



The Centre for Family Literacy Centre Page

THE HIGH COST OF LOW HEALTH LITERACY

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

To read a prescription label, inject insulin, or understand an infant's immunization schedule, you need to possess an essential life skill: health literacy. Health literacy refers to your ability to obtain, process, and understand the information you need to make informed health decisions for you and your family. The World Health Organization says that our level of health literacy directly impacts our health status and health outcomes, calling it a critical resource for everyday living. Yet it's a critical resource that the majority of adult Canadians—nearly two thirds of us—don't have.



In 2008, the Canadian Public Health Association reported that low levels of health literacy affect more than 55% of adult Canadians over the age of 16, and 88% of seniors. This means that 14.8 million people lack the capacity to understand and act on

health information and services, and to make appropriate health decisions. These high figures come at a cost to all Canadians—excess health care costs due to low literacy are in the billions of dollars.

Low levels of health literacy are significantly higher among certain jurisdictions and certain groups, including seniors, newcomers, those with low levels of education and with low literacy. This makes sense: if you struggle to read or write, you will find it difficult to do what many of us might take for granted, whether it be reading a workplace safety sign or filling out a medical form. Navigating the increasingly complex healthcare system takes skill no matter what level of literacy you have. Imagine, then, trying to navigate the system as a low-literacy adult who has a chronic disease or a seriously ill child.

In The Canadian Public Health Association's 2008 health literacy report, the panel of authors included a list of potential barriers to health literacy, along with a list of ways to address those barriers—investing in adult and family literacy programs was among the list. However, at the end of the report, they emphasized that none of this will happen without political will, organizational leadership, and the concerted efforts of practitioners and the public.

They concluded by asking the following question:

“Are we willing as a country to make the investment that is required to create a health literate Canada?”

Contact us

11642 142 Street NW Edmonton, AB T5M 1V4 T 780.421.READ (7323) Toll free 1.866.421.7323
F 780.421.7324 E info@famlit.ca W www.famlit.ca

Autumn
2016

GOLFING FOR LITERACY

The sixth annual Links for Literacy Golf Tournament had a record number of golfers in attendance and generated a net profit of \$42,000, which brings the total raised over the past six years to in excess of \$190,000. Funds from the tournament support the Edmonton Classroom on Wheels (C.O.W.) Bus program.

Most golfers know about mulligans—the opportunity to “do-over” a stroke without penalty—but few have heard of string as part of the game. At the Centre’s tournament, each player can purchase up to 18 inches of string which they can use to improve their lie, or position, on the course without sacrificing a stroke.

The team of Andy Zylstra, Michael Pidhirniak, Jonathan MacLeod and Jay Downton came in 21 under par for the day—a great game of golf and strategic use of their string and mulligans. The winning team was presented with their “green jackets” at the banquet following the tournament.

The “Beat the Volunteer” challenge on hole 11 has always been a favourite with golfers. This year Edmonton Centre MP Randy Boissonnault joined the volunteers on the hole to greet golfers and thank them for supporting the Centre. Mr. Boissonnault was the first Board Chair of the Centre and is a strong advocate for literacy.

Dave Hancock, Honorary Chair of the golf tournament, did double duty playing in the tournament and emceeing the banquet. He did a great job



Andy Zylstra, Michael Pidhirniak, Jay Downton, and Jonathan MacLeod

and the awards and prizes were distributed in record time.

We would like to thank everyone who supported the event, especially our sponsors:

- Birdie: Dialog
- Lunch: Ledcor
- Banquet: Nearctic Group
- Cart: Carlson Construction
- Flag: Qualico Commercial
- Gift Bag: PCL
- Caddy: CHANDOS, Dentons, Jacobs
- Print: Regent Signs
- Hole: Arrow Engineering, Bee-Clean, Clark Builders, Impark, Multivista, Synergy, Wave Eningeering
- Hole in One: Investors Group, Raymond James
- In-Kind: Aurora CDN Blonde Ale, Fifendekel Pie Shop Cafe

NEW FUNDING EXPANDS LITERACY LINKS PROGRAM

The Centre has received a grant from the City of Edmonton, Family and Community Support Services to deliver a series of Literacy Links workshops for parents and caregivers.

“ I learned the fun that I can have with my child doing activities using household items to save money. ”

The interactive workshops provide participants with information, strategies, and tools to facilitate parenting, support early literacy development, and promote interactions with their children—building emotional bonds, social supports, and community engagement.

The Literacy Links program was established a number of years ago in response to an increasing number of requests for tailored workshops. Each year the demand has grown and so have the

topics. The Centre now has 15 packaged workshops, from using technology in family literacy to home-grown activities to support early learning and promote parent child bonding. Feedback from participants reinforces the positive outcomes of the workshops and is reflected in comments like this one from a parent, “I learned the fun that I can have with my child doing activities using household items to save money.”

The grant from the City will allow the Centre to work with community partners to deliver workshops in a number of targeted communities. Community partners see the Literacy Links program as an opportunity for them to build on their relationships with families and increase participation in other programs offered by their agencies.

This additional funding will allow the Centre to expand the delivery of the Literacy Links program and reach more families in the Edmonton area.

A full list of workshops and presentations can be found on our website under Training.

IMPORTANT DATES

*Lois Hole Memorial
Literacy Award –
Community Leadership*

**Nomination deadline
December 2**

Please visit our website, www.famlit.ca, for nomination criteria and form.

*Office Christmas
Closure*

December 26 - January 2



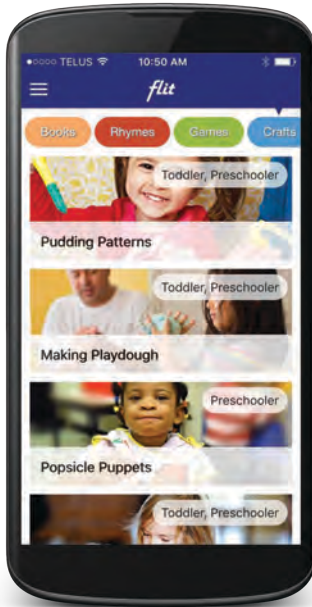
Online donations to the Centre can be made through CanadaHelps.org



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



ANDROID VERSION OF FLIT LAUNCHES IN OCTOBER



Thanks to a grant from TELUS Community Board, the Centre will be launching an android version of our app **Flit**. The app will be available in October at which time we will also be adding new activities to the iOS version.

We are extremely pleased with the response to **Flit** as the application continues to be downloaded and used on a regular basis. Over 100 of those users have come back to the application 8+ times in the past three months.

Many people have expressed disappointment that the app was only available for those with an Apple phone or tablet. We are very excited that we can offer this valuable resource to a much wider audience.

See a demo of the app by visiting our website for the link at www.famlit.ca, where you will also find more information about **Flit!**



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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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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