

A Practical Guide to Family Literacy



**A Project of the Family Literacy
Action Group of Alberta**

Researched and written by Sharon Skage

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Acknowledgments

This practical guide is the result of the hard work, perseverance, creativity, and commitment of the volunteer members of the Family Literacy Action Group (F.L.A.G.) committee. From their initial meetings to develop the organization, to their on-going support, feedback, and guidance for this and other projects, these people have given countless hours of their own time to establish and promote family literacy in this province. These committee members, who deserve our sincere thanks and recognition, are Bonnie Annicchlarico, Maureen Sanders, Yvon Laberge, Kathy Day, Candice Jackson, Judy Pool, Bev Knutson-Shaw, and Tony Garlock.

Another essential member of F.L.A.G. and this project in particular is Allen Vandenberg of Medicine Hat College. Allen has been involved in family literacy in Alberta since the Roots of Literacy symposium in Brooks, and has served as a skilful and supportive administrator to F.L.A.G. since its inception. Medicine Hat College has also provided important contributions in kind to the organization, both in Medicine Hat and at their Brooks campus.

Our thanks also to the F.L.A.G. coordinator Jana Joujan. Jana's support for the practical guide project has ranged from providing a much-needed injection of humor to diligently passing on new information and resources on family literacy as they became available.

Our sincere appreciation goes to the National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources Development Canada and Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development for funding this project. Both the staff and volunteer members of F.L.A.G. value, in particular, the knowledgeable support and guidance of Yvette Souque and Keith Anderson.

Finally, producing this resource would have been impossible if not for the patience, cooperation, and enthusiasm of literacy and family literacy workers across the province and beyond. Thank you to each and every one! A special thanks to Karen Nelson of the Homespun Family Literacy Program in Brooks and Maureen Sanders of Prospects Literacy Association in Edmonton for supplying the photographs used in the practical guide.

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Foreword

"I really enjoyed the classes that I took on reading to my child.... The most important thing that we learned is that reading to your kids is very important, and to show them that you do it and enjoy it, too." *Terry-Lynn, adult basic education student and participant In the Red Deer Family Reading Program In 1994.*

Family literacy is gaining momentum across Alberta and beyond. Many of us are attracted to the concept because of its simplicity: *Children's attitudes toward literacy and teaming are shaped in their first years. We can assist and support families in making those early experiences positive.*

We may have been convinced of the worth of family literacy while attending conference sessions, talking to colleagues, or reading published articles. Those of us Interested in starting a program want to know about the programs already In existence, but we may not actually have time to research them. What is Involved in starting a family literacy program?

That's where this publication comes in. It's intended to provide practical, stepby-step information on how to set up a family literacy program. It is also intended to provide support to existing family literacy initiatives. The guide should be helpful for preparing grant proposals and for demonstrating the need for programs to potential collaborators.

The guide provides a rationale for family literacy programs as well as information about the history of family literacy and a description of program models. The information presented also includes such topics as community collaborations, resources, evaluation methods, and contacts in existing programs.

We hope you will find the guide to be useful and informative. Best wishes for successful and longlived family literacy programs!

Family Literacy Action Group of Alberta

Chapter I

Introduction

The introduction to the practical guide provides a description of the Family Literacy Action Group, its history, activities, and future direction. The introduction also includes an overview of how the guide was developed, and gives suggestions on how to use this resource.

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I. Introduction

A. About the Family Literacy Action Group of Alberta

The Family Literacy Action Group, or F.L.A.G., was formed in 1993 in response to a need identified at the Roots of Literacy Symposium in Brooks in October 1992. That symposium on family literacy, organized by a group from the Brooks Campus of Medicine Hat College, brought together individuals from across Alberta and beyond who saw family literacy as having great potential for preventing the cycle of low literacy skills and for strengthening the family.

Among those attending the symposium in Brooks were Bonnie Annicchiarico, one of the creators of the Homespun curriculum, Kathy Day, a literacy coordinator in Pincher Creek, Maureen Sanders of Prospects Literacy Association in Edmonton, and Yvon Laberge of HOPE Learning Systems in Edmonton. These four saw the need and possibility for an organization which could help network people interested in family literacy. Such an organization could also work to raise the public's awareness of the importance of family reading, and to inform other agencies who would be targeting the same client group. By 1993 this core group had formed the Family Literacy Action Group.

The F.L.A.G. committee applied for and received funding from Literacy Partnerships, the joint funding program between Alberta Advanced Education and the National Literacy Secretariat. The proposal was developed to link the promotion of family literacy programs with the International Year of the Family in 1994.

The Family Literacy Action Group is involved in three main types of activities:

- Exploration of family literacy activities, resources, and issues. This research is used to support and provide information to practitioners and interested agencies, as well as to develop the Practical Guide to Family Literacy.
- Enhancement of family literacy by means of publishing a practical guide to family literacy, developing a speakers' bank, developing presentation packages, publishing newsletters and newsletter inserts, participating in the national family literacy conference in October 1994, and publishing a position paper.
- Promotion and celebration of family literacy, including the development and distribution of media packages, participation in the Premier's Council in Support of Alberta Families, and participation in various conferences and workshops.

F.L.A.G. is busy planning for its second year of operation. This work will include research into effective community collaborations and the development of a pilot workshop to assist family literacy practitioners in building strong collaborative projects. F.L.A.G. will also be researching and developing resources on effective family literacy program evaluation.

F.L.A.G. will also continue to support family literacy through collecting and distributing information on programs and issues, and promoting family literacy in a range of forums.

B. Using the Practical Guide

The practical guide is intended as a resource book. It has been organized according to the process involved in developing an understanding of family literacy and initiating or building a program. Each section or chapter of the guide corresponds to the individual steps that make up this process, with examples from provincial, national, or international programs used to illustrate those concepts. Examples are usually arranged in order of relevance, moving from the experiences and developments found in Alberta programs to the more general level of programs outside the province. The exception to this is the section on the history of family literacy, where information moves from the older, more established international programs and developments to the relatively new Alberta scenario.

In addition to the Table of Contents found at the beginning of the guide, there is an itemized list of contents at the beginning of each chapter to provide you with an overview and assist you in locating information.

The scope of this guide has been limited by time and resources. Although of no less importance than English family literacy, initiatives in Aboriginal, Francophone, and first language family literacy are under-represented. As family literacy continues to grow in Alberta and Canada, so will the development of information-sharing and support processes. Dialogue between all types of family literacy projects is essential.

The sources of data for this Publication include: program reports; surveys, books and articles; personal communication with family literacy practitioners; conference and institute presentations; and National Literacy Secretariat records.

The guide has been published in a binder to accommodate future research. In our second year, F.L.A.G. is going to be developing materials, resources, and workshops on community collaborations and evaluation processes. Publishing in this format will also allow for updates on programs and practices in Alberta.

Chapter II

Definitions and Discussions

Because family literacy is a relatively new field and includes a wide range of initiatives, a single, universally accepted definition or theoretical framework does not yet exist. This section of the guide includes a sampling of definitions of family literacy by a range of organizations and individuals. These include an examination of what types of activities are included in family literacy programs, what the primary focus of programs should be, who should be responsible for family literacy, and who programs are intended to serve. Reflections by practitioners and researchers on the development of family literacy are also included.

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II. Definitions and Discussions

Just what is meant by the term "family literacy"? How is a family literacy initiative different from other literacy programs?

Family literacy has been defined in several different ways by different individuals and groups. Looking at a sample of these definitions can help us reflect on our own views and assumptions and move toward a common frame of reference.

Family Literacy: Reading and writing interactions that develop a learning environment within the home.

Family Literacy Programs: Initiatives in which the primary focus is to promote and support family literacy.

(Family Literacy Action Group of Alberta
[F.L.A.G.] working definitions, 1994)

Family literacy is a community-based initiative designed to break the cycle of illiteracy. Family in this context is interpreted in the broadest sense of the term. Implicit in this process is a shared responsibility in the community to provide intergenerational support, education, and advocacy. The intention is to empower the individual and establish reading as a valued activity shared within the family.

(McCoy and Watts 2.1)

The International Reading Association's Family Literacy Commission offers the following ideas as a definition of family literacy:

1. Family literacy encompasses the way parents, children, and extended family members use literacy at home and in their community.
2. Family literacy occurs naturally during the routines of daily living and helps adults and children "get things done."
3. Examples of family literacy might include using drawings or writings to share ideas; composing notes or letters to communicate messages; keeping records; making lists; reading and following directions; or sharing stories and ideas through conversation, reading, and writing.
4. Family literacy may be initiated purposefully by a parent, or may occur spontaneously as parents and children go about the business of their daily lives.
5. Family literacy activities may also reflect the ethnic, racial, or cultural heritage of the families involved.
6. Family literacy activities may be initiated by outside institutions or agencies. These activities are often intended to support the acquisition and development of school-like literacy behaviors of parents, children, and families.

7. Family literacy activities Initiated by outside agencies may include family storybook reading, completing homework assignments, or writing essays or reports.

(Family Literacy: New Perspectives, New Opportunities)

Family Literacy is an intergenerational education program that integrates adult literacy instruction and early childhood education for under-educated families. The program has four essential elements including basic skills instruction for the children's parents, developmental education for young children, parent and child time together to share in learning experiences, and parent education and support groups.

(National Center for Family Literacy 1994a, 1)

Family Literacy is one of the 'new' literacies that have been the focus of discussion, writing and research in the past decade. As a descriptive label it has emerged from a number of related, and at times overlapping terms. These terms have included Parent Literacy, Parent Involvement, Intergenerational Literacy and Community Literacy. This has created some degree of confusion.... A second order confusion has been the addition of the words "involvement," "participation" and "partnership" to the major term. Is someone always 'involved' as a participant? It seems not always. But more importantly, what is a participant, a family, a community? Does participation lead to partnership? Not necessarily. These are just some of the questions raised by the use of these terms....

The most commonly used terms in recent times have been Family Literacy, Community Literacy and Intergenerational Literacy. All these terms are useful and mean slightly different things....

The terms *Family Literacy* and *Community Literacy* are used to describe (respectively) literacy practices which occur in either a family or community context. As a result, the term Community Literacy is broader in definition, and it could well be argued that it incorporates Family Literacy, since all families are resident within communities. However, in reality, this is rarely the case in the literature because writers choose instead to use either 'family' or 'community' to provide an insight into the social context, hence 'community' or 'family' becomes the key distinguishing term. In recognition of the importance of these contexts, programs are commonly planned that focus on the development of specific literacy practices in each. In the case of Family Literacy programs, this normally involves initiatives that focus on strategies for adults to use in interactions with children.

Intergenerational Literacy is a term used to describe the process by which the literacy practices of one generation influence the literacy practices of another. This term has considerable overlap in its usage with Family Literacy. Unlike the label Family Literacy it avoids the difficulty of defining the family unit, and provides for the possibility of adults other than members of the same family having an influence on the literacy of others. This of course allows for consideration of the influence of non-family members such as friends, social workers, child care staff and after school care workers. The recognition of this important process of Intergenerational sharing of literacy practices has led some educators to focus on the development of adults' literacy practices as a means to enhance the literacy development of the children in their care. While in reality the type of programs developed have been rather narrowly focused, this term has the potential for much broader interpretation.

(Cairney 1994a, 1)

The variation in these definitions mirrors the diversity in family literacy models and programs. Ruth Nickse is a well-known American family literacy practitioner and researcher. She notes that:

"Family and intergenerational literacy programs are a new area for research and development. Their numbers are on the increase but the concept itself lacks a theoretical and conceptual base.... The variation among programs points to a need for a way to identify and classify programs.... The theme of "intergenerational and "family" literacy is a hot topic -- but there is little agreement about the meaning of these two words and programs may use them interchangeably." (Nickse 1990a. 5 1.)

Nickse's work includes a widely cited typology for classifying family and intergenerational literacy programs; we'll look at this and different models in detail in Chapter V.

Nickse's typology, while recognized as groundbreaking in the development of an organizational framework for family literacy, is seen by many as being too broad. It can be argued that virtually any literacy or educational program can be included; for example, in Adult Basic Education programs the students' re-entry and improved literacy skills will likely impact their families in terms of modelling, amount of print material in the home, etc., hence it can be classified a Direct Adult, Indirect Child model under Nickse's matrix. Her inclusion of intergenerational programs, regardless of the relationships between the adult and child, is also problematic to many.

In contrast, Katherine Ryan proposes a definition for family literacy programs based on the following characteristics:

The program is conceptualized around the concerns of the family as a unit in contrast to serving only an individual family member.

Program components are developed on the basis of the community needs assessment and participant recommendation.

Adults who need to improve their literacy skills and the child or children for whom they are responsible are the target population.

Parenting education is offered and literacy activities are provided so adults can attain a level of proficiency in basic skills that is sufficient to meet individuals' goals and social and economic demands for proficiency.

Literacy, pre-literacy, and developmentally appropriate activities for children are provided.

There are formal and/or informal activities with varying degrees of systematic adult and child interactions focusing on parents as teachers.

The programs serve as a liaison with community agencies which focus their resources in basic problems faced by the families. (Ryan et al 2-3)

Ryan points out that, using all these characteristics as criteria, very few programs could be classified as family literacy. She sees family literacy as evolving, and that programs would be more likely to include some of these characteristics while developing the additional objectives and components.

Yet another view of family literacy can be seen in the view of Lesley Mandel Morrow and Jeanne Paratore, who encourage us to study family literacy from the widest possible perspective:

Those who work in family literacy or comment on it vary greatly in the theoretical stances they hold. From political and economic perspectives, for instance, the focus of discussions and programs in family literacy is often shaped by a desire to promote educational and, ultimately, economic advancement, both personally and nationally. Some people in the field believe that while it is important to support programs aimed at arresting what is perceived as a cycle of illiteracy, that focus may represent a deficit view because it does not take into account certain literacy events that occur within families. This perspective acknowledges the complexities of literacy activities and environments within families where literacy events may not be school-like and, consequently, may go unnoticed by those outside the family or culture. (196)

Chapter III

Family Literacy Rationale

Why is family literacy important? What value does it offer? This section looks at the rationale behind family literacy and some of the data that support the premise that family literacy is an effective, positive advancement in literacy and community development.

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III. Family Literacy Rationale

A. Why is Family Literacy Important?

The rationale behind family literacy programming is simple and straightforward. A child's literacy development begins at birth, and is shaped by his or her experiences in the home environment. By supporting parents/caregivers of young children in their role as their children's first teachers, we can have a positive impact on the child's emerging literacy skills and attitudes toward learning. This positive impact has implications not only for the child's future success in school but for their entire lifetime. (Nickse 1989, Morrow 1989, Heath 1983, Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines 1988)

Early intervention for the purpose of impacting children's literacy skills is not the only rationale for family literacy, however. These programs may also improve parents' literacy levels, promote parental involvement in their children's education, and encourage positive home-school relationships (Padak et al 5). Perhaps as important as skill development and taking a more active role in education, family literacy has important implications for relationships within the family:

The goal of a family literacy program is to enhance the lives of parents and children through the joy of reading, and not incidentally. to also improve the literacy skills, attitudes, values and behaviors of both. Evidence from adult basic education. early childhood education, cognitive science, emergent literacy and family systems theory tells of the Importance of adults in children's early literacy development. Sharing books in families, when appropriately undertaken. sets a pattern for talking together about things and ideas. and adds to the pleasure of each other's company. Through shared activities, the social uses of literacy are incorporated along with orientations to concepts about books and print materials, and the cognitive tasks of asking and answering questions which are so Important to the children's school success.... (Quezada and Nickse 7)

The value of family literacy goes far beyond reading and writing. At a time when greater and greater emphasis is being placed on collaboration and "one-window" service delivery, family literacy programs can be one component of the growing movement to support and strengthen the family and the broader community.

B. Statistics

In order to understand the value of family literacy, it's helpful to look at data relating to the relationship between parents'/caregivers' reading, writing, and numeracy skills and the literacy achievements of their children.

Statistics Canada defines literacy as "the information processing skills necessary to use the printed material commonly encountered at work, at home, and in the community." *The Statistics Canada Survey of Literacy Skills Used in Daily Activities* (1989) assessed reading and numeracy skills of adult Canadians (excluding residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories, people living on Indian reserves, Canadian Armed Forces members, and prison inmates) according to four levels of ability.

The survey results found that, while 71% of Albertans are able to meet most everyday reading demands (level 4), 17% of adults in this province are limited to some degree in their reading abilities. This 17% are able to use text in a variety of situations if the material is simple, clearly laid out, and the tasks involved are not too complex (level 3). The rest of the adults in the survey were found to be "illiterate by most standards": 7% only being able to recognize a familiar word in simple text (level 2), and 5% having virtually no reading skills (level 1). (*Survey of Literacy Skills Used in Daily Activities: a Report on the Literacy Skills of Albertans 7-11*).

Other findings included in the Statistics Canada survey support the need for family literacy programming in this province:

Parents' education was also significantly related to the literacy level of Albertans. Certainly, at least part of this relationship is indirect, through the influence of parental education on the educational attainment of respondents themselves. The influence of mothers' education on the reading ability of respondents seemed to turn on whether or not one's mother had completed high school. While only two-thirds (66%) of Albertans whose mothers were not high school graduates were at Reading Level 4, the percentage rose to 84 - 85% among those whose mothers had attained a high school diploma or more. (*Survey of Literacy Skills Used in Daily Activities: a Report on the Literacy Skills of Albertans 25*)

More work needs to be done to study the intergenerational effects of low literacy skills in Alberta families. While we can't take evidence from the very different context of the United Kingdom and elsewhere and assume it matches our own experience, we can use it to broaden our own knowledge of the issue.

Data was analyzed from the fifth sweep of Britain's National Child Development Study (1991) to investigate the relationships between parents' literacy and numeracy skills, other parental characteristics, and their children's reading and mathematics abilities. Strong relationships were found between parents' self-related literacy problems and their children's abilities, which were measured using reading and mathematics assessments:

- Where parents had reading problems, twice as many children were in the bottom quartile of reading scores, compared with children whose parents did not report problems.
- Seventy-two percent of children whose parents had reading problems and who were in the lowest Income group and 54 percent of children whose parents had reading problems and who had no school qualifications were in the lowest reading score groups.
- Parents' numeracy problems and children's low math scores were also closely related.
- Of children whose parents reported numeracy difficulties, had no school qualifications, and were also in the lowest income group, seventy-nine percent were in the lowest score group for the math or reading tests. (*Parents and Their Children: The Intergenerational Effect of Poor Basic Skills 5-6*)

C. Summary of Research

There has been a great deal of research done on emergent literacy, and more recently, on family and intergenerational literacy. The following overview is taken from a summary by Victoria Purcell-Gates (1993). Additional research references that support the findings are noted in square brackets [].

- Children acquire their basic cognitive and linguistic skills within the context of the family. (Sticht and McDonald 1989) [Smith 1984, Heath 1983]
- Much literacy learning takes place in the years preceding formal instruction in the context of family-based interactions and activities. (Taylor 1982, Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines 1988, Teale and Sulzby 1986)
- School achievement and test scores are higher for children whose parents have more education and books in the home. (Applebee, Langer, and Mullis 1988)
- Parents who are low-literate cannot support their children's literacy learning nor pass on positive attitudes about schooling and the importance of learning to read and write. (Newman and Beverstock 1990), [Smith 1984]

Research has also shown that children are socialized to become literate (Taylor 1983, Teale and Sulzby 1986, Morrow 1989, Nickse 1989, Smith 1984). "Children learn about language by attaching themselves as apprentices to people who are using language as a tool to accomplish particular and self-evident ends.... Literacy develops because the child sees what reading and writing can do and because it is relevant to the child's own creative and constructive purpose" (Smith 1984 in *Mom, Read, Read, Read 3*).

D. Program Results

Given that family literacy is a relatively new concept, there is a real need to demonstrate the value and possibilities this approach offers in order to secure collaborations with other agencies, community support, and funding. One way of justifying family literacy and securing this kind of support is to present summaries of program evaluation and results.

While there has been valuable information gathered through evaluations of a limited number of programs, most of the reports are qualitative in nature and lacking in empirical data. It is also important to realize the diversity in practice and objectives, and the danger in generalizing about program successes elsewhere that may have little to do with the work carried out here in Alberta.

Homespun

The Homespun Family Literacy Project in Brooks has a number of assessment processes in place, including the use of class transcripts, parent feedback, and outside evaluation. The results have been summarized in four areas: parents' literacy and learning, children's literacy and learning, family interaction and communication, and empowerment.

In terms of their own literacy and learning, parents reported they:

- were reading and writing more often and for longer periods;
- were more aware of children's books (what they liked or didn't like, various authors and illustrators that they and their children liked);
- encouraged the children to "use" the books rather than keep them safely on a high shelf;
- learned as adults;
- became more conscious of teaching and school approaches;
- changed perceptions of learning used the library more;
- enjoyed writing; and
- made physical changes in their own homes to encourage literacy.

Parents reported that their children:

- wanted to be read to;
- had expanded their imaginations;
- made personal connections with the stories that were read;
- looked forward to the Homespun book of the week;
- had a new enthusiasm for reading;
- would voluntarily read on their own;
- became more attentive;
- who were not yet readers believed that they could read;
- asked more questions;
- used the stories that were read in their own play;
- liked to talk about the stories;
- responded to the illustrations;
- spent more time drawing and using paper and pencil;
- talked more; and
- had improved speech.

In terms of family interaction and communication, parents reported that they now:

- became more conscious of their home communication and interaction;
- were more aware of their children's potential;
- looked at situations in a different light with a new perspective;
- shared intimate moments with their children through story;
- turned the TV off,
- took more time for their kids;
- changed priorities in their home; and
- used books to share values and morals.

In terms of empowerment, parents reported that they:

- felt less isolated;
- gained confidence;
- felt they could influence and teach their children;
- felt calmer and more positive;
- had hopes for their children;
- became committed to their children's learning; and
- wanted to do something more with their own lives. (Annicchiarico 1994)

Parents as Partners as Learners

Another Canadian study evaluates the Parents as Partners as Learners project in the eastern townships of Quebec. Grades 1 - 5 children in two school districts were given the Slosson Oral Reading Test before and after either four- or eight-week intervention periods. Kindergarten children were also involved in a reading program with their parents. Findings suggest that the family literacy program:

- turns the spotlight on family reading;
- points out the connections between poor reading at school and what is happening at home;
- can raise oral reading scores;
- can increase positive reading attitudes; and
- opens doors to discussion of literacy programs with poor- or non-reading parents. (Fear 1)

Learning With My Child

In Lachine, Quebec, the Learning With My Child cites the following program results:

In some cases students who might have failed a school year because of difficulties in reading and writing are now being promoted to the next level. Certain families are changing old habits; closer regulation of T.V. viewing for example, allows more time for family activities, such as reading, playing games together or visiting the library or other points of interest. Children and their parents have an increased awareness of the importance of reading in everyday life. They realize the necessity of having adequate literacy skills in order to fully participate in society and the knowledge, pleasure, and satisfaction to be gained through reading. Changing attitudes noted by volunteers include: increased attention span, better concentration and perseverance, less restless behavior, broader interests, ranging from an exclusive interest in hockey cards to Grimms' Fairy Tales and poetry. More reading often means better reading, and one-on-one attention without demands increases confidence and lessens anxiety. Some parents have registered in high school or language courses to improve their skills. Some mothers participate in the reading activities in order to upgrade their own literacy. Volunteers are unanimous in noting a more positive attitude toward reading among family members, the twice weekly visits are eagerly awaited. The children are really excited about books and reading. These positive experiences reflect on all members of the family, as they become more confident and assured in the whole education of their children. (Correspondence from Gillian deVito, program coordinator, January 1995)

Even Start

Perhaps the most comprehensive evaluation of family literacy programming is the national evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program in the U.S. The evaluation is based on three years of data collected from the first one hundred and twenty three projects funded under Even Start. The following are cited as short-term effects of Even Start:

- Even Start has substantially increased participation rates in the three core service areas of early childhood education, adult education, and parenting education.
- Even Start children gain significantly more than control group children on the Preschool Inventory, which assesses a range of school readiness skills.
- Even Start projects have been effective in improving the functional literacy of participating adults as measured by the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). The amount of gain is directly related to the amount of instruction received through Even Start.
- Even Start has a clear, positive effect on G.E.D. attainment.
- Effects on parenting skills were difficult to assess because of perceived problems with measures used. However, positive gains were seen in the home learning environment in terms of the number and type of reading materials in the home.
- Even Start significantly increased parental expectations for their children, an important factor in how well children do in school. (*National Evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program 1994*)

Toyota Families for Learning

Another source of evaluative information comes from the National Center for Family Literacy. During the 1992 -93 school year, over five hundred families took part in the Toyota Families for Learning Program conducted by the N.C.F.L.. Data was collected on the parents and children before, during, and after their participation in the program, and compared with the results of other educational programs:

- Adults learn more in family literacy programs than in adult-focused programs. *Reading scores increased an average of 4.5 points compared to 2.3 points, using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System. Reading skills increased by a grade and a half compared to half of that, using the Test for Adult Basic Education.*
- Family literacy programs reduce dropouts. *In the national evaluation of adult education program, over half of the participants dropped out within the first sixteen weeks and only 40% remained after twenty weeks. In the family literacy program, two-thirds remained after sixteen weeks and 59% remained after twenty weeks.*
- Participants who stay longer continue to learn. *Those who left the program within the first 50 hours of instruction gained little, but those who stayed longer increased their reading skills an average equal to a year and a half of education.*

- Children in family literacy programs learn more than children in child focused programs. *Upon entry, children's vocabulary skills placed them in the 11th percentile of the nation. By the end of the year, skills had improved to an average of 19th percentile. They also made greater developmental gains.*
- Parents express greater support for their children's education. *Parents report an increase in the frequency they are directly involved in different dimensions of support for their child's education, positively impacting on the literacy environment in the home.* (National Center for Family Literacy 1994b, 13-19)

See [Chapter VII](#) for further information on evaluation instruments and recommendations.

