



Sing for Literacy Toolkit

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This year's Family Literacy Day theme is *Sing for Literacy*. We are encouraging groups across the country to participate by hosting or attending sing-alongs in their communities. **Read through this *Sing for Literacy* Toolkit for information and ideas for your sing-along!**

Why singing?

Family Literacy Day is all about brushing up on your literacy skills in fun and different ways! There are so many activities you can do to practice your literacy skills, such as following a recipe, reading a road map or singing from a song sheet. Singing is a great literacy activity for families because it provides a fun way to expand spoken vocabulary and creates a strong bond. Singing allows you to learn patterns of words, rhymes and rhythms, and is strongly connected to language skills.



It's easy to participate!

All you have to do to participate in *Sing for Literacy* is host a sing-along at your FLD event. It doesn't matter if it's karaoke or campfire-style - be creative! There are no rules when it comes to your sing-along, so just have fun.

We'll even provide you with songs! ABC CANADA has teamed up with Stingray Digital, owners of The Karaoke Channel, to provide you with karaoke songs and lyrics for free. Visit www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca to gain access to these popular songs.

Register to win!

Be sure to register your FLD event by January 8, 2010 at the Family Literacy Day website, www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca, to be eligible for a cool FLD prize pack.

Pledge to sing!

In a year when funds are needed to support literacy across Canada, why not turn your Family Literacy Day event into a fundraiser? Encourage participants to have fun asking friends and family to pledge them to *Sing for Literacy* at your event! For more information, see **page 33**.

Pledge to Sing!

This year, celebrate Family Literacy Day and host a *Sing for Literacy* event to help support the literacy cause. Ask friends, colleagues, family and the community to collect pledges to *Sing for Literacy* at your event.

It's easy! Just follow these five simple steps and start singing!

1. Have fun creating a unique, free GivingPage for your *Sing for Literacy* event at www.canadahelps.org/givingpages. You can create a personal page for yourself and one for your organization!



2. Choose your literacy cause. Direct the money raised to ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation and/or your local literacy organization. Over 240 literacy groups are registered on Canada Helps. If your organization isn't listed, visit www.canadahelps.org to register. It's free!

3. Read through this *Sing for Literacy* toolkit for additional ideas on how to throw a great event.

4. Spread the word! Encourage your *Sing for Literacy* attendees to create their own GivingPages and send the link to friends and family for pledges to sing at the event. You should also create a GivingPage for yourself and/or your organization, and tell everyone you know that you will *Sing for Literacy* on Family Literacy Day. Send the GivingPage link to friends and family and make sure you tell them why literacy is important to you! Be sure to also send your GivingPage link to your supporters, the media and the community, and ask them to support your efforts. For literacy facts and statistics, see **page 23**.

5. *Sing for Literacy* on Family Literacy Day!

Why support the literacy cause?

Literacy touches virtually every aspect of our lives. Strong literacy skills are linked to work achievement, positive parenting, personal growth, health and self-esteem. Unfortunately, millions of Canadians age 16 to 65 are challenged with low literacy which hinders their ability to cope with the demands of everyday life and work.

“Because of literacy programs, people have a chance to live, really live – not in the dregs of just surviving, but in the glow of succeeding.” — Literacy learner, age 45

Donations to ABC CANADA will support programs like Family Literacy Day, LEARN, and public awareness initiatives that promote the importance of literacy at home, at work and in the community.

Individual GivingPage

Here is a sample GivingPage for an **individual** who will be singing for literacy at an event. Pages can be created at www.canadahelps.org/givingpages and sent out to friends and family for pledges. Have fun creating a page for yourself! Be sure to include the following:

- Interesting title to catch people's attention and intrigue them to pledge you!
- A personal message explaining why literacy is important to you and why someone should pledge you to sing. Mention details of your event, the date and what songs you plan to sing.
- A fun photo!

Personal message explaining why you're taking part and raising money for literacy.

