any program providing help or support to develop or improve your life-skills	11	20%	5	9%	9	16%
Took part in any program providing counseling for personal problem	12	22%	7	12%	12	22%

6.3 Further Education

Almost half of survey participants (49%) said they have taken additional courses since leaving the NTL program. Almost all of the participants (92%) engaged in further education have either completed their courses (65%), or are still attending (27%). One participant took two trade/vocational courses, and another participant took three trade courses since leaving NTL. Other types of further education includes computer courses, bookkeeping and accounting courses, Private Investment License, Real Estate License, Teaching Techniques certificate, Level 2 Child Care and courses for working with ESL students.

Further Education N=53	#	%
Apprenticeship	1	2%
Trade/Vocational	4	8%
College Diploma	11	21%
Other	10	19%
Total	26	49%

Most of the students paid for their further education themselves. Only two students reported using accessing student finance, and four students accessed other government loan programs.

6.4 Impact on Children

Most NTL participants (83%) have children at home. When asked about the possible impact of their experiences at NTL on their children, participants noted that:

- 22% of parents reported being more comfortable reading or reading more often with their children
- 36% of parents reported being more comfortable helping their children with school work
- 20% of parents reported feeling more comfortable or being more involved with their child's school

One participant said that she *"got involved in the parent council"*.

6.5 Impact on Family and Friends

Overall, 70% of participants felt that by completing Never Too Late they had positively influenced other members of their family or friends

Of the 37 participants who explained how they had influenced family or friends, 35% had actually **inspired a friend or relative to take the NTL program**.

- *"My daughter graduated with her GED and my son is in the program this year to complete his GED."*
- *"My cousin and girlfriend both completed NTL since I have."*
- *"My husband joined NTL and graduated after me. I have told many friends about the program."*

Many NTL graduates (30%) felt they had **inspired their children** to take more interest in school by acting as a role model.

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- *“It (NTL) taught my kids that they need to stay in school while young and to take the opportunity to do so.”*
- *“My son knows the importance of education and staying in school when you are a teenager. He saw how hard it was for me to go back (to do my GED) and balance my home life.”*
- *“They saw what I studied and how hard I worked. They know how important education is and to never give up.”*
- *“When I did my homework, my kids would see me and then do their homework. “They did their homework more often while I was in NTL. I was a role model. They know the steps to getting an education.”*

Other participants (27%) mentioned how happy and proud their family and friends were when they graduated. One NTL graduate felt that *“people view me differently now”*.

6.6 Impact on Community Involvement

For some NTL participants the program had a positive impact on their level of community involvement. IN particular, the program contributed to them making new friends (59%), sharing information with others (39%), and feeling less isolated (33%). The following chart shows the number of NTL participants whose community involvement was positively impacted by the program in a number of ways.

“I know my community much better, I know where the services are. I’m “in” the community more often.”

Community Involvement Since NTL (n=54)	#	%
I have made new friends	32	59%
I have shared information with others on community events/services	21	39%
I get out more, am less isolated	18	33%
I have participated more in community events	15	27%
I volunteer more in the community	14	25%
I have taken on new roles in NTL, other than being a student	3	5%

Examples of volunteer involvement included volunteering in their child’s school (4), Bowness Board, Montgomery Community Association; Community Garden, community suppers, community fair, United Way, blood drive, Diabetic Society, Dog Rescue, Alberta Society for Visually Impaired, Calgary Reads tutor, Food bank, Mustard Seed, Blues festival, NTL tutoring.

6.7 Personal Impact of Never Too Late

When participants were asked what difference the NTL program made in their life, they most commonly pointed out the **increased confidence and self-esteem** they felt (59%), followed by the positive impact on their **employment and career opportunities** (19%). The following participant comments illustrate the impact felt by NTL students.

"It makes you realize that you're not alone. There are many people in the same boat. My attitude has changed. I'm so positive now and it has opened a lot of doors."

"It opened my eyes to know that I can accomplish anything and the GED. If there is something I want I can achieve it."

"I'm in college now - second year. I've gotten a career."

"I was able to go back to school, have increased confidence and got a better job. It helps support my family better."

"It gave me the confidence to carry on and keep pursuing better employment. It's hard to feel unsuccessful in your 40s and I wanted to find success. Now I feel proud. I have better employment which is impossible to do without education."

