

# YUKON LITERACY COALITION

Strategic Plan 2011-2016

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Yukon Literacy  
Coalition

[www.yukonliteracy.ca](http://www.yukonliteracy.ca)

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The Yukon Literacy Coalition (YLC) is a community based organization committed to increasing literacy and essential skills for adult learners in the Yukon. It is founded on the belief that literacy and essential skills are the foundation that allows adults to succeed in life, work and their community; and that the best way to improve these skills is through programs, tools and research that are culturally and geographically relevant. The YLC is a centre of excellence for literacy research and practice in the Yukon; and works with its Territorial partners to be a literacy leader in the North.

YLC recognizes that the skills needed to succeed in the workplace and community evolve over time. In order to participate fully in the economy, people must have more than the traditional literacy skills of reading and writing. Essential skills such as document use, numeracy, computer use, thinking, oral communication, working with others and continuous learning are needed in order to succeed in the workforce and live life to its fullest. The YLC uses the term literacy to encapsulate all of these skills; and incorporates them into all areas of work.

The YLC's five year strategic plan is a tool for stakeholders, members and funders to understand the priorities of the YLC and the actions required to meet these priorities. It is an evergreen document that will require updating, but will remain a blueprint for the YLC to follow for the next five years.

# **YUKON LITERACY COALITION**

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## **Five Year Plan**



# YUKON LITERACY COALITION

## Workplace/Workforce

Literacy skills, which YLC defines to include all essential skills, are prerequisites for successfully participating in the workforce. The development and retention of these skills are necessary to foster productivity, and safety in the workplace. Increased reliance on technology tasks means more skills are required to carry out workplace.

Workplace/workforce literacy has always been important to the YLC; however in recent years it has become a priority as there is an increased recognition for a well-trained population able to enter and advance in the workplace. A work culture of life-long learning creates safe, healthy, productive work environments that will benefit all Canadians.

Capitalizing on the success of a Nunavut and Northwest Territories research project, the YLC will conduct research on work force and workplace skills training in rural and Aboriginal communities in the Yukon. This research will provide YLC and its stakeholders with much needed data on the status of skills training in the Yukon. It will also set the foundation for on-going workforce literacy programs in the Yukon. Increased understanding of the workforce needs in the Yukon will lead to programs that meet the needs of employers and employees. Both employers and employees need tools to highlight the nine literacy skills and their connection to an effective, healthy workplace.

Workplace/workforce literacy initiatives are realized through strong partnerships with educational institutions, governments, other non-governmental organizations and private industry. These partnerships result in effective and efficient programs that meet the needs of employers and employees and contribute to a stronger Yukon and Canadian economy. The YLC, in partnership with Yukon stakeholders will develop resources necessary to support employers and employees in accessing relevant literacy skills programs.





# YUKON LITERACY COALITION

## Adult Learner Support

The YLC supports adult learners in the Yukon through resource development, public awareness and learner networks. These actions foster a community where learners are empowered to seek opportunities to develop and enhance the literacy skills required to participate and advance in the workplace and community.

The YLC is a plain language advocate and adult learner resource producer in the Yukon. Working in partnership with the Yukon Learn Society, the Coalition has produced the "How to..." series, a collection of northern-centric books designed to provide relevant information to adult learners. The continued production and education on plain language materials supports adult learners by increasing access to information.

The YLC works hard to raise public awareness of the challenges and realities that face adult learners. Campaigns have and will continue to highlight learner successes and educate the public on literacy realities of the Yukon. These types of campaigns are designed to increase engagement by learners, practitioners and other stakeholders.

Through learner networks, the YLC is able to gain insight into the obstacles faced by learners, and the preferred methods of program delivery. It is also an opportunity for learners to share stories and inspire each other in the attainment of further literacy skills. YLC's Learning Circles initiative is a successful example of learner engagement. Additionally, the YLC gathers learner input through a dedicated learner representative on the Board of Directors. The increased engagement of learners through board work and advisory groups strengthens the YLC's initiatives.



