



LITERACY NOW COMMUNITIES PROGRAM  
STAGE THREE - IMPLEMENTATION  
2008-2009

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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**Name of Community: South Okanagan-Similkameen**

**Name of persons submitting this report: Caroline Pennelli/ Lorraine Renyard**

**Address: Penticton and Wine Country Chamber of Commerce**

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**Submission Date: April 30, 2009**

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**YOUR COMMUNITY**

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**1) What changes do you observe about your community since doing the community plan?**

- We are experiencing reduced employment opportunities, lay-offs and closures of businesses, due to national economic decline
  - We have experienced challenges in provision of essential services in some communities, due to lack of qualified personnel e.g. pre-natal support
  - School District 53 has closed an elementary school in Hedley due to realignment of resources
  - Okanagan College is offering additional programs for adults through its school-based 'Write Out Loud' projects
  - We have increased the availability of information regarding Early Years development and social risk-factors, through the recently completed Understanding the Early Years project
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**YOUR PLAN**

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**2) List the priorities/objectives and actions from your community's literacy plan that have been addressed this year.**

- Recruited a Job Creation Partnership staff member, to develop a Community Literacy Directory. This will be accompanied by updated information on the Literacy BC website (one of four provincial pilot projects), and a local website, hosted by School District 53
- Held first annual Family Literacy Day at Cherry Lane Shopping Centre in Penticton, on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009, bringing together 30 service providers and agencies to celebrate and educate families about literacy supports in the South Okanagan-Similkameen.
- Established 3 literacy subcommittees to address specific goals and objectives of the Literacy Plan:

Adult/ Workplace Literacy  
Health Literacy  
Family Literacy

- Addressed funding and other supports, including CALP and Spirit of BC 2009
- Improved access to and communication between services, through sub-committees, monthly newsletters, and regular Task Group meetings
- Increased awareness of literacy issues in the region through regular articles and announcements in several community newspapers and TV news shows. These include coverage of the Family Literacy Day, Health Literacy initiatives, Write Out Loud, funding for District Literacy from Ministry of Education, and Spirit of BC week activities.
- Increased access and awareness of Early Years literacy activities by producing termly tables of events and activities for parents and care-givers, in Penticton, Oliver, Osoyoos and Okanagan Falls.

### 3) **What have been the major impacts of this work?**

We are aware of a heightened awareness and interest in literacy issues in the community. Service providers at Task Group meetings have requested:

- Termly Early Years Literacy updates
- Health literacy information, with workshops for service providers
- Adult literacy success stories, shared through newsletter
- Involvement of Literacy Coordinator in various service-provider forums e.g. Communities for Kids and Success by Six Steering Committee, South Okanagan Early Years HUB Committee, Child and Youth Services Committees
- Literacy tutors to work with youth that attend their programs.

Large numbers of new collaborations have developed through the outreach work of the Literacy Coordinator and the Literacy sub-committees (Health, Adult/ Workplace, and Family), including

- Ooqnakane Friendship Centre,
- Penticton Museum,
- Okanagan Regional Libraries,
- Penticton Library,
- Indian Band Schools and Day-Care programs,
- Government service providers (including Service Canada and MCFD),
- WorkZone BC,
- Interior Health, Speech and Language Pathology,
- Mental Health,
- BC Schizophrenia Society,
- Keremeos & Cawston, and Oliver and Osoyoos ESLSAP programs, and
- South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services.

### 4) **What adjustments have you made to your community plan?**

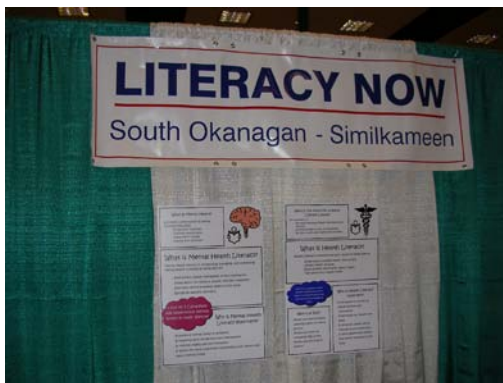
The three subcommittees were formed in November, with first meetings scheduled on Nov 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Their mandate is to further refine the focus areas for adult literacy, health literacy and family literacy, by digging deeper into the goals and objectives of the Community Literacy Plan.