Chapter IV

History of Family Literacy

This section looks at the history of family literacy and gives an overview of the major developments in the field.

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IV. History of Family Literacy

It is impossible to say where research in emergent literacy and experiments in early childhood education leaves off and research on family literacy first begins. As early as 1908, educators in the U.S. were suggesting that children's learning in school begins with parents reading to them at home (Huey in Morrow and Paratore 1993). The term "family literacy" was first coined by Denny Taylor in her doctoral dissertation in 1981 (Taylor 1993, 551), but initiatives aimed at supporting families in their literacy development pre-date Taylor's work.

Rather than attempt to document the comprehensive history of family literacy, we have provided an outline of significant events in order to set family literacy in Alberta in a larger context.

A. General History

1967 - The Plowden report produced by the Department of Education and Science (U.K.) argued for the concept of a partnership between home and school, and influenced a number of initiatives. Many of these aimed to provide parents with a range of reading strategies to use with their children. (Cairney 3)

1969 - The Home Instruction Program (HIPHY) was developed at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel. It began as a research project examining the feasibility and effect of home-based educational intervention involving mothers and their preschool children from educationally disadvantaged parts of the country. In 1975, the project moved from research to operation on a national scale, and by 1989 had expanded to five other countries.

1973 - The Avance Parent-Child Education program began in San Antonio, Texas. Its goal was to reduce the disproportionately high dropout rate among the Mexican-American community. Program components included parenting/parent education, prereading/language development activities, and other topics related to family and community development.

1980 - Haringey study (England) - Six schools in working-class neighborhoods participated in this experiment. Parents were invited to take part in a two-year program of listening to their children read two to four times a week (Toomey 223-224).

1980's - Peter Hannon and others work at Sheffield, England in the study of home factors in school reading attainment, focusing on young children in poor urban areas. (Hannon 6)

1980's - P.A.C.E.: Parents' Aid for Children's Education. Secondary literacy program started in a secondary mixed comprehensive school in an East London working class district. Three quarters of the school's pupils were from ethnic minorities. The project focused on giving assignments that invited explicit help from parents (Sandler 1985).

1982 - The Home Instruction (HIPPIE) program, originally developed in Israel in 1969, was introduced to the U.S. in Arkansas.

1984 - The Mother's Reading Program was begun by the American Reading Council. The rationale was that "teaching reading skills to both mothers and children, using a similar approach in the same learning environment, is the road to true literacy... a deeply felt sense of the usefulness of literacy and literature that makes reading an ongoing and vital part of daily life." (Barbara Bush Foundation 33)

1984 - 1989 - Collaborations for Literacy at Boston University. This project was conceived and designed by Ruth Nickse, and developed by Nickse and Shelley Quezada from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Various social and educational agencies were involved in collaborative community development projects, with libraries playing a leadership role (Quezada and Nickse 11)

1985 - The Parent and Child Education Program, or P.A.C.E., was developed by Sharon Darling, then Director of Adult Education for the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

1986 - SER-Jobs for Progress (1964) decided that literacy training and basic remedial education should be its primary service. It delivered its Hispanic literacy initiative through the Family Learning Center concept, which included Basic and Job Skills Training, Literacy Councils, and Intergenerational Enriched Child Care.

1987 - MotherRead initially began in Raleigh, North Carolina as a reading program for mothers separated from their children by incarceration. Mothers met once or twice weekly to learn about the importance of reading to young children and to share children's literature. They were able to use their new skills to make visits with their children more meaningful and nurturing. The program quickly expanded to the community.

1987- Parent Readers Program, designed and developed by Ellen Goldsmith and Ruth Handel, began in New York City. Based on a survey of home reading activities and attitudes, it offered a workshop series for adults in which children's literature was used to teach parents how to read and how to discuss books with their children. Participants were first-generation college students enrolled in remedial reading courses and their preschool and school-age children.

1987 - New York State Library Family Literacy Project. The program used government funds to provide start-up grants to seventeen library systems to develop family reading programs. The program included outreach and activities in family shelters, maternity wards and Well Baby clinics with teenage mothers, and with jailed youth offenders who were also parents.

1988 - California's Family for Literacy Program. This program enabled libraries which were already providing adult literacy services under the state funded California Literacy Campaign to add a family literacy component.

1988 - The William R. Kenan Charitable Trust provided a major grant to establish model family literacy programs in Kentucky and North Carolina. For the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project, the original P.A.C.E. model was modified slightly.

1989 - The National Center for Family Literacy was created with an expanded grant from the Kenan Trust, to promote family literacy programming and see it implemented effectively across the U.S.

1989 - Even Start - federal program which has provided funding for demonstration projects through the United States Dept. of Education (to approx. 150 school districts in the U.S.). Under the National Literacy Act, the program has been designated the Even Start Family Literacy Program and in 1992 became a state administered program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. It allows states to make a minimum grant of \$75,000 for each program and targets services to both parents and their children from birth to age eight.

1990 - The Talk to a Literacy Learner (TTALL) program in Australia consisted of a number of sessions designed to teach parents about the nature of learning and literacy, to "improve the quality of parent-child interactions when discussing reading and writing" and "to equip parents to provide additional literacy opportunities in the home" (Cairney & Munsie 7).

1990 - ALA/Bell Atlantic Family Literacy Project. Joint effort between Bell-Atlantic Charitable Foundation and the American Library Association. Libraries formed partnerships with a local Bell company and an adult education specialist or literacy provider in their community.

1991 - The National Center for Family Literacy began the Toyota Families for Learning Program through a grant from the Toyota Motor Corporation.

1991 - The National Literacy Act of 1991 was signed into law in the U.S. "The National Literacy Act represents the most comprehensive and serious legislation to address the literacy needs of adults in this country who lack the basic skills of reading, writing, computation and oral communication. It has implications for libraries, the workforce, and adult, early childhood and secondary education. It encourages the development of demonstration literacy projects in prisons and pays significant attention to a growing need to address the literacy needs of adults and children in a family context." (Quezada and Nickse 5)

B. Family Literacy in Canada

1981 - Toronto Board of Education established Parenting Centres in its inner city schools, with the objective of "improving educational outcomes for children by involving the family with the school early and by offering support and information to parents in their role of child rearing" (Gordon 6-7).

1983- J'apprends avec mon enfant begins in Montreal. The program recruited mothers with low literacy skills to attend literacy classes in 10 primary schools, during school time. The goal was to support both the child and the mother in their literacy development.

1984 - Bookmates started in Winnipeg. Initially volunteers accompanied preschoolers to the library once a week to read to them; in 1991 the program changed to focus totally on parents rather than volunteers.

1987 - Parents as Partners as Learners Project -Sherbrooke, Quebec. Piloted in elementary schools in the Eastern Townships School Board and District of Bedford Regional School Board. Preand posttesting using Slosson Oral Reading Test for Grade 1-5 children. Parents of kindergarten children were asked to read to them.

1988 - Family Literacy Interest Group founded in Ontario. This group began meeting to identify the issues of family literacy and to advocate for the funding of family literacy programs. F.L.I.G. hosted a major session at the November 1988 Literacy Conference, highlighting what was happening internationally in the area of family literacy. This was followed by a conference on family literacy in Kingston, Ontario in January 1989. The group has also published a family literacy manual, and offers support and information on family literacy programming and research.

1990 - Literacy and the Parent program started at East End Literacy in Toronto.

1992 - Born to Read program started in North Battleford, Saskatchewan. Each mother of a new baby is given a book and information on the importance of reading to young children. Follow-up activities take place during health nurse visits and at the local library.

1994 - Celebrating Family and Community, a family literacy/E.S.L. conference, was held in Saskatoon. It was organized by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network and the Saskatchewan Council for Educators of Non-English Speakers.

1994 - National Conference on Family Literacy was held in Ottawa, sponsored by the National Ad Hoc Family Literacy Group.

1994 - Table Ronde Sur la Prévention de l'Analphabétisme / Round Table on the Prevention of Illiteracy was held in Québec in October, organized by Le Collectif de recherche pédagogique.

1994 - L'alphabétisation familiale en français au Canada, a national symposium on family literacy, was held in Aylmer, Québec In December, organized by la Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français.

C. Family Literacy in Alberta

Family literacy is a relatively new type of program in Alberta. It is difficult to pinpoint its history here as programs have tended to come and go in isolation, dependent on short-term funding. The following is an outline of major events and program development in the province.

1988 - Partnership Approach to Literacy (P.A.L.) Project began in the public school system in Pincher Creek.

1988 - The Combined Agencies Project to Prevent Illiteracy (C.A.P.P.I.L.L.) began in Edmonton. Project activities included literacy, consumer education, nutrition, life coping skills, and preparing pre-school children for school.

1988 - The Rhyming Babies program began in Stettler. The program involved activities that provided socialization for both parents and babies, increased language development in Infants, increased fine and gross motor development, and supported the relationship between parent and child.

1989 - The Latin American Literacy Partnership began in Calgary. The program provided conventional classroom instruction to adults in Spanish and English. It also included one-on-one tutoring, a parallel children's program, and parent-child activities.

1990 - The Pineridge Community Project in Calgary established a program that addressed mother tongue literacy problems in children and their families.

1990 - The Northern Alberta Reading Specialists Council received funding to develop a video tape and instructor manual to demonstrate the Paired Reading technique as a literacy resource for home reading programs.

1991 - The Homespun Family Literacy Project officially began in Brooks. Homespun is modelled after the Motherhead program in North Carolina, and "Canadianized" to make the content relevant to Alberta families.

1991 - Wetaskiwin Little Pals project started in Wetaskiwin.

1992 - The Books for Babies project started in Cardston.

1992 - Homespun Instructor training began for literacy workers from Alberta and beyond

who were interested in starting family literacy programs.

1992 - The Home Language and Literacy Project was piloted in the YWCA in Calgary as part of the existing E.S.L. home tutoring program.

1992 - The Books for Kids program started in Nanton, patterned after Books for Babies in Cardston and Books for Babies in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.

1992 - The Roots of Literacy Conference was held in Brooks. It was attended by people from all over western Canada and the northwestern U.S., with Dr. Ruth Nickse as the keynote speaker.

1993 - Medicine Hat College received funding to develop a Homespun instructional video.

1993 - The Family Literacy Action Group was formed.

Chapter V

Description of Models

This section provides a framework for identifying and understanding different types of family literacy programs. The chapter begins with a review of different means of classifying programs, and proceeds to describe initiatives found within and outside Alberta.

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V. Description of Models

A. Overview of Classification Systems

Perhaps the most commonly used frame of reference for classifying family and intergenerational literacy programs is Ruth Nickse's typology of **four basic models**. Because her work has been so influential in the U.S. and Canada, and because many programs here in Alberta identify themselves according to Nickse's typology, the following description may be useful as an overview.

In her review of practice in the United States, Nickse classified programs according to the type of participant (adult and/or child) and the degree of intervention (direct or Indirect). The degree of intervention refers to "whether or not the adult and the child are present together for literacy development any or all of the time" (Nickse 1989, 29). "Primary" participants receive direct services, "secondary" participants benefit indirectly.

In brief summary, these models are:

Type 1: Direct Adults - Direct Children

This model involves programming for both parents and pre-school child. Parents attend literacy instruction and may participate in parenting education, vocational training, or volunteer in the program or children's classroom. "Parent and child together" activities are also a key feature, and may include instruction on how to interact and play with children, as well as how to read to them. Programs use a dual curriculum and direct instruction that is class-based. Children take part in a structured early childhood or preschool program.

Type 2: Indirect Adults - Indirect Children

Adults (may or may not be parents) and children attend together. The goal is the promotion of literacy for enjoyment. There is no sequential curriculum, but rather a series of reading enrichment events, such as storytelling, book talks, and library activities. Reading pal programs involving adult volunteers are another example of this type of program.

Type 3: Direct Adults - Indirect Children

Adults are the main target for this type of program, and children do not participate regularly, if at all. Programs may include literacy or English language instruction, or instruction in reading children's stories or other behaviors that assist children. The goal is to help adults become more literate so they may positively influence their children's literacy development.

Type 4: Indirect Adults - Direct Children

Pre-school and school-aged children are the primary recipients of service in this type of program. Parents may be invited to participate, but usually do not receive literacy instruction for their own needs. (1990a, 53-55)

In addition to Nickse's four basic models, there are **other ways** of classifying family literacy programs. The National Center for Family Literacy, for example, cites three basic types of programs that are developed in response to needs of specific target groups: group-based, home-based, and a combination of the two (1994a, 15-16). Other ways of classifying family literacy activities include parents and children in groups; parent workshops or discussions; homework clubs, advocacy, comprehensive or upgrading programs, PaPaL-type (Parents as Partners as Learners) programs; and kits/promotion/public awareness (McCoy and Watts 3.00-3.3.28). Family literacy programs have also been grouped according to E.S.L.-, first language-, or Francophone focus, or according to the institutions they are associated with (library-based, school-based, etc.).

B. Family Literacy Models in Alberta

It's important to note that this list of models and the programs listed in Appendix A are by no means definitive. We have documented as many as we could identify and gather information on, however the number of programs changes constantly as practitioners plan and train for incorporating family literacy into their programs. Numbers also change as projects close due to lack of funds, or to other challenges.

At this point in Alberta, there are five distinct types of family literacy programs in operation, as well as numerous family literacy initiatives and promotions. They're described here as examples of the range of programming in the province, and often as the model used or adapted by other programs.

Homespun

The most well-known of family literacy programs in Alberta is the Homespun Family Literacy Project, developed at Brooks Campus of Medicine Hat College. Homespun officially began in January 1991 with the mandate of reaching at-risk families and providing parents with instruction on how to read with their children and how to encourage a supportive literacy environment in the home.

Homespun began with a model developed in Raleigh, North Carolina called Motherhead. In the Motherhead program mothers met once or twice weekly to share children's literature centred on a particular child development theme. The Homespun instructor/coordinator received curriculum and training from the Motherhead headquarters.

Modifications to the Motherhead model to more truly reflect our population and to include Canadian content led to the evolution of the new model. Homespun. Three primary components make up Homespun's curriculum: 1) a focus on children's literature as well as extended discussion about the book and activities related to the story, 2) opportunities for parents to explore ideas on encouraging an environment in the home that is conducive to literacy development through readings, discussion, videos, and instruction, and 3) exploration and development of the parent's own literacy abilities, beliefs, and attitudes through personal journals, writing for children and discussing adult readings.

Homespun sessions run for 15 weeks, with evening or daytime workshops offered for 2 hours each week. There are an average of 10 parents in each workshop. In addition to regular classes, Homespun has a volunteer in-home program for parents who can't come to class.

Communities that have adapted the Homespun model include Calgary, Wildwood, Lacombe, Stony Plain, Pincher Creek, Edson, Strathcona County, Wetaskiwin, Lloydminster, Edmonton, Rocky Mountain House, and Red Deer. Homespun has also provided training to several other literacy practitioners who are planning family literacy projects.

Books for Babies

Another model used in Alberta is the Books for babies program in Cardston. Books for Babies is based on the philosophy that since children spend the first (and most critical) five or six years at home, parents need support in becoming more effective "first" teachers.

The Books for Babies program has three distinct phases. Phase One is the hospital presentation phase where the program presents a book bag to new mothers at the local hospital. These canvas bags are stencilled "Books for Babies" and contain an information sheet from the provincial Home and School Association on the importance of reading to babies and young children, a tip sheet on family reading from the International Reading Association, three children's books, and a Native coloring book produced at the nearby Blood reserve, with text in both Blackfoot and English. In addition to the book bag, there is a video presentation at the hospital on the importance of reading to children.

The second phase of the program consists of informal follow-up activities and keeping in touch with the parents. When the babies are brought in for check-ups and immunizations, the staff at the Cardston and Stand-Off Health Units talk to parents about the importance of reading to their children, and ask them if they received a book bag and whether they've had time to use the materials. There is a book bag on display at the health unit, and the family literacy video is also shown at the health units and local libraries.

Other follow-up activities include a newsletter produced twice each year, and a workshop for parents of newborns held once each year. There is also a Books for Babies section at the local library.

The third phase of the program is the evaluation phase. The program is just ending its third of five years; running Books for Babies for five years will enable them to evaluate the effects of the program on children entering kindergarten. The evaluator for the program is an educator in the public school system in Cardston, one of many examples of the extensive community support for Books for Babies.

Among the programs that have adapted the Books for Babies model are Drayton Valleys "Tiny Tot Tales," "Books for Babies" in Brooks and Pincher Creek, and "Books for Kids" in Nanton.

Partnership Approach to Literacy (P.A.L.)

P.A.L. began in Pincher Creek in 1989 as a special "preventative literacy" project. It offers one-on-one support and modelling of the enjoyment of reading by tutors to school students who do not enjoy reading, do not choose to read, and are in the bottom third of their class. Its approach is based on literacy development principles and on the work of the National Reading Styles Institute of New York, which proposes that we teach students how to read through their strengths and preferences, rather than dwell on their weaknesses. Tutors are volunteers, or are peer tutors from junior high and high school. Training is conducted in conjunction with the Read/Write Adult Literacy Project.

P.A.L. recognizes the importance of parents reading to their children, and "reading for enjoyment" workshops are held to give parents strategies. There are "Read to Me, Mom and Dad" workshops for parents of pre-school children, and "How to Make Your Child a Better Reader" workshops for parents of school children. Inservices are held for teachers in understanding learning styles, and student profiles are developed and discussed with staff.

Children participating in the P.A.L. Project are referred to the program by their school, their parents, or themselves. They meet with their tutor at the school during or after school hours, usually once a week for an hour and a half. The pair uses reading material selected by the student and prepared by the tutor based on student interest. Activities include learning reading strategies such as predicting, D.R.T.A., language experience, phonetics, and many "hands-on" experiential activities.

During the 1993-94 school year, the Pincher Creek district had 77 student-tutor pairs, and worked in partnership with all the schools, both public and separate. The coordinator hopes to see P.A.L. expand westward into the Crowsnest Pass this year, funding permitting.

Several projects have been started in Alberta based on the Pincher Creek P.A.L. model; some include parent workshops and some do not. P.A.L. projects are currently operating in Pincher Creek, Red Deer, Wetaskiwin, Sundre, and Barrhead.

Alpha Familiale A St-Paul (Family Literacy in St. Paul)

Alpha Familiale began in St. Paul in February 1995, a project of the Adult Literacy Program. The adult learners in the program asked the staff to implement a family literacy component so they could help their children and grandchildren with reading, comprehension, and writing skills. Alpha Familiale did not use any particular model for their program, but rather used the specific needs of participants as its basis. Adult learners have been and are involved in planning and developing the program.

The main goal of Alpha Familiale is to break the cycle of illiteracy with French families in the community. Other goals are to develop better communication between the parents and their children; to increase parents' knowledge in French in terms of reading, writing, and comprehension; and to generally increase interest in reading in French.

Teachers of the participants' children supply school material and supplementary exercises, which are both used in the program and provided so parents know what their children are working on in school.

The group meets together for two hours one afternoon a week. (Because clientele are from a rural community, access is an important issue.) For the first hour, parents and children spend time reading together. The focus is on understanding the story, word comprehension, vocabulary extension, and building writing skills using story vocabulary. In the second hour, parents go to their literacy class while children work on homework with a tutor's assistance.

Seeing their parents in a classroom is a great motivation for children. They are proud of their parents and very supportive. Another motivating factor is that there is more free time in the home because the program includes time for homework for both children and parents.

Alpha Familiale was developed initially for the French adult learners in the Adult Literacy Program and their families. In mid-March the program plans to open to the rest of the community; there was a waiting list in its first month of operation.

Rhyming Babies

The Rhyming Babies program was started in Stettler in 1988 and was based on the "Time for Twos" program in Rimbey. The coordinator then developed the program with the help of Canada World Youth Exchange program (Two young men, one French Canadian and one from India, helped develop the program.) The program has four primary goals:

The program encourages parents in the community to involve their babies and toddlers in a program which combines socialization with others, increased language development through rhymes and poems, as well as fine and gross motor development through finger plays, actions, and dancing.

- It fosters the relationship between parent and child.
- It promotes a meeting place for parents to socialize.
- It encourages use of the library after each session.

The program is delivered by a volunteer coordinator with the support of the librarian. The group meets for an hour one morning each week at the local library.

Parents as Tutors (P.A.T.)

Parents as Tutors (P.A.T.) is a partnership project between the Rainbow Literacy Society and the schools in the County of Vulcan #2. The objective of the project is to provide training and support to parents who are interested in helping their child become a better reader through a process known as Paired Reading.

P.A.T. is available to families who have elementary school children in the County of Vulcan. A trained person from the community goes into the family's home five times a week for eight weeks. These sessions are fifteen minutes long, and are used to demonstrate Paired Reading. The trained community person is a non-teacher who acts as a liaison between the school and the family. This person's primary role is not to tutor the child, but to provide training and positive support to the parents as they develop skills as their child's tutor. In order to join the program, parents must agree to participate in each of the Paired Reading Sessions, and to take over from the tutor before the end of the sixth week.

Other Family Literacy Initiatives

Some literacy programs contain a family literacy element, but have a different primary focus. Other initiatives are not on-going, but undertaken as a special event or promotion.

The **Lamplight** project in Fort McMurray is a relatively new literacy project aligned specifically at women. The emphasis is on developing the literacy skills of women in the context of their particular learning needs and styles. Family literacy is an important but secondary element. Child care is provided for the women who attend. The children play and read and write apart from the mothers sometimes, but at other times join the mothers to work on literacy skills together.

In Lac La Biche, the **Program for Adult Literacy** decided to promote the idea that parents should be active in encouraging their children's reading, writing, and numeracy efforts. One of the program's board members had received training at the National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville, Kentucky, home of the Kenan model of family literacy, in 1993. The promotion took the form of handing out board books to parents of Infants, as well as sending out brochures to parents of pre-schoolers and early elementary school age children on the importance of reading. Workshops have also been held for these parents on helping young children with literacy skills.