"It has made a huge difference - GED without math does not seem to make a difference to employers. All employers look at my resume and know that I have initiative and am willing to try to improve."

"NTL helped me pull it together - I realized there's more to me than a guy on the side of the road. NTL helped me get a better job. I have a sense of pride and accomplishment and I am pursuing my welding apprenticeship – second year. Increased confidence also helped me to meet new people."

"I have more confidence and self esteem because of diagnosis with learning disorder. It made me understand why school was hard."

"It was a bridge to enter Canadian society. I had more self confidence and improved my English skills."

"I'm able to comfortably help children with their homework. I feel confident that I will be able to help them as they get older and in higher grades."

"I had a full turn around because of this program. It affected all aspects of my life."

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Never Too Late program is designed to remove barriers and provide the support and encouragement needed by participants who otherwise would not be able or likely to complete their GED. This follow up study of Never Too Late graduates found that the program has had a number of positive impacts on participants. Some Never Too Late participants who completed their GED had a significant increase in income averaging approximately \$17,000 over pre-GED income levels. In addition the program had a positive impact on participants' confidence, ability to pursue further education or training, and opportunities to move into more rewarding or senior employment positions. For some participants, the personal impacts on their own and their families' lives were more highly valued than potential impact on employment prospects.

The Never Too Late program has been a successful and popular program in the communities in which it has been offered. Expansion of the Never Too Late program to include other disadvantaged populations and/or low income geographic communities should be considered.

8.0 APPENDIX

8.1 **Appendix A**

Program Activity Across Eight Semesters from Sept 2006 to June 2011					
Total Enrollments	Total Drop Outs	# Wrote Exams	# Graduated	# Passed 4 of 5	# Passed < 4 of 5
175 new 69 repeating	62 new 14 repeating	106 new 51 repeat	51 on first try 21 repeating	33 first try 27 repeat	16 first try 3 repeat
244	76	157	72	60	19

Note: numbers shown as “repeating” are those students who have enrolled and/or wrote exams more than once.

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Appendix B

Job Title Before NTL	Job Title After NTL
Retired	Cashier
School Bus Driver	Dispatcher @ Shaw Cable
Rona - Merchandiser	Air Craft Mechanic
Serving, Bartending, Managing	Serving, Bartending, Managing
Cashier Supervisor (temporary)	At Home with Children
At Home with Children	Baker (Pastries)
Department manager. Sea food clerk	Legal Assistant
Receptionist	Support worker with Scope Society
Truck Driver	Truck Driver
Lunch Room Supervisor	School Aide
Security Officer	School Bus driver
Warranty Advisor @ Honda	Business Manager
Cake decorating - self employed	School Assistant
Front-end supervisor @ Co-op	Business Owner (VAL)
At Home with Children	Educational Assistant
ESL Assistant	Educational Assistant
At Home with Children	Special Ed. Assistant
Dental Receptionist	File Clerk and assistant
At Home	General Laborer
Plumber	Plumber
Auto Body Tech	Auto Body Tech
Kitchen Staff @ Nursing Home	Own Business Installation Company
	Real Estate Agent
Day Cafe Worker	Admin Coordinator at U of C
Rig Worker	Heavy Equipment Operator
At Home with Children	Cook
Unemployed	Cleaner
Smitty's Hostess	Senior Support Worker

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Job Title Before NTL	Job Title After NTL
Lab Tech	Technical Assistant
House Cleaner	House Cleaner
Farm Hand	Retail Marketing @ Bay
Dayhome	Dayhome
Post Office Clerk	Pharmacy Assistant
Machine Operator	Machine Operator
Labourer with City	Labourer with City
Bus Driver	Spa Attendant
Plumber Apprentice	Plumbing Apprentice
Unemployed	Food services
Clerk - Grocery Store	Assistant Manager
Care giver	Caregiver
Welder	Welder
CBE caretaker	Laundry Nursing Home
Server @ McDonalds	Nursing Attendant
Cook - Calgary Stampede	Receptionist -- Bowmont Medical
Painting	Painter
Labourer	Apprentice welder and Pipe fitter
Sales	Manager
Driver	Driver
Sewing	Sewing
Labourer/Driver	Labourer/driver
Receiver	Receiver
Foam cutter	General Labour