Areas of focus for 2009/ 2010, arising from meetings to date:

## Health Literacy

### To facilitate or develop:

1. Approaches to effective doctor-patient communication, for example  
Doctor 'Teach Back'  
'Ask Me Three'
2. Points of contact with medical service providers:
  - Doctors: MAC (including central mailing locations in hospitals)
  - Social Workers' Society : monthly meetings
  - Public Health Nurses: Interior Health (locations?)
  - Mental Health Centres (Penticton; Oliver & Osoyoos; Keremeos)
  - College of Pharmacists (local contacts)
  - South Okanagan Health Fair
3. Points of Contact with Community, to include:
  - Doctors' offices/ health centres
  - Strong Start Centres
  - Early Years HUB Community Bulletin Boards
  - South Okanagan Health Fair



### To prepare and disseminate information items:

- Okanagan College Adult Literacy Tutoring posters
- Health Literacy Brochures
- 'Make it Better for Myself Card', including 'Ask me Three'
- ELSA information
- 'Doctor Teach Back' methodology
- Health Literacy Posters

## **Adult/ Workplace Literacy**

### **Main areas of need identified as follows:**

- To raise awareness among employers about effect of enhanced literacy on workplace: productivity, safety, retention, bottom-line
- To raise awareness among employers about effects of low-literacy levels in community: impact on businesses
- Safety around agricultural work-place
- Workplace training opportunities for employees with low literacy levels
- To raise awareness of existing Adult Language learning opportunities

### **Key Discussion Items:**

Points of contact with workplace/ community:

- Small Business Trade Show, Fall 2009, Penticton
- Women in Business luncheons
- WorkZone BC (including ESL specialist)
- South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services
- Chambers of Commerce
- Francophone Centre
- CFSEO (Centre francophone de services a l'emploi de l'Okanagan)
- Fruit Growers' Association

### **Sequence of Activities for 2009/2010**

- 1/ Research: effects of low literacy levels on businesses: economic, health and safety, employee retention  
Address the question to employers: why is it important to refer your staff for literacy support/ education?
- 2/ Gather success stories, from employers' or employees' perspectives
- 3/ Select groups to connect with, for dissemination of findings e.g. Unions, Fruit Growers' Association, Women in Business
- 4/ Develop mechanisms and identify forums for communication of findings: newsletters, public forums, Small Business Trade Show, Chamber of Commerce events etc.
- 5/ Identify flagship organisations, which might be approached to develop a model of employee training and support e.g. The Lakeside, Penticton; The Ramada, Penticton
- 6/ Plan, implement and evaluate model of employee training in flagship business
- 7/ Develop further employee training initiatives: spread the wealth

## Family Literacy

Focus to date has been on Event Planning for  
Family Literacy Day: Jan 24<sup>th</sup>, 10am - 6pm, Cherry Lane



# Family Literacy Day Celebration

Saturday January 24th, 2009 10 am - 5pm  
*Cherry Lane Shopping Centre, Penticton*

**A FUN** day out for the entire family: Celebrate with us!  
Activities for kids of all ages and adults  
Family Literacy Information  
Hourly draw prizes  
Book Exchanges

**CENTRE STAGE  
EVENTS ALL DAY!**  
Storytelling  
Dance  
Drumming  
Open-mike  
Author-readings  
German stories  
Raise a Reader



Venue has been booked for Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010, for  
Second Annual Event

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**TASK GROUP AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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- 5) **If your task group or advisory committee has a vision or mission statement, list it here.**

NA

- 6) **Number of people participating in the Community Literacy Task Group or Advisory Committee:**