In many communities around the province, public and elementary school libraries offer special preschool story times and other programs for parents and young children.

In addition to on-going programs, there are a vast array of special events to promote reading in the family. For example, many community agencies and local businesses get involved in celebrating such things as Education Week and Family Day with book giveaways in maternity and pediatric wards, read-a-thons, workshops, and other events.

Family Treasures is a program developed by the Canadian Museums Association and supported by the National Literacy Secretariat as a model project for the Reading the Museums program in 1993. Jean Bruce, historian at the Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec, originally developed Family Treasures for school classrooms. She went to Pincher Creek in October of 1993 to help students think about their family's treasures and to write about them.

Students and tutors of the P.A.L. student literacy project and the READ/ WRITE Adult Literacy Project were instructed to involve their families in finding special family stories and/or objects which had been passed down from one generation to the next. Stories were written down by these student-tutor pairs, often with family participation, and collected in an album. Staff from the Glenbow Museum in Calgary began the project with Pincher Creek literacy students and tutors, who contributed a favourite family dish to a potluck dinner as a kickoff to the hunt for family treasures. The local museum and the Glenbow organized tours for participants, to show them other collections of family and community items.

C. Family Literacy Models Outside Alberta

In the following pages, we'll look at models that are significantly different from those operating in Alberta. For a more comprehensive list of family literacy programs, and for contact names and addresses, see Appendix A.

British Columbia

Several programs in B.C. have used the Kenan model as the basis for their work, integrating adult literacy and early childhood with other life skills, reading enrichment, and parent-child together activities. An example of this type of program is **Families in Motion** in Chilliwack. This program combines adult education (upgrading, parenting skills, and job readiness training), child-centred preschool activities, and parent-child together activities (reading, crafts, creative play). The program runs two mornings a week for three hours, and includes a hot breakfast for participants. It also includes activities at the public library and parents volunteering at the local elementary school.

Other family literacy programs that combine adult education, early childhood development, and parent-child activities include the original **Learning Together** program of Capilano College/ North Shore Neighbourhood House and **Reading Mothers Raising Families**, which operated in Fernie in 1994.

Saskatchewan

The most widely used model in Saskatchewan is **Come Read With Me**, based on Homespun and adapted to fit Saskatchewan. As with Homespun, the Come Read With Me model varies from one program to another, depending on resources and community needs. Projects include Come Read With Me in Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, and Swift Current; Going the Distance: Family Literacy in Rural Saskatchewan in Weyburn; the Teen and Young Parent Program in Regina; and l'ABC et la Famille in Prince Albert.

The Push Literacy Action Now (PLAN) model in Washington DC was also used as a resource for the adult literacy component of l'ABC de la Famille.

In addition to Come Read With Me, the Teen and Young Parent Program in Regina incorporates "Nobody's Perfect" for parent education; pregnancy, education, and vocational counselling; and the "Experienced Mothers Program" for life management skills.

The Kenan model was adapted for First Nations people in the **Parent and Child Together** program at Northlands College in Stanley Mission. The decision to use this model was based on the fact that counsellors and instructors list the number one cause of absenteeism from all adult programs in northern Saskatchewan as babysitting problems. A program which incorporates parents and children together alleviates this problem. In addition, the local social worker and community school staff report that illiterate parents fear the school system and worry about their children growing away from them. They also lack the skills to help their children with school work and do not encourage them to excel. In addition to adult literacy, pre-school, and parent-child activities, the program also addresses problems unique to the community with a focus on problem solving and community development.

The **Family Reading Program** in Prince Albert is a composite of programs researched by the volunteer coordinator. It has evolved from a direct parent-indirect child model to direct parent-direct child through collaboration with a community development project, and now includes preschool as one component. The program's primary objective of raising literacy levels within families is reinforced by introducing basic information about child development.

Manitoba

Bookmates in Winnipeg began in 1984 as a program where adult volunteers accompanied preschool child to the library to read to them. In 1991, the program changed to focus on encouraging parents to read to their children. Parents and children take part in workshops in a variety of locations, including libraries, daycares, cultural centres, and schools. Children take part in literacy-related activities while parents learn about different literacy issues and learn how to integrate literacy activities into the family's routine. Workshop topics include why and how to read to your child, the use of environmental print, and engaging children in reading through writing. Parent and child together activities are also part of the sessions. Workshops are delivered in the groups' first language by trained volunteers; they have been offered to Vietnamese, Filipino, Laotian, Portuguese, First Nations, Spanish-speaking and English-speaking groups to date.

Pluri-Elles, based in St. Boniface, has a Francophone family literacy project operating in Winnipeg and, as of January 1995, is in the process of developing a similar project for rural communities. The workshops in Winnipeg include the following components: parent and child together listening to facilitators reading aloud; parent self-esteem activities; crafts and plays for children; basic French grammar for parents (or other identified needs); and self-esteem activities for older children and games for younger children. All activities are organized according to the needs of each group, and every activity promotes the French language directly or indirectly.

Literacy Initiatives for Tomorrow (LIFT) is a project of the Manitoba Child Care Association. The project has two main components: (1) to purchase materials and organize four literacy curriculum kits to be distributed to child care centres in various regions of the province, and (2) to deliver a series of four workshops on literacy development in the early years and the effective use of the kits in child care centres.

L.I.F.T. has six primary goals:

- it promotes, within the child care community, a deeper understanding of the Importance of literacy development in young children;
- it provides early childhood educators with strategies, skills, and resources needed to enhance literacy development in their early childhood education program;
- it provides an opportunity for professionals to become familiar with appropriate materials for literacy enhancement and learn how to present them to children effectively;
- it helps early childhood educators recognize the value of Including these materials in the curriculum on a regular basis;
- it raises awareness in early childhood educators of how they can influence parental attitudes about reading with their children; and
- it provides early childhood educators with strategies and skills on how to support and promote parental skills that will enhance literacy development at home.

The Day Care Volunteer Program in Winnipeg has a **Family Literacy Pilot Project** that operates in three daycare centres. The project includes a home reading program that provides book bags for each child and culturally appropriate children's books for lending. Workshops are offered to parents on the importance of reading with young children, and information on adult literacy programs in the community is presented to parents as well.

The **Family Literacy Program** at Stevenson-Britannia conducted a series of six play workshops in the spring of 1993. The group consisted of twenty children and fourteen adults. The discussion and workshop component of each session focused on the importance of play, with each session being 25-35 minutes in length. Adults worked separately from their children, who were involved in play and story time.

Ontario

BabyTALK in North Bay is a program similar in many ways to the Books for Babies program in Cardston. The components of the program are:

- parents of newborns receive a board book and a book on the importance of reading to young children;
- parents receive a newsletter during their baby's first three years. The newsletter contains information on child development and a list of recommended books at the library;
- "Now Baby's Here," a program presenting rhymes, music and ideas for homemade toys, plus presentations by the Health Unit; and
- "Lapsits," a program for toddlers and their families with songs, stories, and finger plays. Lapsits are held at libraries and family resource centres.

Foster Farm Family Literacy Program in Ottawa consists of five components:

- The Homework Program operates three evenings a week for two hours. It is open to all school children in the area age 5 years and up. For the first half hour, volunteers and staff read to children and listen to children read to them. Older children with homework can stay for the next hour and a half, the program provides a place to study and do homework in a supportive atmosphere.
- The Adult Literacy Program is for adults who need help with basic reading and writing skills. Adults can work one-on-one or in small group, and are involved in setting the curriculum. Additional groups are formed as requested, such as a parenting group and assertiveness training. Parents involved in this program are required to participate in the Read to Your Child component. The Adult E.S.L. Program is also based on the needs of the students. In addition to providing English language training and an introduction to Canadian culture, the program offers citizenship classes in the evenings and an opportunity for involvement in other community centre activities.
- The Combined Literacy/E.S.L. Child Care Program offers child care for the pre-school children of adult students enrolled in programs.
- Every morning the parents come into the child care room for the Read to Your Child Program, where they share books and stories with their children. The child care staff reads a story to the whole group and leads in songs and finger plays. In order to prepare parents for the program, a series of workshops are held on various aspects of reading to children.

The John Howard Society of Victoria/Haliburton initiated a family literacy project in 1993, setting up reading circles in four rural communities. They produced a Reading Circles Manual to be used to start programs in rural communities, and continue to act as a resource for those groups. The Society also offers a summer reading camp for children ages 5 to 11.

Quebec

De Pas en Mots is a project based on the PLAN (Push Literacy Action Now) model in Washington DC and adapted for Francophone low-literacy parents of infants. Workshops focus on parenting information and using children's literature.

Two primary schools, a library, and a women's shelter are partners in **Main dans la main** in Quebec City. Literacy learners, parents, and their children under the age of eight years take part in workshops with the goal of developing an interest in reading.

The **Jimmy Sandy Memorial School** is an Aboriginal school in Kawawachikamach that has several small projects that relate to family literacy. The school staff organize book fairs for the school and community, including a Native book fair to raise money to purchase more Native books. These books are used to encourage more home reading. The school also offers parent workshops on reading and writing. Another project involves elementary students, parents, elders, high school students from the Home Economics class, and school staff. The elders sew canvas book bags and embroider them with traditional Naskapi designs. Home Economics students learn from the elders and help with the bags, which are used by elementary students to take books home to read with their parents.

Learning With My Child is a project of the Adult Education Services of the Sault Saint Louis School Board in collaboration with the English elementary schools of LaSalle, Lachine, and Ville Saint-Pierre. The project has three components:

- A planned reading program is offered for children in elementary school who are experiencing difficulties in learning to read and write, or whose parents are unable to help them because of low literacy skills or other difficulties. Every night the student takes home a reading assignment to be done with the parent.
- Workshops for parents include teaching how to read, the objectives of the school program, and the attitudes and behaviors to be developed by the child at school.
- Tutoring is provided for children with learning difficulties who need help at home from an adult volunteer. The tutor's aim is to foster an interest in books so that the child becomes a better reader. They meet twice a week and work in the presence of the parents.

Maritime and Atlantic Provinces

As part of a wide range of community education programs, the Port au Port Community Education Initiative and Laubach Canada offer **Parents as Teaching Partners** in several schools in the Comer Brook area of Newfoundland. Elementary school staff target parents who would benefit from the program, who are invited to take part in a four-week series of workshops. The workshops focus on developing a love of reading in children and increasing communication between home and school. The objectives are to increase the children's reading levels, provide information on literacy services, strengthen parents literacy skills, and ultimately break the cycle of family illiteracy. The community schools involved in the Initiative also offer a Books for Babies program, Breakthrough to Literacy (where teachers work with grade one students and their parents), and parenting programs.

Parents as Reading Partners is a community-based adult literacy project of the Prince Edward Island Literacy Alliance. In this model, adult learners, educators, Home and School, literacy groups, and community organizations collaborate in the program implementation, delivery, and evaluation. The program is designed to reach three adult populations: parents of preschool children, parents of school age children, and adults with literacy difficulties. The program varies in length from 10 - 12 weeks to 6 - 12 months, depending on the group. The course teaches over fifty learning and reading strategies. Areas of learning include understanding the learner, the process of reading, the process of thinking, processing information, the process of writing, math as language, and life management.

The Literacy Section of the Nova Scotia Department of Education has developed family literacy programs for three specific groups in the province: English-speaking, Acadian, and Mi'kmaq. **Learning Together** is a series of four workshops that aim to help English-speaking parents feel more confident and equipped in their efforts to support their child's learning in the home and at school. The department has published a series of booklets as part of these workshops: *Families and Learning*; *Families and Reading*; *Families and Writing*; and *Families and the School*.

In addition to Learning Together, the Nova Scotia Department of Education, in collaboration with the Acadian Parents Federation of Nova Scotia, has developed a program entitled

J'apprends pour mon enfant. The main objective of the program is to emphasize the importance of parents in their children's intellectual development. A series of four workshops for parents is based on the contents of three booklets, which offer practical suggestions on how to encourage reading, writing, and oracy in the home. The booklets are *Apprendre, découvrir son monde!*; *Lire, quel plaisir!*; and *Écrire, faire danser le mots*.

The Nova Scotia Department of Education is also developing a Mi'kmaq family literacy program; both the French and Mi'kmaq versions address cultural factors which influence learning.

Northwest Territories and Yukon

Unfortunately, we did not receive any response from the north to our surveys and letters of inquiry.

Outside Canada

In the U.S., the William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust funds a type of family literacy which has become known as the **Kenan model**. This model is the basis for the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project, which is promoted by the National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville, Kentucky. The Kenan model is an adaptation of Sharon Darling's Parent and Child Education (P.A.C.E.) program; changes include more time each day for parents and children to be together, parents as school volunteers, extended teacher training, and a career education component in the adult literacy classes.

The primary goal of the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project is to "break the intergenerational cycle of under-education and poverty by improving parents' basic skills and attitudes toward education, their parenting skills, their children's pre-literacy and school readiness skills, and the overall quality of parent-child relationships (National Center for Family Literacy 1994b, 10). There are four key components to Kenan-type programs: early childhood education, parent literacy training, parent time, and parent and child together (PACT).

Even Start is an American family literacy program that aims to improve the educational opportunities of children and adults by integrating early childhood education, adult education for parents, and parenting education into one program. All three components are seen as necessary to effect lasting change and improve children's success at school.

The **Home Instruction Program (HIPPY)** was developed at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel in 1969, and has since been adapted in several countries around the world. (See UNESCO [1993] for descriptions of the Dutch HIPPY Experiment and the Turkish Early Enrichment Project.) HIPPY was introduced in the U.S. in 1982. The goals of the project are to provide home-based mutual learning experiences for parents and children; to prepare pre-school aged children for better success in school; and to motivate parents to act as their children's first teachers. An instructional program concentrates on language, discrimination skills, and problem solving. Storybooks are given to families for

language instruction. Parents learn how to ask questions about content, vocabulary, and concepts. Problem-solving activities encourage children to list sort, match, and group attributes and ideas. Parents work with their children fifteen minutes a day, five days a week, thirty weeks a year for two years. During the second year the child is in kindergarten. (Barbara Bush Foundation 36-38)

Bichester Under Fives and Families Centre (BUFF) is a project in England that focuses on encouraging parents to develop their own skills and to take more responsibility for their child's education and development. Social service providers collaborate with parents and schools, mainly through educational and social events, meetings, and access to resources. (Isserlis et al 1994b, 20)

Boston City Hospital has developed a unique program that integrates family literacy into pediatric primary care. First started in 1989, the program has three components. In the waiting room, volunteers model for parents how to listen, question, discuss, and read books with children. In the examination room, the pediatrician provides guidance about books by implicitly showing parents the principles of diagnostic reading. Finally, at each visit, beginning at six months, the pediatrician gives the parent a developmentally and culturally appropriate book for the child to take home. The hospital has also developed a program of research to evaluate the effects of this intervention. (Needlman 1-2)

Paired Reading is another model of family literacy that has been researched extensively, primarily at the University of Dundee in Scotland, and incorporated into many different tutoring situations. The Paired Reading technique was developed by Morgan (1976) and refined by Tizard, Schofield, and Hewison (1982), Topping and McKnight (1984), and Topping and Wolfendale (1985). Paired Reading materials have also been developed by the Northern Alberta Reading Specialists Council in Edmonton, with a study undertaken in Edmonton schools in 1990. In Paired Reading, the child selects high interest reading material, regardless of its level of difficulty, from school, the community library, or home. Parent and child spend at least five minutes of paired reading a day for five days a week, usually for about eight weeks in the studies documented. The method involves pre-reading activities and then reading in unison at the child's pace. When the child is ready, he/she begins solo reading with the parent giving positive feedback and support. Any errors on the part of the child are corrected simply and positively, and the pair resume duet reading. The session continues with a flow of duet and solo reading. (Topping 1993)

Proyecto Padres e Hijos in Chile is an educational program for parents and pre-school children living in conditions of poverty. The purpose of the project is to "empower mothers and fathers in their parental role and to stimulate children's interactions with their family and their environment in order to promote healthy socio-emotional, cognitive, and biological development" (Filp and Valdes in UNESCO 1993, 211). The project, which began in 1971, was developed by the Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Educación (C.I.D.E.), a non-profit organization. The program consists of weekly meetings of parent groups, led by a team of two monitors trained by C.I.D.E. Group discussions centre around a selected topic, and are supported by educational materials (specifically designed for different cultural conditions), simulation games, and group

activities. Parents receive teaching materials which will allow them to carry out specific activities with their children at home. (215)

In 1990 a temporary UNESCO workshop was set up in Mazar-i-Sharif in northern Afghanistan in collaboration with the **Afghan Carpet Exporters' Guild**. The workshop was to train families in traditional dyeing and weaving techniques for the purpose of encouraging home carpet weaving industry. Traditional techniques and family or tribal economic structures have been largely replaced in the past fifty years by urban, non-traditional workshops and processes. It became apparent in the Mazar-i-Sharif workshop that many youth, women, and girls had been deprived of all forms of educational services. The coordinator felt that the structure of the skills training workshop would be an ideal opportunity to introduce other elements of basic education, such as literacy, numeracy, health education, and environmental awareness. (Gilles and Williams 1994)

These are just a sample of international initiatives. For an excellent collection of perspectives on intergenerational literacy research and program development, see UNESCO. Early Intervention and Culture 1994.

Chapter VI

Getting Started

The following two chapters are the "practical" part of the practical guide. The information in this chapter will lead you through the various steps involved in planning and initiating a family literacy program.

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VI. Getting Started

In addition to the information outlined on the following pages, we highly recommend the work of Janet Isserlis, Lee Weinstein, Leslie McCue, and Virginia Sauve as a guide to establishing a family literacy project. The group's publication Community Literacy: an Intergenerational Perspective (Process Guide) contains excellent information on the steps involved in starting a project as well as sample needs assessments, letters to agencies, evaluation documents, and more.

There is a logical order to proceed in developing a family literacy project, just as there is in any program development. What that order is depends largely on your approach to literacy work and your objectives. We have structured the following section based on the view that involving other stakeholders early is essential for building support and ensuring your program meets the needs of your community. It should be noted, however, that many of the following elements are interconnected and would happen concurrently rather than consecutively. For example, building public awareness of the need for and development of family literacy programming in your community should be something that starts immediately and continues throughout the program.

A. Community Collaboration

Literacy in general, and family literacy in particular, concerns much more than supporting reading, writing, and numeracy development. Literacy development is interwoven with the overall growth and well-being of children, parents, adults, families, and communities.

Historically, the needs of adults and children have been fragmented and categorized, met by a diverse and separate array of government departments, social and human service agencies, and educational institutions. This system fails to recognize the interrelated nature of social issues, their solutions, and their cyclical, intergenerational nature.

In recent years, an increasing number of individuals and agencies involved in human service delivery have come to realize the importance, in fact the necessity, of interagency support, cooperation, and collaboration. Some communities have been practicing collaboration for years; for others the recent downturn in the economy and resulting financial restraints and cuts have made it a priority.

In order to realize strong and effective family literacy programs, we must involve and work together with other partners and stakeholders. As the Intergenerational Literacy Project points out in their discussion of the connections between family literacy projects and community-based organizations:

Literacy is a critical strand of community development. Broadly viewed, community development can encompass economic development, housing and neighbourhood concerns, community health and safety, as well as building solidarity within and among diverse groups of people. Community-based organizations work to address needs and issues affecting members of a community; increased access to literacy learning can increase the effectiveness with which this work is done....

Literacy interweaves throughout the range, of a family's (and a community's) interactions with service providing agencies and institutions. We see literacy as an integral strand within the work of community development connecting families to health, school, employment and neighbourhood resources, as well as facilitating participation in these institutions. (Isserlis et al 1994a, 27-28)

Partnerships have a direct bearing on many aspects of program planning and development. Looking at the Toyota Families for Learning prototype, we see the following as reasons for building partnerships:

- to use existing resources and expertise, as much as possible, to create and implement a family literacy program;
- as a means of identifying and learning about your community's needs and resources from those directly involved;
- to gain the support of agencies, institutions, and government;
- to raise the resources to do a good job; and
- to prepare the community for a family literacy program (Brizius and Foster 79)

Ruth Nickse and Shelley Quezada. were involved in the Community Collaborations for Family Literacy (C.C.F.L.) project in Massachusetts in 1990-91. This joint development project involved more than forty social and educational services in six communities. The aim of the project was to improve the ability of public libraries to serve at-risk families by developing community-specific family literacy projects.

While the C.C.F.L. project differs significantly from the current situation in Alberta because of the legislated funding for early intervention programs in the U.S., the work that Nickse and Quezada have done on collaborations is still very useful for our efforts here.

In the published results of the C.C.F.L. project, the authors list the characteristics of the most successful collaborations as including:

- involving the key players
- assessing the contributions which each participant could contribute to the project
- achieving a shared vision for a family literacy project
- developing a project design which all members could support
- fostering a climate which allows for divergent opinions and ideas
- setting attainable, achievable objectives for the shared project
- assigning tasks for carrying out project design
- building ownership at both interagency and intragency levels
- providing a mechanism to deal with misunderstandings or barriers
- beginning to institutionalize change within organizations which would ultimately affect the delivery or development of improved services a communicating the success of a collaborative effort (Quezada and Nickse 41)

Collaboration is essential for family literacy programs to be effective and sustained, but collaboration is a challenging and complex process. To avoid misunderstandings, roles and responsibilities of different partners should be clearly stated and documented as the program is developed. (Nickse 1990, 13)

A recent development in Alberta highlights the growing importance placed on collaboration and inter-agency cooperation. In November 1994 the Minister of Family and Social Services announced a three-year transition process to redesign the planning and delivery of children's services in the province. This new initiative has four key areas of change: community delivery, focus on early intervention, Aboriginal services, and integrated services. (For more information on the "Focus on Children" initiative, call the Alberta Commissioner of Services for Children in Edmonton, 422-5011.)

Findings in Alberta

The following comments are examples of experiences and insights Alberta practitioners have had building community collaborations:

- "When you want to work with someone, you have to make it clear what's in it for them. There is so much change happening (in terms of cutbacks, etc.). You need to sell the idea to them, show them how it will benefit their clients and make their jobs easier. Presenting options is important, and so is keeping partners informed."
- "Collaboration requires meetings and constant contact. Our advisory group is made up of community stakeholders."
- "Collaboration is always advisable in family literacy. Colleges can't always have expertise, resources. Collaboration is also necessary to get people out to programs."

- We meet with the Adult Literacy Council bimonthly. We have given many formal presentations to service groups, community organizations, and church groups. There are constant one-to-one personal contacts with interested persons and groups. Newsletters are sent to program participants, stakeholders, and contributors."
- "We approached each (potential partner) individually."
- "Collaboration process: one-to-one self introduction to school and daycare; meeting set up with all parties involved to discuss possibilities; second meeting to discuss further; presentation by primary collaborators to school staff and daycare board; two meetings then held for parents."
- "This year we are collaborating with the Friendship Centre in their efforts to run a "Brighter Futures" program for parents and children in the "at risk" category. The Homespun program will be a portion of the Brighter Futures initiative. We have also collaborated with the Basic Education class at the local A.V.C. to provide a portion of the Homespun program to participants."
- "As this was an Association project, interested C.L.L.L.A. (County of Lacombe Lifelong Learning Association) members volunteered for the committee. The logical tie between this project and C.L.L.L.A.'s Adult Literacy Program prompted the involvement of the Adult Literacy Coordinator. Because we were looking at families whose children were aged 5-7, the local elementary school was invited to be involved."
- "When two agencies recognize a common area of need, collaborations become the most sensible route to take. Collaboration to me means that we can fill the need of both agencies and each do about half the work. It can be a very positive relationship."
- Lots of talk -- educating one another about our setups and organizations -- and looking for the most convenient process for all involved. The literacy program is responsible for check-ups on the system and working out hitches."
- "We met with each group, explained the proposed program, and invited them to become partners in the Family Reading Program. In retrospect, it would have been better to invite agencies to be part of planning the program?"
- "Personalities, small-town dynamics play a large role."
- "I just got the idea, then decided to develop it with the help of Canada World Youth exchange program. (We hosted two young men, actually, one French Canadian, the other from India.) They had a very enthusiastic approach and really got people interested!"
- "I have been in touch with the teachers of the children and have asked them to supply-some school material and supplementary exercises familiar to the children. It is good for the parent to realize what kind of material the children work with."
- "Although Social Services is very supportive, they aren't able to provide practical information (phone numbers, etc.). We're working with schools and kindergarten because they have an accurate view of families who need support."

