



Focus on Promising Practices

In this issue we are focusing on the topic of promising practice, starting with an overview of the topic. We also have great interview with Connie Jones, a practitioner from Saskatchewan. Many thanks to all of you who responded to our request for project overviews. We are going to send that information to you in a separate document. See “In the Works” for more information.

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Is publishing information about projects something that could be considered a promising practice? Good question. Which leads to the next question: what does the term promising practice mean? Is it the same as “lessons learned” or “good practices”? How do these differ from “best practice”?

Promising or good practice and lessons learned are used to describe useful practices, approaches or ideas. Often they are used to describe what works best or what to avoid in a *given* situation. In fact, sometimes these terms are used interchangeably. There are, however, subtle differences between these phrases. A good practice guideline might describe an approach to learner assessment (all learner assessments should include a writing component); while a lesson learned will usually describe something that happened in a specific situation – (we learned that we should also provide service on Saturdays). Whether or not this may have wider applicability is left to the reader.

The term “best practice” seems to bring with it a sense of something that has been evaluated or compared to other practices. The implication is that what is being described has been determined to be the best way to approach or handle *any* situation, within a certain context.

Recently the term promising practice has been used more frequently than good practice or lessons learned. It seems to bring with it an understanding that a particular action, program or process has provided an effective and productive result. It holds promise.

Imagine Canada splits the term in two and describes a practice as a “particular way of doing things—the methods and tools that programs use to accomplish their work”. They define a promising practice as one that can be transferred to or replicated by a “broad cross-section of non-profit and charitable organizations and have an impact on the communities they serve”. They suggest that promising practices include “documentation that can help others replicate this good work—reports, manuals, or related materials about programs and services”.

Imagine Canada has collected promising practices for many areas of non-profit management. These include strategic planning, volunteer management, boards and governance and social advocacy to mention only a few. While not specific to the field of adult literacy, they may have general applicability. You can check out the promising practices catalogue that Imagine Canada has created at: <http://library.imaginecanada.ca/pp>.

Part of the attraction of promising practices is the idea that you can look at what has been done in other fields and decide if you can apply it to your own situation. *Promising Practices, a Quick and Effective Way to figure out what Works for your Community* provides a six step approach to researching promising practices. In addition to asking what a promising practice is, they pose three additional questions: How do I identify a promising practice? Where do I look for a promising practice? How do I evaluate a promising practice?

Their six step process includes:

Step 1: Identify and Understand the Problem

Step 2: Target Your Research

Step 3: Review Information to Find

Step 4: Begin Research

Step 5: Evaluate Your Research

Step 6: Summarize and Present Your Results

You can download this resource from the Fels Institute of Government at: www.fels.upenn.edu.

Continuing along with the theme of looking to other fields for promising practices, check out *Promising Practices in Community Partnerships: Lessons Learned from the Canadian Rural Partnership*. As the title indicates, lessons learned from the analysis of a selected sample of community projects funded over a period of six years. Many of the key findings, such as identify the importance of building community partnerships and networks, and of having a participatory approach that involves as many stakeholders as possible, can certainly be applied to the field of adult literacy. The lessons learned on partnerships and networks were grouped into three categories: common values, goals and objectives; mutual benefits; and shared responsibility and accountability. You can download this resource from <http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/Collection/A114-28-2006E.pdf>.

In 2003, Dr Robin Millar presented a paper at the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education's annual conference. Her paper, called *Benchmarking Best Practices in Adult Learning Centres*, provides examples of some best practices of practitioners, who were recognized as outstanding teachers of adult learners in Manitoba's Adult Learning Centres and at basic education in the workplace sites. Her study used participant observations and teacher and student interviews to compare their practice with commonly accepted principles of good practice in adult learning. The study also identified "new" practices such as good teachers like teaching, they share themselves personally with adult learners and they are reflective. If you are interested in learning more, you can download her paper at: www.oise.utoronto.ca/CASAE/cnf2003/2003_papers/rojomillar_finalCAS03.pdf



Do you know of a good resource on promising practices? If so, tell us about it and why you like it. We will post your suggestions on our website.

Practitioner Profile



Connie Jones started at Saskatchewan Literacy Network two years ago as the Professional Development Coordinator. Like many literacy workers she found that her position quickly evolved to include much more. Since January 2007 Connie's been the Adult Literacy Coordinator.

