



Build Your Skills,
Shape Your Future

Words Worth

The Quarterly Newsletter of Kingston Literacy & Skills

SPRING/SUMMER 2010

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Kingston Literacy & Skills' Mission Statement
Kingston Literacy & Skills furthers the development and growth of adult and family literacy in Kingston and neighbouring communities.

Hungry for Reading?

We must become the change we want to see.

– Mahatma Gandhi

Most parents want the best for their children. They want them to succeed in school and in life, and to be healthy and happy. So, how do parents know they are doing all that they can to give their children the best possible start in life?

Volumes have been written on the subject of child-rearing – from Dr. Spock to Dr. Seuss – and all this information can get pretty confusing even for the most well-informed mum or dad. However, there is one thing that *every* parent should know: the early years, from birth to age six, have the most influence on the development of the brain and later learning behaviour and health than at any other time in a person's life.

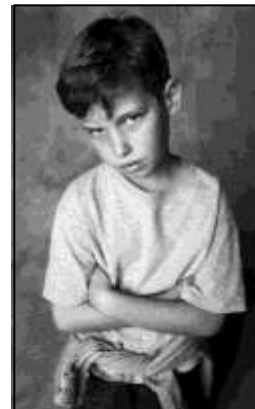
Babies learn through their senses by touching, tasting, smelling, watching and listening. So, reading stories, singing songs and playing games with babies and young children has a significant effect on their ability to develop language and literacy skills. By age three, a child's brain is twice as active as an adult's brain. (No wonder parents have a hard time keeping up with their toddlers!)

While reading to a young child is an enjoyable aspect of parenting, it is also an extremely important part of the child's emotional, intellectual and cognitive development.

Children who have not been exposed to early reading experiences and have not developed early literacy skills by the time they enter school may have already lost out on these important learning lessons. They start out having to catch up to the literacy levels generally expected by educators in the public school system. These children tend to fall further and further behind academically as they progress through school, especially if there are other factors at play in their lives.

For many children, lack of early literacy skills is just one more obstacle they have to face, perhaps on their own.

cont'd p. 2



June 1st was National Hunger Awareness Day.

How hungry are you?

Hungry for Reading *cont'd*

In addition to an early exposure to reading and its effect on subsequent success at school, it is becoming more evident that nutrition and physical exercise play an equally important role in academic achievement and success in life in general.

Recent studies indicate that undernourished children are more irritable, have lower energy and find it difficult to concentrate. These conditions interfere with the ability to learn. Although children may seem to be eating enough, the nutritional value of foods high in sugar, fat and salt may be quite low. They are not getting the vitamins and minerals they need even though they are gaining weight at an alarming rate.

In the last of decade or so, we have seen an explosion of overweight, inactive children. Little physical activity not only contributes to obesity and its related health concerns like Type 2 diabetes and heart disease, but there is also mounting evidence to support the link between poor eating habits, a sedentary lifestyle and lower academic achievement scores.

What does food quality and quantity, and physical exercise (or lack of) have to do with early literacy?



It is all part of the cycle of life. Nutrition actually begins before birth – if mom eats well, baby is generally healthier. If parent is active, kids usually are too. Parents are their children's first teachers. If parents have low literacy skills, their children may not get those important

early literacy experiences they need to succeed in school – and in life.

Want to learn more about Kingston Literacy?

Visit our website at

www.kingstonliteracy.com

or call 613-547-2012

Early Literacy Strategies



Build your child's early literacy skills by asking them to help you make a grocery list next time you are going to the store. Use the flyers from the stores to cut and paste grocery items onto the list.

Books are a fun and exciting way to teach children about food. They are great jumping off points for conversations on nutrition, as well as colours (“I am thinking of a drink that is white.”), shapes (“Can you tell me what shape an apple is?”), beginning sounds (“B-b-b-bananas are my favourite snack!”), numeracy (“Hmm...which bowl has more cookies in it?”), and so much more.