Note: F.L.A.G. is planning to research and develop resources and workshops on community collaborations in 1995-96!

B. Identifying Stakeholders

Many family literacy projects in the province told us that their organizations already had built bridges to other agencies, or knew who to approach, based on previous collaborations or community building projects. If you don't have this same background to work from, how to go about it will depend on your intentions and your particular community.

First of all, who do you want to involve, and why? The common reasons, as discussed earlier, are to draw in the expertise and resources of others so as to do a more comprehensive, effective job of reaching and supporting families in the community. Another obvious reason is to secure support, financial and otherwise, for your project.

Who else in the community has an interest in strengthening and supporting the family? In improving literacy? In providing early intervention services to children? Who has access to the families you want to reach? Who would like the opportunity to have their agency name associated with this Initiative? Who has funding designated for community development? Answers to these questions will help you define a list of potential partners.

Many communities, large and small, have some type of community services network that meets to support, cooperate among, and inform individual agencies. In addition to their meetings, these groups often publish directories of services in the area, an excellent resource for identifying and contacting agencies. Another often-overlooked resource is the telephone book. The most recent Alberta Government Telephone book has a section called "Community Pages," which lists, among other things, community services grouped according to the problems and services they handle. Kathy Day of the Friends of Literacy Society in Pincher Creek has adapted Nickse's process for initiating community collaborations called "mapping the community," which also uses the telephone book.

Another avenue for finding out what resources and agencies exist in an area is by contacting the local Chamber of Commerce or municipal government. The local library is a good source of information as well.

The number of stakeholders and potential partners will of course vary from one community to another, an issue raised by several literacy practitioners across the province. Variables include whether a literacy organization is situated in a rural or urban area, the size of the community, and the number of government, service, or educational institutions in the area. Situations can also vary depending on whether the community has a strong history of inter-agency cooperation and networking. The support of leaders in the community is also an important variable that can affect the success of family literacy initiatives.

At the Roots of Literacy Symposium in Brooks in October 1992, small group discussions led to the **following list of potential partners** in collaboration:

- media (particularly newspapers, who have a vested interest in avid readers)
- businesses
- teachers
- school trustees
- housing
- authorities
- Social Services
- parent-teacher associations
- ministerial groups
- recreation departments
- libraries
- colleges
- universities
- public health authorities
- service clubs
- Native associations
- seniors
- Metis groups
- Family and Community Support Services
- daycare associations
- students
- speech therapists
- multicultural associations
- Scouts and Guides
- book publishers
- International Reading Association
- physicians (especially as corporations)
- women's organizations
- Department of Labour
- Workers Compensation Board
- Employment and Immigration (most federal and provincial government departments)
- foundations
- literacy & adult literacy organizations
- food banks
- store-front law offices
- Corrections (Roots of Literacy 4)

Isserlis et al (1994a), working from a project based in the large urban centre Surrey, B.C., lists the following community-based organizations as potential contacts:

- municipal services (fire hall)
- employment/welfare (vocational guidance and employment services)
- health services (hospitals, medical health services, and mental health and rehabilitative services)
- education (alternate programs, colleges and universities, and libraries)
- legal services
- financial assistance
- housing (emergency housing/group homes, mental health community residence program)
- counselling (individual and family counselling, parent and family support services, specialized counselling)
- recreation (outdoor recreation and wildlife groups) -
- seniors services (seniors transportation, health assistance and programs, information services, recreation and social opportunities)
- youth services (infant daycare, group daycare centres, pre-school, residences for children, special needs children services, youth recreation, guidance and counselling programs)
- support groups (self help and support groups)
- community organizations (community services, services for Native people, multicultural services) (55-57)

Information from surveys

In our survey of family literacy programs in 1994, we asked for information on partnerships and stakeholders. Although many of the groups and agencies listed are the same as those identified by the Roots of Literacy report, the groupings may suggest possibilities for your community. It should be noted that the partners listed have a broad range of involvement and responsibility, including agencies that provide referrals, agencies that provide support such as photocopying or promotion, agencies that provide funding or in-kind contributions, and partners active in planning and developing the family literacy program.

The following information for projects in Alberta includes partners in each project, as well as the means used by the literacy organization to identify partners, if reported.

Head Start - Athabasca

- Social Services, F.C.S.S., A.A.A.L., L.C.A.

How partners identified:

- Coordinator had done employment training for local career services which involved Social Services. This work demonstrated what parents were dealing with and what type of home environment they were trying to build. Also demonstrated need to work on communication skills.

P.A.L. Program - Barrhead

- local literacy program, school special needs person, assistant superintendent, librarian

How partners identified:

- evolved from inter-agency group

Homespun - Brooks

- community college, Social Services, schools, adult education classes, health unit

Family Literacy Program- Forest Lawn Library - Calgary (ceased operation in 1994)

- public library, adult literacy program

How partners identified:

- picked community where school has problems with transience, students lacking skills
- partners worked together

The Learning Centre - Calgary

- Learning Centre, public library system, Family and Community Support Services (F.C.S.S.), daycares

Books for Babies - Cardston

- health units, library, school division, teachers, hospital, adult literacy coordinator, Home & School (parents), community groups (F.C.S.S.)

How partners identified:

- We contacted any individuals who might be concerned with family literacy, specifically targeting very young children.

Tiny Tot Tales - Drayton

- adult literacy association, health unit, hospital & women's auxiliary, Association for Community Living, Baby Welcome, Further Education Council, municipal library, Scholastic Canada

Be-dinning With Books - Edmonton

- F.C.S.S., public library, Social Services, health unit, Parkland Continuing Education, public school systems

BOOKS - Edmonton

- adult literacy association, University of Alberta, school, daycare centre

How partners identified:

- We approached one program first - a Head Start program - but met with little interest. We then approached an inner city school with attached daycare centre that we had heard was very approachable. They were, and we stayed with them.

Homespun - Edson

- adult literacy- program, Friendship Centre, Alberta Vocational College Basic Education class, Catholic Women's League, Chamber of Commerce, Ladies Auxiliary to the Canadian Legion, Order of the Eastern Star, public and separate school divisions, Further Education Council, F.C.S.S., Nova Corporation, Weyerhaeuser, Kinette Club, Social Services

How partners identified:

- groups that could offer financial support were identified and approached.
- other groups were approached for participants

Lamplight - Fort McMurray

- community literacy program, community agencies

How partners identified:

- already established relationship between community literacy program and agencies
- "cold calls" to agencies that provide services to women and their children

Homespun - Lacombe

- Lifelong Learning Association members (F.C.S.S., public & regional libraries, adult literacy coordinator, Lifelong Learning Association coordinator), elementary principal

How partners identified:

- As this was an Association project, interested County of Lacombe Lifelong Learning Association (C.L.L.L.A.) members volunteered for the committee. The logical tie between this project and C.L.L.L.A.'s Adult Literacy Program prompted the involvement of the Adult Literacy Coordinator. Because we were looking at families whose children were aged 5-7, the local elementary school was invited to be involved.

LEARN - Lloydminster

- literacy program, Native Friendship Centre

How partners identified:

- We recognized the fact that our literacy program was not reaching many Aboriginal students. Our contact with the friendship centre on this issue "developed" into a family literacy project

Books for Kids - Nanton

- literacy program, health unit, public library, F.C.S.S. (Welcome Wagon)

How partners identified:

- determined which partners could reach the families we had targeted for our project (families with new babies, families new to community with children under seven)

Family Reading Program - Red Deer

- Literacy & Learning Centre, public library, local daily newspaper, Canada Post, McDonald's Restaurants, Catholic Social Services, Social Services, Family Service Bureau, Native Friendship Centre, Rotary Club, local child care society, public school division, local church organizations, health clinics

How partners identified:

- All are members of our Literacy Advisory Committee

Rocky Read to Me - Rocky Mtn. House

- Further Education Council (16 member organizations), children's librarian, health unit, Early Childhood Services coordinator, Social Services, friendship centre, ministerial group

How partners identified:

- through adult education and Further Education Council work

Rhyming Babies - Stettler

- F.C.S.S., health unit, social services help to promote the program. The nursery school has invited us to take the program to them.

How partners identified:

- we looked at other agencies who were involved with children

Homespun - Strathcona County

- adult literacy program, Further Education Council, schools, health units, daycares, kindergartens

Alpha familiale à Paul - St-Paul

How partners identified:

- We do not have any partners involved yet. However, we have presented to the French School Board and the French School a document relating the structure of our program, the goals that we want to achieve, and the method that we will be using to achieve them.

Reading PAL's - Sundre

- school district

Homespun - Wetaskiwin

- community literacy program, Social Services, public library, Further Education Council, four elementary schools

How partners identified:

- worked with them on other programs
- family reading workshops were advertised

Books 'n' Butterflies - Wildwood

- adult literacy association, playschools, libraries, health unit, social services

Across Canada

Family literacy projects across Canada report the same diverse range of partners and stakeholders as found in this province. In addition to those already identified in the Roots of Literacy report and the surveys of Alberta projects, partners include:

- provincial literacy organizations
- reading councils
- provincial departments of education
- provincial departments of adult and continuing education
- Roman Catholic separate schools, boards, and districts
- Francophone schools and boards
- Home and School federations
- education initiatives
- research collectives
- parents and parent committees
- Acadian parents associations
- high school Home Economics students
- Indian bands and tribal councils
- Native elders
- Native women's organizations
- Health Canada
- health promotion trust
- family resource centres
- community centres
- non-profit housing groups
- John Howard Society
- anti-violence coalitions
- children's aid societies
- women's shelter
- churches
- babysitting course graduates
- municipal governments

C. Forming an Advisory Committee

Forming an advisory committee should be one of the first stages of developing a family literacy program, in order to have community members involved from the beginning in exploration, planning, and implementation. Such involvement creates a sense of meaningful participation, ownership, and commitment.

What is the function of the advisory committee? As noted above, the advisory committee should be involved in the project from- the earliest stages, initially to guide the development and Implementation of a community needs assessment. Based on the information gathered in the needs assessment, the advisory committee develops an action plan and guides the development of the delivery system.

The advisory committee also provides on-going support to the program and can be instrumental in areas of promotion and recruitment. The advisory committee will also guide and develop assessment and evaluation strategies for the program.

Who are the stakeholders you have identified for this project? Who are your potential partners? Who do you need input and involvement from? Where can you find the expertise and knowledge needed to make the project a success? Answers to these questions will help identify potential members of the advisory committee. If your family literacy program will be run in conjunction with an existing literacy program, you will need representation from its staff and/or administration. Local school districts are very important stakeholders in family literacy, and should be involved in the advisory committee. If you hope to work with community agencies to obtain referrals and lend support, those agencies should be represented as well.

Parents are another obvious group that should be represented on the advisory committee. Are there existing groups that you could recruit from, such as a basic literacy class, members of a school parents' committee, or representatives of other organizations such as a community centre or housing registry?

Potential advisory committee members will require certain information on the role of the committee and expectations of its members. When inviting people to sit on the committee, be sure to provide an explanation of the committee's mandate, a definition of responsibilities, and the expected time commitments involved (in terms of start and end dates, number and frequency of meetings, and the approximate number of hours of involvement).

Cypress Hills Regional College in Saskatchewan has developed a process for building literacy partnerships that has useful ideas for forming an advisory committee. They suggest preparing a literacy awareness package which defines literacy and provides concrete examples to support statistics. They list the Saskatchewan Literacy Network as the agency that can access this type of information; the Alberta Association for Adult Literacy would be the agency to contact in this province.

The next step suggested by Cypress Hills is to research literacy activities that would work well in your region, and follow that by hosting an interagency meeting with potential stakeholders. You would present the literacy awareness package at this meeting and discuss any concerns arising from the group. Schedule a follow-up meeting with those interested in forming a partnership, and ask those participants to consider the specific needs that exist in their organizations.

The final stage suggested by Cypress Hills Is to organize the Partnership meeting. "Encourage individuals to express their literacy needs, and/or offer a service, but be prepared to suggest activities [roles] as the partners may look to you for guidance." (Banks 1994)

D. Developing an Action Plan

Once the advisory committee has been established, the first task it faces is to set objectives for itself and to plan actions and activities to achieve those objectives.

Because the foundation of the family literacy project is still being built, the advisory committee will not be able to develop long-term goals or objectives at this point. These will be formed after the preliminary work of setting a framework for the project, gathering information on the needs and resources in the community, and exploring possible means of meeting those needs.

In order to develop objectives for the advisory committee, a framework must be established that not only gives a general direction for the project (delivering a family literacy program), but that also integrates the goals and interests of participating individuals and organizations (Alary 172).

The overall objective of the committee will be to identify the need for a family literacy project in the community and how best to address that need. In addition to that objective, specific objectives of individual committee members might include the desire to promote literacy as an issue related to employment or health, or to develop a process where family literacy supports and complements the work of preschool and primary school educators, family and social service providers, etc. Such individual goals and concerns must be articulated within the group and built into the overall objectives (Alary 172).

General objectives, such as the development of a family literacy project and support of the family, must lead to setting of specific objectives, the means to achieve them, and the establishment of the time necessary to accomplish those tasks. Decisions should also be made as to which committee members will take responsibility for particular tasks.

In a discussion of developing a community care project, Alary identifies the following as "pitfalls" and challenges involved in organizing a diverse group:

The choice of specific objectives must be realistic, which is not always easy, as partners are still getting to know each other at this stage. The coordinator must not push the group to make explicit goals which are still implicit or difficult to acknowledge. The early identification of both those goals found to be desirable and those to be rejected prevents unnecessary tension and confusion....

The first objective presupposed that members of participating groups shared a concept and a vision of community care. As this was not the case, defining community care became the primary objective of the project.
(172)

Among the initial specific goals for the advisory committee will be developing and delivering a community needs assessment, choosing and/or adapting a family literacy model, and writing a proposal for funding. Other goals need to address the need for on-going program evaluation and building public awareness of the project.

Chapter VII

Developing Your Program

This chapter looks at the processes necessary to follow through on your action plan and establish your family literacy program.

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VII. Developing Your Program

A. Community Needs

Assessment

Earlier we talked about the importance of understanding family literacy, both for your own knowledge and in order to inform and persuade others of its value. Another important type of information for developing a family literacy project deals with understanding your community. You need to know what programs and services already exist in the way of literacy, family support, parenting, and school-based initiatives. You also need to know who participates in these programs and uses these services. What are the needs in the community that relate to family literacy? What needs are already being met and which are not?

This type of information may already have been researched and compiled, perhaps by your local literacy organization or other service agencies and coalitions. If not, it's important to do a community needs assessment so that the program you develop will be suited to the needs and resources of your particular community.

What is a community needs assessment? It is a systematic way of identifying needs in the community that relate to literacy, early childhood education, and family support. These needs are identified by obtaining input from a cross-section of individuals and agencies in the community. This process is positive in that, in the end, it focuses on the needs of the community as a whole rather than the needs of specific individuals.

A community needs assessment also identifies existing programs and services in the community that relate to the identified needs, as well as programs and services that would complement a family literacy program. These might include parenting and family resource programs; literacy, adult basic education, and English as a Second Language programs; or library drop-in programs for children and families.

By involving community agencies and individuals, a needs assessment builds ownership, support, and awareness among stakeholders, and follows the principles of community collaboration and cooperation. It gauges the level of support for the proposed program, and determines similarities and differences in how literacy needs are perceived.

Through examining literacy needs in context, the needs assessment ensures that realistic expectations are set for the proposed project and the role it can play in helping individuals and agencies. It can also provide a strong foundation for developing related programs and other strategies for literacy improvement in the community.

Community Needs Assessment Guidelines

(Many of the ideas for community needs assessments came from Yvon Laberge of HOPE Learning Systems in Edmonton.)

Consider the following as guidelines for developing a formal needs assessment:

1. Develop goals and objectives.

It is very important that you decide what information you want to obtain before proceeding with a needs assessment. If you are not sure of your goals and objectives, proceeding will probably not be worth the effort and resources involved. An unfocused needs assessment will result in general information, but will not provide specific answers to your questions.

The Edmonton Social Planning Council suggests the following questions in the development of goals and objectives:

- Why do you want to do a needs assessment? What signs indicate a needs assessment is required?
- What do you hope to find out from the needs assessment?
- Whose needs are being assessed? (*Doing it Right 11 - 12*)

2. Planning the needs assessment.

Should we do a needs assessment?

The first step in the planning process is to decide whether or not to do the needs assessment. Doing a needs assessment is not an easy task. It requires commitment on the part of employees and the committee members. Are the necessary resources available? Most often we look exclusively at the amount of money required to do a needs assessment, but the expertise needed to conduct the assessment and to compile and analyze the information must also be considered. Also, is the necessary technology available, such as computer software to compile and analyze raw data? Finally, can the information required be obtained elsewhere?

Design an overall strategy.

Once a commitment has been made to do a needs assessment, it is time to design an overall strategy. By reviewing the following questions, you'll be able to refine the objectives developed earlier in this process.

This strategy will address the basic questions of what, how, who, how many, where and when. What will you ask in your needs assessment? How will you obtain that information? Who will you ask? How many from each "group" will you ask? Where will you administer the needs assessment? When will you administer it?

It is important to set some parameters for your community needs assessment. Identify the community to be served. Will your program serve the general public, a particular region, a specific school district, an elementary school area, a particular group of mothers or parents, or a specific group of employees?

After you have obtained the answers to these questions, you are ready to write a research plan. To the above information you may want to add things like timeliness who will do the work, etc. The research plan should not be too rigid. It is important to continually adjust it as the need arises. (See *Doing it Right*.)

Choose a way of obtaining the information.

There are two basic kinds of information that may be obtained in needs assessments: primary information and secondary information.

Primary information is obtained by going directly to the source. The respondent is usually in the community and has direct knowledge about the information you wish to obtain. Questionnaires, personal interviews, focus groups, or observations are most often used to gather the information. It is impossible to present in detail these data gathering techniques, but the questionnaire and the interview process are detailed in this section. (Source used: Dunnette, M. and M. Leatta, eds. [*Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*](#). See [Appendix C](#).)

Questionnaires:

A questionnaire is a series of questions designed to obtain the information identified in the research plan. The type of question to be used will depend on the population, the size of the sample, the timelines, the money available, the ability of the researchers to compile and analyze the information, etc. Some examples of types of questions include: open-ended, projective, forced-choice, and priority-ranking. Questionnaires may also be administered in a variety of fashions: by mail, in the presence of the respondent (self-administered techniques), and through a process where the questions are read to the respondent (where the presence of an interpreter or researcher is required). These are usually done in person or over the telephone.

The advantages of using a questionnaire include reaching a large number of people in a fairly short time, the fact that it is relatively inexpensive, and that data is easily summarized and reported.

The disadvantages of questionnaires include making little provision for free expression, requiring more time (and technical skills) to develop the instruments, and self-administered techniques having a low rate of return. Also, in the literacy context, the respondents may not have the required literacy skills to provide the necessary information.

Interviews:

The personal interview permits a face-to-face meeting with the respondents. The interview technique is usually structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. The level of structure relates to the detail of the questions the respondents are expected to answer. For example, a structured technique will involve obtaining answers to a number of specific questions which leave little room for interpretation. At the other end of the spectrum, the unstructured interview will start with a series of very general lead questions, from which sub-questions are asked based upon the information provided by the respondent. The interview may be used with a variety of respondent type: individual, focus groups, and key respondents.

The advantages of interviews are that it permits "on the spot" synthesis of different viewpoints, it builds support for the particular service response, and it helps to go more in depth on certain areas of the problem.

The disadvantages of interviews are that it is time consuming, the datagathering component is usually more expensive, and the data can be difficult to synthesize and to quantify (the amount of data can be a little overwhelming, particularly for the novice).

Secondary information is obtained from sources who have already obtained the primary data, and most often have also analyzed it. Statistics Canada, for example, obtains information from every Canadian household every ten years by sending a questionnaire. They then make this information available to the public through a series of publications, some presenting demographic data, others focusing on specific variables. Unpublished information is also available from Statistics Canada on specific areas of information.

Other sources of secondary information may be obtained in your community. School boards have a lot of information on the families in their jurisdiction, such as the number of children, addresses, etc. Many municipalities have "community profiles." The Chamber of Commerce may be another source of information. Human Resources Canada maintains files on employment trends in the areas they serve. The telephone book, contacts, and a lot of imagination are the best tools in identifying secondary information.

The general consensus in doing community needs assessments is that a variety of research techniques will provide the most accurate picture of needs. One may start with identifying secondary data, and proceed with gathering and analysing data obtained from primary sources.

3. Getting started with the needs assessment.

Prepare the community for the needs assessment.

This very important step is often overlooked in planning the process. Before actually starting the needs assessment, inform the community as to what will be done and why. State your objectives and the Intended outcomes. All this information can be transmitted in a variety of ways. A news conference is one means of preparing the community for your assessment. Isserlis et al (1994a) recommend informing people in the community and potential participants about the needs assessment by contacting them by telephone, explaining what you hope to learn and what you will do with the findings. Tell them you will be sending a package of information and that you will call back to set up an interview. (23)

Prepare the research tools.

After the objectives are clear and you have an idea as to the technique in gathering information, you need to develop your research tools. Only information relating to collecting primary data is presented here.

Whether you choose to do a questionnaire or use an interview process, first develop a draft of the questions. To prepare the questions, you will want to consult questionnaires developed by other people. Most research papers include copies of the questionnaire used in the appendices. There are also many books available on the development of questionnaires. Again, Statistics Canada is a good source of information. They can provide you with sample questions which they use or copies of the actual census questions. They also regularly offer seminars on questionnaire development and overall

research techniques. The next step is to field test the questions. In all cases, the field test should include first presenting the questions to someone you know (family, friends, colleagues) and then to a sample of the population. Remember, developing a questionnaire is not an easy task. Short questions presented in plain language are less likely to give rise to multiple interpretations. But no matter how hard you try, no questionnaire will ever be perfect. Once you are comfortable with the questionnaire, you can go on to actually conducting and analyzing the survey.

Findings in Alberta

How many family literacy programs do a community needs assessment before developing a program? 38% of programs who responded to our 1994 survey reported doing some type of assessment, usually informal in nature.

Some programs reported that a needs assessment was unnecessary because they were already aware of needs in their community, or that they had been approached by individuals requesting this type of program.

Many programs explained their needs assessment strategies in terms of discussion and consultation with local social service, health, public and adult education, daycare, and library organizations. Parents and individuals were also asked for input into identifying needs.

B. Choosing and/or Adapting a Model

As noted earlier, programs can vary in purpose from a focus on building enjoyment of reading and facilitating access to books, to a program that improves adults' literacy skills, to a program that encourages reading and writing skills in children, to a program that includes parenting classes, or any combination of these.

Programs can also vary depending on the settings where they are held, the group(s) targeted, and eligibility or criteria for participation. Funding, sponsorship, and administrative responsibility, as well as the degree of collaboration with other agencies, also affect the type of program developed. Other factors include program content and activities, nature of instruction used, and the use of evaluation and types of methods used. (Nickse 1990a, 47)

The model you choose or create for your family literacy program will largely depend on the results of your needs assessment, the mandate of your organization, and the financial and human resources available in your organization and your community.