MCL: How did you begin your career in literacy?

Connie: My background is not in education. When I joined the Saskatchewan Literacy Network I was a freelance writer and facilitator for Gentle Teaching, a philosophy of caring for people with

challenging behaviours. I find that my work here really fits with my three loves: facilitating workshops, organizing events and writing. I provide support to communities receiving provincial funding for community literacy initiatives. This involves traveling out to communities, developing resources (like quick guides for needs assessments and partnership development strategies, etc.), and connecting people to available resources. I also facilitate program planning, proposal writing and plain language workshops. In addition, I coordinate any large provincial events, such as our provincial literacy conference and the Saskatchewan Literacy Awards of Merit.

A big part of the fun I get to have is coordinating a provincial adult learner focus committee. This group of eight dynamic learners from across Saskatchewan meet twice a year to develop leadership skills and provide input that steers Network work. I think my favourite activity, though, is facilitating literacy 'cafe' discussion forums across the province. This 3-year initiative provides an innovative way for literacy folks to talk through the issues of the day together. These cafes are really energizing – for me and for the participants, and they often spark some really innovative ideas.

MCL: Much of the focus in our field is on essential and transferable skills. What skills do you bring to this work from previous work and life experience?

Connie: I have a very strong bent toward social justice for marginalized people. My work with Gentle Teaching International gave me a wide-angle perspective on the struggle for some individuals to move from the outskirts of society into community, and it provided me with a keen empathy for the need to acknowledge underlying systemic challenges before healing can begin in people's lives.

Although I hadn't heard the term 'plain language' before working in literacy, writing for the nutraceutical and functional food industries gave me a firm grasp of the principles. I had a long term gig developing magazine articles from very complex scientific research reports. An example of a typical assignment would be taking information about the correlation between coronary heart disease and Elsie Poofas (long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids) and writing about how Omega-3 gel caps may be better for Grandpa than Vitamin E.

MCL: What changes in the field have you noticed in the past few years?

Connie: That's tough for me to answer, since I've only been around for a few years, coupled with how hard it is to see past the grindstone against your nose most days. I suppose what has been most noticeable for me has been the turnaround in contacts across the province. People move in and out of the literacy field, even if they don't necessarily move in and out of literacy work *per se*. We hear a lot of requests for the development of a good contacts database across the province. I'm not sure if this sort of resource, although it would be great, could ever be kept up to date! And of course, we

see the changes mandated by federal funding calls. Program focus always shifts with the dollars, so this change seems to be one of those constants that we try to be ready for.

MCL: What excites you about the work that you do?

Connie: I love the ‘aha’ moments – for myself, and also watching others experience them. Great discussion really gets my motor running. Listening as ideas spark more ideas, and watching two good ideas meld into one really great one. Now that is fun! I love to talk with practitioners about how to allow our passions to guide our work. After all, skills can be learned, but passion comes from the heart. It’s important to work from both our head and our heart.

A really satisfying moment happened for me this past year at the Saskatchewan Literacy Awards of Merit. A young man from Afghanistan won the Cameco Adult Learner Award which, along with a bursary of \$500, was presented to him by Hon. Gordon Barnhart, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan. We can sometimes get desensitized to the tangible benefits of literacy work in the lives of individuals. Mohammed’s reaction to this award was a very concrete and lovely reminder that literacy can change lives, even save them in some cases.

MCL: What’s the biggest challenge facing your organization right now?

Connie: Transition! Anyone who has ever given birth understands that transition isn’t necessarily a comfortable thing – in fact it can be downright painful! We’ve celebrated retirements and welcomed new babies, we’ve said hello to new faces and farewell to others. This fall we are moving into stability and have a team of really dedicated people who are also a lot of fun to laugh with, so I am really excited for this coming year. We are also looking forward to getting to know some new faces in the provincial literacy office of the Ministry of Education soon. It’s always nice to get to know the people we will be working closely with.

MCL: Describe the literacy field in Saskatchewan.

Connie: The Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour provides funds for adult upgrading, basic education and essential skill development programs, which are typically provided through colleges and some community agencies. The Literacy Office of the Ministry of Education provides funds for communities to conduct needs assessments followed by separate funding to deliver short-run programs. They also provide funds to develop and/or deliver community family literacy initiatives.

