

Family Literacy Newsletter

NWT Literacy Council

April 2003

Family Literacy News

The NWT Literacy Council is in its fourth year of working in family literacy to address the literacy needs of northern communities. We initially started by developing family literacy programs and resources. As a result, we developed the programs *1-2-3 Rhyme With Me*, *Books in the Home* and *Families First*. These programs have become the backbone to our training.

Over the past two years we have trained 150 family literacy facilitators from almost every community in the NWT. There were over 30 family literacy programs delivered across the north this year. Family literacy is making a difference in the NWT.

We are looking to expand our family literacy training and resources in the next year. We would like input from people working in family literacy.

We will be sending questionnaires to community-based family literacy programs asking these questions:

1. What kinds of training do you need to enhance your skills?
2. What kinds of resources do you need to continue to run successful programs?
3. What support do you need to help you with your programs?



What's Inside?

- ✓ **Great Resources and Websites**
- ✓ **Family Learning Kits**
- ✓ **Community-based Family Literacy Programs**
- ✓ **Other Family Literacy Ideas**
- ✓ **Easter Activities**
- ✓ **Literacy Connections**
- ✓ **Four Component Model**
- ✓ **Family Literacy Funding**





Family Literacy Newsletter

Great Resources and Websites

Walking ten feet tall: a toolkit for family learning practitioners, by Jeanne Haggart ISBN: 1 86201 132X

This is an excellent resource for family literacy programs. It is a practical guide to working with families. It covers a wide range of topics from recruitment to delivery of family learning programs.

“Family Literacy: Growing and Learning Together Kit” developed by the Centre for Family Literacy.

This kit can be used to promote family literacy in your community. It includes overheads on literacy, family literacy and programs. There is also a CD if you would like to make changes to the overheads.

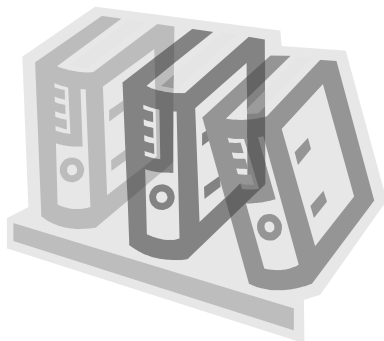
Contact information:

Sharon Skage

Centre for Family Literacy

(780) 421-7324

Sharon_Skage@aal.ab.ca



www.kidsdomain.com

This website is an excellent resource for children’s activities.

There is information on holidays, games, crafts and learning activities. You can download puzzles, colouring pages, games and a variety of other activities.



<http://abcteach.com>

This website will be of interest to family literacy facilitators and teachers. The website includes a variety of learning activities for children ages four through twelve. There are fun activities such as puzzles, mazes, colouring sheets, craft ideas, flashcard cutouts, reading games etc.

www.nuttinbutkids.com

This website is specific to songs, rhymes and stories that relate to holidays. If you are doing theme related units or family literacy nights - you can download a variety of rhymes, songs and stories to go with your theme.

www.childfun.com

There are a variety of learning activities on this site. As well, there is a section on parent support. It is worth checking out.

www.enchantedlearning.com

This is an excellent website for ideas and activities to include in early childhood programs, family literacy events and the classroom.



Family Literacy Newsletter



Family Learning Kits

Way to go, community coordinators!

We are now in the final stages of giving out the literacy backpacks to children born in 1997 and 1998. Yellowknife and Inuvik are the only places still giving them out. Altogether the coordinators have distributed about 1 600 to families in the NWT. Most coordinators said they enjoyed giving them out and would be willing to do it again for the children born in 1999.

We've had many comments back about the backpacks. Parents like them, especially the northern books and the literacy activity cards.

"The most useful thing about the Family Learning Kit is having the tools to be able to do fun things with my little girl."

"This is a very good idea, and I hope others appreciate it as much as we did."

"The learning activity cards are a wonderful tool to allow us parents to get creative with our children. Sometimes it's hard to get started."

"I'm going to speak Dogrib to my child more."

We also asked children for their feedback. Here's what some told us!

"It's the best gift I ever got. I will learn how to read."

"I think my sister should have one too."

"It's my own and I always carry around my backpack with all my books in it."

"It's great I like it." Mom's note: "When she first got it, she was very excited and felt very important and special to receive it."

"It's pretty cool!"