**31 (though meetings usually number between 15 and 20, depending on peoples' commitments)**

- 7) **List the sectors involved in the Task Group:**

- Lower Similkameen Community Services Society
- ESLSAP, Lower Similkameen
- ESAP, Oliver and Osoyoos
- Okanagan College, Adult Literacy and ESL Tutors, and Coordinators
- Children's librarian
- ECD HUB coordinator
- School District 67, Director of Instruction
- School District 53, Assistant Superintendent
- South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services
- Service Canada
- MCFD
- School District 67 Principal and Literacy Helping Teacher
- Penticton Museum
- Communities for Kids
- OoKnakanees Friendship Centre
- Penticton and District Community Resource Society
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Speech and Language Pathology: Interior Health
- BC Schizophrenia Society
- SD 53 and 67 Strong Start leaders
- WorkZone
- Public Health/ Interior Health
- Okanagan Boys and Girls Club
- CAPC

- 8) **Number of times that your Task Group/Advisory Committee met:**

The Task Group met on four occasions:

Sept 18<sup>th</sup>, Oct 30<sup>th</sup>, Feb 26<sup>th</sup>, and April 30<sup>th</sup>. Two more meetings are scheduled for the remainder of the 08/09 year.

The smaller Executive Committee, comprising the Okanagan College Adult Literacy Coordinator; the Director of Instruction from SD 67; the Assistant Superintendent from

SD 53, and the Manager of the Penticton and District Chamber of Commerce, met 8 times.

Subcommittee meetings took the place of Task Group meetings on Nov 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

Subsequently, the subcommittees have scheduled their own meetings:

Family Literacy Sub-committee: 4 to date  
Health Literacy Sub-committee: 4 to date  
Adult/ Workplace Sub-committee: 2 to date

In addition, regular updates are shared by email, and through the monthly newsletter.

**9) Examples of statements/actions that indicate a shared understanding of the issues and needs:**

In general, people who attend the Task Group meetings are pleased to attend, and are given opportunities to contribute to the meetings, rather than being passive recipients of information. Thus, Task Group members who are on a Sub-Committee regularly report back to the larger group, to solicit ideas or opinions about projects. Task Group members are willing to share the chairing of the meeting, though the Coordinator ensures that agendas and minutes are kept, and sent out in a timely manner.

Introducing the sub-committee format proved particularly positive. These groups of interested and knowledgeable people in the field, have come together in a very dynamic way to move forward with the implementation of the Community Literacy Plan, as described in the preceding section.

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LITERACY OUTREACH COORDINATION

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The coordination of literacy work in the community context has been an important outcome of literacy planning work. Therefore, an effort has been made to fund the Literacy Outreach Coordinator (Community Literacy Coordinator) position specifically. In this section, please add any comments that are especially related to the coordinator position and its effect on literacy work.

**10) How has the Literacy Outreach Coordinator position funded through 2010 Legacies Now enhanced literacy work in your community?**

“The Coordinator position has made a huge difference in the quality and amount of work that we have been able to produce in Penticton. The Coordinator was able to reach out to the Community in a much broader way and bring literacy partners together in the same room for some very important and needed discussions.

People who originally did not think that the Literacy issue affected them, are part of this committee now and are being educated about how it affects everyone.”  
(Lorraine Renyard, Manager, Penticton and Wine Country Chamber of Commerce)



"We just need to look at all the work and accomplishments thus far. All these support what we are doing, ergo, they wouldn't be done otherwise! The newsletters and fair were great examples of communicating and awareness."  
(Jim Insley, Assistant Superintendent, School District 53)

"There is a growing realization or acceptance that many behavioural issues with students stem from a lack of literacy ability at an early age. Beginning from a lack of oral stimulation and skills at the infant and preschool stage to underdeveloped phonological awareness at the preschool and primary stage and onward to an inability to keep up and enjoy reading through the intermediate, middle and high school years. Reading and writing are the base of all other academic studies so if literacy is not developed all other areas suffer including behaviour.