There are many wonderful books that illustrate a variety of topics such as eating right, identifying foods, where food comes from, respecting food and the people who grow or cook it, and other food-related topics. Here are some great books that will make children hungry for reading:

- ✓ *Blueberries for Sal*, by Robert McCloskey
- ✓ *Growing Vegetable Soup*, by Lois Ehlert
- ✓ *Yum Yum Dim Sun*, by Amy Wilson Sanger
- ✓ *Green Eggs and Ham*, by Dr. Seuss
- ✓ *Lunch*, by Denise Flemming
- ✓ *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, by Eric Carle
- ✓ *To Market, To Market*, by Anne Miranda
- ✓ *Stone Soup*, by Ann McGovern
- ✓ *Today is Monday*, by Eric Carle
- ✓ *Jamberry*, by Bruce Degan
- ✓ *The Little Red Hen (Makes Pizza)*, by Philemon Sturges
- ✓ *The Carrot Seed*, by Ruth Krauss
- ✓ *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, by Laura Joffe Numeroff

Living with Hunger



The Ontario Hunger Report – 2009, *Living with Hunger*, published by the Ontario Association of Food Banks in December 2009, identified six key trends in the use of food banks in Ontario.

One of these trends was that many individuals in households that use food banks consume an inadequate amount of food and that the nutritional quality of the food that is consumed is very low.

This is especially troubling for children. The report goes on to say that children in one out of every four households using food banks regularly don't eat breakfast once or more times per week. In addition, at least one member of the family misses three or more meals per week due to lack of money for food. Among households using food banks, 63% don't eat the recommended daily servings of milk or milk products and don't eat the required servings of fruit and vegetables.

There is no doubt that food bank usage in Ontario is on the rise. Since last fall, the total population served by food banks has increased by 19% to more than 375,000 Ontarians. In our own community of Kingston, between September 2007 and September 2009, food bank usage increased by 26.8%* – significantly more than Ottawa, Barrie and Toronto.

There is another side to living with hunger – living with obesity. It seems funny to be talking about hunger and obesity in the same sentence, but it is true that you can be overweight and still be hungry. A national poll conducted by the Heart & Stroke Foundation (Feb. 2009)**, found that 47% of Canadians reported going without fresh fruit and vegetables, dairy, whole grain products, and lean meat or fish because they were too expensive. Instead, food that is high in sugar, salt and fat like

fast food, pop, chips and cookies are cheaper and more convenient. As a result, if you are trying to manage on a limited income, food is one area where it's possible to cut back. Too often, making this compromise has far reaching consequences.

Without access to good quality food, families face increasing health problems, poor concentration and decreased capacity for physical activity. Poor nutrition, whether in the form of malnourishment or obesity, can lead to a whole host of physical diseases including diabetes and heart disease. As well, it can lead to lower levels of self-esteem, irritability and low energy – factors that interfere with the ability to learn and succeed in life.

To date, there is no universal national program available to nutritionally vulnerable people. However, there are many local initiatives and programs. For a complete list of places people can access assistance with food in Kingston, visit: <http://www.thepovertychallenge.org>

*Ontario Hunger Report 2009: *Living with Hunger*
 ***What's in Store for Canada's Heart Health?*

Good Food Boxes in Kingston

The Good Food Box is a community-driven, cost-recovery initiative that allows any community resident living in Greater Kingston and outlying areas to purchase a basket of fresh fruits and vegetables at wholesale prices.

Orders and money are taken at the beginning of the month and the baskets are available for pick up later in the month. The produce changes to reflect seasonal availability. Host sites where people can pay and pick up food are situated throughout Kingston Frontenac Lennox & Addington.

There are four choices available: \$15 large box, \$10 small box, \$5 fruit bag and \$5 veggie bag.

Contact Mary Wood, Coordinator, Good Food Box Kingston at 613-530-2239 or email maryw@nkchc.kchc.ca.

Kingston Reads – Great Summer Reading

Looking for a few good books to take along on your summer vacation? Look no further than the 2010 Kingston Reads book list! From murder mystery to poignant life experiences and unrequited romance, there's sure to be something that appeals to the "reader" in you!