Family Literacy Newsletter

Community Based Family Literacy Programs

Holman

Holman has a variety of family literacy programs running from reading programs to cultural programs. Joanne Ogina is the family literacy coordinator for the community. She organizes the many literacy activities for families in Holman. Each month she sends home a monthly calendar of events for families. Some of the activities they are running are:

- √ 1-2-3 Rhyme With Me
- √ Books in the Home
- √ Books and Bannock
- √ Shared Reading
- √ Games Afternoon
- √ Storytelling with Elders



Shared Reading program

Another program that Holman runs is the Traditional Skills program for boys and girls. The program teaches young boys and girls traditional skills such as sewing, tanning and making tools. This is a great way to combine literacy activities with culture.



Shared Reading program



Maggie Alanak teaches her boys how to sew fur mitts



Family Literacy Newsletter



Community Based Family Literacy Programs

Detah

Detah is running family literacy Dogrib bingos each week for community members. The Dogrib language class developed a set of Dogrib bingo cards. Each card has a picture and a word that goes with the picture. They usually have around 40 people attend the bingo. Prizes have been donated by local businesses. After bingo they serve traditional foods to the players.



Community members playing Dogrib bingo



Mary Rose Sundberg the Dogrib language teacher calls bingo

Wekweti

Wekweti is running several family literacy programs. Twice a year they hold a Book Birthday Party for children in the community. They give all the children in the community a book for their birthday and do related literacy activities at the celebration. They will be opening a Toy and Resource Lending Centre at the Community Learning Centre. The centre will have books, books on tape, Dogrib resources and educational games. The centre will be open twice a week for families. They will also hold special event evenings where they read books together and do crafts. Good luck with your new program, Wekweti!



Book Birthday Party in Wekweti





Family Literacy Newsletter

Community-Based Family Literacy Programs

Hay River Reserve

The Hay River Reserve Daycare is running a variety of family literacy programs. Every two weeks they have a "Parents' Night Out" where parents come for a meal and a discussion of some type. Discussions range from healthy eating to helping your children learn. Childcare is available on site.

The daycare has also partnered with the adult learning centre for shared reading. Adult learners go to the daycare to read to the children. This is an excellent way to encourage reading for the whole family.

The daycare is running a *Families First* program too. The workshops are held at the Sharing Lodge on the reserve and are open to all community members. Some of the topics they have covered are:

- ✓ Children and Learning
- ✓ Storytelling
- ✓ Communication



The daycare has started several Slavey language projects. They received funding to do a variety of Slavey projects. They will be:

- ✓ Publishing a cookbook in both English and Slavey. The cookbook will contain traditional and other low cost meals for families.
- ✓ Producing a CD with children's songs and rhymes in Slavey.
- ✓ Holding Slavey language classes for their staff and other interested community members.



The Hay River Reserve Daycare is an excellent example of how to involve the entire community in family literacy. All the programs are open to all community members and they have partnered with the school and adult upgrading program to enhance their services.

Please send us your family literacy ideas and photos for the next Family Literacy Newsletter.



Family Literacy Newsletter



Other Family Literacy Ideas

There are a wide variety of family literacy initiatives happening across the North. Some communities have extended their early childhood programs to include family literacy. Other communities have added family literacy to their adult upgrading programs.

Here is a list of ideas for family literacy programs or events.

Reading with Adults

Invite community members to read to young children after school or at the daycare or pre-school program. Holman invites parents, teachers, RCMP, social workers, and elders to read to students after school once a month.

Nutrition Theme

Have a family literacy night that centers on nutrition and healthy eating. Have families write out their favourite recipes and create a community cookbook. Cook a nutritious meal and send it home with the families. While the parents are cooking - read to the children and do activities about nutrition. The Family Literacy Coordinator in Fort Providence did a variety of activities for Nutrition Month for families.

Theme Family Literacy Nights

Take advantage of the many wonderful holidays, specials days, seasons or events we have. Pick a theme and hold a family literacy night. Families can create crafts, read books and take home activities related to the theme.



Lutselk'e's Valentine's Family Literacy Night

Culture and Literacy Programs

Culture and literacy go hand-in-hand. Holman runs a traditional sewing program for young children. Elders, parents and children come together once a week to learn to sew. The elders and parents teach and communicate with the young children - this is literacy!

