

The Centre For Literacy

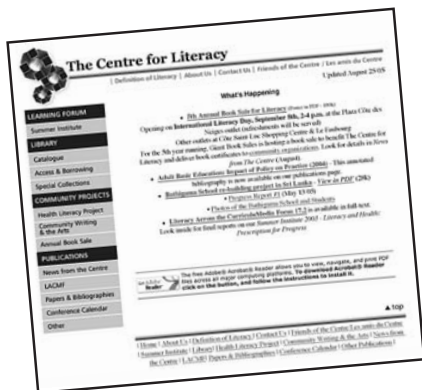
News from The Centre

August 2005

New space, new web site

This issue of News is double the size because we were unable to publish in May while we moved to new physical space inside Dawson College. We are now located in Room 4B.5-4 overlooking the stately trees and lawns on the west side of the campus. While still unpacking boxes, we are reveling in the light that floods in through ceiling-high windows on three sides. Appreciation to Dawson College for its continued support.

The Centre also has a new web address – www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca – and a re-designed look.



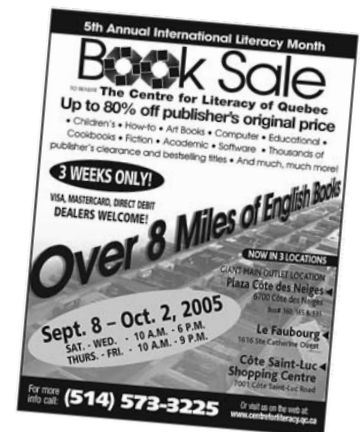
Work on the site will continue through the fall as we add information about new and existing services and begin to develop a new section of links from the library. We welcome your feedback.

Celebrate our fifth annual book sale

Our International Literacy Month Book Sale, in collaboration with Giant Booksales, will run for the fifth year from September 8 to October 2 at three sites: Côte Des Neiges Plaza, le Faubourg, and Côte St Luc Shopping Centre. The Centre will receive a cash donation of \$5,000 from the booksellers and \$5,000 in book vouchers that we donate to community organizations, schools and libraries in deprived or remote areas. The recipients can choose their own books from a vast selection at the sale. Details of the book sale and a list of past recipients are on our web site.

This year's proposed recipients include:

- Atwater Library
- Cedarcrest Elementary School
- Comfy Cozy Foundation
- Côte des Neiges Black Community Centre
- Côte des Neiges Community Centre Library
- Hampstead Elementary School
- Miriam Home and Services
- Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations
- Third Avenue Resource Centre
- Words for Women, YWCA



Book Sale Launch: Thursday, September 8, at 2:00 p.m., Côte Des Neiges Plaza. Coffee and refreshments – \$25 book vouchers for five lucky participants.

HIPPY Montreal funded

The Chagnon Foundation has approved a four-year grant to the Salvation Army and The Centre to establish a Montreal HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters) program in French and English for at-risk communities, set to start up in Fall 2005. Elizabeth House/Maison transitionnelle 03 has been confirmed as the English site. Negotiations are in progress on the French site. The Centre is responsible for the pedagogical and evaluation components; we will track the process and outcomes of the project. As soon as the formal agreement has been signed with the Foundation, Hippy Montreal will begin to recruit families and train home visitors.

A condition of the funding is that the project must become self-sufficient by the end of four years. The Centre will allocate a portion of Friends donations to this project each year. Watch our web site for details. Background on HIPPY International and HIPPY Canada can be found at: <http://www.hippy.org.il/html/map> and <http://www.hippycanada.ca/>



FRIENDS CAMPAIGN 2005

Last year The Centre began to call itself a Learning Forum – a physical and virtual space where professionals, parents, volunteers and policy-makers can find learning opportunities related to all aspects of literacy. Beyond the grants we receive, fund raising allows us to offer the lowest possible fees to make these activities accessible to groups and individuals with limited means.

The Centre also supports community partnerships that bring literacy alive at the grassroots. In 2005-06 we will increase our work in the health sector, in early intervention with parents and children, and in community arts. We are committed to increasing both services and self-sufficiency over the next three years.