***The Brutal Telling*, Louise Penny**

After a stranger is found murdered in the village bistro and antiques store, once again, Chief Inspector Gamache and his team are called in to strip back layers of lies, exposing both treasures and rancid secrets buried in the wilderness.

***Burmese Lessons: A Love Story*, Karen Connelly**

Burmese Lessons is a love story that takes the reader into a world as dangerous and heartbreaking as it is enchanting. It is illuminated by the sensual language and flashes of humour that have won fans around the world.

***Come, Thou Tortoise*, Jessica Grant**

A delightfully offbeat story that features an opinionated tortoise and an IQ-challenged narrator who find themselves in the middle of a life-changing mystery.

***February*, Lisa Moore**

In 1982, the oil rig Ocean Ranger sank off the coast of Newfoundland during a Valentine's Day storm, killing all 84 men aboard. The story of Helen O'Mara, one of those left behind when her husband, Cal, drowns, begins in the present-day, but spirals back again and again to the "February" that persists in her mind and heart.

***Heart Specialist*, Claire Holden Rothman**

Inspired by the life of Doctor Maude Elizabeth Seymour Abbott, *The Heart Specialist* is the story of an ambitious woman pursuing her dream at the dawn of the twentieth century. Set against the backdrop of conflict and upheaval permeating the early 1900s, *The Heart Specialist* is a testament to one woman's triumph in the face of adversity.

***The Mystery of Grace*, Charles de Lint**

On the Day of the Dead, the Solona Music Hall is jumping. That's where Altagracia Quintero meets John Burns. Grace loves John, and John loves her, and that would be wonderful, except that John, like Grace, has unfinished business - he's haunted by the childhood death of his younger brother. Before their relationship can find its resolution, the two of them will have to teach each other about life and love.

***Old City Hall*, Robert Rotenberg**

Kevin Brace, Canada's most famous radio personality, stands in the door of his luxury condominium, hands covered in blood, and announces to his newspaper delivery man: "I killed her." His wife lies dead in the bathtub, fatally stabbed. It would appear to be an open-and-shut case, but Brace refuses to talk to anyone – including his own lawyer, but his case is not as simple as it seems.

***Oonagh*, Mary Tilberg**

In 1833, 18-year-old Oonagh Corcoran emigrates with her sister from Ireland to Upper Canada. In the deep, green forest off the coast of Lake Ontario, she believes she has found paradise only to discover that the New World harbours its own horrible injustices.

***Small Beneath the Sky*, Lorna Crozier**

A volume of poignant recollections by one of Canada's most celebrated poets. It is a tender, unsparing portrait of a family and a place.

***Underground*, June Hutton**

Sixteen-year-old Albert Fraser believes that serving in the First World War will make him a man. What he doesn't realize is the type of man he will become until a shell blast buries him alive in a trench at the Somme.

For more information, visit www.kfpl.ca after July 10th.

Goings and comings...comings and goings...

Welcome Dr. Robin Dawes.



Robin grew up in British Columbia, but moved to Ontario in 1979 and has lived in Kingston since 1983. Currently, he is an Associate Professor in the School of Computing at Queen's University.

Robin tutored for Kingston Literacy many years ago, and after a hiatus has returned as a tutor and the newest member of our Board of Directors. In addition to his busy professional life, he manages to find time to pursue photography, curling and Tai Chi, among his many other interests.

Don't Forget – Our Annual General Meeting

This year our AGM will be held on Tuesday, June 29 at Crossroads United Church (formerly St. Margaret's) located near the corner of Sir John A MacDonald Blvd. and Princess St. The meeting begins at 4:30 pm and is an integral part of Kingston Literacy's charter as a non-profit organization.