Needs Assessment Results

The data collected in your needs assessment will provide the basis for determining what type of family literacy program is needed in your community. It will have identified what needs exist and which are already being met by existing programs, which programs and services will support and complement a family literacy program, and what resources are available to develop and sustain such a program.

Mandate of the Organization

Another **important consideration** in choosing or adapting a model is the fundamental objective or mandate of your organization or collaborative group. Are there limits on the type of issues you can address in your family literacy program? As an example, Isserlis et al (1994b) identify the following as key areas explored within intergenerational literacy programs:

- health (access to medical services)
- libraries
- child development/ parenting styles
- consumer concerns (food, clothing, housing)
- child care
- legal services
- child protective services
- schools (access, interaction with, etc.)
- nutrition
- safety
- drugs/alcohol
- community history (26)

Community or Organizational Resources

What is realistic for your organization to take on as a family literacy program? What are the requirements of different models in terms of additional staff and/ or coordinator time, money for materials and resources, use of facilities, and cost of operation?

Existing Models and Family Literacy Resources

In relation to the needs identified, which family literacy models are viable in your community? Committee members and staff can use the description of models outlined in [Chapter V](#) of this guide, the programs listed in [Appendix A](#), and the resources listed in [Appendix C](#) as sources of information on the various models and their applications.

In addition, it may be helpful to consider the following list of resources and models other family literacy practitioners have found helpful in planning their programs.

Resources

Our survey asked family literacy workers in Alberta what resources they found helpful in planning their project. Their responses included:

People

- librarians
- expertise of adult learners
- resources from Edmonton coordinator (Candice Jackson, Beginning with Books)
- Pincher Creek coordinator (Kathy Day)
- Homespun trainer as resource person
- coordinator's experience as parent
- local school board and central office personnel
- health care professionals/ health units, hospital personnel
- teachers
- parents
- coordinator at Cardston (Mary Ellen Peterson at Books for Babies)
- STEP grant student to help set up program
- coordinator of family literacy program in Wildwood
- adult literacy council
- Further Education Council members and resources

Program models

- information on Motherhead program in U.S.
- Reading PAL's program
- Homespun training, book lists, and video
- ABC- 123 materials
- Lunenberg NS Books for Babies program
- Riverside, California family literacy materials

Conferences and workshops

- Alberta Association for Adult Literacy (A.A.A.L.) conference (sessions and networking)
- Literacy Coordinators of Alberta (L.C.A.) conference (sessions and networking)
- Bonnie Annicchiarico's presentation (on family literacy) at Alberta Association for Continuing Education (A.A.C.E.) conference
- National conference for French literacy programs in December 1994 Family literacy symposium in Brooks (Roots of Literacy, 1992)

Literature

- L.C.A. newsletter
- library resources
- Nickse's work
- Jim Trelease's *Read Aloud Handbook*
- International Reading Association journal
- C.C.L.O.W. (Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women)
- resources on women working with children in literacy learning efforts

Other

- Canadian Children's Book Centre

Models

Because family literacy programs receive funding from several agencies at the federal, state, and local levels, many variations exist.... These include the location and responsibility for program administration, funding amounts and sources, target population, the degree and type of program intervention used, and the use and type of evaluation. With such variety, it's difficult to compare programs and to evaluate which type is most appropriate for specific groups of adults and children. However, programs should be tailored to specific audiences. No one model will fill the diverse needs of adults and children in all communities. There are no "best" teaching techniques to promote, since ideally each program selects instruction that is appropriate to the needs of specific populations. (Nickse 1990b, 12)

When asked which family literacy model Alberta practitioners used or adapted, and why, they responded:

P.A.L.

- Pincher Creek P.A.L.. We planned to begin with Homespun but it was just too expensive for me to travel to Brooks to get training. So we opted to go with the school board and go with school-aged children.
- Pincher Creek P.A.L. Program.

Homespun

- Homespun. We had taken the training and liked the basic model. Also we felt the model (parents only, once a week for a number of weeks) was as much as we could hope for, given funding levels.
- Homespun. The previous literacy coordinator ... was able to attend the first Homespun training workshop and was favourably impressed with the program.
- If we get a program going it will be based on Homespun.
- Homespun. I had heard positive comments about it and was pleased after taking the instructor's training. It was detailed and self-contained, easy for a volunteer to implement if we go that route.
- We will be adapting the Homespun model because it is the most accessible model. We will be working primarily with adults (we are an adult literacy program), teaching them
- strategies and skills needed to encourage learning at home with their children.
- Our program is based on Homespun, and adapted to meet our needs locally, and our budget!
- Homespun, because it's simple and training is available. We thought it was something that we could implement.
- We've heard about Homespun and are planning on taking in a workshop on it. (We are operating a literacy program in the school for grades 1-12. We would like to further our program to include more family literacy.)
- Homespun.
- (We) worked on a family reading program -- lots of work! Homespun in Brooks is all prepared, ready for use, which is appealing.

Books for Babies

- There had been a Books for Babies program operating in the mid '80's in Calgary. We had received some information on that program but it was no longer in operation due to lack of funding. We basically took the idea and developed our own program.
- The "Books for Babies" project from Cardston was our model. This seemed the most likely to "get up and running."
- We patterned ours after Cardston's Books for Babies and Lunenburg, Nova Scotia's Books for Babies. We were able to obtain sample packages to help with our planning.

Other

- Motherhead. We adapted it to more truly reflect our population and include Canadian content.
- Head Start in the States.
- We have not used any model. We went with the specific needs of the participants and "created" our own program to answer these needs.

C. Applying for Funding

Funding is one of the biggest challenges facing family literacy practitioners and those interested in developing programs. At the present time, family and intergenerational literacy programs "fall through the cracks" of provincial and federal funding programs. There is no secure source of ongoing funding for these programs. Those working in the field are calling for fundamental changes in government funding policy so as to include family literacy.

Because family literacy is not recognized at the present time as a government responsibility, and because of the growing recognition of the need for community to share responsibility for its members, family literacy workers often turn to foundations and community-level business and institutions for financial support. While the nature of the funding application or proposal will vary depending on the applicant and the potential supporter, there are some general guidelines that can be followed.

Generally speaking, proposals usually contain the following types of basic information:

- a description of the organization applying for funding and its main activities
- need for the proposed activity
- the intended participants or recipients
- objectives of the proposed activity
- description of the activity
- proposed timelines
- the total budget
- evaluation procedures
- anticipated outcomes

Information on collaborating partners is also very important. Also include such basic information as name of contact person and where they can be reached, and the location of the project. Making contact with the funding agency or organization is usually a good idea in terms of asking about making an application for funding, whether there are deadlines, and what type of information they require in an application.

When writing an application for funding, estimate the size of group to be served. This is an important step in being able to justify a program in your area, and you'll find the community needs assessment invaluable at this point. Also look at other parenting programs, adult literacy and basic education programs, English as a Second Language programs, elementary school statistics, and census data on families with pre-school children.

Another suggestion for developing a funding proposal is to look at proposals written for other literacy and family literacy programs. This type of support and networking is growing as avenues of communication open between programs, reducing the isolation that has been a common complaint of literacy workers.

Funding Sources

Alberta

Programs often have a combination of funding sources and/or sources of contributions in kind. As with the list of partners and stakeholders, perhaps the combinations of funders will suggest possibilities for your program.

Note that some of the funding listed was made available for research projects as opposed to strictly operational costs. It should also be recognized that funding for literacy programs is undergoing significant changes, with obvious implications for keeping this information current. The following data was collected in mid-1994.

Athabasca - Head Start

- Family and Community Support Services

Barrhead - PAL Program

- Fund-raising by literacy program (bingos). Once we get going we will look at additional sources.

Brooks - Homespun

- National Literacy Secretariat

Calgary - Forest Lawn Library Family Literacy Program (ended '94)

- literacy program base budget

Cardston - Books for Babies

- Family & Community Support Services, service groups (Kinsmen, Rotary, Ladies Auxiliary), Home & School organizations, businesses (TransAlta, Alpha)

Drayton Valley - Tiny Tot Tales

- Corporate donations

Edmonton - Books

- N.A.R.S.C. (Northern Alberta Reading Specialists Council), publishers donations, Alberta government grant for STEP student; grant from Clifford E. Lee Foundation, Further Education Council, research grant from Alberta Advisory Committee for Educational Studies via University of Alberta

Edson - Homespun

- We do not have a dependable funding source for instructor fees. Community financial support for books and other resources: Catholic Women's League, Edson & District Chamber of Commerce, Ladies Auxiliary to the Canadian Legion, Order of the Eastern Star, Yellowhead School Division, Edson R.C. School District., Edson Further Education Council

Killam - Books for Babies

- donation from service club (desperately searching for others!)

Lacombe - Homespun

- County of Lacombe Lifelong Learning Association, Lacombe Family & Community Support Services

Lloydminster - Aboriginal Family Literacy Program

- We are funded by the National Literacy Secretariat for a term project from September to June.... We applied for and received the funding through Saskatchewan Education, Training, and Development.

Nanton - Books for Kids

- Literacy program (used book corner sales), community service groups, Willows Project (community development project).

Pincher Creek - PAL Program

- Wildrose Foundation, Pincher Creek School Division, local service clubs

Red Deer - Family Reading Program

- Further Education Council, Superior Propane campaign, Red Deer College, Canada Post
- Red Deer Advocate and Red Deer Rotary Club donated funds for children's books, with the Red Deer Public Library buying them at a discount.
- Red Deer College, Red Deer Public Library, McDonald's Restaurants, and Red Deer Advocate provide contributions in kind.

Rocky Mountain House - Rocky Read to Me

- Further Education Council provided money to initiate program (coordinator time and some funding).
- Donations from business and service clubs for children's books.
- Family and Community Support Services covered the cost of training and start-up costs.

St-Paul - Alpha Familiale

- We have a literacy centre where we can deliver our program. The money for rent, materials, utilities, etc. comes from bingos that we hold once a month. The coordinator and the tutors get a very small honorarium from a budget of \$5,000 that comes from the Centre éducatif communautaire de l'Alberta, on the provincial level.

Stettler - Rhyming Babies

- The library provides space for program, as well as use of paper and the photocopier to make booklets.

Strathcona County - Homespun

- Further Education Council

Wetaskiwin - Homespun

- Local fund-raising (bingo), Legion, Lions' Club

Wetaskiwin - Little PAL Program (ended '94)

- Local fund-raising

Wildwood - Books 'n' Butterflies

- Stakeholders share costs

Summary

- National Literacy Secretariat
- Family and Community Support Services
- Further Education Council literacy organizations
- Wildrose Foundation
- fundraising (bingos, etc.)
- donations from local service groups
- churches

- community support for resources
- corporate and business donations
- school districts contributions in kind from community
- Home and School organizations
- Northern Alberta Reading Specialists' Council
- publishers' donations
- Alberta government grant for STEP student
- Clifford E. Lee Foundation grant
- research grant from Alberta Advisory Committee for Educational Studies via University of Alberta
- community development projects
- Chamber of Commerce
- sharing costs between stakeholders

Canada

In addition to the funding sources already listed for Alberta, other programs in Canada reported the following:

- provincial departments of education
- separate school boards
- Laubach Literacy of Canada
- literacy foundation
- private donations
- volunteer instruction by day-time instructors Native book fairs to raise money for Native family reading resources (Jimmy Sandy Memorial School, Kawawachikamach, PQ)

D. Developing Evaluation Processes

Family literacy practice is largely uncharted territory, and there will be false starts and misleading data. However, without comprehensive data, we will not know whether this is truly a new and significant step in literacy services, or just another complicated educational fad. The danger is that policy decisions will be made prematurely based on poor evaluation information; especially a concern when expectations for success are so high. A second danger is that, in a quest for data, programmes distort their services or frighten away the very participants for whom services are developed. (Nickse 1993, 40)

Evaluation is the answer to the question, "Do literacy programs work?" There is a growing emphasis on accountability and results; in family literacy and literacy in general we need to address the need for comprehensive, carefully designed evaluation processes.

Evaluation Issues

Scarcity of Evaluative Information

There is general agreement on the scarcity of "hard" evaluative data on the effectiveness of family literacy programming. The most obvious reason for this is that family literacy is a relatively new field, lacking the research and development that underlies evaluation in other areas. Another related factor is that evaluative "tools" specific to family literacy are just being developed; assessing family interactions and the multiple effects of programming on adults and children have challenged the existing range of evaluation methods (Weiss and Jacobs in Nickse 1990a, 46).

"Family literacy" includes such a broad range of program types that this also poses a challenge to developing evaluation strategies. Areas to evaluate and appropriate methods will depend on the goals of each program. From a broader perspective, this range of programming makes it difficult to compare data. As a result, the lack of a coherent, theoretical background makes it difficult to develop "good practice" guidelines for family literacy evaluation.

There is another issue that impacts on the development of evaluation strategies and the collection of data. Scarce financial and human resources for family literacy programs often don't allow for proper research, development, and ongoing implementation of evaluation processes.

Purpose of Evaluation

Too often, developing and administering an evaluation process is left until near the end of a program cycle or the termination of the program. The value of evaluation lies not only in its use as a final assessment, however, but as an on-going means of determining which aspects of program delivery are working and which aren't, recommending adjustments to the operation, determining whether the program is meeting its goals, and whether those goals should be renegotiated. Evaluation is also often necessary to satisfy funding agencies' requirements, and has value externally as a means of sharing information about family literacy programs.

In the *Policy Maker's Guide to Family Literacy*, the National Center for Family Literacy lists four specific reasons why it is important to evaluate programs:

1. Family literacy programs will have to describe the effectiveness of their efforts, in terms of the difference the program has made in the lives of the participants and the community.
2. Program staff will have to clearly assess the individual progress of the parent and child, in order to show parents how they and their children are progressing.
3. Programs should be able to assess the effectiveness of each component (the Toyota Families for Learning program has four essential components) and identify ways to improve the program.

4. Programs should assess the skills of the staff and identify ways that skills can be improved. (32-33)

In addition, evaluations of family literacy programs are "potentially a rich source of information about parent-child relations, cultural differences in these relations, which strategies are most effective with which types of families, (and) best practices in family programs" (Powell in Ryan et al 4).

Evaluation in Alberta

Family Literacy Survey

In response to F.L.A.G.'s family literacy survey in 1994, 58% of family literacy programs in this province reported using some type of evaluation methods:

- 37% used a participant evaluation form or questionnaire
- 11% used personal interviews with participants
- 11% used an outside evaluator
- 11% used participants' stories and subjective comments
- 5% used group discussion
- 5% used feedback from advisory council, referral agency, or teachers
- 5% used the number of library coupons redeemed
- 5% used the number of participants
- 5% used the level of community involvement

It should be noted that in almost all cases, evaluation was done at the end of the program.

Examples of Evaluation

In the Books for Babies program in Cardston:

There is an on-going formal evaluation using 3-5 year old children. A simple oral testing tool has been developed. Dr. Neldon Hatch, who is the E.C.S. coordinator at the local school division, will be testing a base group of fifty children who have not been exposed to the project and then the same tool will be used to evaluate fifty children who have been exposed to the project.

In the BOOKS (Books Offer Our Kids Success) program in Edmonton:

In the first sessions, which were observed by a university researcher, individual interviews were held by the researcher with each participant after the classes were over. Also, a group session was held after the classes were over so that participants could jointly discuss their experiences, make recommendations for change, etc.

In the Rocky Read to Me program in Rocky Mountain House:

Evaluation includes participants' ongoing feedback and a written evaluation for participants at the end of the program. Referral agencies are also contacted to discuss changes in their clients. They are also considering the possibility of audio-taping participants' comments.

In Alpha Familiale à St-Paul:

An oral evaluation is done after each meeting, which is seen as a good way to get feedback from everyone. For the children, the evaluation will also be done from their report cards. For the parents, evaluation is done after each class with the work they have achieved.

For the parents and the children, the communication is evaluated all the time on site (classroom) and at home.

Homespun Final Report

The Homespun Final Report Mom, Read. Read. Read outlines three aspects of the evaluation process used to determine the success of that program. The methods used were class transcriptions, parent feedback, and outside evaluation.

Class Transcriptions

Thirty-six Homespun classes were audio-taped and then transcribed. This method of evaluation was designed to analyze class interaction, teaching methods, and parent comments. (22)

Parent Feedback

This evaluation method was considered to be the most useful. What parents believed about Homespun and reported of their experiences at home provided on-going opportunities for the instructor to meet their needs. (32)

Outside Evaluation

This third type of evaluation included feedback from Homespun instructors around the province and an official external evaluation from an evaluation consultant at the University of Calgary. The latter included an observation of a three-day Homespun instructor seminar with two actual Homespun classes. (39)

Latin American Literacy Project

Another example of family literacy project assessment in Alberta is the final evaluation of the Latin American Literacy Project in Calgary by an external evaluator. The scope of the evaluation included the effectiveness of the project in general and the intergenerational component in particular. This was accomplished by assessing the language achievement of the children and adult participants. Quantitative results of achievement tests were discussed and anecdotal records and structured observations were used as a context for interpreting test results. (Watt 1-2)

Evaluations Outside Alberta

Books for Babies - Corner Brook NF

Tools used in the evaluation of this project included registration of parents, attendance of parents to follow-up sessions, parent evaluation at the end of sessions, video observation of sessions, and telephone interviews with parents not attending sessions.

Families in Motion - Chilliwack BC

Evaluation for this project includes three components: a program profile questionnaire, a family questionnaire, and a facility host questionnaire. The program profile questionnaire is based on Audrey Thomas' 17 Good Practice Statements (community involvement and linkages; philosophy; planning; awareness activities; access; facilities and equipment; administration; participation; staff training and development; adult assessment; volunteer support services; -family support services, instructional strategies, materials; program evaluation; funding). The family questionnaire looks at general information, the preschool program, and the adult program. The facility host questionnaire evaluates schedules, communication, support, rewards, and allows for suggestions. (presentation at Literacy B.C. Institute. July 1994)

Suggestions for Practice

Flexibility Based on Program Type and Goals

The "young" nature of family literacy and the broad variation in program types presents a challenge for planning and developing evaluation methods.

No specific evaluation approach can be recommended as appropriate for all family literacy programs. Rather the program structure, natural life cycle, (and) funding levels have to be considered. An approach that can be fitted to each individual program rather than fitting the individual program to the design is essential for conducting systematic, yet useful program evaluations of family literacy programs (Ryan et al 4).

Important Considerations for Development

As with other aspects of the family literacy project, developing and implementing an evaluation process should be a collaborative effort. It should involve representatives of key stakeholders, resulting in an evaluation team that is responsible for designing and carrying out an evaluation strategy. This collaborative approach ensures that:

- program goals respond to the needs of all stakeholders
- evaluation activities provide information on those agreed-upon goals
- stakeholders get a better understanding of and take ownership of the evaluation process as well as the program as a whole
- the evaluation provides clear information which advisory committee members need to make well-informed decisions about program improvements, continuing the program, revising goals, etc.

Evaluation Should be On-Going

As mentioned earlier, evaluation should be an ongoing process, rather than only a means of final assessment. When used throughout the program, it can guide the direction and development of the program, as well as evaluate its effectiveness (Ryan et al 4).

Use a Broad Interpretation of Literacy

When evaluating a family literacy program, use a broad Interpretation of literacy and literacy achievement. Be sure the achievements your evaluation measures are broad enough to include your participants' goals, both short and long-term (Nickse 1990b, 28).

Use an Appropriate and Realistic Evaluation Strategy

When choosing or developing an evaluation strategy, make sure it is suited to your program type and its goals. Consider whether it is realistic in what it requires of the participants. Also make sure it is feasible considering your resources, both human and financial.

Other Factors to Consider

Things to consider when developing an evaluation strategy also include:

- keeping information confidential on the individual level
- seeking a variety of information sources
- the number of samples needed from each source of information
- methods of collecting information who will administer the evaluation when and how often the evaluation will take place how the evaluation team will organize and analyse the information how the advisory committee will follow up on evaluation results

Areas for Evaluation

In her article "A typology of family and intergenerational literacy programmes: Implications for evaluation," Nickse expands on the work of the Illinois Literacy Resource Centre, Jacobs (1988), and Weiss (1988) to apply that particular framework of evaluation to her typology of four basic family literacy models. In that article, Nickse identifies two basic levels or domains for measurement in family literacy evaluation, namely the program level and participant level. Each level has different areas for assessment and data collection.

Program level

- Program design/ context. For example, the target population, the community setting, and the type of core and support services planned for or provided
- Program implementation/ processes/ inputs. For example, program resources including staff and funding; processes of recruitment, instruction, and selection of materials; attendance and participation strategies; retention strategies; staff development and in-service training; support services such as transportation and child care; parent workshops or activities; and assessment.
- Program outcomes. Short- and long-term impacts such as literacy development of adults and children; increases in educational skills and expectations; changes in behaviors, skills, and attitudes at the individual, family, and community level.

Participant level

- Demographic information, which describes ethnicity, sex, ages, relationships of participants to each other, educational levels, job experiences, and data about the families' lives in their communities.
- Literacy skills, environments, and attitudes. For example, knowledge about children's emergent literacy; the development of literacy in adults/parents in the family; the uses of literacy in the home; the uses of literacy in pre-school or school programs; access to literacy materials and literacy events at home and in pre-school or school settings; attitudes and values about education and schooling; and aspirations and expectations about literacy.
- Parent-child Interactions. This might include parent teaching strategies, attitudes, values, and behaviors in terms of "parent as teacher"; the "climate" of parent-child relationships and their context; and specific literacy efforts such as storybook reading or other interactions.
- Child personal characteristics/ achievements. This might include cognitive and linguistic development, psychomotor and social development, and emergent literacy concepts.
- Parent personal characteristics/ achievements. For example, parents' self-esteem; their feelings of wellbeing and personal efficacy; measure of social Isolation and maternal depression; and other factors such as locus of control.
- Family characteristics, support, and resources. This might include the psychological, economic, and social factors which affect participants, and

- measures of coping.
- Parenting behaviors and attitudes. This might include concepts about child and adult development, attitudes about parenting and discipline, management of family matters, and aspirations and expectations for parenting. (Nickse 1993, 38-39)

Evaluation Instruments

Isserlis et al suggest the following as possible evaluation instruments:

- time-one/time-two surveys (identifies participants' knowledge and abilities before and after program)
- anecdotal reporting by staff and/or participants
- pre- and post-test scores
- samples of participants' writing or classroom work (1994a, 26)

The National Center for Family Literacy lists evaluation tools according to each of its program components. In addition to standard tests for adult education and early childhood education, it suggests the Family Literacy Program Standards and Rating Scale for evaluating the family literacy component. (Available through the N.C.F.L.; see "Recommended Resources" for the address.)

Another source of information on standard tests is Philliber Research Associates' "Strategies and Techniques in Family Literacy," which suggests a range of tests to measure parents' educational skills, parenting skills, and child development:

Parents' Educational Skills

- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (C.A.S.A.S.)
- Test of Adult Basic Education (T.A.B.E.)

Parenting Skills - Adult

- Adolescent Parenting Inventory (A.A.P.I.)
- Parenting Stress Index (P.S.I.)
- Nursing Child Assessment Teaching Scale

Child Development

- Peabody Picture Vocabulary (P.P.V.T.)
- Bayley Scales of Infant Development
- Minnesota Child Development Inventory

In the Parents-as-Partners-as-Learners Project in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, the project's evaluation was based primarily on the change in children's oral reading. The Slosson Oral Reading Test was given to first- through fifth-grade children in two school districts before and after the program. Comments from the children were collected and a survey was done with a group of grade four students. A survey was also done with parents who took part in the program by reading to their kindergarten children. (Fear 7-8)

The Latin American Literacy Project evaluation was based on first-hand observations of the project, discussions with staff and students, the evaluation of new program implementations, the interpretation of results from language proficiency and achievement tests, and analysis of video recordings. The standardized tests used included the Gardner Test (Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test) for the children's program, and basic literacy, E.L.S.A., S.T.E.L., and John Tests for the adult program. (Watt ix, 2, 13)

As shown in the above lists of existing evaluation instruments, there is a wide range of methods used in evaluating family literacy programs, where evaluation exists. The challenge is to develop "good practice" guidelines or standards and still retain the flexibility needed for diverse programs. The following framework, referred to earlier, is a very promising model that should be looked at closely for our work in Alberta.

