



The Centre for Family Literacy Centre Page

VOLUNTEER LEGACY

Tammy Irwin began actively volunteering at age 20 and recently celebrated her 80th birthday. For 25 years, Tammy has volunteered with the Centre for Family Literacy. In her roles as an Adult

Literacy Tutor and an ESL Class Facilitator, Tammy has taught over 150 adult learners in local libraries, community centres and churches.

She has supported refugees who have faced war, violence and family losses, and prepared newcomers who face the challenges of a new country, culture and language. Tammy's students have been from India, Pakistan, Somalia, China, Hong Kong, Sudan, South Korea, Brazil, Mexico,

Ukraine, Japan, Uganda, St. Lucia, Norway, El Salvador, and yes, from Canada too!

For over two decades, Tammy has facilitated free ESL classes to not only help newcomers improve their conversational English skills, but also to empower them with invaluable information about Canadian culture and local events.

Tammy loves seeing her students develop friendships and a sense of belonging to their community here in Canada. After spending some months in Tammy's class, one student said, **"I always used to want to go back to my home country, but now I feel Canada is my home."**

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

ADULT LEARNING IN FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS

When you visit a family literacy program, you will see parents singing, sharing books, or doing crafts or games with their children. You say to yourself "what a great program for kids." While this is true, it is also a great program for the parents.

The primary focus in a family literacy program is to provide learning opportunities for the parent. They are their child's first and best teacher. Family Literacy programs provide them with the skills to support their children's early language and literacy development.

Learning principles tell us that for an adult to choose to attend a program, learning needs to be relevant and practical. What is more relevant than learning how to support their child?

Using this principle in our programs, we see adults become engaged in learning, sometimes for the first time since they were a child.

The holistic approach gives them ways to support their child's early learning. Literacy activities that fit easily into daily routines, and often become a parenting tool, are shared. Doing these activities regularly, in a loving relationship, strengthens learning for both adult and child.

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WINTER
2018/19

VOLUNTEER LEGACY

Continued

“It’s amazing Tammy is still volunteering so passionately at age 80!”

shared Ruth, Tammy’s current co-facilitator.

In addition to her work with the Centre, Tammy has been a volunteer with the Canadian Federation of University Women since 1958. Taking on leadership roles with the organization, she became the National President in 1988. She has been an active volunteer with the United Church, helped establish the Social Justice Committee, and is a key member of Moving Forward With Reconciliation. For 16 years, Tammy volunteered at the Grandview Extended Care facility. Add to that her work with Habitat for Humanity and Rundle’s Mission Retreat Centre, and you get a sense of Tammy’s incredible commitment to her community.

If you talk with Tammy about her volunteer legacy, she will downplay her contribution to the lives of others. Instead, she will highlight the immense satisfaction she feels as a volunteer and her gratitude at being given such opportunities. She is at once dedicated, tenacious, and humble.

Over the past 60 years, Tammy has literally impacted thousands of lives in Alberta and across Canada. From patiently teaching a refugee how to write her own name to lobbying politicians for policy reform, Tammy has dedicated incalculable hours to improving the lives of others.

ADULT LEARNING IN FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMS

Continued



In these programs, topics on parenting and supporting early childhood development build transferable skills for adults. Adults that have had learning challenges or other barriers often don’t think they can support their child’s learning. Through the program, they build “soft skills”—confidence, self-esteem, and problem solving. They start to recognize that they can support, and have been supporting, their child.

Adult participants also build literacy and essential skills which are foundational to all other learning. Oral communication, working with others, and thinking skills, are just a few that happen naturally through interactions with others in the program.