Parents as Literacy Supporters (PALS)

PALS is an excellent program for kindergarten classes. Parents come to class to work with their children and also learn how to help them at home. Lutselk'e and Nahanni Butte have been running this program.





Family Literacy Newsletter

Activities for Easter

Easter will be here soon. Celebrate Easter with a family literacy night. Invite parents to come and share reading with their children and do crafts and games related to Easter. Here are some good ideas!

Related Books

- The Runaway Bunny
- Ten Little Rabbits
- Hopper Hunts for Spring
- Bedtime for Bunnies
- Gah (in Dogrib)

Poems

Eggs

Eggs come in many sizes
Eggs hold some big surprises
Speckled, brown, white, or blue
Eggs hold babies that are new
Chicks from eggs are fluffy yellow
Chicks from eggs are funny fellows!

Easter Bunny Chant

Funny little bunny
Sat on a stump
Flicked his floppy little ears
And then he gave a jump!

Jelly Bean Soup

We're camping out,
What a lucky group.
We're going to dine
On jelly bean soup.

We'll cook those beans
Till they're red hot.

Add M&Ms
To fill up the pot.



Crafts - Easter Chick Cards

- ✓ Yellow and orange construction paper
- ✓ glue
- ✓ 2 small wiggle eyes
- ✓ 2 paper fasteners
- ✓ a pencil
- ✓ scissors
- ✓ a child's hands



How To Make It

1. Trace your child's hands on the yellow paper; these will serve as the chick's wings.
2. Cut an oval or egg shape out of the yellow paper. The size should be about 1/3 larger than your child's hands to be the right size for the wings.
3. Fasten the wings onto the oval body with the paper fasteners.
4. Use the orange paper to make the beak and legs. The beak should be shaped as a diamond, bend it in the middle and only glue the bottom half to the oval portion of the chick.
5. Glue on the eyes.
6. For the feet, make long thin legs with 3 pointy toes. Glue the legs to the back side of the chick and write a message on its body.

Happy Easter!!



Family Literacy Newsletter



Activities for Easter

Fun Activities

Easter Pictionary- How To Play

Put papers with Easter objects written on them into a basket. Divide families into two groups. Flip a coin to see which team goes first.

Invite someone from the playing team to approach the chalkboard, draw a slip of paper, and read it to themselves. On your mark, the person should then draw the object in hopes that his/her team members will guess the object on their paper. If the team guesses correctly, before time runs out, they score a point. If the playing team does not guess correctly the other team has five seconds to try to come up with the correct answer. If they guess correctly they score a point and it is their turn to play.

Easter Bunny Says

This game is played similar to Simon Says. The player up is the "Easter Bunny". Player will say "Easter Bunny says hop on one foot". The children will hop on one foot. Player will say "Stop". The children are to keep hopping on one foot until player says "Easter Bunny says stop". Repeat for additional activities such as take one baby step forward, step backwards, turn around, sit down. Sometimes Easter Bunny will say "Easter Bunny says" and sometimes he won't.



Word Find

Take an Easter related word such as: Basket, Chocolate, Chickens, etc. and find as many little words as possible before the timer runs out.

Example: Chocolate

Words: late, at, ate, tea, tale, tool, cool, hat, hot, cat, coat...

Example: Basket

Words: ask, set, beat, tea, skate, bat, at, sat, bet, ate, eat...

Easter Twenty Questions

The facilitator starts by choosing an Easter related person, place, or thing. Then they say, "I'm thinking of something." The families try to guess what it is by asking no more than twenty questions that can be answered "YES," "NO," or "I DON'T KNOW." The person who guesses correctly is next up.

Easter Scramble - How To Play

Choose an Easter word such as: Easter Bunny, Chocolate, Basket, Hippiity-Hop etc. Write the letters of the word on individual index cards. Do this two times, making two sets. Put each set in a brown paper bag.

Divide families into teams. Give each team a bag. The first team to decipher what the word in the bag is wins.





Family Literacy Newsletter

Literacy Connections:

Teaching parents and volunteers to read with their children

Literacy Connections is a workshop that explores basic reading strategies with parents, children and volunteer readers. The objective is to teach skills that will help parents and volunteer readers nurture a love of reading in children. *Literacy Connections* is specifically designed for parents of children ages 5 - 10.