The Network currently has a two-year funding agreement with OLES (HRSDC) to build and share knowledge about essential skills. Recently, we partnered with Health Canada to develop a prenatal family literacy program. We are also involved in a Research-in-Practice train-the-trainer program encouraging practitioners to move action research into mainstream activities.

As our definition of literacy broadens, so do the opportunities to deliver services. More and more large businesses are seeing the benefits of investing in their employees by providing on-site workplace/essential skills training during work hours. Some of them are also including literacy programs that engage the families of newcomers as a retention strategy. In the past, programs that included aspects of development in the areas of interpersonal and communication skills were not considered a part of the field. Now we understand there is an entire spectrum of skill development essential so Canadian adults can reach their full potential in society.

MCL: How are programs in Saskatchewan integrating “Essential Skills” into the work that they do with adult learners? Is it mostly a language change or is there more of a philosophical change involved?

Connie: It’s a little of both. Any community literacy programs funded by the provincial Literacy Office must have a family and a workplace component built in. When I’m out networking with folks in the business world, I don’t use the terms “workplace literacy” or “family literacy” unless they do. We talk about how good for business it is when employees reach for their maximum potential and develop company loyalty, for example. Essential skill integration is happening holistically in the work place because it makes sense. One large employer in Saskatchewan has gone so far as to pay laid off employees to come in and complete the skills upgrading programs they were involved in before the layoffs.

MCL: Do you have a mentor or someone who inspires you?

Connie: I really love asking questions. Sometimes it’s not even about people’s answers, it’s about *how* people answer that fascinates me. I think that is why our Executive Director Lisa Erickson (currently on maternity leave) inspires me. I’ve become more and more convinced that one of the premier signs of a good leader is not so much about having all the answers, but asking good questions. Lisa is an excellent question asker, which allows her to draw out peoples’ most innovative ideas, which are what can ultimately put hands and feet to dreams. I enjoy that entire process, which is why it is so fun to work with Lisa.

I am also inspired by Dr. John McGee, the founder of Gentle Teaching. What I’ve learned from my work with his approach is that we humans don’t do as well when we act independently of one another. I have discovered – wonder of wonders! - that people need each other. We are *interdependent*. Children are not lesser beings because they are shorter, or less educated or with less seniority on this Earth. People with intellectual disabilities don’t carry a lesser societal membership just because some might communicate in an unconventional way. It’s the same with any person accessing a service and any person delivering a service. We learn from one another, as equals, interdependently.

On a personal note, I'll be starting grad studies this January: MA-Leadership through Royal Roads University. Not that I've been twiddling my thumbs, wishing I had a little homework to do now and then. With 3 teenage kids, a fun husband and a houseful of pets, I have gotten a few funny looks when I say I'm starting school on top of everything else. But I really look forward to diving into the program content. I have a feeling this will awaken me to a whole new realm of questions. I can't wait to start asking!

Highlights from the LAN

One of principles that govern MCL is the involvement of adult learners in our work. One way that adult learners contribute is through the Learners Advisory Network, or LAN. As a committee of MCL, the members of LAN work to ensure learners' views are heard locally, provincially and nationally. Since the last face-to-face meeting in Ottawa, the LAN have been meeting by teleconference and communicating between calls by email.

LAN members, supported by LAN Coordinator Chris Harwood, are busy working on the Agenda for next face-to-face meeting. Here is an overview of *some* of their planned activities for the November meeting:

- Discussing future activities including the development of literacy awareness training for school trustees and teachers
- Discussing the development of a training session on computer skills that can be used with LAN members and other learners who want to improve their computer skills for the workplace and volunteering as well as their personal lives.
- Discussing the development of a *Study Guide* that can be used with the book, *Ellen's Story*. The book and the accompanying study guide could be made available to schools and teacher training programs as an educational and awareness tool.
- Participating in a needs assessment for NALD
- Hearing from Sue Nielson, the Executive Director of the Toronto Adult Student Association, about ways for learners to broaden their networks and get their message across.