# YUKON LITERACY COALITION

## Practitioner Support



In the Yukon, literacy practitioners include: nurses, librarians, tutors, employers and more. In the Yukon practitioners are individuals who work with adults to improve literacy skills through formal and informal activities. Practitioner support includes resource development, research, training and networking opportunities. This support is paramount to the success of literacy initiatives and the ongoing provision of literacy activities in the Yukon.

The YLC regularly undertakes environmental scans to assess literacy needs and opportunities in the Yukon. Through research and monitoring activities, the YLC keeps both itself and all Yukon practitioners apprised of the Territory's needs. Yukon practitioners need opportunities to share best practices, resources, and other information.

The YLC has worked to establish a vibrant practitioner community through initiatives such as Literacy Circles, and Literacy Summits. In 2012 this will continue with a Pan Northern Literacy Gathering linking practitioners in the three Northern Territories. Beyond 2012, the YLC will continue to offer opportunities for northern practitioners to work together and share best practices, lessons learned, and new research. The regular collection and distribution of important literacy information keeps practitioners informed on a year-round basis. The YLC maintains a website, and produces regular e-mail newsletters. These tools help Territorial and National partners share information, and advertise local opportunities for training and development.

# YUKON LITERACY COALITION

## Family and Community Literacy

The YLC recognizes family and community literacy as a key component of increasing life-long learning. Family and community literacy offers opportunities for adults to access literacy programming in a non-threatening, supportive environment. It sets the foundation for children to gain the literacy skills they will need to participate in the workplace of the future; and it teaches the parents tools that support lifelong learning for themselves and their children.

The YLC opened the Family Literacy Centre in Whitehorse in 2009. This Centre provides a space for practitioners, parents, and caregivers to participate in programming and to develop the skills to integrate literacy activities at home. This Centre is visited by 5000 people a year, and is the headquarters of family and community literacy in the Yukon.

The development and provision of grassroots family literacy activities has been one of the YLC's greatest achievements. Activities such as the Reading Tents, Dolly Parton Imagination Library, Literacy Bingos, and Community Literacy Nights have attracted large audiences in communities across the Yukon. These activities have been successful in engaging adults, who may not feel comfortable otherwise participating in literacy activities. They have brought communities together and spearheaded community-based literacy programs that continue long after the YLC's role is completed.

The development of a northern program will give communities and families the guidance needed to develop and maintain literacy and essential skills. The continued development and provision of community family literacy programs increases adult learner participation and opens the doors to lifelong learning.





The YLC recognizes the high percentage of aboriginal people living in the Yukon, and their disproportionately low literacy levels according to International Adult Literacy Survey. Although aboriginal people participate in YLC activities as adult learners, practitioners, families and communities, there is also the recognition that targeted programs and products are key to assisting this high-risk group acquire the literacy skills needed to participate in the workforce and the community.

Self-Governing First Nations, and Indian Act Bands in the Yukon are best positioned to offer programming to their members and citizens. However, these organizations are often small and need resources and support. The YLC has worked in consultation with communities to provide training, resources, and mentorship. Through this work, YLC has gathered information about the interesting and innovative projects happening in Aboriginal communities across the country in order to share best practices and lessons learned.

Through capacity building, mentoring and supporting the development of resources, the YLC will continue to consult and work with First Nation partners in order to play a pivotal role in improving Aboriginal Literacy in the Yukon.

# YUKON LITERACY COALITION

## Aboriginal Literacy



The YLC is built on a foundation of strong governance, accountability, evaluation, and risk management. These fundamental principles that guide the YLC's work ensure that there is value for money and results based management.

The YLC is governed by a Board of Directors representing Yukon communities. These Directors are responsible for setting policy and direction, which is in turn implemented by an Executive Director. The organizational chart of the Coalition varies depending on resources available. The YLC believes in strong administration and accountability; and will continue to update and review financial and human resource practices.

As an entity under the Societies Act, the YLC is subject to bylaws. The continual assessment and annual review of bylaws is necessary to meet the needs of the YLC and its membership. Through review of governance, including Board and membership structure; the YLC will ensure that it has the foundation necessary to achieve its objectives.

# **YUKON LITERACY COALITION**

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## **Internal Services**