The Five-Tiered Approach to Evaluation

Jacobs (in Ryan et al 1991 and Nickse 1993) has developed what she calls the "five-tiered approach" to family literacy program evaluation. This approach is based on the work of the Illinois Literacy Resource Centre and that of Jacobs (1988) and Weiss (1988). Ryan et al have also extended this work in the development of an evaluation framework for family literacy.

The framework includes five levels or tiers of program evaluation; "each requires greater effort at data collection and tabulation, increased precision in programme definition and a greater commitment to the evaluation process" (Jacobs in Nickse 1993, 37). Each tier fulfils a different purpose, uses different techniques to gather information, with information useful to particular audiences. The framework is designed so that programs should use several tiers, moving from one to another as appropriate in order to record program changes over time (Nickse 37).

The tiers that make up the framework, plus the research questions for each tier, are as follows:

Level I - Pre-Implementation

Commonly known as a "needs assessment," this tier answers the question "What is the problem?" This level of evaluation determines whether there is a need for the service.

Level II - Accountability

This is the program utilization level, and answers the question "Who are we serving, and what services are we providing?"

Level III - Programme Clarification

This type of evaluation is formative or process clarification. It answers the question "How can we do a better job of serving our participants?"

Level IV - Progress

Evaluation in this tier answers the question "Are participants making progress?" and measures short term program effectiveness.

Level V - Programme Impact

At this level, the program is committed to an experimental or quasi-experimental approach to evaluating program effects. It answers the question "What are the long-term effects of programme participation?" (Nickse 1993, 37) (Ryan et al 5-10)

For every tier in the evaluation framework, Ryan describes the typical steps specified and carried out in the evaluation process. For each level, the following steps are addressed:

- purpose of the evaluation
- evaluation questions
- audiences for the information collected
- evaluation tasks and strategies
- types of data to collect and analyze
- interpretation and dissemination of findings
- program planning (5)

For example, in Level I (pre-implementation), the purpose of the evaluation is to document that there is a need for particular services for a specific population within a particular community.

The audience might include funding agencies, community members, and potential participants. The need for the program is usually documented through local demographics, a review of local media, interviews with community leaders, and/or community surveys. The next step would be to interpret the findings in a summary report and describe the proposed program in terms of the population to be served; what the effect on families will be as a result of receiving services; the types of services to be offered, by whom, and at what cost; and the intended benefits. This is the stage at which an adjustment in program planning is made based on the findings of the needs assessment. (Ryan et al 56)

Ryan also includes, in the same report, a discussion of the challenges involved in using assessment in the evaluation process. While assessment is not so much an issue in the first three tiers of the process, it is significant for tiers four and five.

... family literacy programs have inherited all the assessment issues from adult literacy, early childhood education, and family support programs and perhaps from education in general that have never been satisfactorily resolved.... (H)ow to define progress, operationalize it, and what represents significant progress has not been clarified. (11)

In response to this challenge, Ryan discusses recent developments in both performance-based assessment and an alternative assessment model used in adult literacy, and recommends that family literacy programs use a combination of the two (12).

E. Training

The type of training you require for your project will obviously depend on the model you choose for your program. There are currently a limited number of formal training opportunities available for family literacy staff, depending on your needs you may find it possible to develop a training opportunity with an existing program through an exchange of information and program observation.

Homespun training has been offered in Brooks and around Alberta; our survey in mid-1994 indicated that practitioners felt that training was difficult to access and too expensive. This has changed in the past year as Homespun obtained funding to provide training free of charge and in different locations around the province to Alberta practitioners. Contact Karen Nelson at the Homespun address listed in Appendix A for more information.

The National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville, Kentucky offers training in the Toyota Families for Literacy model; see also Appendix A for more information. The Prince Edward Island Literacy Alliance offers training institutes in the Parents as Reading Partners model, and the Saskatchewan Literacy Network offers Come Read With Me training to practitioners there (see Appendix A).

In addition to training institutes, provincial literacy conferences (A.A.A.L. and L.C.A.), literacy institutes such as Literacy B.C. (1994), and national conferences (English and Francophone) all provide workshops and seminars on family literacy for professional development.

F. Public Awareness

Public awareness is a critical aspect of building a family literacy program. It not only informs the general public of the need for programming and its development locally, it can build support for the program and attract potential participants from your intended target audience.

Public awareness strategies will depend on your resources, your intentions, and your community. The following suggestions for building awareness are drawn from a variety of family literacy projects and resources; please see Appendix B for samples of promotional materials.

Media

Small budgets usually determine the amount of conventional advertising a family literacy project can use to build public awareness of their services. While a media support is helpful in building general awareness in the community, many projects reported being forced to rely on print media coverage for promotion, even though this has obvious shortcomings for targeting low-literacy clients.

Local media are often interested in reporting on the development of new programs in the community, especially if they have a "human interest" aspect to them. See Appendix 'B' for a media "tip sheet" developed by F.L.A.G. that suggests ways of dealing with the media.

Some family literacy programs and organizations reported that they have had the opportunity to appear on local talk shows or radio programs to discuss their programs and the rationale behind family literacy.

In addition to "news" coverage of your program, there are usually several opportunities for public service announcements in local radio, television, and newspapers. Send information before sessions begin to explain the project and follow up with positive reports of what has been accomplished.

In-Person Promotions

Many practitioners reported that promoting their project in person was the most effective means of raising public awareness. This type of promotion can be delivered to the general public, potential cooperating agencies, or potential clients. The opportunities for this will vary depending on your community, but may include making presentations at service agency staff meetings, schools and other educational institutions, parent association meetings, church board meetings, food banks, soup kitchens, and whatever type of family venues exist in your community.

In the Homespun program in Brooks, the coordinator works closely with social service agency staff to arrange home visits to promote the program. The agency staff describe the program to their clients, and ask their permission to have the coordinator call them. If they agree, the coordinator calls them and arranges a convenient time to bring sample children's books and discuss the program with them. The fact that the visit takes place in the potential participant's home is a positive strategy that makes receiving the information less threatening.

In the Family Literacy: Reading Circles Project in Lindsay, Ontario, door-to-door contact with people in housing complexes proved to be an excellent way to inform and recruit potential participants.

Word of Mouth

The family literacy survey results indicated that for many programs, word of mouth was one of the most effective, useful means of building public awareness of their programs. Building relationships with other community agencies often resulted in assistance promoting family literacy and in many cases, referrals to the program. Similarly, previous participants often recommend the program to family and friends, and provide "testimonials" as to its value.

Newsletters

Publishing a program newsletter is another inexpensive, effective way of promoting your program and keeping families, institutions, and other agencies informed and aware of its development. It's possible to put together a very attractive newsletter with nothing more than basic computer software and a photocopier.

In reviewing numerous examples of family literacy newsletters, we found that the most effective were those that were positive in tone, brief, and balanced in terms of program information and practical suggestions.

Brochures and information sheets

Other types of inexpensive promotional materials include simple print materials like brochures and information sheets. These can contain program descriptions and registration information, tips on family reading, information on the sponsoring organization(s), and/or acknowledgment of sponsors.

Other promotional strategies

While researching family literacy programs across Alberta and beyond, we saw Or heard of some very innovative promotional ideas, including book bags, bookmarks, fridge magnets, posters, and videos. Other promotional ideas included using school and

church newsletters to advertise programs, as well as sending letters and information packages to Members of Parliament and other politicians.

Example of Program Promotion

An interesting example of promotion is the Families in Motion family literacy program in Chilliwack, B.C. The following are some of their strategies for promoting and raising public awareness of their program:

- The program advisory committee members are recognized and given a gift.
- There is a Christmas party for everyone involved in the program, and includes a book gift for participants.
- There is a wrap-up potluck brunch, with participants and facility hosts. The facility hosts receive a substantial gift, and children and parents receive certificates. The adult participants plan the brunch, make gifts, and cook, which gives an important feeling of ownership.
- The program uses a mall display to raise public awareness and recruit participants.
- Two radio shows have done interviews on Families in Motion, with participants involved.
- Newspaper coverage has helped to promote the program.
- The program has made a video as part of a series on literacy in the Fraser Valley.

G. Recruiting Participants

Recruitment is one of the biggest challenges of establishing a family literacy program. How you go about recruiting participants will depend on the type of program you're developing, on the "target groups" you want to reach, if any, and on the resources you have available. It will also depend on whether you are collaborating with other agencies and how they can be involved in developing a recruitment strategy. In addition to being involved in this type of program development, other agencies often provide client referrals and help to promote the project.

The National Center for Family Literacy (1994a) identifies the following as important considerations in developing **recruitment strategies**:

- Students are more likely to stay in the program if recruitment policies and procedures match the outcome objectives of the program. A high rate of dropout in the first few weeks of a program is often due to a lack of understanding of the commitment required or the purpose of the program.
- We as practitioners know that family literacy provides a necessary service, so we tend to think that people will be anxious to enter the program. We have to remember that many people have experienced lack of success in school, and initial recruitment may be very difficult. Rather than altering the program, eliminating components, or expanding the target audience in response to low enrollment, administrators should remain patient and trust the process.

Because it is a critical issue, financial resources and personnel must be allocated to support recruitment efforts. Recruitment should be the business of all members of the collaborative group. (23-24)

When developing recruitment strategies, we need to consider why people might be motivated to join a family literacy program. Practitioners frequently point out that parents will often join a program for what it offers their children in direct or indirect benefits, rather than joining a literacy program that focuses on adult learner development only.

Overcoming isolation is another motivating factor often cited in studies of family and intergenerational literacy. "For many young mothers access to, and interaction with, other mothers sharing similar problems and concerns lowers affective barriers to learning" (Isserlis et al, 1994b, 24). For some participants, family reading programs are a positive opportunity to socialize and meet other people, or to share a "parenting" experience with a friend. Horsman (1990, in Isserlis et al 1994b) suggests that connection to other learners is critical both logistically (in terms of shared child care and transportation) as well as in providing the support some women need in order to participate in programming at all. (24-25)

Recruitment Strategies

In addition to general public awareness strategies outlined earlier in this chapter, programs and resources report specific methods for reaching and recruiting potential participants.

Examples from surveys

Our survey asked practitioners who their participants were and how they recruited parents or families into their program. Here are their responses:

Athabasca

The target group is parents with children from kindergarten to grade three. Recruiting is done through social services and schools. We use posters and send flyers home with K - Grade 3 students.

Barrhead

We are hoping to have our schools identify students who need the help plus referrals from parents or students themselves. No specific "groups" are targeted.

Brooks

We hoped and hope to reach the "atrisk" group. We relied on referrals from Social Services, schools, adult education classes, health unit, etc.

Calgary

Participants are low income and low literacy. Recruiting strategies included the library putting up posters, all schools in the area sending flyers home, and targeting students in outreach literacy programs.

Cardston

Newborn children and their parents are our specific target group for this project. Every mother of a newborn at the Cardston Municipal Hospital receives a packet and this becomes part of the program. They receive newsletters and invitations to workshops.

Drayton Valley

Our target group includes families of all area newborn babies. Giving birth is the only criteria.

Edmonton (BOOKS)

Initially (we made the program) open to all parents from the school and daycare but made particular efforts to recruit parents identified by the school/daycare as needing help. The daycare now has a Head Start component and in our last session we worked with this group -- not entirely successful as the program (Head Start) mandate asks only that parents attend two sessions, so attendance was sporadic.

(Regarding recruitment.) As above, through the school, daycare and Head Start program. We used a general promo., followed by letters, followed by phone calls to some parents. In most recent session, parents were referred by the Head Start program.

Edson

We have run the Homespun program on a referral basis, usually from Social Services or schools. We have also offered it as an Adult Basic Education class.

Fort McMurray

Participants are women. Women with children are encouraged by referral from agencies, word of mouth, referral from community literacy program, and advertisements on cable T.V.

Lacombe

Participants are parents of children aged 57; priority was given to families in which there were younger siblings. Teachers at the elementary school identified participants by using the following guidelines:

- children who appear to lack reading background from home
- children in grades one and two who are having difficulty reading and for whom reading is not fun higher priority families with younger sibling lower priority given to children with specific reading disabilities (as there are other support groups for these families)
- parents who are looking for assistance in order to help their children
- children who didn't have E.C.S. (review if E.C.S. is not funded by government and/or school board)

These teachers suggested the program to the parents and then completed a referral form developed by the principal. The referral form was given to the principal and then passed on to the program facilitator. Only parents who expressed an interest when their child's teacher spoke to them were contacted by the program facilitator.

Lloydminster

Target groups include urban Aboriginal parents and grandparents. Working through the Friendship Centre, we will gain participants through their memberships, however we are not limited to just members.

We have notified schools, and are working through word of mouth. We have also received newspaper and radio coverage when announcing the project.

Nanton

Target groups: families with new babies and families new to the community, with children under seven.

Red Deer

Possible participants will be students in Adult Basic Education classes and referrals from the Native Friendship Centre, Family Resource Centre, daycares, kindergartens, and Social Services.

Rocky Mountain House

Yes (we targeted specific groups). We're not generally advertising the program, but looking for referrals from Social Services, the health unit, E.C.S. (special funding families), and the adult upgrading class (below grade nine level).

Recruitment has included:

- letters to agencies;
- presentations at agency staff meetings;
- follow-up calls to agencies;
- asking agencies to facilitate direct contact with clients; and
- peer referral from previous participants.

St. Paul

Participants include French adult learners from the Adult Literacy Program with their children and grandchildren. In the middle of March, we want to open the doors to the rest of the community.

The children and the parents already involved do the recruiting just by talking about the program. The French school board and the French school have on hand information on the project.

Stettler

It seems that stay-at-home and part-time work mothers are able to attend as the program runs on Wednesday mornings at 11:00 a.m. The odd father has participated.

Posters draw in some participants, but it seems that most people have heard about it by word of mouth. (Other promotion has included) news column in local paper, advertising on radio, classified ads in newspaper.

Wetaskiwin

(Homespun) The target group is families who don't read to their children. Recruiting is through referrals from Social Services.

(Little PAL Program) The target group is elementary school children. The schools refer students who need the support into the program.

Examples from other programs

Attracting the target group: Information sessions are given on separate occasions to groups of teachers, parents, and students at each elementary school. Program staff discuss the problems of illiteracy and outline the goals, methods and expected results of the reading program.

Following these meetings, teachers and parents make initial contacts with the program staff. Principals are also invited to submit names of children considered to be "at risk," or those who have already repeated one year of school. At this time, appointments are made to visit the families in their home. (Learning With My Child, Lachine, PQ)

Recruiting strategies in the "Family Literacy: Reading Circles" project in Victoria/Haliburton, Ontario included door-to-door contact with people in housing complexes, putting notices in church bulletins in rural communities, and having information included by school principals in their newsletters.

L'ABC de la famille in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan is planning to use the media, school support of the program for referrals, adult learners already participating in adult literacy programs, and informal introductory sessions to recruit participants.

In the Family Reading Program in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, parents are recruited by personal contact -- in class, parents' meetings, in hallways -- and by presenting goals and a description of the program to groups of parents after meeting with administrators of programs.

In Weyburn, Saskatchewan, "Going the Distance" recruits parents by means of home visits and clinic visits to health nurses and social workers. They also put community posters in local libraries, stores, and post offices.

Both Jody McElligott in Athabasca and Karen Nelson in Brooks emphasized that having school support and participation is essential in recruiting participants. Sending messages home to parents of early childhood and primary school children, having staff identify families where children are entering school without the same emergent literacy experiences as others, and having information included in school newsletters are just some of the ways schools can support family literacy.

Chapter VIII

Key Issues in Family Literacy

There are many issues and challenges involved in establishing and delivering family literacy programs. The experience of those already working in the field can help us learn, and can support our efforts to develop successful, effective programs.

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VIII. Key Issues in Family Literacy

In our 1994 survey of family literacy initiatives, one of the questions asked what people considered to be the key issues in family literacy.

The following list of issues has been compiled from the returned surveys and information gathered on other programs. The list has been ranked according to how many programs identified each issue, and then grouped as administrative, programming, or participants' issues. They are in descending order, with any additional comments or details listed below.

A. In Alberta

1. Recruitment (42%)

- how we promote the program in terms of reaching target families (hard to make contact, not necessarily in any group or agency)
- tend to reach the "converted"
- reaching those who really need the program

2. Funding (42%)

- - ongoing funding
- funding to maintain current programs and develop new ones
- many good programs [models] available but no funding
- time for administrative issues
- lack of funding
- small budgets
- uphill battle in times of cutbacks

3. Awareness (27%)

- building public awareness on a small budget (relying on word of mouth and print materials)
- recognizing strengths, rather than weaknesses
- mother-blaming
- public awareness of the role parents can play in their child's development (instead of abdicating their responsibility to educators)
- parents must realize the important role they play in helping children to become literate adults right from day one
- building awareness (parents and community)
- schools need to realize the importance of parents' role, and support them as much as possible

4. Prevention (19%)

- to provide early opportunities for literacy, from babyhood on, introduced in an oral fashion
- adult literacy programs are finding it difficult because they are trying to cure a problem rather than prevent it
- family literacy programs are essential to helping break the cycle of illiteracy
- strengthening the family using a "holistic" approach to well-being
- helping families create positive attitudes towards lifelong learning

5. Collaboration/cooperation (19%)

- time for initiating and continuing collaborations with other community groups
- time for planning and collaboration
- should be an issue addressed by schools, social services, and health agencies
- sorting things out with adult literacy program
- more collaborative approach
- the involvement of teachers and the whole community

6. Accessibility (15%)

- women have often been the family member responsible for education, but often face many barriers, including money issues, time to learn and do literacy with children, program times often inconvenient, transportation, child care, domestic violence, and lack of support from friends and family
- rural distances/ rural areas
- isolation
- personal stigma attached to attending groups

7. Program approach (8%)

- the involvement of parents and children
- the approach used in the delivery of the program
- to provide literacy in a fun approach learning through play"

8. Poverty (4%)

9. Training (41%)

- training to set up and run these programs is lacking or very difficult to obtain

10. Recruiting volunteers (4%)

Viewing these issues in general groups can help us identify potential challenges that need to be addressed when developing and implementing family literacy programs:

Administrative Issues

- training
- collaborations
- public awareness
- volunteers

Programming Issues

- recruitment
- accessibility community-based
- accessibility/support
- prevention/parents' role
- recognizing strengths

Participants' Issues

- money/poverty
- other support
- time
- domestic violence

B. Across Canada

In addition to the issues identified in Alberta, family literacy practitioners across Canada who responded to our survey added the following as key issues in family literacy:

- scheduling programs ("Having [reading] circles get under way in April and May was too close to the summer. September would be a better start-up time.")
- personal stigma attached
- reaching visible minority - under education and poverty
- targeting low income, low literacy families
- should be community-based, not in educational facility
- It is always challenging to develop programs for rural areas because of distances and difficulties with transportation.
- making family literacy programs more widely available for parents and primary caregivers to attend voluntarily (not by referral from an agency)
- providing training to facilitators and leaders to ensure high quality programs.

- reaching parents and primary caregivers when it is most effective - before children go to school.
- to empower parents; to invite them to take ownership of their children's education. Schools can't do it all.
- all parents need to hear this so the stigma of Family Literacy being for "dummies only" is not created.
- parental involvement in all levels of education
- support for parents
- financial support for ongoing programs
- enhancing the lives of children begins by strengthening the family unit
- sponsorship and sustainability!
- delegating literacy to volunteers (the most difficult learning problems assigned to volunteer teachers!)
- it is hard to show collaborators a commitment on our part when funding may end
In one or two years
- trying to get more culturally relevant materials

C. Family Literacy Issues in General

Looking at published resources on family literacy, several issues arise that echo and support the concerns raised by Alberta practitioners.

Cultural Differences

One of the main challenges in family literacy is cultural differences and the impact these differences have on developing, delivering and evaluating a program. These differences can mean a diverse range of needs and experiences within and between groups of participants, presenting challenges in finding appropriate and relevant resources and teaching methods. (Quezada and Nickse 12,) Cultural differences also present a challenge in terms of understanding and tailoring the program to different types of parent-child interaction and parental teaching behaviors, two factors which underlie the mediation of children's learning in their early years. How we define "socially competent mothering" and the resulting implications for how we structure our programs has tended to represent the characteristics of the "modal white middle class mother" (Laosa in Nickse 1990a, 43). Often the institutions sponsoring or housing family literacy programs are dominated by white middle-class culture and values (Olson in France and Hager 570), and poor minority parents may not feel comfortable or welcome in those settings. These differences in cultural perceptions and values can also impact the way we evaluate participant involvement and progress; Victoria Purcell-Gates has done research on what she calls "researcher/ community congruence" which compares the studies done by researchers from majority, mainstream cultures on minority, low-literate, and/ or low-income families and communities to those done by researchers from within those communities.

The theme of respecting diversity is common in suggestions for meeting the challenges raised by cultural differences. Often this includes developing a sense of shared responsibility for children's education by involving and respecting the parents in program development (France and Hager 570).

Funding

Funding is identified as a key issue in published resources just as it is by Alberta practitioners. Discussion usually focuses on the need for adequate

levels of funding as well as long term funding. Programs need time to form partnerships with other agencies and recruit participants to this new type of literacy program (Nickse 1990a, 45). Meetings in Ontario in 1990 represent a common view toward responsibility for funding family literacy programs:

- 4) There needs to be more government support for family literacy programs.
 - in order to operate consistently over the long term, community literacy agencies need regular and predictable funding
 - agencies also need information on how to foster literacy acquisition and development, access to resources (personnel and materials), and accurate, up-to-date information on the programs being offered by other agencies
 - efficient delivery of information and services requires coordinator that can best be fulfilled at the provincial level
 - decisions regarding literacy initiatives should be made at the community level.
 - long-term success rests on commitment and leadership within the communities concerned.
 - while relying on provincial support, agencies should not be restricted in their ability to respond to local needs and conditions in the way they consider most appropriate
 - the most successful programs are often those that are started on the initiative of small local groups (*Literacy for Life* 5-6)

Research

Several issues have also been identified around research for family literacy. Program practices are often only loosely related to research (Purcell-Gates 670) or have been designed on a "trial and error" basis rather than on a research base (Quezada and Nickse 12).

The type and quality of research is also an issue. Furniss states that family literacy is a complex concept that still has to live up to its early claims of success, and that there has not yet been the longitudinal studies or evaluation required to determine whether family literacy is "another fad or new insight." Similarly, Hannon cites the need for good quality research as a problem in family literacy. He calls for two types of research: the evaluation of intervention effects (experimental quantitative designs) and qualitative studies of how interventions are implemented and the resulting impact on participants. Like Furniss, he also calls for longitudinal studies as well as research that is not limited to single cultural settings (10).

Isolation

For those who attended the National Conference on Family Literacy in Ottawa in 1994, you may have been fortunate enough to hear an address by Lee Weinstein from the Intergenerational Literacy Project in Surrey, B.C. in the resulting focus paper, Weinstein discusses the role isolation plays for individuals and agencies in our communities:

... agencies in the non-profit sector, providing services to literacy learners, are relatively isolated from one another in their proposal writing, planning, and delivery. Possessing limited resources and little political clout, the burden falls on them nonetheless to communicate and share information with one another. Too often it is all these organizations can do to fulfill their basic mandate. As a result, services provided are neither coordinated nor based on the collective planning necessary to address the complex problems of the people they are intended to serve....

