

The Centre for Family Literacy is dedicated to helping families grow and prosper.



# The Centre for Family Literacy Centre Page

September 2007

## Pilot Program a Success

The Centre's Rhymes that Bind program participated in an exciting new partnership with West Edmonton Parent Link Centre and Touchmark at Wedgewood this past spring session.

We brought our oral literacy program for families with children aged 0 – 3 years into a seniors complex – and brought the seniors into the program too! This intergenerational program was a huge



success with children, parents and seniors interacting, enjoying the rhymes and songs together and visiting after the program ended.

One of the parents commented on how she "was left feeling so full of life and so thoroughly enjoyed herself, as she was sure her daughter had as well!" This

just skims the surface of how important and fulfilling it is for all generations to be involved in family literacy.

“Most children's language abilities will flourish under the right circumstances, which include a secure home that encourages verbal interaction.”

*Alison Palkhivala,  
Early Childhood  
Learning Bulletin,  
Canadian Council on  
Learning,  
June 2007*

## New Partnership in Support of Literacy Edmonton Public Library and Centre for Family Literacy

For many years the Centre has been delivering family literacy programs such as Rhymes that Bind and Books for Babies in partnership with the Edmonton Public Library. On September 5, at Sprucewood Library, the two organizations signed a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize and strengthen their efforts to increase literacy for Edmonton children, families and adults.

The signing event included a demonstration of the family literacy



– Eunice Crouter,  
Jingle Dancer

program Storysacks using the story "Jingle Dancer". A highlight of the event was the performance of a Jingle Dance.

Storysacks with an Aboriginal focus will be the first program to be piloted following the signing of the agreement. A Storysack is a large cloth bag containing a children's book with

supporting materials to stimulate reading activities. By using many of the traditional skills of Aboriginal people – making crafts, sewing, telling stories,

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## Life-Long Learning Begins in the Home



Alison Palkhivavla writes that “as many as 8% to 12% of [Canadian] preschoolers and 12% of children entering school have language impairment, defined as poor listening and speaking skills compared with peers.” (1) Children with language impairment are often at risk of developing behaviour problems, academic difficulties, learning disabilities, shyness or even anxiety disorders. It is not hard to imagine why children with language impairment might have a more difficult time in early social settings, and in making friends. Sadly, many will also develop reading disorders.

Research tells us that early, regular, and fun child-adult interactions such as songs, rhymes, word play, and storytelling help children develop language skills that are in fact the foundation for all future literacy and learning.

Maureen Sanders, Co-Executive Director of the Centre for Family Literacy and consultant Janet Shively note in their article in the latest publication by the Vanier Institute of the Family, “Studies worldwide show that family influences on student achievement outweigh the effects of either school or community. Learning takes place in all families, among all generations, in all kinds of unique ways. It happens naturally in the daily process of “getting things done” and sharing experiences together.” (2)



From the moment babies are born, parents and other caregivers need to be talking, reading, rhyming, singing and storytelling with their children. These verbal interactions can easily become part of many daily routines – changing diapers, getting dressed, riding on the bus or in the car - and provide parents with tools for dealing with their children’s behaviour, as well as for building their children’s language skills.

It becomes abundantly clear that language is linked not only to literacy acquisition, but also to emotional, social, and academic development and lifelong resiliency. Language is indeed the portal to living and learning.

1. Language is the Door to Living and Learning, Canadian Council on Learning Early Childhood Learning Bulletin, June 2007, page 2
2. Promising Practices in Family Literacy Programs, Transition, Summer 2007, page 9



## New Partnership *Continued from page 1*

teaching original languages – the program will foster a healthy sense of family, cultural pride and belonging.

“Edmonton has the second highest urban Aboriginal population in Canada,” comments Maureen Sanders, Co-Director of the Centre. “We are delighted to work with Edmonton Public Library in offering this innovative program for Aboriginal families.” Linda Cook, EPL’s Director of Libraries adds: “This partnership will allow us to develop new services and share resources in support of literacy.”



*Colleen Crozier, Aboriginal Family Literacy Coordinator, and Darlene Auger, guest reader, present the story “Jingle Dancer”.*

## Lois Hole Memorial Literacy Awards – Call for Nominations

The Centre for Family Literacy is seeking nominations for the second annual Lois Hole Memorial Literacy Awards. The awards celebrate individuals, organizations or businesses that have demonstrated a commitment to literacy in Alberta.

### Learner Award

Presented to an outstanding individual in one of the Centre's adult or family literacy programs who has shown a commitment to their own learning and or that of their child.