Your donation will help us respond to community needs and sustain our leadership role

Friends of The Centre for Literacy who donate \$30 or more receive a free subscription to *Literacy Across the Curriculum/Media Focus*. We issue tax receipts for donations over \$10.

Donation forms are available on our web site, or call us (514) 931-8731, ext 1415.

National framework for research in practice

A group of experienced adult basic education and literacy practitioners-researchers has received funding to develop a framework to support research in practice across Canada. They have put out a call for teams from every province and territory to work together in the coming year. The Centre is eager to talk to Quebec organizations/groups that would like to collaborate on this initiative. This project offers a unique opportunity to both document what is happening in English-language adult literacy and to identify what supports are needed to promote more research in practice in this region. We need to hear from you by early September. The deadline for project applications is September 30.

The project is described in detail at <http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/framework/page1.htm>
For more information about the full project, e-mail ripframework@literacy.bc.ca or contact co-ordinators Jenny Horsman at jenny@jennyhorsmen.com (416) 533-8502, or Helen Woodrow at HWoodrow@thehub.literacy.bc.ca (709) 753-8815.

Sri Lanka project update

We are pleased that we raised \$7000 to help buy books and re-build libraries in Sri Lanka schools devastated by the tsunami. A report with pictures on the first part of the work carried out in the town of Bathigama is on our web site. We were disappointed, however, to hear that re-construction at the school has been temporarily disrupted by an upsurge in local friction. Our contact, Professor Weeramunde at University of Colombo, has assured us that if problems continue, he will work with local authorities to find other schools affected by the tsunami, and ensure that the funds raised are used for the intended purpose.

A special thanks to the Mayor of Stadt Plochingen in Stuttgart, Germany; the commune contributed €3,300 to the project. Thanks also to Principal Beverley Townsend and the students at Cedarcrest Elementary in Montreal who raised \$1000 for this project.

Literacy, museums and independent facilitators

The Centre ran a pilot project last year with the Canadian Museums Association on linking museums and literacy. The Quebec Ministry of Education contributed funding to explore the feasibility of having an independent community facilitator make liaisons across these sectors to seed possible collaborations. This investigation grew out of a Quebec adult education study mission in 2003 that visited several European countries, including Sweden, Ireland and England, where independent facilitators regularly seek out adults in non-traditional settings who might be interested but not involved in some form of learning. These facilitators do not sell programs or represent a specific school; they act as brokers between potential learners and providers who might have appropriate programs or be willing to create them in response to demand. The Quebec project uncovered interest in this concept. Facilitator Bronwyn Chester mapped groups engaged in museum, arts or literacy activities in a section of Montreal and facilitated some gatherings among them. She created a list of selected museums and arts groups open to collaboration, and The Centre has initiated discussion with some literacy programs that want to develop more consistent ties to the arts community. A report and list of organizations will go online this fall. We are seeking funding to develop and track a literacy and arts project involving an independent facilitator.

Blue Metropolis 2006: The City of Words



We are planning the 2006 Community Writing and Arts strand for next year's Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival which will run from April 5 - 9, 2006. The theme is "The City of Words: Une ville, des mots".

Our events, on April 7 and 8, will highlight efforts by community-based writers and artists to make words an integral part of their physical environment. We invite any community or literacy group that engages learners in activities that reflect this theme to contact us before September 16.

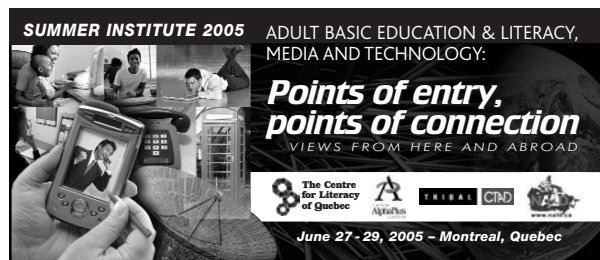
ABE: Impact of policy on practice – An annotated bibliography

This bibliography, now available in PDF format, can be accessed from the front page of our web site. Prepared in draft for the 2004 Summer Institute, and completed after the event, it offers 55 pages of annotations on international reports, web sites and links to Canadian provincial and territorial policy papers/statements current at the time of publication. Our librarian Claire Elliott sifted through hundreds of documents and requested feedback from Institute participants before making the final selection.