Workshop Kit

The workshop kit is a step-by-step guide to help people facilitate the *Literacy Connections* workshop. The workshop kit consists of:

- √ A manual
- √ Instructions for workshop leader
- √ Blackline masters for handouts
- √ Sample flyer promoting the workshop
- √ *Literacy Connections* Video

The *Literacy Connections* workshop kit is very easy to use and understand. It is written in plain language and provides detailed information on how to go about setting up a workshop for parents and tutors.



This workshop will:

- √ Help families develop skills to effectively encourage and nurture literacy at home
- √ Provide training for volunteers who read with children
- √ Gives families a chance to ask questions about literacy
- √ Provide models for teaching children to read
- √ Provide suggestions and tips for reading strategies
- √ Clarify the role of home and school in helping children become literate
- √ Create excitement and interest in reading

Literacy Connections Topics

- √ Reading aloud to your child
- √ Shared reading and discussion
- √ Guided reading
- √ Independent reading

For more information about this program and other free resources check out

www.classroom-connections.com You can call 1-888-882-8865 to order a copy. You can also borrow a copy from the **NWT Literacy Council.**



Family Literacy Newsletter



Four Component Model to Family Literacy

All children are born ready and willing to learn, and parents are their children's first teachers. All parents want their children to be successful.

The development of literacy is a naturally occurring event in families. To ensure that all children benefit from this important link between parent and children, family literacy programs started up. When parents learn along with their children, we see:

- √ Children coming to school prepared to learn
- √ Adults who are lifelong learners and better prepared to support their children's learning
- √ Positive attitudes towards learning
- √ Adults with the necessary skills and confidence to be self-sufficient

There are four components to this family literacy model: children's education, adult education, parent and child together time (PACT) and parent time.

Children's Education

The children's education component is designed to promote growth and development of young children and to engage parents in their child's learning. Children attend a quality early childhood program or school each day. The classroom environment has a wide variety of materials that are of interest to children and provide meaningful learning opportunities.

Adult Education

The adult education component is more than basic literacy skills. Adult learners not only work towards their high school education or develop basic literacy skills but they develop learning materials for their children at home. Lifeskills are also taught in this program.



Parent and Child Together Time (PACT)

This component provides the opportunity for parents and children to interact together as a family unit. The parents go into their children's class and play and read to their children. At the end of the session, parents and children do a large group literacy activity. The literacy activity helps parents with ideas for home learning.

Parent Time

A strong and effective parent time is a key part in successful family literacy programs. This program provides parents with:

- √ Information on child development
- √ Information on literacy development
- √ Information on community resources
- √ Opportunities to network and develop mutual support with other parents





Family Literacy Newsletter

Family Literacy Funding

The NWT Literacy Council will continue to offer family literacy funding to each community in the upcoming year. The funding is from the Early Childhood Development Framework for Action which is a joint project between Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services.

There will be \$3 000 per community for family literacy projects, resource development and family literacy community events.

The criteria for the funding are:

- √ One member of the committee or group applying must have some type of family literacy training.
- √ Groups must work in partnership with other organizations in the community.
- √ The project must be completed by March 31, 2004.

Call the NWT Literacy Council for the application form at (867) 873-9262.

If you would like further information on the family literacy funding please contact Lisa at the NWT Literacy Council or email her at lisa@nwtliteracy.ca

Board of Directors

Katherine Peterson, President
Brenda Hall, Vice President
Valerie Stark, Secretary
Kathy Carriere, Treasurer
Ruth Elanik, Beaufort Delta
Bette Lyons, South Slave
Mary Ann Vital, Sahtu
Dianne Lafferty, North Slave
Vacant, Deh Cho
Mary Rose Sundberg, Yellowknife, Ndilo, Detah

Staff

Cate Sills, Executive Director
csills@nwtliteracy.ca
Lisa Campbell, Community Literacy Facilitator lisa@nwtliteracy.ca
Donna Mulders, Resource Development
dmulders@nwtliteracy.ca
Helen Balanoff, Research & Evaluation
helen@nwtliteracy.ca
Agnes Etsemba, Family Literacy Trainee
agnes@nwtliteracy.ca
Mae Quinlan, Administrative Assistant
info@nwtliteracy.ca

How can you reach us?

NWT Literacy Council
Box 761
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N6
Phone: (867) 873-9262
Fax: (867) 873-2176
Email: info@nwtliteracy.ca
Website: www.nwt.literacy.ca

