



The Centre for Family Literacy Centre Page

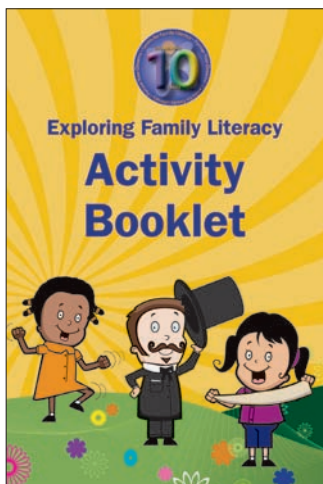
Anniversary Celebrations a Big Hit

Our Vision:

A healthy, literate society where all are able to contribute and succeed.

January 2011 was the start of a year-long celebration of the Centre's 10th Anniversary. The year saw the Centre build on current partnerships and activities and develop a variety of new initiatives.

The *Exploring Family Literacy* booklet was developed in partnership with the Alberta Art Gallery, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Fort Edmonton Park, Royal Alberta Museum and Winter Light Festival. The booklet contained ideas and activities focused on literacy for parents to use both at home and during visits to our partners' venues. The Downtown Business Association distributed to over 3,000 copies of the booklet at their Family Day Festival in February.



The contest *Splash! Celebrate Summer* was launched at the Alberta Library Conference in the spring. Libraries from across seven regions were encouraged to submit their Summer Reading Club activities along with photos. In September a library from each region was selected as the winner of 50 children's books to add to their collection.

There was no shortage of creativity. Pirates, sharks, submarines, whales and other water related creatures appeared in many forms. The Carstairs Library reported "the windows were covered with colourful fish, sea stars and other ocean creatures, turning it into a fish bowl." At the Bonnyville Library every week they had a "wet" day with

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Reading to School-Age Children Has Impact



A recent analysis by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) examined the long-term affect of parental support on literacy. It found that early involvement pays big dividends.

The OECD analysis, based on teenagers in 14 developed countries, found that active parental involvement at the beginning of school was a significant trigger for developing children's reading skills.

The analysis focused on the reading performance of 15-year-olds. Students whose parents had read with them "every day or almost every day" or "once or twice a week" during the first year of school had significantly higher scores than those whose parents read a book with them "never or

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December
2011

Anniversary Celebrations a Big Hit

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water gun fights, water balloons or a slip and slide. As well, their crafts included making sand castles out of boxes, a massive fish with amazing scales and paper bag octopus.

The Rotary Branch Library in Drayton Valley celebrated National Parks Day by taking a trip to the North Saskatchewan River and participating in environmental workshops done by the Eagle Point-Blue Rapids Council.

Formal presentations by either staff or Board Members from the Centre were held at each library, often with Library Board Members, town councilors and the media in attendance. "It was really neat for us to see all the things that libraries are doing to engage families, and the entries to this contest really showcased that" said Kim Chung, Program Director for the Centre.

October saw the Centre partner with LitFest to present "Write to Literacy". Participants of the Learning Centre Literacy Association Abbotsfield Writers' Circle shared how literacy issues framed their experience and how they used creative writing to change that frame of reference. LitFest's "Writers' Cabaret for Literacy" was a fundraiser in support of the Centre's work.

It is fitting that the final celebration will be the Leading with Literacy Breakfast, our annual event held in recognition of Family Literacy Day and the presentation of the Lois Hole Memorial Literacy Awards. Previous winners of the Lois Hole Memorial Learner Award are all planning to be in attendance, as they want to be part of this special celebration.

Reading to Children Has Impact

Continued

almost never." On average, teenagers whose parents had helped with reading at the beginning of school were six months ahead in reading levels at the age of 15.

Differences in performance related to parent involvement partly reflected socio-economic backgrounds. However, when the scores of students from similar socio-economic backgrounds were compared, those students who were read to regularly by their parents in the first year of school scored 14 points higher.