Print copies can be ordered from The Centre for \$15 including postage and handling.

Summer Institute on technology

The 2005 Institute at the end of June focused on adult literacy, technology and media. Participant David Rosen prepared a short paper summarizing advances in the past decade and the distance we still have to go. He listed some of the many high-quality resources that already exist, while acknowledging the barriers. In particular he noted that many teachers remain uncomfortable with technology and "uncomfortable with being uncomfortable." He suggested that teachers need to accept that their students may know more about technology than they do – and shift to a WAITT (We're all in This Together) teaching/learning paradigm. Partners from AlphaPlus, NALD and CTAD, and several other participants demonstrated variations on the concept of "blended learning" through which teachers make reasoned decisions about when to use technology, pen-and-paper and face-to-face support. Although participants came from diverse backgrounds with widely variant understandings of what "technology" means, in the end there was consensus that we are not talking about specific hardware or software, but about how to use the huge array of available teaching and learning "channels" to meet the needs of learners. The notion that there are no simple, single all-purpose devices or programs challenges funders as well as teachers. Materials and reports from the Institute will be available later this fall.



LIBRARY UPDATE

New titles

The summer months have seen the addition of more than 250 titles to our catalogue and our shelves! We have made the most additions in:

- Easy-to-read materials
- English as a second language
- Health literacy
- Learning disabilities
- Media education
- Spelling/Vocabulary (includes resources on Phonemic awareness)

See our web site for a complete listing, by subject.

Suggest a purchase

This year's library budget still has a few dollars remaining, so let us know what types of tools and materials you need to support your practice in literacy. We welcome user input to ensure that the best literacy resources are available to the field. Go to the online form in the library portion of our web site, and fill in the requested information to *Suggest a Purchase* (<http://www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca/library/sp.asp>).

Book Giveaway

Quebec literacy organizations took more than 80 titles from our Book Giveaway earlier this summer. We removed these titles from our shelves when we moved our location, to make room for new materials.

More than 100 items still remain, and may be requested until **September 15th**. Check the Library page of our web site to see the complete list.



Help us defray the cost of mailing *News*

The postage costs for sending *News from The Centre* outside Canada have become too high for us to sustain. We would like to ask anyone in the US or abroad who wants to continue receiving a print version to please send a cheque or money order for \$6 US to cover mailing for four issues a year.

Literacy Across the Curriculum Media Focus publication schedule

Some subscribers may have noticed that we only published one issue of *LACMF* last year. This was due to rising costs and budget shortage. However, we do keep a subscription database and are not sending renewal notices until we have produced the issues that were paid for. Based on feedback from readers, we are seeking funds to re-instate two issues per year. In the meantime, the next issue is in production and will be out by the end of September. It highlights the impact of policy on practice as presented at the Summer Institute 2004.

Health communication workshops and document design

The Centre can now customize communication training workshops, organize focus groups to pilot test health information and instructions, revise and edit health documents and conduct organizational communication audits to help assess how effective you are at communicating with your full range of clients.

This service has grown out of years of experience in the field and research on the effectiveness of various media in reaching vulnerable populations. These populations include those with limited literacy, with languages and cultures other than English or French, and with a variety of physical and learning disabilities. Together, these groups account for more than half the Canadian population. Communication has been identified as a significant root cause of medical error; addressing it is more cost-effective than paying for the outcomes of error.

Call us to discuss your needs.

Clear communication workshop



The **Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français (FCAF)** is offering a full-day workshop in English on Friday, November 4, at the Holiday Inn, in Longueuil Quebec. The FCAF has been giving this workshop across the country since last year to demonstrate how plain writing and clear communication

in many sectors including banking, insurance, and government, can serve the needs of less-literate Canadians.

Information: <http://www.clearercommunications.ca/>

Mark your calendars

Summer Institute 2006

Literacy and health, technology and media: The changing dynamic of health communication

Montreal
June 28 -30, 2006

An opportunity to explore the impact of media and new technologies on health communication and the implications for health literacy among vulnerable populations

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