Many of the behavioural issues we see from intermediate and higher grade students, seem to stem from the lack of an academic base. These students are embarrassed, have lack of confidence, are frustrated, may hate school, may see teachers as the enemy, want to fit in but they can't, etc. These are the students who may quit school, struggle in life, remain in low paying jobs for the rest of their lives and repeat the cycle with their own children. It is profound to think that so many of the disadvantages plaguing individuals and society could be prevented by a strong literacy ability at an early age."  
(Naomi Ludington, Community Volunteer on Literacy SOS Task Group)

"The Family Literacy Day was the single biggest enhancement to Literacy work in the region. This was the first time that so many service providers and agencies came together in an accessible way for the community. The coverage of the event, and the energy and commitment from the groups involved, helped to get the message out to our local population. We should definitely do it again next year!"  
(Blair Lischeron, Project Coordinator, Communities for Kids and Success by Six, South Okanagan-Similkameen)

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## COLLABORATIONS

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11) Number of organizations involved in collaborating in service/event delivery:

30

12) Examples of collaborations:

Annual Family Literacy Day: 30 services represented at various booths and activity-centres throughout the day (see program)

## PARTICIPANTS/ BOOTHS

### Representing the South Okanagan-Similkameen region

Communities for Kids/ Success by Six  
Community Action Program for Children (CAPC)  
Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRC)  
CUPE  
DeafBlind and Rubella Association of BC  
Interior Health  
Kiwanis Clubs: K Kids  
Literacy Now  
Mental Health Coalition  
Okanagan Boys and Girls Club  
Okanagan College: Adult Literacy  
Oliver Communities for Kids Table  
Oliver Library  
Ooknakanee Friendship Centre  
Penticton & District Community Resource Society  
Public Health  
Penticton Library  
Penticton Museum and Archives  
Penticton Writers and Publishers  
Playshare Pre School - Penticton  
Raise a Reader Penticton  
School District #53, South Okanagan  
School District #67, Central Okanagan  
Seeds of Empathy  
Strong Start: SD 53 and SD67  
Summerland Library  
Work Zone

## WELCOME

*Welcome to our first annual Family Literacy Day Celebration.*

- *enjoy the many entertainments,*
- *involve the family in exciting and fun literacy games and activities,*
- *learn something new*

*Many thanks to all the people who have made this event possible:*

- *Cherry Lane Shopping Centre, Penticton*
- *The Family Literacy planning group*
- *Donors of draw prizes (listed overleaf), and London Drugs*
- *Film-makers Kevin Manning and Tayler Thompson, Penticton High School*
- *Student leaders from Princess Margaret and Penticton High Schools*
- *The Penticton Chamber of Commerce*
- *Chief Jonathan Kruger, MLAs Rick Thorpe and Bill Barisoff, Mayor Dan Ashton, Councillor Judy Sentes and BC Ambassador, Nav Gill.*
- *Emcees Bruce Johnson and Adam Schroeder*

*If you are interested in finding out more information about any of the events or participants, contact [literacynowsos@gmail.com](mailto:literacynowsos@gmail.com) or call 250 689 0552*

## CENTRE-STAGE SCHEDULE

10.00 a.m. Bobbi Bovenzi: drumming & dance  
10.45 a.m. Marco Carboni: Penticton High  
11.00 a.m. Kurt Hutterli: German story-telling  
11:30 a.m. Catherine Jamieson: children's author  
NOON GetBent Children's Yoga and Dance  
12.30 p.m. Sister Circle Singers and Drummers

**1p.m.** Chief Jonathan Kruger, Penticton Indian Band,  
MLAs, Rick Thorpe and Bill Barisoff,  
Penticton Mayor, Dan Ashton, Councillor Judy Sentes, and  
BC Ambassador, Nav Gill

1:30 p.m. Yasmin John-Thorpe: Raise a Reader  
2.00 p.m. Penticton Writers & Publishers  
2.30 p.m. Julia Cox: Penticton Public Library  
3.00 p.m. Columbia Honour Choir – SD #67  
3.45 p.m. Adam Schroeder: local author  
  
4.00 p.m. Osoyoos Indian Band drummers

### **Other Collaborations:**

*Ooknakanee Friendship Centre:* we are collaborating on a funding application through Frontier College, to run a summer literacy camp for aboriginal youth.