The analysis also found that the score point difference in reading performance was largest when parents engaged in other types of parent-child activities in addition to reading with their children. These activities included telling stories to their children and talking about things they had done during the day.

The analysis also showed a student's reading performance was higher if parents continued to engage in certain activities with their teenagers. Discussing books, films or TV programs; eating meals around a table; and spending time just talking were activities that were associated with better student reading performance in school.

The OECD analysis clearly demonstrates that children are never too old to benefit from a parent's involvement. The full analysis can be found at www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/54/33690904.pdf



“Stronger Together”

Collaborating for Change

Literacy Alberta, the Community Learning Network and the Centre for Family Literacy are all organizations that work to improve literacy and learning in the province of Alberta. The organizations have worked together on an ad hoc basis for several years. This spring they decided to explore opportunities to formalize their working relationships.

The Executive Director and two Board members from each organization have been meeting since then as a group with facilitators Pamila Crosby and Sharon Matthias.

This group is looking at ways the three organizations can build on their current collaborations so they can work together more strategically and effectively on behalf of people who live in Alberta and use our services now and in the future.

The Centre for Family Literacy’s Board Chair Maie Kellerman said, “We are encouraged that each time we meet, we get to know one another better and understand the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for the field generally.”

The group is currently developing Guiding Principles that will form the foundation for their work together. These include, for instance, that the outcome must be Learner Centered and must build on the excellence and unique characteristics of all three organizations.

Kellerman concluded, “While we have not come to any final conclusions, we remain excited about the possibilities that lie ahead.”

Leading with Literacy Breakfast

Celebrating the winners of the

Lois Hole Memorial

Literacy Awards

7 - 9 am, Thursday,

January 26, 2012

at the Westin Hotel



It’s More Than Just a Book

The Mitten by Jan Brett is a much-loved adaptation of an old Ukrainian folktale. It is the perfect book to read during the winter months and provides the opportunity to use the story as the base for fun activities that will expand a child’s literacy development.

If the weather permits, take a walk outside and look for different kinds of snow. Does it look like the snow in the book? What words would you use to describe it? What sound do your boots make as you walk across the snow? Try to find things on you walk that begin with the letters of the alphabet.

If the weather is too cold, it is the perfect day for arts and crafts. Make a mitten by tracing your hand on paper and then colour and decorate the mitten. Use your new mittens as a prop as you share the story “The Three Little Kittens Who Lost Their Mittens”.

Draw pictures of the animals in the story and have your child count how many animals crawled in the mitten. Make a collage using pictures of animals, mittens and other winter items cut out of magazines. Or make masks of the animals in the story and put on a play.

Extending the story with a variety of activities will engage your child’s imagination and build their literacy and language skills. It is the perfect way to celebrate winter.



Online donations to the Centre can be made through CanadaHelps.org



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



Government of Alberta



Support Families on Their Literacy Journey

If you would prefer to receive our newsletter via email rather than by mail, please send us an email at info@famlit.ca and reference Centre Page in the subject line.

Your donation will help ensure that parents can provide their children with positive early learning experiences.

A gift to the Centre will make a lasting difference!

- \$25 – 2 quality board books for a baby
- \$75 – a book bag and 4 books for a family
- \$100 – healthy snacks for families attending one of our programs
- \$300 – fuel for the local C.O.W. Bus for one month

Now there are three easy ways to donate to the Centre for Family Literacy either with a one-time donation or a monthly donation:

- On-line through CanadaHelps.org
- By phone: 780-423-7323 or 1-866-423-7323
- By mail: Centre for Family Literacy, 11642 142 St, Edmonton, AB T5K 0M1

We accept donations by Visa, MasterCard or Cheque. Please use the form below if submitting your donation by mail.

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.

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YES, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Your support will help us make a difference in the lives of Alberta families! Together we can make Alberta a healthy, literate society where all are able to contribute and succeed.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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