

This Week in Literacy

Friday, March 7, 2008

The NWT Literacy Council is a non-profit, non-government agency dedicated to supporting the development of literacy in all official languages of the NWT.

Community Events and Information

Premier's Council of the Federation Literacy Award

Literacy skills are crucial to daily living, employment, citizenship, personal advancement and enjoyment. In order to bring recognition to literacy achievements, the premiers of Canada created the Council of the Federation Literacy Award. The 2008 Northwest Territories Council of the Federation Literacy Award will honour the achievements of a learner, who has overcome obstacles and demonstrated outstanding progress in the pursuit of literacy skills in any of the NWT official languages. NWT learners of all ages, who have excelled in literacy achievement, improved personal literacy levels and helped others to improve their literacy levels, are eligible for nomination. The learner must have been enrolled in classes within the past 18 months. More information and the nomination forms are attached.

National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) Conference 2008

Location: Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites, 361 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

NEADS is pleased to announce their 2008 national conference, "Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow." It will take place from November 14-16, 2008. The conference will focus on solutions to drive change. This year's event will be an exciting opportunity for students, consumer advocates, service

providers, employers and all others interested in exploring key issues of equal access to post-secondary education and employment for students and graduates with disabilities. We welcome delegates from across Canada and around the world. For more information go to www.neads.ca

In the News

Statistics Canada has recently come out with some new stats and information.

Literacy skills of Canadians across the ages: Fewer low achievers, fewer high achievers

In a recent study, David Green and Craig Riddell, economists at the University of British Columbia, investigate the distribution of literacy skills in the Canadian-born population and how those skills are generated.¹ They also investigate the nature of literacy generation in the years after individuals have left formal schooling and are in the labour market, and the relationship between literacy and income. This article summarizes the results of their study.

They find, as have other studies, that literacy increases strongly (though at a decreasing rate) with years of schooling. Parental education levels also have a strong positive impact on literacy, with the mother's education being especially important. For more information go to <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/81-004-XIE/2007006/article/10528-en.htm>

Literacy profile of off-reserve First Nations and Métis people living in urban Manitoba and Saskatchewan: Results from the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey 2003, By Evelyne Bougie, Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics, Statistics Canada

Of all the provinces in Canada, Manitoba and Saskatchewan have the largest proportions of their populations that are comprised of Aboriginal people. According to data from the 2001 Census, the Aboriginal population accounted for about 14% of the total population in both of these provinces. In comparison, the province with the next largest share of Aboriginal people in its population was Alberta, at only about 5%.

The Aboriginal population in Manitoba and Saskatchewan is also growing rapidly. In both provinces, from 1996 to 2001, it grew by 17%, compared to less than 1% growth in the total population of Manitoba and a decrease of just over 1% in the total population of Saskatchewan.¹ Two segments of the Aboriginal population in Manitoba and Saskatchewan are projected to increase substantially by 2017: children aged 0 to 14 and young adults aged 20 to 29. Demographic projections indicate that, by 2017, 37 out of 100 children in Saskatchewan (26% in 2001) and 31 out of 100 in Manitoba (24% in 2001) could be Aboriginal. As for the proportion of the Aboriginal young adult population, it may almost double in Saskatchewan, reaching 30% in 2017, from 17% in 2001. In Manitoba, the proportion of young Aboriginal adults is projected to rise from 17% in 2001 to 23% in 2017. For more information got to <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/81-004-XIE/2007005/article/10500-en.htm>

Learning online: Factors associated with use of the Internet for education purposes, Larry McKeown and Cathy Underhill Science, Innovation and Electronic Information Division, Statistics Canada

Before the Internet was launched commercially in 1993, few people outside of the scientific and academic worlds knew much about this new technology. The Internet has since changed the way many Canadians conduct their everyday activities, from viewing weather, news and sports to banking and paying bills. It has also changed the way some are pursuing learning opportunities. In 2005, over one quarter of adult Canadians - an estimated 6.4 million - used the Internet for education, training or school work. Such use of the Internet has the potential to help encourage lifelong learning and to reduce obstacles to learning, such as

cost and distance. For more information go to

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/81-004-XIE/2007004/internet-en.htm>