*Service Canada, now Ministry of Child and Family Development:* Literacy Now has hired candidate through the Job Creation Partnership, to develop a Community Literacy Assets Directory for each of the 10 communities in the region.

*Okanagan College:* supporting JCP program through in-kind donation of office.

*Penticton and Wine Country Chamber of Commerce:* supporting JCP through in-kind donation of computer and technical support.

*Literacy BC:* We are developing a link from our locally developed website, to the LitBC website, and are one of the province's four pilot projects, being supported in this process by Mark Campbell.

*School District 53:* hosting of locally developed website.

*School District 67, School District 53 and Okanagan College:* 'Writing Out Loud', journaling and writing workshops for adults in Penticton and Oliver.

*Sen Pok Chin School, Osoyoos Indian Band:* we partnered in a Spirit of BC week event for parents and children from 1 - 7 years, with a first nations author sharing books and reading strategies for parents.

*School District 67:* we arranged a parent workshop with Adrienne Gear (Reading Power), by inviting Adrienne to address parents and care-givers while she is in Penticton for two days of teacher-workshops.

*Raise a Reader:* Funds were made available to support the second phase of the "Writing Out Loud" workshops, for April/ May 2009. Their involvement at the Family Literacy Day involved the distribution of over 1000 books donated by Scholastic Canada. Plans are in the works for a shared Christmas activity, involving schools and local businesses.

*Cherry Lane Shopping Centre, Penticton:* in-kind donation of entire mall concourse, for agencies to set up zones of activities for families, at the Family Literacy Day. Support from various stores within the centre, including *Booster Juice*, for wireless internet access, and *London Drugs* for prizes.

*Penticton Museum and Archives:* We partnered in a bid for Literacy Enhancement Funding through the Spirit of BC week initiatives, to put on a poetry slam.

*School District 53:* hosting LiteracyNowSO-S website



# Poetry Slam

## at Penticton Museum

### Feb 6<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009

Are you ready to rumble?! It's the Vroom! Poetry Slam

- Come and check out our "Vroom" - Magic of Motorcycles" exhibit
- Write and recite slam poetry, hip-hop, dub poetry or any other performance style that works
- Record your piece in front of a Vroom! web-cam
- Prizes will be awarded to the top 3 most creative entries

Stop by on your way home from school, or on your lunch break, and bring your friends along for a wild experience! Develop your 'Wild Side', and be creative!

Penticton Museum is at 785 Main St (next to the Library), Penticton.  
For more information, call Peter Ord at (250) 490-2452.

**Remember: NO PROFANITIES OR OBSCENITIES WILL BE RECORDED**



For Keremeos/ Cawston ESLSAP programs: number of tutors: 5  
number of students: 15

**19) # of adult participants in programs specifically focused on family literacy:**

PALS: Demonstration session for families and trainers, SD 53: 12 adults; SD 67, 19  
Aboriginal PALS: 30  
Ready Set Learn: 200  
Strong Start 242 (Queens Park), 68 (Cawston), 82 (Osoyoos Early Learning Centre), 78 (Oliver), 110 (Okanagan Falls), 134 (Giants Head Elem. Summerland)

**20) # of children participating in programs:**

PALS: SD 53: 9; SD 67: 17  
Aboriginal PALS: 30  
Strong Start: 242 (Queens Park), 105 (Cawston), 82 (Osoyoos Early Learning Centre), 78 (Oliver), 68 (Okanagan Falls), 134+ (Giants Head Elem. Summerland)

**21) # of youth participating in programs specifically for youth:**

Not applicable this year.

**22) # of seniors participating in programs specifically for seniors:**

Not applicable this year.

**23) # of adults participating in events:**

See items 19 for specific details regarding 0 - 6 programs.  
Estimated over 500 adults attended the Family Literacy Day event, on Jan 24<sup>th</sup>, based on count of programs distributed.

**24) # of children participating in events:**

See items 20 for specific details regarding 0 - 6 programs.  
Estimated over 800 children attended the Family Literacy Day event, on Jan 24<sup>th</sup>, based on count of bookmarks, books and library bags distributed.