LAN members have been busy back in their home provinces. We'll provide more information about these activities in the next issue of the newsletter. In the meantime, here is a brief synopsis of recent work done by LAN chair, Ellen Szita: a letter responding to an article by Dr. Paul Copon, a letter to a local newspaper, a letter to the Director General of the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, attending literacy conferences, speaking at Rotary Clubs and being interviewed for radio in the Netherlands. **To learn more about the LAN and LAN members** go to: www.literacy.ca and click on the Learners link.

Your Opinion Matters



Check out the MCL website (www.literacy.ca) on a regular basis and participate in our online polls. If you have suggestions for a poll email Lindsay Kennedy at lindsay@literacy.ca.

In the Works... Projects and Research from across the Country

We asked and you responded! In the last issue of literacy.ca *EXPRESS* and by email we asked people to send us overviews of projects and research. We've had such a great response that we are going to publish this information separately in a document called "In the Works, A compendium of projects from across the county". Topics include capacity building, professional development, workplace/workforce literacy, health and literacy, family literacy and learner success.

We will be sending out "In the Works" by email in the very near future. Email Lindsay Kennedy at lindsay@literacy.ca to make sure you get a copy. It will also be posted on MCL's website.

Have a project "in the works"?



Is your project not in the compendium? Or, you are looking for advisory team members, pilot sites or do you want to share information on a national level? If so, then send an email to Lindsay Kennedy at lindsay@literacy.ca. We will include your information in the next edition of our newsletter and post it on our website. **Deadline for articles for the winter issue is January 29.**

Good to Know... Resources, Reports and Articles from Around the Globe

Bridging Distance: Promising Practices of Online Learning in the Canadian Literacy Community

Getting Online: Distance Education Promising Practices for Canadian Literacy Practitioners" (or the GO Project for short) was an innovative national project designed to research trends, technologies and promising practices in online learning in Canada. A key project goal was to bring about a heightened awareness in the Canadian literacy

community about the use and value of online learning. You can download the resource guide and other project deliverables at <http://www.nald.ca/gettingonline/goresources/intro.htm>.

Essential Skills for Older Adults

The Newfoundland and Labrador Laubach Literacy Council (NLLLC) has completed phase two of its Essential Skills Literacy Training: Tools for Older Adults. You can download the *Findings Report* from <http://www.nald.ca/nlllc>. The next phase of the project will be the development of a literacy training package for literacy practitioners. For more information contact Marie Lewis at laubachh@nf.aibn.com.

Community Literacy Benchmarks

In spring 2009 Literacy BC completed the field-testing of the community literacy benchmarks and produced a report for the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development with recommendations. In addition to recommendations about specific changes to the benchmarks, the report emphasized the need for support in the form of continuous training and increased financial resources to implement the benchmarks effectively. The report also stressed the need for clarity about the purpose and need for the benchmarks and the use of the data generated.

In 2008/09 community adult literacy programs funded by the Ministry were required – for the first time – to use the newly developed Community Literacy Benchmarks to assess and report on learner progress. Literacy BC offered a 2-day training session on the benchmarks in the fall and produced a small guide. If you are interested in learning more about the BC process go to: <http://www.literacybc.ca/Research/benchmarks.php>.

Learning Materials in Instruction Study

In the spring of 2008, SkillPlan, the BC Construction Industry Skills Improvement Council, began a research project called *Learning Materials in Instruction*. Funded by HRSDC, the primary purpose of the project was to examine whether the development and use of workplace related resources has contributed to an increase in skill levels. The key research question was: How does the choice of learning materials in instruction impact the acquisition of Essential Skills and contribute to learner success?

The study focused on instructional materials and their impact on learner skill gains. The study found that learners increase their employment related skills (specifically reading, document use and numeracy) when instruction includes more than 50% work-related learning materials at a higher rate than learners who receive instruction which includes 50% or less work-related materials. You can download the report from: www.skillplan.ca/English/report.htm.

Measurement Tools as Pedagogical Aids: Online Resources from the Canadian Council on Learning

Literacy practitioners appreciate the value of innovative, interactive resources that can engage their adult students and drive home the importance of literacy and lifelong learning. The Composite Learning Index (CLI) and the Prose Literacy Map—online measurement tools created by the Canadian Council on Learning—hold considerable promise to do just that.

The CLI and the Prose Literacy Map enable users to explore the lifelong learning and literacy profiles of cities and communities across Canada. Learners have a unique opportunity to take stock of their own—and their community's—literacy and learning assets, and to explore the links between lifelong learning, literacy and improved quality of life.