Are 5-year-old children ready to learn at school? Family income and home environment contexts

As children enter formal schooling, willingness and readiness to learn can make a difference in their school performance. Are all children equally willing and ready to learn? A recent report using data from the *National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth* (NLSCY) found that household income was a significant predictor for many of the measures of 5-year-old children's readiness to learn at school: children from more affluent families were better prepared to learn at school than children from lower-income families. The study also found that activities in a child's home environment, such as daily reading, high positive parent-child interaction, participation in organized sports, as well as lessons in physical activities and the arts, predicted greater readiness to learn. Children in lower-income households were less likely to have exposure to these activities; however, those who did were more ready to learn than those who did not. For more information go to <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/81-004-XIE/2007001/read.htm#i>

Yes, it's time we paid attention to the Canadian literacy crisis

Frontier College supports the Council of Ministers of Education Canada recommendation

TORONTO, Ontario – Thursday, February 28, 2008 – Frontier College, Canada's original

Education announcement of their key priority areas of Aboriginal education, literacy and

The literacy and education community in Canada has known for decades that we are facing

Canadians don't have the literacy skills they need to participate in today's workforce. "E

attention," says Sherry Campbell, President of Frontier College. To read the whole article

http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/news_releases/response-cmec.htm

The myth about that person who 'can't read'

Commentary for International Adult Learners' Week, March 3-10, 2008

By Margaret Eaton, President, ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation

It may surprise you that many people reading this morning's newspaper have low literacy. You may, in fact, be one of them. No, they are not *illiterate* – they're reading the paper, after all. But they encounter moments in their day when they are called upon to interpret a piece of writing, perform a particular task, or engage in a discussion, for example, and their level of comprehension isn't quite up to the task. It isn't a problem that is apparent to their friends, family members or colleagues – in actual fact, in some cases they may not even recognize it themselves. But some lack of literacy or numeracy skills holds them back, keeps that opportunity that might otherwise have come to them at a distance, just beyond their grasp.

There are millions of such Canadians, and it seems fitting to salute them – their needs, and their triumphs – on this week, International Adult Learners' Week (IALW), March 3 to 10. Declared in this country by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and supported by Human Resources and Social Development Canada, IALW is recognized in more than 40 countries. With its theme *A world of possibilities through learning*, it seeks – if nothing else – to have us reflect on the fact that learning is a lifelong process, and that literacy is the core to that learning. It is a learning that gives to everyone the freedom to reach their full potential – as fathers and mothers who want to read to their kids and help them with their homework; as employees who want to get that dream job or move ahead; as citizens who can engage fully in their community and in the political life of the country. To read the whole article go to <http://www.abc-canada.org/ialw.asp>

New Resources and Websites

By the Advanced Learning Technology, 2007

- ✓ Basic Technology Workshop for Learners
- ✓ Intermediate Technology Workshop for Learners
- ✓ Technology Workshop 1 for Instructors Tutors and Coordinators
- ✓ Technology Workshop 2 for Instructors Tutors and Coordinators

To download go to

<http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/alt/basic/cover.htm>

Literacy and Digital Technologies: Linkages and Outcomes

By Veenhof, Y. Clermont and G. Sciada

To download go to

<http://www.nald.ca/library/research/stats/ldtlo/cover.htm>

How to Cut the Gobbledegook: An introduction to plain language writing and clear design, PEI Literacy Alliance, November 2006

To download a copy go to

<http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/plcd/cover.htm>

Family Literacy Connections : A Guide to Family Literacy Partnerships , Produced for the Peel-Halton-Dufferin Adult Learning Network , 2007

To download a copy go to

<http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/flconn/cover.htm>