The AGM is a chance for us to show the community what we have accomplished over the past year and where we are headed in the coming year. A review of the audited financial statements is undertaken at this time, which is followed by reports from the Chair of the Board of Directors, the Treasurer and the Executive Director.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

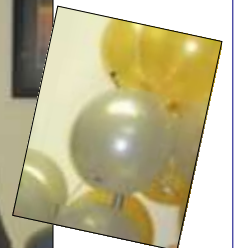


Board members voting at last year's AGM

Celebrating a Milestone

At the end of May, our Executive Director, Carynne Arnold, celebrated a significant birthday. Not to let such a momentous occasion go by unrecognized (or without a cake!), staff gathered together to help her mark this special day. We managed to surprise her, which is a pretty tall order. She is, after all, someone who knows all there is to know (and more) about Kingston Literacy & Skills!

Happy Birthday Carynne!



16th Annual Spelling Bee Results

And the winners are:



Best Spellers: Kingston Frontenac Public Library
Elizabeth Goldman, Christina Tracy, Carol Vanderhelm



Best Costumes: Investors Group
Lorne Glasspoole, Dana Harris, Sue McDonald



Most Team Pledges: Bergeron Clifford
Anne Newell, Lara Robinson, Shawna Langille
Most Individual Pledges: Anne Newell

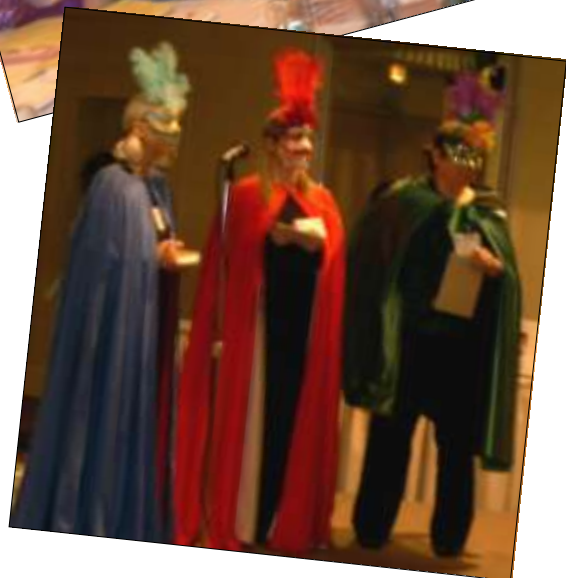


Most Team Spirit: St. Lawrence College
"The Wizards of OZsome"
Tracy Coady, Erin Kearney, Jennifer Lauten

Congratulations Everyone!!!

A huge thank you to our judges (Chief Stephen Tanner & Tanis Fairley), to Craig Walker (Master Pronouncer) and Jim Elyot (Master of Ceremonies), to Peter Renaud (Timekeeper) and to Wayne Lajoie (Photographer), but most of all to our sponsors, teams and loyal supporters.

Without your help, there would be no Bee!



**Thanks to your generosity,
this year's Bee raised just
over \$26,000.**

Community Learning Centre Kingston (CLCK) News

Our LBS staff have participated in a number of professional development activities over the last few months. In February, several folks travelled to Sharbot Lake to take part in web training hosted by Northern Connections. Wikkis, blogs, Facebook, Twitter and educational software were explored.

In May, Kingston Literacy hosted a two-day training program in CAMERA (Communications and Math Employment Readiness Assessment). Five KL&S staff members attended this training, provided by Pathways to Possibilities (PTP), as did 20 other assessors from around Eastern Ontario. This comprehensive assessment tool and learning system are useful for students whose goal is to get into the workforce.

CLCK also saw the successful completion of a second ROCKS (Road Crew & Construction

Certificates) program, and is looking forward to hosting another in the not too distant future. Before then, however, we will host another G2 training program in partnership with the City of Kingston and Excel Driving School. Both of these programs provide students with the necessary skills and certification that will help them to achieve their employment goals.



KL&S staff take part in CAMERA training

Community Learning Centre Napanee (CLCN) News



Looking back through past newsletters, it seems that Napanee tends to approach newsworthy events from a weather perspective. Since it has worked in the past, there doesn't seem to be a good reason to change this practice. So, as this issue goes to print, the temperature in Napanee is a balmy 26°C.