Interesting title to intrigue people to pledge you!

The screenshot shows a GivingPage on CanadaHelps.org. At the top, the CanadaHelps.org logo is displayed with the tagline 'Giving made simple.' Below it is the 'GivingPages' logo. The main title of the page is 'Pledge me to "Sing for Literacy" and raise funds for ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation'. The page content includes a personal message from Rina Khosla, a 'DONATE NOW' button, a photo of Rina and a man holding a book, a 'Fundraising Progress' section with a goal thermometer showing \$2500.00 raised of a \$2500.00 target, and a 'Selected Charities' section featuring the ABC CANADA LITERACY FOUNDATION logo and a 'DONATE NOW' button. The page also notes it will be available for donations until February-05-10.



Goal thermometer



Pledge recipient

Organization GivingPage

Here is a sample GivingPage for an **organization** that will be hosting a *Sing for Literacy* event. Pages can be created at www.canadahelps.org/givingpages and sent out to friends, family, the community and media for pledges. Have fun creating a page for your event! Be sure to include the following information:

- Interesting title to catch people's attention and intrigue them to pledge your event!
- A message explaining why your organization is participating in Sing for Literacy and why people should pledge your group to sing. Mention details of your event, the date and what songs you plan to sing.
- A fun photo!

A message explaining why your organization is participating in Sing for Literacy and why people should pledge your group to sing.

Interesting title to intrigue people to pledge you!

Goal thermometer

A fun photo!

Pledge recipient

The screenshot shows a GivingPages event page titled "ABC CANADA Sings for Literacy!". The page includes a description of the event, a fundraising progress bar, a photo of a band, and a list of selected charities. The fundraising target is \$10,000.00, and the amount raised so far is \$0.00. The selected charity is ABC CANADA LITERACY FOUNDATION, a Canadian Registered Charity. The page is available for donations until January 28-10.

ABC CANADA Sings for Literacy!

ABC CANADA staff and board members are singing for literacy!

Pledge us to sing our favourite songs on Family Literacy Day, January 27, 2010 - and help raise much needed funds for literacy programs across Canada.

Donations help support: Family Literacy Day; community resource, 'Look Under Learn'; Canadian literacy research; investment in workplace literacy programs; and free literacy resources for thousands of Canadians every year.

Fundraising Progress

Fundraising target: \$10000.00
Amount raised so far: \$0.00

Selected Charities

The following charities have been selected by ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation:

ABC CANADA LITERACY FOUNDATION

Canadian Registered Charity

This page will be available for donations until January-28-10.

If you notice anything offensive or inappropriate on this page, please report it to CanadaHelps.

Sing for Literacy Ideas



Karaoke Night: Host a night of karaoke for parents and children. Set up a karaoke machine and a screen and have everyone sing along together by following the words on the screen. Or, if guests are comfortable, you could have several smaller groups perform their song of choice for the crowd!

Caroling Style: Don't have a karaoke machine? No problem! You can easily find lyrics on the Internet and project them

from the computer on to a screen for everyone to follow along! Or, print off the lyrics and give everyone a copy so they can sing along.

Campfire Style: Sit in a circle and sing traditional campfire songs. Have someone play guitar as guests sing along.

Special Guest Singer: Invite a celebrity singer from your community to your Sing for Literacy event. Have them lead the group in the sing-along.

Sing Munsch Songs: Robert Munsch is the Honorary Chair of Family Literacy Day. Read some of his books that have songs and ask everyone to sing along when it comes time to sing. Books with great songs include *Mortimer* and *Love You Forever*.

PLEDGE TO WIN!

The GivingPage that raises the most money for ABC CANADA will receive a **\$1000** gift card for a leading book retailer that can be donated to a literacy organization or educational institution of their choice!

Promotional Items

This year's promotional items will include a singing-themed bookmark and poster. Feel free to use these as give-aways or as a way to promote your event. You can download the bookmark and poster at www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca. Check out the sample poster on **page 7**.