**25) # of books or other articles given out in special projects:**

Books for Babies: 275  
Leap and Hop Books: 1300  
PALS program books: weekly to number of families involved (see item 19), plus core literacy materials such as crayons, pencil boxes, pencils, glue sticks, erasers etc  
Ready Set Learn: about 400 books, plus core literacy materials (see above)  
Raise a Reader books, distributed through school-based author readings, and at Family Literacy Day: over 2000



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## RESOURCES

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Some of the information requested below is also requested in the financial statement. These numbers can be shown in both places.

**Please list funding from outside sources for all initiatives (not from organizations that participate in delivery or from fundraising):**

- **Legacies 2010: \$60,000**
- **Ministry of Ed. District Literacy funds, from SD 53 and SD 67: \$60,000**
- **Raise a Reader: \$1,000**

**Have you applied for grants to support initiatives?**

26) Number of successful grant applications:

4

27) Total value of successful grant applications:

Spirit of BC: Keremeos/ Cawston: \$500

Osoyoos/ Oliver: \$500

Penticton: \$300

Job Creation Partnership: 6 months of employee salary

**What have the partners contributed?**

28) **Value of in kind resources contributed from organizations that participate in program and event delivery:**

Estimate only, \$15,000 - \$20,000 and growing

29) **Value of actual funds contributed from organizations that participate in program and event delivery:**

**\$0**

30) **Have you held fundraising events?**

Not yet, but a fund-raising committee is to be established for 2009/2010, drawing membership from Literacy Task Group members.

List of events: NA

How much money was raised? NA

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## EVALUATION

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**31) What evaluation method/s/framework and/or tools did you use to determine how effective your work has been?**

Feedback from service providers during the February - March period, using the 'Most Significant Change' model. This is a system for gathering qualitative data about changes in Literacy provision in the region. The model was not utilised in full, but did enable us to gather specific examples and insights from Task Group members.

Data gathering re. numbers of children and parents attending events, through requests sent to Task Group members.

**32) What issues/areas of concern do you have about this evaluation technique or evaluation in general?**

No concerns yet.

**33) What issues/areas of concern were identified in the initiatives that you were evaluating?**

None

**34) Examples of comments from those who participated in the evaluation.**

"Speaking to health care providers at the South Okanagan Health Fair made me aware that more providers have become aware of the barriers to patient care related to health literacy. This included the importance of plain language in developing patient information materials and the importance of having patients repeat information back or having someone with them. The interest shown in having the Health Literacy Task Group attend staff meetings to discuss the issues was heartening.

I have had more organizations ask about Adult Literacy programs as service providers identify individual's requiring assistance with literacy barriers."

(Sharon Evans, Director of Penticton Branch, BC Schizophrenia Society, Retired Psychiatric Nurse, and Adult Literacy Tutor)

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## WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED

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**35) What have you learned about the community development process?**

- That we need to listen, then listen some more.
- That talk without action is not well-received. Service providers have been engaged when there is a specific set of objectives identified, and when they are able to work collaboratively towards achieving outcomes.
- That there is apparently endless good will and energy on the part of service providers, if they feel that an event or program will support the

most needy members of our communities, in fostering literacy and early literacy development.

- That we need to listen to the wisdom of the community: when we receive feedback from parents, families and care-givers, the sub-committees are focused on finding ways to address questions, concerns, or suggestions.
- That it takes time: perhaps one additional student enrolling in a program, or one additional tutor supporting an at-risk youth, is a significant achievement for the individual concerned. From these small steps, we can build programs that genuinely meet the needs of the communities we serve.

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2010 LEGACIES NOW

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**36) What else can we be doing to support you?**

Looking at sustainable funding solutions  
Providing support in responding to grant applications

**37) What else do you need in general?**

Ongoing dissemination of good practice and successful models from across the province, as we work to implement more programs for youth, adults and families.

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ANYTHING ELSE?

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*If you have stories and/or pictures, we would be happy to get these.*

**Please Note: Included throughout document**