Warm weather is not only good for the garden and the soul, it means seasonal work for many of our learners. In the past two weeks alone five people have found work and many more are pursuing jobs. To that end, we continue to offer the TISS (employment training in soft skills), 3As (Attitudes, Accountability and Actions) and G1 training. College preparation continues to grow as well. In fact, there has been a trend in which people stop by the centre to look for help with college and OSAP applications even though they are not registered at CLCN. They hear that someone else has been helped, so they come by because they feel overwhelmed with the process. Word-of-mouth has always been a key component of outreach, and the proof is in this trend.

We are very pleased to report that Susan Howlett, a tutor with CLCN for nine years, was the recipient of the Zalman Yanovsky Award. Susan attended the wonderful evening hosted at Chez Piggy and was quite overwhelmed by the event and the warm reception she received.

The last thing to report is that CLCN will have its program monitoring visit with our employment training consultant from MTCU on June 23rd. We hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable summer.

Community Learning Centre South Frontenac (CLCSF) News

Spring is a time for new things. We see new growth in nature, and we've seen it at the Community Learning Centre South Frontenac too!

At the end of March, the ROCKS (Road Crew & Construction Certificates) program was offered for the first time in Hartington, and was filled with a group of motivated, employment-bound men. The group has been working hard to complete course work, and several of them are in the process of securing employment at the course's end.

Nancy Uchimar, from the Frontenac Employment Resource Centre (FERC) in Sydenham, visited the group to present employment information and answer participants' questions. She will be returning at the end of May

to work one-to-one with individuals to assist them in their job search.

ROCKS participants also look forward to their certificate trainings with the "Safety Guys" and have completed training towards several tickets so far. This program is scheduled to end at the beginning of June.

You're never too old to learn something new! That certainly seems to be the motto for many of the computer students attending the centre. The warmer, more pleasant weather has brought several new students in to register for introductory computer training. The increased confidence they feel after participating in training never fails to amaze and impress both the instructor and student.

Family Literacy and Family Learning Centres News

*Sitting in my high chair, high chair, high chair,
Sitting in my high chair, banging my spoon.*

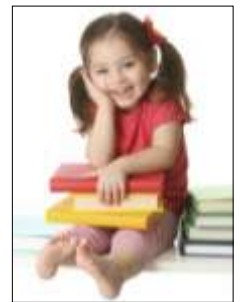
*Bring on the carrots, bring on the peas,
Won't somebody feed me please?
Bring on the jelly, bring on the bread,
Won't you get this baby fed?*

Babies and children are like sponges. Most are eager to learn and the early years are when a child is most likely to become a reader for life.

However, like any living beings, children need to be nourished emotionally as well as physically, in order to thrive. What is the food of reading? Why books of course. Prior to that, children also enjoy being sung to. In songs and books children hear new vocabulary that is not part of every day speech for most families.

The Family Literacy Centre provides programming that encourages the use of books and songs. Some of our most popular programs are those that link literacy to music for babies and toddlers. We offer

workshops for parents where they make resources to take home and use with their children. These might be simple books or games but they are always aimed at encouraging early literacy development through interaction between parents and children.



The Reading And Parents Program (RAPP) provides an enhanced book-lending program. The folders are packed full of age-appropriate activities and crafts as well as good books. These packs are delivered widely and are designed to make reading fun. Children start to long for their book packs after a very short time. RAPP is an integral part of the school readiness programs. Perhaps the song could be changed to read:

*Bring on the songs as well as the peas,
Won't somebody feed me please?
Bring on the **books**, bring on the bread
Won't you get this baby fed?*

LINC News

There has been a lot of activity at the Centre this spring: field trips, talent shows, an open house, workshops and special presentations.

One of our biggest events was our Open House held on March 26, to celebrate our first year in our new location at 16 Bath Road.

The Hon. Peter Milliken M.P. and John Gerretson M.P.P. were among the special guests who visited that day. Our partners in the community were also on hand for the festivities



including: Immigration Services for Employment and Kingston and Area (ISKA); Kingston Youth Services (KEYS); Kingston Immigration Partnership (KIP); as well as others.