The Composite Learning Index

Created in 2006 and updated annually, the CLI uses a wide range of learning indicators (17 in all) to provide a snapshot of Canada's progress in lifelong learning in a variety of contexts—in educational settings, in the home, at work and in the community. The CLI recognizes that learning at every stage of life is a factor contributing to a community's adaptability, health and strength.¹

The purpose of the CLI is to demonstrate the state of learning in communities over time, rather than to rank one community against another. A high CLI score means that a particular city or community possesses the learning conditions that support social and economic well-being. A low CLI score suggests that improvements in learning conditions are needed.

CCL's Prose Literacy Map

An online companion tool to the CLI is the interactive Prose Literacy Map. Using data from the 2003 International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (IALSS) and from the 2006 Census, the map provides a look at the prose literacy of 52,200 neighbourhoods within communities across the country.

On the website, users can zero-in on a given community and find its prose literacy level (as defined by the OECD²) and score. The Prose Literacy Map goes even further. It demonstrates the variations in literacy levels across neighbourhoods and the fact that pockets of low prose literacy exist in *every* community.

¹ Overall, there is a strong correlation (0.81) between the 2009 CLI and indicators of social and economic well-being.

² The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines five levels of literacy. Levels 1 and 2 are considered below what is needed to succeed in today's economy and society.

Particularly interesting is what happens when a community's CLI score is compared with its adult prose literacy score (see figure 1). The close correlation between the two sets of scores is remarkable. Cities/communities with the highest CLI scores (such as Victoria, Calgary and Regina) have also the highest adult prose literacy levels. Cities/communities with the lowest CLI scores (such as Saguenay and Saint John) have among the lowest adult literacy levels.

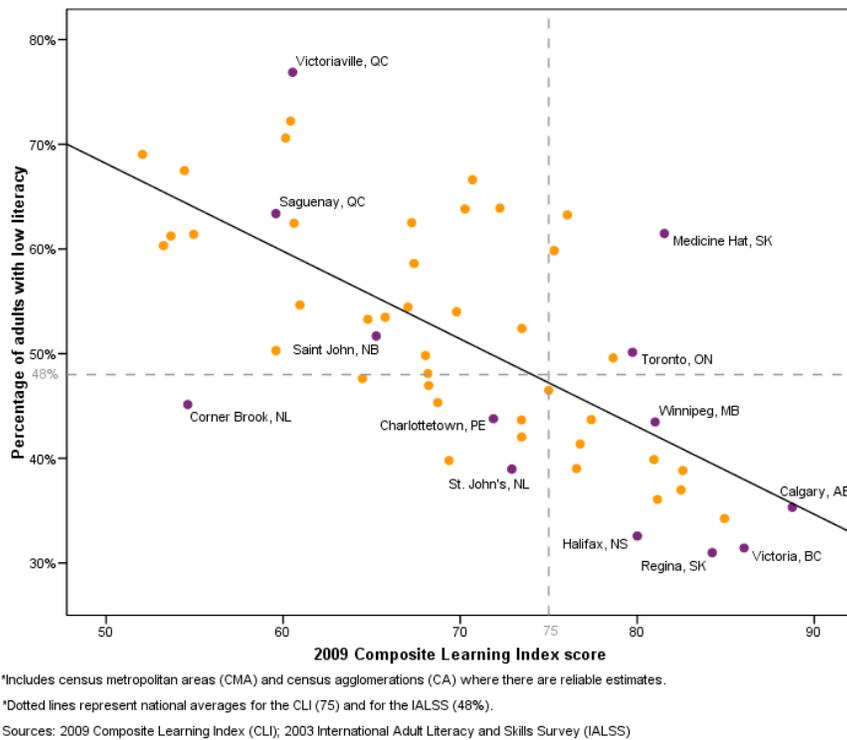


Figure 1: Composite Learning Index and adult prose literacy, cities and towns in Canada

This high correlation is not surprising given that many of CLI's indicators of lifelong learning—such as *formal education, participation in adult learning, volunteering and informal learning*—are among the factors contributing to higher literacy levels.

Potential Applications for Practitioners and Learners

The CLI can be used to convey key messages about lifelong learning—what it is, how it works and why it is important to individual and community success. These messages are integrated throughout the CLI framework and backed up by the CLI scores.

