



# The Centre For Literacy

## News from The Centre

January 2005

### WORKSHOPS

#### **But do they understand? Communicating with patients and caregivers**

Date: Friday, February 4, 2005  
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Place: Hotel du Fort, Montreal  
Facilitator: Linda Shohet

#### **Integrating Comprehension Strategies across the Curriculum for Intermediate to Advanced Adult Basic Education Students**

Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2005  
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Place: Dawson College  
Facilitator: Pat Campbell,  
Adjunct Professor,  
University of Alberta

#### **Improving reading: An innovative approach based on document design Introductory workshop**

A three-day session sponsored  
by the Waterloo Region District  
School Board  
April 6, 7 and 8, 2005  
Kitchener, Ontario

#### **Summer Institute 2005 Adult Basic Education & Literacy, Media and Technology: Points of entry, points of connection Views from here and abroad**

Date: June 27 -29, 2005  
Place: Montreal  
Co-sponsors: The Centre for Literacy,  
AlphaPlus, CTAD (UK), NALD  
Resident discussant: David Rosen

See our web site for details and  
registration forms

### Help a Sri Lankan school rebuild

Since last month's horrific tsunami, The Centre has been trying to link directly with a school-focused relief project. Through the Sri Lankan contacts of Sally Selvadurai, our assistant manager, we have found Dr. A.J. Weeramunde at the University of Colombo who, with 30 students from his Applied Sociology course, is conducting relief and reconstruction efforts in a rural school in Matara, in southern Sri Lanka.

The Centre has agreed to raise some funds for the children at that school. Dr. Weeramunde will send us field reports and assessments as the work proceeds. Please send your donation to The Centre for Literacy, clearly marked "Sri Lanka Project." We will issue tax receipts for any donation over \$10. We will use various events in the coming months to raise additional funds.

### Health and literacy: International perspectives



Linda Shohet has recently participated in visits and seminars on health and literacy in Israel and the UK. As a country that absorbs successive waves of immigrants who sit at every point on the literacy spectrum, Israel is a learning laboratory for innovative health literacy practices in public health that take account of language and cultural differences. In the UK, the continuing synergy between adult basic skills policy and the goals of the health sector is drawing attention to the role of systems and organizations in supporting health literacy.

An Oxford hospital trust is transforming itself through engaging staff in work appraisals that engage low-level employees and tie their personal learning plans to organizational improvement and better patient care. The groundbreaking National Health Service University (NHSU) initiative has recently been downsized and transformed into an institute focused on the learning needs of the least educated in the health sector. Look for articles on these in the next issue of *LACMF*.

## Poetry Challenge Returns!



We will run a 2005 event in April in collaboration with the Quebec Writers' Federation and Dawson College, Creative Arts, Language and Literature Program. A portion of the proceeds will be ear-marked for the Sri Lankan Project. Watch our web site as details unfold.

## Library searching simplified

A new year and change is in the air! Orders are going out, materials are coming in, and browsers will soon see some dramatic improvements to our online catalogue. A cleaner interface, simplified search options, and the integration of our IFPCA holdings into a central library catalogue will make finding materials at The Centre more efficient and enjoyable. Watch for these changes in coming weeks, and let us know what you think!  
[www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca](http://www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca)

## Social inequality and school success

The Third Avenue Resource Centre and the Centre d'éducation des adultes (CEDA) hosted a Popular Forum in Montreal entitled "No Money, No Degree?" on Saturday, January 15. In a lively, bilingual discussion, parents, teachers and community members grappled with the causes of low academic success rates among low-income students, and generated a rich set of recommendations to improve the school culture, and strengthen schools' relationships with parents and the community. A summary of these recommendations will be available from the Third Avenue Resource Centre. A second forum will be held later this winter, on the topic of "Racism and Discrimination." The Centre for Literacy looks forward to future collaborations with groups such as Third Avenue Resource Centre on similar events that address issues of social justice in education and the broader community.

Information on popular forums: Danielle Landry, [info@crlta.ca](mailto:info@crlta.ca)

## Grassroots: Community Writing and Arts 2005

### Dialogue sans frontières/Can we talk?

in collaboration with

2005 Blue Metropolis Montreal International Literary Festival

Friday, April 1, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., at Blue Metropolis

Saturday, April 2, 9:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m., workshop at Dawson College

In recent years, researchers have paid increasing attention to the role of talk in the process of learning to read and write. Children raised in environments rich in the spoken word have a stronger base for reading and writing. There are now suggestions that adults who have not been proficient readers can also move into literacy by starting with the powerful rhymes, rhythms and flow of poetry, drama and song. For aboriginal cultures that survived through oral traditions, the challenges today include re-possessing lost languages and becoming literate in the mainstream languages that will enable their voices to be heard politically, socially and artistically. New technologies are slowly restoring the importance of the oral. Perhaps some of the groups who have traditionally been excluded can help guide us in new ways of thinking about knowing and learning. The 2005 Grassroots event will bring together groups and individuals who are mining the richness of talk and enlarging our understanding of what counts as literacy.

Watch our web site for details.



## The Centre For Literacy

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