For learners, this isolation can be reflected in the feeling of being the only person with a particular problem, feeling a need to hid this problem, and feeling unable to seek assistance. Lack of supportive relationships create a sense of Isolation. felt in one way or another by learners, practitioners, administrators and policy-makers in the field of literacy.

Learners may feel set apart with their literacy issues and isolated from life. Practitioners often work singularly, which means limited contact or opportunity to share points of view and perspectives on teaching and learning. Administrators search for new funds with a wary eye on other competing literacy providers. Agencies are forced into a system of competition with other agencies because of the nature of the funding system. (2-3)

In addition to fundamental changes in funding implied by Weinstein, recommendations put forward at the Partnerships for Children's Literacy meetings in Ontario for overcoming isolation include involving the whole community in supporting literacy. This could be accomplished by developing a community focus on literacy, fostered by liaisons

among institutions and agencies and backed by public awareness campaigns; more formal recognition of the contribution that can be made by community organizations (in addition to educational institutions) that are stakeholders; and organizing programs so as to encourage parents and senior citizens to volunteer in activities (*Literacy for Life* 5).

The International Reading Association's Family Literacy Commission also addresses the question of isolation by recommending that programs be held in locations that are accessible, nonthreatening, and friendly, and that a supportive climate be established by providing transportation, child care, and refreshments at meetings. Overcoming feelings of isolation can also be accomplished by bringing parents together in support groups to share experiences and learn from one another. (*Family Literacy: New Perspectives, New Opportunities*)

Poverty

There is a great deal of debate as to whether literacy in general, and family literacy in particular, is a poverty-related issue. Those who view it as such consider such concerns as child care, health care, nutrition, adequate housing, and other social needs to be critical issues in family literacy discussions (Weinstein 7, McCoy and Watts 4.01-4.06). Literacy is seen as one strand of community and family development, one of the vehicles "through which people can begin to imagine the conditions that would help make, and keep, a society whole and healthy" (Weinstein 7).

Researchers warn against the dangers of simplistically making assumptions about poverty resulting in low literacy; "there is a growing body of evidence that many low-income, minority and immigrant families cultivate rich contexts for literacy development and support family literacy with effort and imagination" (International Reading Association Family Literacy Commission Report [1992] in Purcell-Gates 671). Relationships between poverty, literacy level of the family, and the opportunities young children have to learn literacy behaviors in the family are complex and largely unknown (Purcell-Gates 671).

Recognizing Strengths and Skills

Successful family literacy programs are positive and build on the strengths and skills of the participants. They identify, respect, and develop the literacy skills already present in families, even if they are different from conventional, school-like literacy. Such programs see programs as a supplement to, not a correction of literacy interactions that already exist in families. (*Family Literacy: New Perspectives, New Opportunities*, Weinstein 6, France and Hager 570)

Rural Concerns

Many practitioners in Alberta stated that their programs have special concerns due to being located in rural areas. These concerns were based on such factors as large distances, lack of potential partners, and child care. Although there isn't research available specific to Alberta, a study done on literacy in rural America highlights many of the same concerns. This study by Bailey (1992) showed that while family literacy is really just beginning in rural areas, and that few areas have a "full model" of family literacy, the concept is very promising for meeting needs specific to rural communities (31).

Bailey cites the advantages of having a literacy program located in a rural area as

- smaller programs (no waiting lists, population more stable. easier to adjust programs, more intimacy and interaction, more flexible in days and hours of operation, easier to manage, personal touch to instruction, "laid back" feeling of participants, mutual understanding of clients and tutors, informal atmosphere)
- good character of people (easier to deal with, welcoming, trusting, Independent and realistic in goal setting, traditional attitudes in terms of "helping your neighbour and "taking care of your own")
- easier networking (familiarity, establishing credibility, client recruitment, easier networking between public and private agencies, less "turfism," accessing other resources)
- better media coverage (easier to reach communities for support and awareness, less competition for print or air time)

The disadvantages of being located in a rural area are listed as:

- limited social and physical infrastructure (transportation, communication supports, child care)
- higher costs and isolation from other literacy programs
- lack of confidentiality (lack of privacy and fear of stigma often keeps potential clients from participating)
- limited opportunity structures (difficulties in recruiting or retaining clients because of cultural or economic environment) (39-46)

Whose Literacy?

Finally, another issue regarding family literacy is that of whose literacy we are trying to promote. Hannon's discussion of his work in England raises important questions for us to reflect on regarding our approaches to and perceptions of family literacy:

In the Sheffield Project we did try very hard to listen to parents, to respond to *their* interests. and to have a dialogue with them. But in the end I think what we offered them was probably school literacy, albeit a reasonable version of it. We did not impose it - what we offered was eagerly taken up by the parents - but it could be argued that we brought something which did not fit naturally into the lives of all our families.

There is nothing necessarily wrong with this provided that we are aware of it and prepared for the possibility that alien literacy practices, however sensitively introduced, may not take root permanently if the family, community or work environment encourages something else. We need to be realistic here about what children and parents stand to gain from changes in family literacy culturally, economically, politically. In addition, as a check on the dangers of one social group imposing its literacy on another, it is important to maximize community control over intervention programmes.....

Despite the problems, I certainly believe that intervention is worthwhile. The positive responses we have experienced from families are too strong to be ignored. (Hannon 8)

Appendix A

List of Family Literacy Programs

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A. List of Family Literacy Programs

The following is a list of family literacy programs (or programs with a family literacy component, indicated by an asterisk [*]) that we have been able to confirm. Where available, the name and telephone number of a contact person is given, as well as the location of the program if different from the address. The listings are arranged alphabetically according to address.

Alberta

Head Start Program
Words Work Adult Literacy Program
Box 10,000
Athabasca AB T9S 1N7
Jody McElligott, Coordinator
(403) 675-6110 / 675-6477

P.A.L. Program
Barrhead & District Reading & Writing
Program
5306 - 49 St.
Barrhead AB T7N 1N2
Carol Roberts, Coordinator
(403) 674-8525

Homespun
Medicine Hat College, Brooks Campus
200 Horticultural Stn Road East
Brooks AB T1R 1E5
Karen Nelson, Homespun instructor
(403) 362-1677 / 362-8926 fax

The Learning Centre*
3930 - 20 St. SW
Calgary AB T2T 4Z9
Maureen Howard, Asst. Literacy
Coordinator
(403) 686-9316 / 686-0627 fax

Bow Valley Adult Literacy Project*
Box 757
Canmore AB T0L 0M0
Madeline Crilley, Coordinator
(403) 678-2468 / 678-2165 fax

Homespun (planned)
Box 357
Daysland AB T0B 1A0
Lynne Hartwick

Tiny Tot Tales
Drayton Valley Adult Literacy Society
Box 6321
Drayton Valley AB T0E 0M0
Carol Ulmer, Coordinator
(403) 542-3373

Beginning with Books
Parkland Adult Literacy
NAIT Westerra Campus
11762 - 106 St.
Edmonton AB T5G 2R1
Bette Gray, Contact Person
(403) 963-1036 / 963-1099

BOOKS (Books Offer Our Kids Success)
Prospects Literacy Association
9913-108 Ave.
Edmonton AB T5H 1A5
Maureen Sanders
(403) 421-7323 / 421-7324 fax

Homespun
Edson Adult Literacy Project
4726 8 Ave.
Edson AB T7E 1S8
Jan Karasek, Coordinator
(403) 723-3630

Lamplight *
Fort McMurray Write Break Project
8115 Franklin Ave.
Fort McMurray AB T9H 2H7
Nancy Steel, Coordinator
(403) 791-8943 / 791-1555 fax

The Reading Network (planned)
10100 - 101 St.
Grande Prairie AB T8V 2P9
Ellen Kildaw, Coordinator
(403) 538-4363 / 532-8857 fax

Books for Babies
Cardston & District Home & School
Box 89
Hill Spring AB T0K 1E0
Location: Cardston
Mazy Ellen Peterson
(403) 626-3888

Books for Babies/Read to Me
Flagstaff Literacy Project
Box 535
Killam AB T0B 2L0
Shirley Damberger
(403) 385-3900 / 385-3904 fax

Lac La Biche Program for Adult Literacy*
Box 1934
Lac La Biche AB T0A 2C0
Linda Weir, Coordinator
(403) 623-2477

Homespun, Lacombe's Family Literacy Program
County of Lacombe Lifelong Learning Assoc.
Box 3362
Lacombe AB T0C 1S0
Roberta Dogterom, Coordinator
(403) 782-7655 / 782-4266

Black Gold Regional Schools (planned)
Bag 2500
Leduc AB T9E 2X3
Donna O'Neil
(403) 955-3555 / 955-3444 fax

Aboriginal Family Literacy Program
Lakeland College
Bag 6600, 2602 - 59 Ave.
Lloydminster AB S9V 1Z3
Tamara Topolnisky, Coordinator
(403) 871-5702 / 875-5136 fax

Books for Kids
Project Read-Nanton
Box 26
Nanton AB T0L 1R0
Janice Johnson, Monitor
(403) 646-3030

Books for Babies
Friends of Literacy Society
Box 1090
Pincher Creek AB T0K 1W0
Anne Elle, Coordinator
(403) 627-3311 / 627-5805 fax

P.A.L. Project
Box 1090
Pincher Creek AB T0K 1W0
Kathy Day, Coordinator
(403) 627-3311 / 627-5805 fax

Family Treasures
Box 1090
Pincher Creek AB T0K 1W0
Kathy Day, Coordinator
(403) 627-3311 / 627-5805 fax

Red Deer Family Reading Program
Literacy and Learning Centre
Box 5005
Red Deer AB T4N 5H5
Sharon Skage, Coordinator
(403) 346-2533 / 347-1698 fax

Red Deer P.A.L. Project
Literacy and Learning Centre
Box 5005
Red Deer AB T4N 5H5
Sharon Skage, Coordinator
(403) 346-2533 / 347-1698 fax

Rocky Read to Me Program
Rocky Mtn. House & District Further
Education Council
Box 2037
Rocky Mtn. House AB T0M 1T0

Homespun
Strathcona County Adult Literacy Project
2001 Sherwood Dr.
Sherwood Park AB T8A 3W7
Location: Strathcona County
Marnee Karl, Coordinator
(403) 464-8255 / 464-8050

Alpha familiale Centre éducatif communautaire
de l'Alberta
Box 2920
St-Paul AB T0A 3A0
Angele Buteau
(403) 645-6214 / 645-6251 fax

Rhyming Babies
Stettler Public Library
6202 - 44 Ave.
Stettler AB T0C 2L1
Sandra Davis, Coordinator
(403) 742-2292

Stettler Read and Write Program
(planned)
Box 1420
Stettler AB T0C 2L0
Heather Smith
(403) 742-2999 / 742-1388 fax

Reading P.A.L.'s
c/o Bag 6, SEJHS
Sundre AB T0M 1X0
Angela Schmiemann
(403) 638-3939

Books for Babies
Kneehill Read Project
Box 310
Trochu AB T0M 2C0
Helen Lemay, Coordinator
(403) 442-3737

Homespun (planned)
Rainbow Literacy Society
Box 180
Vulcan AB T0L 2B0
Bev Knutson-Shaw
(403) 485-2241 / 485-2920 fax

PAT (Parents as Tutors) Project
Rainbow Literacy Society
Box 180
Vulcan AB T0L 2B0
Bev Knutson-Shaw
(403) 485-2241 / 485-2920 fax

Homespun
Wetaskiwin Community
Literacy Program
Box 6265
Wetaskiwin AB T9A 2E9
Dianne Baker, Coordinator
(403) 352-7257

Wetaskiwin Little P.A.L.S
Wetaskiwin Community
Literacy Program
Box 6265
Wetaskiwin AB T9A 2E9
Dianne Baker, Coordinator
(403) 352-7257

Books & Butterflies
A.L.P.H.A. Project
General Delivery
Wildwood AB T0E 2M0
Sandra Dye, Coordinator
(403) 325-2090

British Columbia

Families in Motion
University College of the Fraser
Valley
45600 Airport Rd.
Chilliwack BC V2P 6T4
Barbara Bate
(604) 792-0025

Parents & Preschoolers - Learning Through **Manitoba**
the Library

Fraser Valley Regional Library, George
Mackie Branch
8440 - 112 St.
Delta BC V4C 4W9
(604) 594-8155 / 594-9364 fax

Samaritan House Literacy Program
110 - 6th St.
Brandon MB R7A 3N2
Yolanda Levesque
(204) 726-0758

Reading Mothers - Raising Families
(finished '94)
East Kootenay Community College
Box 1770
Fernie BC V0B 1M0
Leslie Giroday, Coordinator
(604) 423-4691

Read to Me
Flin Flon Community Adult Learning
Centre
58 Main St.
Flin Flon MB R8A 1J8
Marge Warkentin
(204) 687-3788

Helping Your Child Succeed in School:
Reading & Study Skills Series for Parents
Fraser Valley College
Location: Hope/Chilliwack
Margaret Penney
(604) 854-4513

l'Alphabétisation et la famille
Pluri-elles (Manitoba) Inc.
674, rue Langevin
St. Boniface MB R2H 2W4
Dominique Reynolds
(204) 233-1735 / 233-0277 fax

Learning Together
Capilano College & North Shore
Neighbourhood House
2055 Purcell Way
North Vancouver BC V7J 3H5
Jean Bennett, Coordinator
(604) 986-1911 / 984-4985 Fax

S.A.L.L.S.A. Family Literacy Program
Steinbach MB
Junia Loewen

Association of Parents & Professionals for
Literacy Education (A.P.P.L.E.)
Virden MB

Intergenerational Literacy Project
Invergarry Learning Centre
Bldg. 400, 9260 140 St.
Surrey BC V3V 5Z4
Lee Weinstein

Family Literacy
Pembina Valley Learning Centre
Winkler MB
Ruth Janzen

Rainmaker Project
1950 E. Hastings St.
Vancouver BC V5L 1T7

Black Educators Assoc. of Manitoba
Box 1131
Winnipeg MB R3C 2Y4
Esme Stewart
(204) 257-6872

The Learning Place
Mount Pleasant School
2300 Guelph St.
Vancouver BC V5T 3P1

Book Bridges
Junior League of Winnipeg
Winnipeg MB

Bookmates
Reading Partners Bookmates Inc.
500 Salter St.
Winnipeg MB R2W 4M5
Lynn Silver
(204) 582-1804

Day Care Volunteer Program
107 Pulford St.
Winnipeg MB R3L 1X8
Kathy Harrison
(204) 475-8775

Family Stories for Students
Victor Mager Parent Association
c/o 81 Beliveau Road
Winnipeg MB R2M 1S6
Jan Smith
(204) 253-9873

Literacy Initiatives for Tomorrow
(L.I.F.T.)
Manitoba Child Care Association
364 McGregor St.
Winnipeg MB R2W 4X3
Location: province-wide
Katalin Nagy, Resource Coordinator
(204) 586-8587 / 589-5613 fax

Pregnancy Distress Service Inc.
Young Parents Community Centre
571 Furby St.
Winnipeg MB R3B 2V9
Valerie Chitty
(204) 772-9091

Stevenson-Britannia Family Literacy
Program
Stevenson-Britannia Community Resource
Centre
1777 Silver Ave.
Winnipeg MB R3J 1B1
Jackie Lepage
(204) 832-7575

Vimy Ridge Park Literacy Project
870 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg MB R3G 0P1
Tom Penner
(204) 784-4054

Newfoundland

Books for Babies
Humber Laubach Literacy Council
Box 822, Fisher Bldg.
Comer Brook NF A2H 6H6
Isabella Fry, Coordinator
(709) 634-5081

Parents as Teaching Partners Program
Laubach Canada
Box 822
Comer Brook NF A2H 6H6
Location: various schools in area
Isabella Fry, Coordinator
(709) 634-5081 / 634-2126 fax

SORT (Significant Others as Reading
Teachers) Program
Faculty of Education, Memorial University
Room E-100, G.A. Hickman Building
St. John's NF A1B 3X8
Dr. Joan Oldford-Matchim
(709) 737-7578

Nova Scotia

Family Literacy Program
Nova Scotia Dept. of Education - Literacy
Section
Kingstec Campus, NSCC
Box 487
Kentsville NS B4N 3X3
Location: provincial (incl. Acadian &
Mi'kmaq communities - see J'apprends
pour mon enfant, below)
Isabel Madeira-Voss, Literacy Facilitator
(902) 679-6203

J'apprends pour mon enfant
Nova Scotia Dept. of Education - Literacy
Section
Box 578
Halifax NS B3J 2S9
Carmelle d'Entremont
(902) 424-5160

Share the Joy of Reading
Community Opportunity Development
Association
35 Dickson St.
Cambridge ON N3C 3N2
Maxine Cheater, Team Leader
(519) 623-9380

Mi'kmaq Family Literacy Program
Nova Scotia Dept. of Education - Literacy
Section
Box 487
Kentsville NS B4N 3X3
Theresa Isaac-Julien
(902) 893-5989

Books for Birthdays
Community Opportunity Development
Association
35 Dickson St.
Cambridge ON N3C 3N2
Maxine Cheater, Team Leader
(519) 623-9380

Target Training and Development
Stellarton, Nova Scotia
Janet Shively, Coordinator
(902) 928-1084

Family Literacy Program
Collingwood & Area Literacy Council
150 St. Paul St.
Collingwood ON L9Y 3P2
Shirley Fasken, Coordinator
(705) 444-0621

Ontario

Family Literacy Program
Atikokan Public Library, Reading Plus
Civic Centre
Atikokan ON P0T 1C0
Doris Brown, Chief Executive Officer
(807) 597-1514

Family Reading Circle
Tri-County Literacy Council
Box 522
Cornwall ON K6H 5T2
Location: Cornwall, Stormont, Dundas, &
Glengarry County
Geraldine McGowan, Executive Director
(613) 932-7161 / 932-5121 fax

Family Reading Pre-School Programs
Quinte Literacy Group
185B Pinnacle St.
Belleville ON K8N 3A5
Location: Stirling, Deseronto, Belleville,
Trenton, Consecon, Ameliasburgh
Cathy Mates, Coordinator
(613) 962-2823

Discover Together
Dryden Literacy Assoc.
23A King St.
Dryden ON P8N 1B4
Glenna Ivanowich, Coordinator
(807) 223-6486 / 223-5156 fax

Born to Read
Quinte Literacy Group
185B Pinnacle St.
Belleville ON K8N 3A5
Cathy Mates, Coordinator
(613) 962-2823

Rural Literacy Program
Rural Literacy Middlesex County
Box 190
Glencoe ON N0L 1M0
Frances Shamley
(519) 287-2618

Family Literacy Program
Action Read Community Literacy Centre
20 Fountain St. W., Suite 206
Guelph ON N1H 3P2
Sarah Farquhar, Coordinator
(519) 836-2759

Literacy Program
Haldimand Norfolk Literacy Council
Box 1119
Hagersville ON N0A 1H0
Leah Morris, Coordinator
(905) 768-1565 / 768-1993 fax

Family Literacy - Brighter Futures
Family Centre
Hamilton-Wentworth Roman Catholic
Separate School Board
45 Young St.
Hamilton ON L8N 1V1
Margaret Berg, Instructor
(905) 545-6555

Family Literacy
Hamilton Public Library
Box 2700, Station A, 55 York Blvd.
Hamilton ON L8N 4E4
Colette Wilson, Literacy Manager
(905) 546-3445 / 546-3202 fax

Family Story Time
Iroquois Falls Adult Learning Centre
P.O. Box 520
Iroquois Falls ON P0K 1G0
Location: Metheson
Marilyn Moon, Coordinator
(705)232-5433 / 232-7134

Kenamatewin Native Literacy Program
NeChee Friendship Centre
Box 241
Kenora ON P9N 3X1
Deana Halonen, Coordinator
(807) 468-4058 / 468-5340

RAPP - Reading & Parenting Project
Kingston Literacy
88 Wright Crescent
Kingston ON K7L 4T9
Caryanne Arnold, Executive Director
(613) 547-2012

Family Literacy Program
Frontenac County Board of Education,
School of Continuing & Community
Education
234 Concession St., Suite 101
Kingston ON K7K 6W6
Mary Forbes, Instructor
(613) 546-1432

The Open Book Project
Frontenac-Lennox & Addington County
Roman Catholic Separate School Board
1440 Princess St.
Kingston ON K7M 3E5
Robyn German, Program Coordinator
(613) 544-8883 / 544-9616 fax

Family Literacy Project
Core Literacy, Waterloo Region, Inc.
736 King St. E.
Kitchener ON N2G 2M5
Anne Ramsey, Family Literacy Facilitator
(519) 743-6090 / 743-0474 fax

Family Literacy Project
Core Literacy, Waterloo Region, Inc.
736 King St. E.
Kitchener ON N2G 2M5
Location: Elmira, New Hamburg,
Cambridge
Melinda McCoy, Coordinator
(519) 740-9694

Family Literacy Project
John Howard Society of Victoria/Haliburton
31 Peel St., Suite 110
Lindsay ON K9V 3L9
Location: rural communities in Victoria
Haliburton area
Sheila Vlachos, Coordinator
(705) 328-2222 / 328-2549 fax

Fun with Books
London Community Schools Assoc., Literacy
Programs
c/o Irene Wilmot, 70 Jacqueline St.
London ON N5Z 3P7
Bonnie Mahon, Coordinator
(519) 434-8404 / 434-7518

Parents & Kids Group - SAR Project
Peel Literacy Guild, Inc.
93 Dundas St. E., Suite 105
Mississauga ON L5A 1W7
Tina Koschate, Coordinator
(905) 273-5196

Colonial-Forest Ridge "Reading Club" - SAR
Project
Peel Literacy Guild, Inc.
93 Dundas St. E., Suite 105
Mississauga ON L5A 1W7
Tina Koschate, Coordinator
(905) 273-5196 / 273-3078 fax

BabyTALK (Teaching, Activities for Learning
& Knowledge)
Literacy Alliance of North Bay
183 First Ave. W.
North Bay ON P1B 3B8
Reva Perreault, Coordinator
(705) 476-8588

E.S.L. Conversation
North York Board of Education, Continuing
Education
15 Mallow Road
North York ON M3B 1G2
Jason Colina, Intake worker
(416) 395-4986

Independent Learning Centre Support
Orillia and District Literacy Council
P.O. Box 41
Orillia ON L3V 6H9
Jo Cryderman, Coordinator
(705) 327-1253 / 327-5250 fax

Family Literacy
Orillia and District Literacy Council
P.O. Box 41
Orillia ON L3V 6H9
Jo Cryderman, Coordinator
(705) 327-1253 / 327-5250 fax

Literacy for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Adults
Capital Region Centre for the Hearing
Impaired
310 Elmgrove Ave.
Ottawa ON K1Z 6V1
Louise Ford, Coordinator
(613) 729-1467 / 729-5167 fax

Read to Me Program
Ottawa Board of Education
515 Cambridge St. South
Ottawa ON K1S 4H9
Location: (4 locations)
Joyce White, Manager ABE, E.S.L., FWC
(613) 239-2656

Family Literacy
Russell Heights Family House
1799E Russell Road
Ottawa ON K1L 0N1
Beverly Zrudlo, Coordinator
(613) 736-9855

Family Reading Program
Sound Learning Centre
35 Seguin St., Suite #1
Parry Sound ON P2A 1B3
Cindy Jeffery, Family Reading Promoter
(705) 746-8393

Trent Valley Literacy Assoc.
P.O. Box 983
Peterborough ON K9J 7A5
Corry Wink, Coordinator
1-800-263-0993 / (705) 749-0084 fax

Chippewas of Sarnia Literacy Program
978 Tashmoo Ave.
Sarnia ON N7T 7H5
Jean Doull, Instructor
(519) 383-8787 / 332-6855 fax