A multicultural buffet of wonderful food and world music with some live performances, speakers, skits and students wearing colourful native dress made the occasion a resounding success. Thank you to all our wonderful students for participating in the activities and for making this event such a success.

Project News and Updates

Programs in North Kingston (PINK)

As our class wraps up for the summer (we close in July and August), we are looking back at how far everyone has come since entering the program. A student who had never worked on a computer prior to last October now sets up the computer lab for each class and is encouraging others to improve their computer skills. Four students have registered in Gr. 12 equivalency programs with St. Lawrence College, doing their work on-site. Working at this academic level is something some people had only dreamed of achieving before. All students have gained confidence and insight into how they learn, and have made great headway in applying learning strategies.

After the months of hard work, summer reading is on our minds! This spring we expanded our library to ensure everyone will have books to borrow over the summer months. When thinking about what to read, we were curious about what the “hot” books are and asked ourselves: what are

other people reading? Since we have mainly women participants in our program, we wondered specifically: what are women reading? One trend is books exploring vampire mythology, so we found copies of the popular “Twilight” series and the reading began! Each student is following a “Reading Response Journal” where they record their responses to their reading, predict what they think might happen, and pose questions about the book’s plot and characters. Students are discussing their responses with each other, and are learning how to organize and articulate their responses in writing.

Most of all they are enjoying reading quietly on their own at home, chatting to friends about the books, and thinking about what they would like to read next. Happy reading!



TIES Update

The Training Incorporating Essential Skills (TIES) project continues to hum along, on schedule. Part of the on-going work is a regular review of job postings in print and on the internet. To date, this has shown that the TIES list of top-10 entry level jobs is still current, which is very positive.

Response to the condensed Essential Skills profiles that were prepared for the top-10 entry level jobs has also been positive. Recently, the TIES pilot survey was distributed and collected and participants found the profiles to be useful on many levels. One employment counsellor remarked, "Completing the profile checklist was a very positive experience for my client. He could see how many skills he already has."

Some of the other comments made by those using the profiles were:

- "I like the way the profiles are laid out"
- "I would like page numbers"
- "It is really good"
- "We need a copy of TIES at each of our sites"
- "This would be great for clients to look through"

The Essential Skills-based interview questions for these jobs are now ready and will be distributed to reference group partners, who will pass them on to local employers who hire entry level workers. The questions are tailored specifically to each entry level job and focus on the most important Essential Skills needed for that job. Packages for employers will include a summary of Essential Skills information along with the questions and a feedback form.

The final version of the 50-top entry level job profiles are currently being edited. Unfortunately, work on these was delayed because the Essential Skills profiles on the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) website were unavailable from the fall of 2009 until just recently.

Events and Fundraisers

Chez Piggy Gala Fundraiser

This event was a resounding success, raising much needed funds for Family Literacy. A deluxe, gourmet dinner was accompanied with readings by Larry Scanlon and Merilyn Simonds, and a fabulous silent auction. Thanks to Chez Piggy, our generous donors, staff and volunteers for all their hard work in making this evening so memorable.



Celebrating Volunteers

April 18 – 24 was National Volunteer Week. In recognition of all the amazing work our volunteers do for Kingston Literacy, we invited them to enjoy a light dinner with us on April 20. Each volunteer was also given a token of our appreciation and celebrated through a lovely display at our main site.

Remembering Carolyn Davies

On March 2, the community of Kingston lost a passionate (and tireless) supporter of social change, and a friend and colleague to a great many people.



Carolyn was the Director of Community Engagement and Health equity at the Kingston Community Health Centre and a new member of Kingston Literacy & Skills' Board of Directors.

She loved her job and was very excited about the possibilities it offered. Being on our Board, as well as a member of the Kingston Community Roundtable on Poverty Reduction, dovetailed beautifully with her passion to be an agent of social change. She will be missed by all who knew her.

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www.familyliteracyexpertise.org
www.linckington.ca
www.grategroanupspellingbee.com

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