Sing for Literacy Checklist

Here is a checklist to help you throw the best Sing for Literacy event ever!

Have you...

- Decided what type of sing-along you will be having? be creative! It could be karaoke-style or traditional campfire-style – have fun coming up with your sing-along idea.
- Decided on songs? It's up to you which songs you want to sing, but they should be fun and family-friendly. Depending on the type of sing-along you have, you may need to print off lyrics or rent a karaoke machine.
- Contacted prospective partners? State how recognition will be given to them for their participation. You might want to search for partners that have an affiliation with music.
- Invited special guests? Try to get a local singer or politician to come out and sing!
- Registered your event at www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca? Register before January 8, 2010 and be eligible for a FLD prize pack!
- Encouraged the community to pledge to sing? Ask your community to collect pledges from friends and family and then come out and sing at your event. Publicize the event in every possible way – post an ad and/or event listing in local newspapers, use flyers, posters, newsletters, your website, etc.
- Promoted your event through your local media? Prepare and send out a news release to target media. Ensure the release includes details, such as where the pledges will be donated, any dignitaries who will be in attendance and event activities.
- Invited the media to your event? Develop a media alert with the 5-W's in this one-page synopsis: Who, What, Where, When and Why. Remember to mention special guests who will be attending as well as photo opportunities. Include contact information of designated media co-ordinator.
- Followed-up with the media to confirm their attendance?



Sing for Literacy Checklist

Do you have...

- Sheet music, a karaoke machine, a band, instruments or any other items needed for a sing-along? Don't forget to check out www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca for songs too!
- AV equipment? If you're planning on having a rockin' good sing-along, think about AV equipment needed, such as speakers, a microphone, projector, etc. Of course, you can always sing a cappella as well.
- A GivingPage for your Sing for Literacy event? If not, create one at www.canadahelp.org/givingpages. It's easy and free!
- A GivingPage for yourself? You are hosting the event, so why not ask your friends and family to pledge you to sing at the event Create a GivingPage at www.canadahelp.org/givingpages and help raise much-needed funds for the literacy cause.
- Volunteers? By registering your event on the Family Literacy Day website and indicating you need volunteers, people will be able to contact you to help out at your event.
- Media information kits? If you invited the media, you should have kits with facts on adult and family literacy in Canada. This will help raise awareness of the literacy cause and why you're hosting a Sing for Literacy event.
- Materials required for activities, giveaway prizes for children and appreciation gifts for special guests. Certificates of participation are available for download at www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca. Be creative with your prizes and have a sing-along theme, such as music books or concert tickets!



Sample Letter/Email to Friends and Family for Pledges

Dear friend/family/colleague,

In celebration of Family Literacy Day, I will be hosting and participating in the *Sing for Literacy* event at [your event location] on [date] to celebrate the importance of literacy and raise money for the cause [or enter your own specific reason for raising money for literacy].

I would like to ask you to pledge me to *Sing for Literacy* and help support literacy programming for the millions of individuals that struggle with literacy. Your pledges will help individuals:

- increase their literacy levels
- gain confidence and independent thinking
- enrich family relationships
- prepare their children for success in school
- gain a lifelong love of reading and learning

You can pledge me to sing on my GivingPage at [link to giving page]. It's really easy and any donation counts. To learn more about *Sing for Literacy*, visit www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca.

Thank you in advance for pledging me to sing and support this important cause.

Sample Letter/Email to Supporters and Community for Pledges

Dear supporter/community member,

In celebration of Family Literacy Day, [organization] will be hosting a *Sing for Literacy* event at [your event location] on [date] to celebrate the importance of literacy and raise money for the cause.

We are asking you to please pledge us to *Sing for Literacy* and help support literacy programming for the millions of individuals that struggle with literacy.