### Community Leadership Award

Presented to an outstanding individual, business or group who reflects the Centre's mission and has through their efforts demonstrated an ongoing commitment to family literacy in Alberta.

The nomination deadline is Tuesday, October 30, 2007. For a nomination form and to see past recipients, go to [famlit.ca/about.awards.html](http://famlit.ca/about.awards.html).

## International Perspective and Numeracy

### New Focus at Institute

In August, Family Literacy Facilitators, Coordinators and Administrators from across the province gathered at the Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton for the Centre's annual Family Literacy Training Institute.

The Linking 1-2-3 and A-B-C workshop was presented for the first time at the Institute. The workshop included hands on ideas, strategies and practices for incorporating numeracy in family literacy programs.

Maren Elfert, Public Relations/Programme Specialist at UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, provided an international perspective. She spoke about the European Union project "QualiFLY" that involved pilot programs in Bulgaria, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta and Turkey. Of particular interest were the innovative fathers' programmes and the remediation programmes with elder children.

## New Resource Materials

The Centre has recently updated our Family Literacy Tip Sheets which are available on our website at [famlit.ca/resources/resources.html](http://famlit.ca/resources/resources.html). Check out the **Tips for Parents** and the **Recommended Book Lists**.

We have recently released a brand new resource – **Literacy Tutor's Guide**, Reading for Meaning & The Writing Experience. Learn more about the Guide on our website at [famlit.ca](http://famlit.ca)

## Upcoming Events

### Starbucks Fundraiser for CFL – September 26

Bring your family and friends to the opening of the new Starbucks in South Edmonton Common (1751 102 St) from 4-9 p.m. In exchange for a donation to the Centre you will receive free coffee, snacks and will be eligible for great prizes.

### READ IN Week – October 1-5

The goal of READ In Week is to involve as many people as possible in reading events and activities. For more information on events and how to participate go to [www.epl.ca/readin/](http://www.epl.ca/readin/)

### Raise-A-Reader Day – October 3

Volunteers will be out early in the morning in the downtown core seeking donations in support of family literacy. The Centre is a beneficiary of this program and we encourage you to be generous as they "hawk" the Edmonton Journal in exchange for a donation.

Online donations to the Centre can be made through [CanadaHelps.org](http://CanadaHelps.org)



The Centre for Family Literacy gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the following:



## The Alberta Prairie C.O.W. Keeps Travelling



Like many Albertans, we have been carefully watching the price of gasoline over the past several months concerned about the impact it might have on the cost of the Alberta Prairie C.O.W. project.

We were delighted to receive a call from Jim Piliouras, Senior Sales Coordinator at Petro-Canada advising us that they would again be donating gas cards to the C.O.W. Bus.

Petro-Canada has been a supporter of this project since the launch in January 2004 and its generous donation has helped to keep the bus travelling throughout the province supporting family literacy. Over 32,000 adults and children have visited the bus in the past 3 years. Thanks to Petro-Canada for its ongoing support of this project.

## Charitable Gifts with Retirement Funds

For the past two years in an effort to build endowment funds, we have had a number of articles in Centre Page about ways to include charities in your long term planning.

Many of us have planned for the future by contributing to retirement funds. It has been found that most Canadians do not use all of these funds before they pass away. In that case, leftover retirement funds make an excellent charitable gift because the charitable tax credit will offset the tax on the distribution. Leaving the funds to a beneficiary, who is not a spouse or dependant child or grandchild, generally would cause the full value of the funds to be taxed in the year of your death, but with the charitable gift you preserve the funds intact for a charity whose work you want to support.

The recommended procedure is to designate the charity as beneficiary of all or a portion of your RRSP and RRIF funds. The tax credit will entirely offset the tax on the distributions because the creditable amount of a charitable bequest is 100 % of net income. Thus no part will be consumed by taxation.

A charitable gift is one method of assuring that all or most of the funds you spent a lifetime accumulating are used for the purposes you choose.

**If you would prefer to receive the Centre Page newsletter via email rather than by mail, please send us an email at [info@famlit.ca](mailto:info@famlit.ca). Please reference Centre Page in the subject line.**

## Literacy Develops in Families First

The Centre for Family literacy is dedicated to helping Alberta grow and prosper. Our innovative programs, training and research help Alberta families achieve what they imagine - improved education, jobs and health.

### Privacy Policy

If you do not wish to receive Centre Page or information about the Centre for Family Literacy, you may call, write or e-mail us. A copy of our privacy policy can be found on our website at [www.famlit.ca](http://www.famlit.ca)