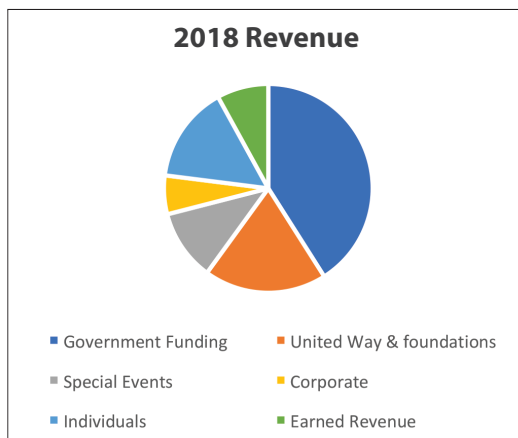
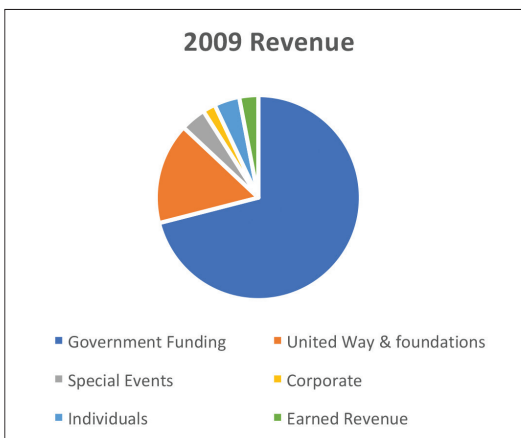
Reading, writing, and numeracy skills are supported through strategies using books and materials that can be used with their child. Adults learn how to support a child through activities like sharing a children’s book together, reading it through with the group, talking about the vocabulary, the meaning of the story, and then extending it with crafts. Through this process, they are using the learned strategies themselves, and applying them to other parts of their lives, including school, work, and the community.

Throughout the program, we encourage the adults to start thinking about their own learning. They now have the confidence to look at a variety of options.

CHANGING FUNDING LANDSCAPE

Seven years ago, 71% of the Centre’s revenue came from all three levels of government. At the time, the Centre’s Board of Directors and senior staff made a decision to diversify our funding sources in an effort to minimize risk to the organization. Having one major source of funding, whether it is government or private sector support, can provide some sense of financial stability. But what happens if that funder reorders their priorities, or their financial situation changes, and they decrease support for your work.

For the past ten years, the Centre has worked at diversifying our funding so that our programs and services are supported by a wide range of private and public organizations. The 71% from all three levels of government has been reduced to 41%, and you can see from the charts below how the funding has changed.



ANNUAL BREAKFAST WILL FOCUS ON LITERACY AND HEALTH

In Canada, 60% of adults and 88% of seniors are not health literate, which means at some level they struggle to obtain health information, understand and process that information, and use the information to effectively maintain and improve their health.

Dr. Louis Francescutti’s keynote address at the Leading with Literacy Breakfast will focus on how literacy affects the health and wellbeing of individuals, and the overall health of our society.

The **Leading with Literacy Breakfast** will take place **Wednesday, January 30, 2019 at the Westin Hotel in Edmonton**. Tickets can be purchased through the Centre for Family Literacy website at www.famlit.ca

IMPORTANT DATES

Office Christmas Closure

December 24 - January 4

National Family Literacy Day

Sunday, January 27

Family Literacy Carnival

Sunday, January 27

2:00–4:30 p.m.

Robbins Health Learning Centre
MacEwan University

Leading with Literacy Breakfast

Wednesday, January 30

7:00–9:00 a.m.

The Westin Edmonton

Visit our website for more information.



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



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



CARNIVAL FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

To switch to our email newsletter: please send us an email at info@famlit.ca and reference Centre Page in the subject line.



The Family Literacy Carnival is a place to wander, explore, participate, and just have fun! Head down to **MacEwan University, Robbins Health Centre (109 St and 104 Ave)** on **January 27 from 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.**

The event is free for the whole family, with eight different activity stations including music, play and learn, technology, and science. There will be book giveaways, and special guests will read their favourite books for storytime.

This is a great opportunity to celebrate National Family Literacy Day. The 2019 theme for Family Literacy Day is “Take 20”—take 20 minutes to make learning a fun family activity. Come to the Carnival and participant in as many activities as you can fit into your busy schedule. No registration required, just drop in and bring the whole family.

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!

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss Dr.

First Name

Last Name

Company/Organization

E-mail Address

Home Phone

Work Phone

Fax Number

Address

City

Province

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Enclosed is my gift of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$

Payment option:

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Credit card #

Expiry date

Cardholder name

Cardholder Signature

For recognition purposes:

I wish my name to appear as follows:

I wish this gift to remain anonymous

Charitable registration number 869472720 RR0001

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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