



The Centre for Family Literacy Centre Page

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Our Vision:
*A healthy,
literate society
where all
are able to
contribute and
succeed.*

Due to the continued uncertainty around COVID-19, the Centre for Family Literacy is taking precautionary measures to do our part in slowing down the spread of the disease. We are suspending all programs and training until further notice and our office is also closed.

We will continue to monitor the situation and re-evaluate based on the newest information we have. We are exploring delivery of our programs, training and support to learners, volunteers and families through digital formats.

In this newsletter, we have included a number of articles we hope you will find interesting and informative. For more resources and for updated information about the Centre's programs, training and events, check our website www.famlit.ca and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Kim Chung
Co-Executive Director
Programming & Training

Donna Lemieux
Co-Executive Director
Development & Community Engagement

HOW READING REDUCES STRESS



With the pervasive pandemic-related news stories and constant changes to daily routines, it's easy to become stressed and overwhelmed. In times like this, we can turn to reading for respite and as a proven stress-buster.

Scientific evidence shows that reading can be a simple and effective stress-reduction technique. A 2009 study by the University of Sussex found that reading can reduce stress by up to 68%. The study also reported that reading lowers stress more effectively than listening to music or going for a walk—welcome news for anyone stuck at home for the next little while. When we read, our heart rate and blood pressure decrease, and muscle tension is reduced.

Those who read regularly also get better sleep, which in turn helps them successfully cope with daily stressors. Getting lost in a good book provides us with much-needed escapism and helps us unwind. Reading can create a calming effect on our brains by producing a similar effect to what we experience during meditation. There's also evidence that reading can help

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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

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2020

HOW READING REDUCES STRESS

Continued

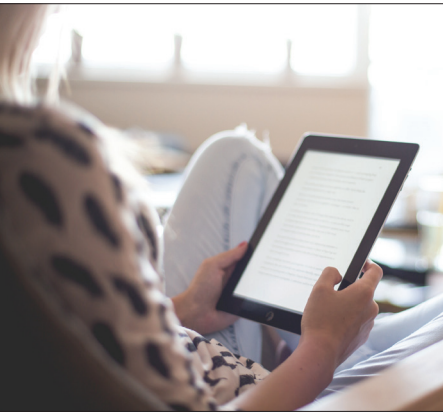
us cultivate empathy, an essential quality during difficult times. According to a 2013 study published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, people who read fiction are better at understanding the perspectives of others.

Experts recommend carving out 30 minutes every day to read somewhere quiet with minimal distractions. Reading before bed can be a nice way to create a calming nighttime ritual. What you choose to read is entirely up to you. Look for something engaging that you won't find stressful. It can be fiction or nonfiction—whatever interests you the most. Try picking up something by an author you love or a new release in your favourite genre. It's also a great time to reach for something comforting like a nostalgic childhood read or something that

will transport you to another world like a fantasy or historical fiction novel.

If you're in need of reading materials, Edmonton Public Library has virtual resources that can be accessed during their closure, including access to thousands of E-books and audiobooks through the app Libby. If you'd like a physical book, Audrey's Books offers

curbside and home delivery in the greater Edmonton area. Alternatively, you can always order something online from Indigo or Amazon.



DIGITAL PROGRAMS

The Centre is exploring ways to support our families, learners, and volunteers until we can re-start programs and training.

We are working on moving some family literacy programs to an online interactive platform to continue to support families registered in our programs. Rhymes that Bind has been selected as the pilot. We invited a small group of families to participate in a trial run, asking them to give feedback on improvements.

Once we have received the pilot group feedback, we will roll it out to our Rhymes that Bind participants. We also plan to adapt, where appropriate, other family literacy programming to this format.

Our YouTube channel is a better fit for Literacy Links workshops, so work has begun on getting content up on that platform. The YouTube channel will allow us to reach families currently participating in our programs as well as new families.

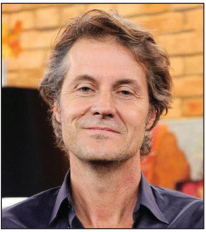
The Adult Learning team is researching different ways our tutors can connect with their learners, so that they can continue to give support without meeting in person. Since we are learner-centred and access to technology and digital literacy skills vary, this will look different for each pair. We are compiling a list of possible tools and sample activities for tutors.