I would like to ask you to pledge me to *Sing for Literacy* and help support literacy programming for the millions of individuals that struggle with literacy. Your pledges will help individuals:

- increase their literacy levels
- gain confidence and independent thinking
- enrich family relationships
- prepare their children for success in school
- gain a lifelong love of reading and learning

You can pledge us to sing on our GivingPage at [link to giving page]. It's really easy and any donation counts. To learn more about *Sing for Literacy*, visit www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca.

Thank you in advance for pledging me to sing and support this important cause.

Sample News Story for Local Media

[Your Organization] Set to Sing for Literacy and Raise Money

On [date], [your organization] will be participating in *Sing for Literacy*, a nation-wide event to celebrate Family Literacy Day and raise much needed funds for the literacy cause.

[Your organization] is asking the community to help reach their goal of [\$ enter your goal] by pledging them to sing. Pledges can be made on [your organization]'s GivingPage at [insert link to GivingPage] or through [your organization]'s website at [enter your URL if GivingPage is linked through your website].

Families are invited to come out and *Sing for Literacy* at [event location] at [event time]. Families can pledge [your organization] or create their own individual GivingPages at www.canadahelps.org/givingpages. [Enter any more interesting information about the event, such as special guests or the song list].

Family Literacy Day is an annual initiative developed by ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation and Honda Canada to celebrate parents and children reading and learning together, and to encourage Canadians to spend at least 15 minutes enjoying a learning activity every day. In 2009, more than 280,000 Canadians participated in FLD activities which featured a successful Guinness World Record attempt for, "Most Children Reading with An Adult, Multiple Locations."

For more information go to www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca.

Sample Facebook and Twitter Posts for Pledges

Facebook: [Your organization] is going to *Sing for Literacy*. Support the literacy cause and pledge us to sing at [event location] on [event date]. It's simple...Just pledge us online at [GivingPage link], then come out to the event and watch us, or sing along!

Twitter: Pledge us to *Sing for Literacy* on [date]! [Insert GivingPage link]

PLEDGE BY DECEMBER 31 FOR YOUR TAX RECEIPT!

All pledges made through Canadahelps.org are tax-deductable. Encourage your participants to pledge before December 31, 2009 to receive their receipt in time for tax season.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is *Sing for Literacy*?

A: *Sing for Literacy* is the Family Literacy Day 2010 theme which encourages Canadians from coast to coast to sing and help raise funds for literacy at various Family Literacy Day events and activities in January. Singing encourages learning patterns of words, rhymes and rhythms, and is strongly connected to language skills.

Q: Why is there a need for literacy fundraising?

A: Literacy touches virtually every aspect of our lives. Strong literacy skills are linked to work achievement, positive parenting, personal growth, and health and self-esteem. Unfortunately, millions of Canadians age 16 to 65 are challenged with low literacy which hinders their ability to cope with the demands of everyday life and work.

Q: What will the funds go towards?

A: Funds raised during *Sing for Literacy* will go towards local literacy programs, as well as Family Literacy Day, the Learn adult learner program, and other public awareness initiatives that promote literacy.

Q: How do I get involved?

A: You can get involved in *Sing for Literacy* by singing at a local event or pledging someone to sing. To participate and sing, visit www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca to find an event near you and for details on how to set up a GivingPage. To pledge someone else to *Sing for Literacy*, visit their GivingPage and make a donation.

Q: Is literacy such a big issue in Canada? How many people are illiterate?

A: Literacy is not like an “on” and “off” switch, and cannot be defined by whether an individual can read or not. Studies have uncovered that a startling 42% of adult Canadians struggle with low levels of literacy. ABC CANADA is committed to raising awareness of the adult literacy cause. National initiatives like Family Literacy Day help us do just that.

What is Family Literacy Day?

A: Family Literacy Day is a national awareness initiative created by ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation and Honda Canada in 1999, and held on January 27 each year. This special day promotes the importance of reading and engaging in other literacy-related activities as a family.