"Different Doesn't Mean Wrong" Program
Niin Sakaan Literacy Program
Indian Friendship Centre
114 Gore St. Sault Ste. Marie ON P6A 1L9
Genny Boyer, Coordinator
(705) 759-7281 / 942-3227 fax

Read to Me Program
Reading Rising Adult Learning Program
and Read to Me Program
Box 847
Schreiber ON P0T 2S0
Kathie Notwell, Coordinator
(807) 825-9221

Towards Rural Education, Employment, &
Training (TREET)
North Frontenac Literacy Program
(Sharbot Lake)
Box 413
Sharbot Lake ON K0H 2P0
Susan Wing, Executive Director
(613) 279-2788

Family Literacy
Sioux-Hudson Literacy Council
Box 829
Sioux Lookout ON P8T 1B2
Monika Orzechowska, Coordinator
(807) 737-1886 / 737-3350 fax

Parents as Tutors
East Parry Sound Literacy Council
The "Word Shop"
Box 280
South River ON P0A 1X0
Alma Rice, Coordinator
(705) 386-0764

Reading Circles
East Parry Sound Literacy Council, The
"Word Shop"
Box 280
South River ON P0A 1X0
Location: South River, Parry Sound
District
Alma Rice, Coordinator
(705) 386-0764

After School Program
Saugeen Community Remedial
Outreach for Learning Literacy
G.M.B. 14, R.R.#1
Southampton ON N0H 2L0
Sharon George, Coordinator
(519) 797-2392

One-to-One and Small Group Literacy
Saugeen Community Remedial
Outreach for Learning Literacy
G.M.B. 14, R.R.#1
Southampton ON N0H 2L0
Sharon George, Coordinator
(519) 797-2392

Literacy Program
Lincoln County Roman Catholic Separate
School Board
145 Niagara St.
St. Catharines ON L2R 4L7
Location: St. Catharines, Grimsby
Tony Mambella, Principal
(905) 682-3360

Ontario Basic Skills (OBS)
Niagara College of Applied Arts and
Technology
Box 340, 59 Wellandvale St.
St. Catharines ON L2R 6V6
Location: Welland, St. Catharines
Marti Jurmain, Director
(905) 735-2211

Family Literacy
Niagara Regional Literacy Council
57 Facer St., Rm. 12
St. Catharines ON L2M 5H9
Chris Andres, Office Manager
(905) 646-4434

Family Literacy
St. Mary's Public Library
Adult Literacy Program
Box 700
St. Mary's ON N4X 1B4
Ann Slater, Coordinator
(519) 284-3346 / 284-2630 fax

English as a Second Language Literacy
Program
Young Women's Christian Assoc.
16 Mary St. W.
St. Thomas ON N5P 2S3
Tracy Fawdry, Coordinator
(519) 631-9800 / 631-6411 fax

Family Literacy Program
Nipissing First Nation Literacy Program
(Sturgeon Falls)
36 Semo Road
Sturgeon Falls ON P0H 2G0
Location: Garden Village
Karen Commanda, Coordinator
(705) 753-2050 / 753-0207 fax

Apprenons Ensemble
533, rue Notre Dame
Sudbury ON P3C 5L1
Louise Romain
(705) 673-5730 / 673-5520 fax

Parents for Reading Program
Confederation College of Applied Arts &
Technology
Box 398
Thunder Bay ON P7C 4W1
Kathleen Forneri, Coordinator
(807) 475-6678 / 623-9165

The RAP Stop (Reading Awareness
Program)
Timmins Learning Centre
85 Pine St. South, Suite 4
Timmins ON P4N 2K1
Rosemary Newman, Coordinator
(705) 268-8900 / 268-4870 fax

Family Literacy Program
Dixon Hall Neighbourhood, Family &
Social Service Centre
58 Sumach St.
Toronto ON M5A 3J7
Jaqueline Cook, Coordinator
(416) 947-0164

Family Literacy
Harambee Centres
Canada Child & Family Services
55 McCaul St., Box 221
Toronto ON M5T 2W7
Vilma Wright, Coordinator
(416) 593-7650

Parenting Education Program
Toronto Board of Education
Toronto ON
Mary Gordon, Program Administrator

Literacy & the Parent
Toronto East End Literacy Project
265 Gerrard St. E.
Toronto ON M5A 2G3
Michele Kuhlmann, Project Coordinator
(416) 968-6989 / 968-0597 fax

Family Literacy
YMCA of Greater Toronto
15 Robina Ave.
Toronto ON M6C 3Y4
Alexis Thomson, Coordinator
(416) 651-0010

Parent-Child Mother Goose Program
Toronto ON
Celia Lottridge

Focus on Learning
North Algoma Literacy Coalition
Box 1387
Wawa ON P0S 1K0
Susan Switzer, Coordinator
(705) 856-4394

The Book Bag Club
Schoolhouse Literacy Skills
Box 813
Warton ON N0H 2T0
Christine Mitropolous, Coordinator
(519) 534-4911

Literacy Program
Oxford County Board of Education,
Blossom Park Adult Day School
391 Blossom Park Road
Woodstock ON N4G 7J3
David Pearce, Vice Principal
(519) 539-4821/539-2144 fax

Prince Edward Island

Parents as Reading Partners
Prince Edward Island Literacy Alliance
P.O. Box 400
Charlottetown PEI C1A 7K7
Maitland MacIsaac
(902) 368-3620 / 628-8178

Quebec

JSMS Language & Literacy Group
Jimmy Sandy Memorial School
Box 5115
Kawawachikamach PQ G0G 2Z0
Allan C. Banks
(418) 585-3811 / 585-3347 fax

Learning With My Child
Adult Education Services, Sault-Saint-
Louis School Board
380, rue Provost
Lachine PQ H8S 1L7
Gillian di Vito
(514) 595-2038 / 595-2065 fax

La Boîte à lettres
360 rue Cherbourg
Longueuil PQ J4J 4Z3
Anne-Marie Gervais, animatrice
(514) 646-9273 / 679-3294 fax

Main dans la main
Collectif de recherche pédagogique
1432, avenue des Pins
Sillery PQ G2S 4J5
Cécile Cloutier
(418) 682-0262

Parents as Partners as Learners Project
Literacy Unit - Eastern Quebec Regional
School Board
2046 Chemin St-Louis
Sillery PQ G1T 1P4
Ann Gauvin
(418) 688-8733 / 682-5891 fax

Saskatchewan

Prairie West Regional College
Box 264
Blaine Lake SK S0J 0J0
Joanne Hubbard
(306) 497-3584

Parent & Child Together
Northlands College
Box 509
La Ronge SK S0J 1L0
Location: Stanley Mission
Marian Andrews, Coordinator
(306) 425-4334

Reading: A Family Affair
Parkland Regional College
Box 790
Melville SK S0A 2P0
LeeAnne Clarke, Coordinator
(306) 728-4471

SIAST - Palliser Campus
Box 1420
Moose Jaw SK S6H 4R4

Born to Read
Northwest Regional College
North Battleford SK
Ed Merkosky

Family Reading Program
Prince Albert Literacy Network
#101, 699 - 28th St. W.
Prince Albert SK S6V 6K5
Elsie Livingston, Volunteer Facilitator
(306) 763-7745

L'ABC de la famille
Service fransaskois d'éducation des adultes
(S.F.E.A.)
852 Branion Dr.
Prince Albert SK S6V 2S5
Janice Thomas Gervais
(306) 764-1292

Come Read With Me
SIAST Wascana
Box 556
Regina SK S4P 3A3
Pat Hoffman, Instructor
(306) 787-1676 / 1-800-667-7730 / 787-4109
fax

READ Canada
Frontier College
#203, 1808 Smith St.
Regina SK S4P 2N4
Michele Sereda, Associate
(306) 347-3077

Regina Public Library
P.O. Box 2311
Regina SK S4P 3Z5
Margaret Dodson, Family Literacy Coordinator
(306) 777-6010 / 352-5550 fax

Teen and Young Parent Program
Saskatchewan Social Services
Regina SK
Lynn Allen

Friendship Inn Family Literacy Program
READ Saskatoon
Box 7888
Saskatoon SK S7K 4R6
Doreen Anderson
(306) 652-5448

Come Read With Me
SIAST Kelsey
Box 1520
Saskatoon SK S7K 3R5
Norma Klassen
(306) 653-7368 / 933-6490 fax

Born to Read
Cypress Hills Regional College
129-2nd Ave.NE
Swift Current SK S9H 2C6
Adeline Steinley
(306) 773-1531

Come Read With Me
Cypress Hills Regional College
129-2nd Ave.NE
Swift Current SK S9H 2C6
Location: rural areas
Adeline Steinley
(306) 773-1531

Family Literacy Program
Prairie West Regional College
Box 1001
Warman SK S0K 4S0
Carolyne Poletz, Program Coordinator
(306) 242-5377 / 242-8662 fax

Going the Distance: Family Literacy in
Rural Saskatchewan
Southeast Regional College
Box 880
Weyburn SK S9H 2A1
Location: rural south-east Sask. (20,000
sq. km. region)
Nancy Smoliak, Coordinator
(306) 848-2507 / 848-2517 fax

Appendix B

Promotional and Public Awareness Materials

Contents

[Media](#)

Newsletters

There are sample newsletters in the hardcopy version of the book but not in this online version

Brochures and information sheets

There are sample brochures and information sheets in the hardcopy of the book but not in this online version

B. Promotional and Public Awareness Materials

Media

F.L.A.G. has developed an information sheet on dealing with the media, which includes the following tips:

Public relations is "free advertising," and if done correctly, more effective than paid advertising. Here are some tips for generating greater public awareness and support through the media:

- Don't be afraid to send news releases on a regular basis.
- Tie your program into events happening in the news. Reporters are always looking for local angles on outside events. For example: Maclean's magazine recently did a cover story on education in Canada. A publicity-conscious literacy coordinator could send a copy of that feature to the local paper with information about a current program. Provide a lead something like: "The local P.A.L. Project is helping to empower families in the educational process"
- If the paper (radio station or television station) doesn't respond, don't phone and complain about their lack of community spirit. Just try again Or, if you really feel that a particular story is important, phone the editor and ask courteously what she is looking for and how you can provide it.
- If a reporter contacts you for more information / photos / interviews, bend over backwards to get it for him. If you can be counted on to be helpful, courteous and provide good copy, after a while he may start contacting you when he is having a slow news day and needs a feature or photo idea.
- If your local media seems really indifferent and difficult to interest, invite them to send a reporter to speak to your committee on "How to Write News Releases," then pump her for information on what kind of information and photos are wanted. After that, you may get more cooperation.
- Volunteer to be a guest speaker or participant in community events (where the local media is sure to be).
- Ask your local newspaper/ radio/ television station for a donation to help fund your program or to collaborate on an International Year of the Family project. Newspapers especially should recognize that they have a vested interest in children growing up to enjoy reading. (F.L.A.G. 1994)

Reading makes difference with children

Edson Leader

September 8, 1992

By Ed Moore
Edson Leader

Parents who read their pre-school children can make the difference between an academically adept child and one who suffers from reading and learning problems.

The Homespun Program will help to bridge this gap, says Edson Adult Literacy Program coordinator Louise Connolly, who explained the concept at the Yellowhead School Division Board of trustees regular meeting Sept. 2 at the YSD Education Services Center.

The concept of the Homespun, said Connolly, is to show parents how to read to their children.

"If they (children) don't know what a book and reading is about by five years old, it's too late."

Connolly hopes to inaugurate the Edson Homespun program some time in the new year.

Connolly told the board, as part of the funding arrangement, Brooks will also have to write a policy handbook for others who follow in its footsteps.

Homespun participants will meet on a once-a-week basis for 10 weeks, said Connolly. Weekly sessions would last about two hours.

The Edson program will require a workshop leader. Unlike a volunteer position, the workshop leader would be a paid position, said Connolly. This program has very specific guidelines. It must be a paid position."

She said, at this point, it looks like workshop leader will be a quarter time position but details still have to be worked out.

She told trustees the Homespun program would also encourage better communication among families. "Some (in the Brooks Program) moved the TV downstairs."

Brooks has even formed a parent self-help group.

"I'm not in support of giving money," said Rosalie Golder, one of the Hinton trustees.

However, Golder said she was in favor of the board donating books to the project. Connolly said books wouldn't be the main problem in starting a Homespun program. Funding the paid position and covering the cost of the workshop would likely be the most difficult responsibilities.

Connolly said between 10 and 12 parents are needed to form a Homespun group. About twice that number will have to be interviewed as possible participants in case some parents decide to drop out. Each family will need about 10 books as materials for its part of the project.

The program would be the second of its kind in Alberta. The Brooks program in southeastern Alberta was the first.

The Brooks Homespun was funded by secretary of state funding (federal government), which is enough funding to last two years. Connolly said Secretary of state funding went to Brooks because they inaugurated the program. Those who follow cannot access the one-time funds.

Connolly said in the Brooks program some parents have put together a book for their youngsters. For example, one parent constructed a book about child birth for their youngster. This benefits the parents and child, she said.

Financial help to the sum of \$1,000 has been received from the Catholic Women's League in Edson, Edson Family and Community Support Services and the Edson Roman Catholic Separate School Board.

The board has agreed to purchase 50 books.

Parental Guide

Helping your child to reach reading readiness

By Dawn Jackson

All parents want their children to be good readers. Unfortunately, and despite the best intentions, many of their tactics actually interfere with a child's reading readiness.

Lynn Silver, executive director of Bookmates, says the first and most important step when teaching your child to read is to create a safe reading environment.

"Parents need to exhibit a lot of support and patience," she said. "What we sometimes forget when we're older is that reading involves taking risks. Kids need to be able to do that they're able to do that."

Silver suggests you follow your child's lead and let them set the pace. Some preschoolers are chomping at the bit, wanting to know every word in their favorite story books. Others are content to simply look at pictures. Parents shouldn't push children to read before they are ready because children may begin to associate books with pressure and failure.

If kids see their parents going to books for information and pleasure, reading is a skill they're going to want to have."

Silver says modeling good reading behavior doesn't only mean novels. "Some parents don't enjoy reading novels, but they love gardening and have a number of books about that," she said. "That's another example of children seeing their parents going to books for information, and that's a powerful model too."

Silver says parents should encourage children to read a variety of materials. Whether it's slogans on T-shirts, street signs, poems or cereal boxes, your little one will see that the written word exists all around them, she said.

"It helps keep reading connected to the real world, and shows children that it's not just something they do in school," Silver said.

Putting labels on some of the objects in your child's bedroom, such as the "chair" or "bed" is also a good idea. That way the child begins to associate those letter combinations with physical objects.

In addition to special reading times, parents can incorporate reading into everyday situations. Things like recipes, shopping lists and letters to grandma can all be helpful reading tools, says Silver.

Finally, parents need to enjoy themselves. Do different voices for the various characters in the stories that you read aloud. Ask your child what she thinks those characters should sound like.

Make up stories together using characters you've encountered in your child's favorite books. If you're having fun reading, you will set the tone for your child to have fun doing it too.

Parents, says Silver, should also remember to model good reading habits to their children. "Children tend to value what they see mom and dad doing.

Putting labels on some of the object's in your child's bedroom, such as the "chair" or "bed" is also a good idea.

Appendix C

Works Cited and Recommended Resources

Contents

[Books and Articles - Family and Intergenerational Literacy](#)

[Books - Children's Literature](#)

[Books - Crafts and Activities](#)

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[Journals and Newsletters](#)

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[Organizations](#)

[Pamphlets](#)

[Papers and Reports](#)

[Videos](#)

C. Works Cited and Recommended Resources

The following resources have been divided into specific categories to make it easier to locate resource manuals, conference reports, etc. An author may have different publications listed in different categories. This is not a comprehensive list of family literacy resources (see the bibliographies listed for more information). Thanks to all who contributed.

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Organizations

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Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU), Family Literacy Officer. Kingsbourne House, 229/231 High Holborn, London WC1V 7DA UK.

Alberta Association for Adult Literacy. Provincial umbrella group. Newsletter, annual conference, professional development for members. c/o A.V.C. 332 - 6 Ave. SE, Attn. #211 RMP, Calgary AB T2G 4S6. (403) 297-4994, 297-4849 fax. Belle Auld, Office Coordinator.

Alberta Commissioner of Services for Children. 22nd Floor, 10025 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton AB T5J 3Z5. (403) 422-5011.

Alberta Teachers Association. 11010 - 142 Street, Edmonton AB T5N 2R1.

Alpha Ontario (Project of the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library). Offers call-in access to catalogue of materials, sells Alphabase Directory. 21 Park Road, Toronto ON M4W 2N1. 1-800-363-0007.

La Boîte à lettres. 360 rue Cherbourg, Longueuil PQ J4J 4Z3. (514) 646-9273, 679-3294 fax.

Canadian Association for Young Children. 5417 Rannock Ave., Winnipeg MB R3R ON3.

Canadian Association of Toy Libraries and Parent Resource Centres. #205, 120 Holland Ave., Ottawa ON K1Y 0X6.

Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (C.C.L.O.W.). 47 Main St., Toronto ON M4E 2V6.

Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation. Suite 109B, 858 Bank St., Ottawa ON K1S 3W3. (613) 234-7292, 234-3913 fax.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education. 1900 Kenny Road, Columbus OH 43210 USA.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, and National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education, Centre for Applied Linguistics. 1118 - 22 St. N.W., Washington DC 20037 USA.

Even Start Program. Mary Jean LeTendre, Director, Compensatory Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Room 4400 - Portals, Washington DC 20202-6132 USA. (202) 260-4021, 260-7764 fax.

Family Literacy Action Group of Alberta (F.L.A.G.). Networking, public awareness, newsletter. 200 Horticultural Station Road E., Brooks AB T1R 1E5. (403) 362-1677, 362-8926 fax. Jana Joujan, Coordinator.

Family Literacy Interest Group of Ontario. 35 Ellerbeck St., Kingston ON K7L 4H5. (Dissolved in 1994.)

Fédération canadienne des associations foyer-école et parents-maîtres. 323 rue Chapel, Ottawa ON K1N 7Z2. (613) 234-7292.

Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français. National umbrella organization that supports literacy projects across Canada. National symposium on family literacy in December 1994. Series of brochures published on family literacy, including an adaptation of some American texts. 235 Chemin Montréal, pièce 205, Vanier PQ. (613) 749-5333, 749-2252 fax. Luce Lapierre, director.

La Fondation Québécoise pour l'alphabétisation. 133 rue de la commune ouest, 4e étage, Montréal PQ H2Y 2C7. (514) 289-1832, 849-7201 fax. Sophie Labrecque, coordonnatrice.

Intergenerational/Family Literacy Professional Network. 1336 West Knox, Tucson AZ 85705 U.S.A.

International Reading Association. PO Box 8139, Newark DE 19714-8139 U.S.A.

Literacy B.C. Public awareness, networking, learner support. #1122 - 510 W. Hastings St., Vancouver BC V6B 1L8. (604) 687-5077, 687-5076 fax. Linda Mitchell, Executive Director.

Literacy Coordinators of Alberta. Resource library including family literacy materials for loan to members. Newsletter. c/o A.V.C. 332 6 Ave SE, #211 RMP, Calgary AB T2G 4S6. (403) 297-4995, 297-4849 fax. Jackie Devlin, Administrative Assistant.

Literacy Partners of Quebec. 3040 Sherbrooke St., West Room 4B.1, Montreal PQ H3Z 1A4. (514) 931-8731 ext. 1413, 931-5181 fax. Judy Brandeis, Coordinator.

Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba. Resources, networking, public awareness. Newsletter. Professional development. 107 Pulford St., Winnipeg MB R3L 1X8. (204) 452-3139. Suzanne Henry, Coordinator.

Manitoba Education & Training, Literacy & Continuing Education Dept. Provides support to and monitors cost-shared projects. 4th Floor, 185 Carlton St., Winnipeg MB R3C 3J1. (204) 945-8247. Movement for Canadian Literacy. 458 McLaren St., Ottawa ON K1R 5K6. (613) 563-2464, 563-2504 fax. Nancy Jennings, Executive Director. National Adult Literacy Database. Contact Tamara Ilersich, Director, NALD, Box 4005, London ON N5W 5H1. (519) 452-4446, 451-8831 fax. Service pour francophones: (519) 452-2246. National Center for Family Literacy. 325 West Main St., Louisville KY 40202-4251 USA. (502) 584-1133, 584-0172 fax. National Clearinghouse on E.S.L. Literacy Education (NCLE). 1118 - 22 St. N.W., Washington DC 20037 USA. National Literacy Secretariat. 25 Eddy St., 11th Floor, Room H15, Hull PQ K1A 1K5. (819) 953-5280, 953-8076 fax. New Brunswick Committee on Literacy. 900 Hanwell Road, Fredericton NB E3B 6A2. (506) 457-1227, 459-0007 fax. Jan Greer, Promotions Coordinator. Nova Scotia Department of Education - Literacy Section. Family literacy resource kits, programs for English-speaking, Acadian, and Mi'kmaq. c/o Kingstec Campus, NSCC, Box 487, Kentville NS B4N 3X3. (902) 679-6203.

Nova Scotia Provincial Literacy Coalition.

No staff, no office. Board contacts are:

Co-chairperson: Craig Logan, 84 West Side Road, Sheet Harbour NS B0J 3B0. (902) 885-3082, 885-3082 fax.

Co-chairperson: Barbara Moreton, Box 112, Heatherton NS B0H 1R0. (902) 625-3761, 386-2316 fax.

NWT Literacy Council. Box 761, Yellowknife NWT X1A 2N6. (403) 873-9262, 873-0423 fax. Barbara Paquin, Executive Director.

Ontario Literacy Coalition. 365 Bloor St E., Suite 1003, Toronto ON M4W 3L4. (416) 963-5787, 961-8138 fax. Susan Sussman, Executive Director.

Ontario Native Literacy Coalition. 787 2nd Ave. E., Owen Sound ON N4K 2G9. (519) 371-5594. Renee Abram, Executive Director.

Parents and Literacy Learning. Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove, Queensland 4059.

P.E.I. Literacy Alliance. Parents as Reading Partners training. Networking, public awareness. P.O. Box 400, Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 7K7. (902) 368-3620, 628-8178. Dianne Morrow, Executive Director.

Push Literacy Action Now, Inc. (PLAN). 1332 G Street S.E., Washington DC 20003.

Quebec Literacy Working Group. English family literacy activities include learning circles in primary schools, encouragement of reading in families, summer camp, literacy day for families. Parents as Partners as Learners project. 2046, Chemin St-Louis, Sillery PQ G1T 1P4. (418) 688-8733, 692-5891 fax.

READ Canada. 35 Jackes Ave., Toronto ON M4T 1E2.

Reading is Fundamental, Inc. Shared Beginnings Program. Numerous publications. 600 Maryland Ave., Washington DC 20024. (202) 287-3220.

Rural Clearinghouse for Lifelong Education and Development. College Court Building, Kansas State University, Manhattan KS 66506-6001.

Saskatchewan Literacy Network. Lending library including family literacy materials for loan to Saskatchewan members. Annotated bibliography for sale. Come Read With Me training. Quarterly journal, newsletter. Box 1520, Saskatoon SK S7K 3R5. (306) 653-7368, 933-6490 fax.

Service francsaskois d'éducation des adultes (S.F.E.A.). Francophone adult education component in Saskatchewan. Affiliate of the Corporation du Collège Mathieu in Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan. Contact Catherine Darvault, (306) 648-3129.

Storylinks: Learning Through Dialogue. 280 Pacific Ave., Apt. 2, Toronto ON M6P 2P9.

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 7 Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP. Telephone 45 68 10 00, fax (33-1) 40-65-94-05.

Yukon Learn. 308-A Hanson St., Whitehorse YT Y1A 1Y6. (403) 668-6280, 633-4576 fax. Valerie Baggaley, Coordinator.

Pamphlets

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