The team is also exploring what group classes might look like in a digital format including lesson plans, resources, and platforms.

Tutors are being provided with a running list of resources and professional development opportunities, both in-house and offered by other organizations. We will continue to add opportunities and resources that are available online, or that can be shared digitally, and will keep exploring new ways to connect with and support our volunteers and learners.

Please check our website, Facebook page or Twitter for updates on when this will be available.

LOIS HOLE AWARD WINNERS



Community Leadership Award

In 2008, **Jim Cuddy** agreed to be the first “guest speaker” at the Centre for Family Literacy’s inaugural An Evening of Wine and Words and has continued his commitment for the past 12 years. He also began bringing a variety of award-winning guests to perform with him. During their performances, Jim and his fellow artists tell stories, sharing what inspired them to write the songs they are performing and making a connection to the importance of literacy.

As a result of Jim’s ongoing efforts and commitment, An Evening of Wine & Words has raised over \$1M in support of family literacy programs in Edmonton.



Adult Learner Award

Living in Ghana with her grandmother and up to 15 family members at times, **Abigail Agyeiwaa** had to leave school after grade 6 as the family could not afford to pay, and education for females was not valued.

Abigail came to Canada speaking Twi and English, but was not able to read or write in either language. Her goal was to improve her reading and writing so she could help her children with their homework, read stories, and understand school notes and agendas. She also wanted to read a newspaper, fill out forms, and read her own mail.

Abigail started at the very beginning, Level 1, and now is able to read Level 3 materials due to her determination and commitment.



Family Learner Category

Rachael Raffray is a strong, independent role model for her children. As a single mom, she has dedicated her time to her children to support them and continuously learn new ways to enrich their learning.

Rachael and her son Archer attend our Literacy Links program. As small children do, Archer tested his moms’ patience with what some would call the “terrible twos” or “trying threes.” Many parents stop attending when it becomes too difficult with their children. Not Rachael—she continued coming, giving Archer the space he needed and freedom to be his age.

Because of Rachael’s patience and commitment, Archer has developed amazing patience and strong learning skills that will contribute to his success in school and in life skills.

IMPORTANT DATES

National Volunteer Week

Time to applaud this country’s volunteers!

April 19 - 25

LETS BE OPTIMISTIC!

Links fore Literacy Golf Tournament

**Wednesday, August 19
The Links at Spruce Grove**



MAKE A DONATION TODAY!

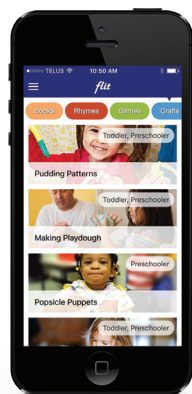
Online donations to the Centre can be made through CanadaHelps.org



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



6 FUN ACTIVITIES FROM OUR *FLIT* APP



To switch to our email newsletter: just send us an email at info@famlit.ca re: Centre Page

Social isolation doesn't have to be boring. As a parent, you can create a positive, fun, at-home environment that builds meaningful memories and lasting literacy skills.

If you are feeling stumped for ideas, don't worry, we have your back. Below are some of our favourite at-home activities from our free FLIT app. To download the app, search "FLIT" in the App Store or Google Play, or go to our website for a direct link to http://www.famlit.ca/resources/resources_p.shtml

1. Playdough Snake Letters – find under: Writing
Making letters from playdough provides valuable hands-on, sensory exploration.

2. Picture Grocery List – find under: Crafts
This is a great way to practice food identification, drawing, and writing.

4. Simon Says – find under: Games
This is one of the best ways to teach your child listening skills and self-regulation.

5. Skewer that Fruit – find under: Cooking
There is some sneaky learning going on as they make this tasty snack, such as identifying fruit names, colours, shapes, and textures.

6. Laundry Toss – find under: Numbers
Laundry toss can be entertaining while teaching important skills like comparing, contrasting, sorting, classifying, and counting.

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.

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Last Name

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E-mail Address

Home Phone

Work Phone

Fax Number

Address

City

Province

Postal Code

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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