The CLI's 17 indicators are organized around UNESCO's four pillars of learning: *Learning to Know, Learning to Do, Learning to Be and Learning to Live Together*. These indicators reflect the full spectrum of experience, skills and knowledge that adults

gain informally and formally in all aspects of their lives. By exploring the indicators, learners can investigate the many dimensions of lifelong and life wide learning. For example, the indicators used to measure “Learning to Live Together” include *access to community institutions* (e.g., libraries), *volunteering* and *participation in social clubs and organizations*. Many students may not associate these activities with learning because they occur outside the context of their learning situation.

Practitioners may want to use these measurement tools as a springboard to discussions about how a community’s learning conditions relate to its social and economic outcomes. Questions for consideration could include:

- What are my community’s CLI and prose literacy scores? How could they be improved?
- How can literacy and lifelong learning help community members to become better parents, workers and neighbours?
- How can I become a lifelong learner in my community?
- What happens when you improve a learning condition? How does it affect other aspects of life, such as employment or community participation?

By using the CLI Simulator, students can explore what happens when a learning condition in their community is altered. This interactive tool enables users to increase or decrease a city’s performance in 10 different areas of learning and discover the impact on the overall learning pillar and the CLI scores.

For more information about the CLI and the Prose Literacy Map, visit the Canadian Council on Learning’s website at www.ccl-cca.ca. CCL also welcomes your feedback on the value of these measurement tools as pedagogical aids. Contact Marc Lachance at mlachance@ccl-cca.ca.

In From the Margins: Promising Practices and Possibilities for Health and Learning. A Working Forum for Health Care, Literacy, and Early Childhood Professionals.

From 2006-2008, the three Working Groups of the Health and Learning Knowledge Centre (HLKC) that focused on adults, early childhood, and health professionals held consultations with their constituent groups about health and learning and health literacy issues.³

³ The definition of health literacy includes the capacity to get, understand and be able to talk about health information so that individuals can make appropriate decisions regarding their health and maintain good health in different health contexts throughout their lives. It also applies to the ability of health practitioners and services providers to also be able to provide information and communicate in a barrier-free way with their clients.

- They heard and learned how complex issues of learning and health are and how they overlap many constituencies and encompass many social determinants of health.
- They heard how the health of adults, children, and families is affected by social barriers and is often dependent on relationships with health professionals and other service providers in various settings.
- They heard how health professionals are not always aware of health literacy issues or know what to do to address social barriers. Even when social determinants and health literacy issues are identified, little action is taken.

As the major activity of its 2008-2009 work plan, the Adult Working Group initiated and led the planning and delivery of a joint forum on health and learning. The intent was to bring those who provide services and those who use them together for knowledge exchange and knowledge mobilization through a joint forum: "From the Margins: Promising Practices for Health and Learning." Forum organizers wanted to encourage action through documenting and disseminating innovative, promising practices and emerging solutions that address the common barriers related to health and learning, and health literacy that these constituent groups have experienced. These barriers relate to the social determinants of health, such as access to health services, poverty, discrimination, language, and culture. At the forum, participants learned together how to address barriers.

A draft of promising practices was distributed in draft form at the forum. After the forum, participants were asked to review their promising practices and resubmit if required. For more information about this, contact Wendy Kraglund-Gauthier, wkraglun@stfx.ca.

Adult ESL and Literacy in British Columbia

In 2009 Literacy BC researched and wrote "Learning Together: A Guide to Community-Based Adult ESL and Literacy in British Columbia". The resource guidebook was written for the literacy field to assist with supporting ESL learners in British Columbia. A draft final copy of the guidebook was sent to practitioners, Regional Literacy Coordinators, the coordinator of the English as a Second Language Settlement Assistance Program at the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, ELSA Net and community-based ESL organizations in British Columbia for feedback. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and additions/revisions have been incorporated into the revised version which should be available on the Literacy BC website in the near future. Check it out at <http://www.literacybc.ca>.

Tool Kit for Practitioners working with ESL Clients

The Ottawa Community Loan Fund's Newcomer Finances Toolkit, produced with funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, is designed to help address financial topics with newcomers. The Instructor's Manual provides an overview of the toolkit as well as helpful information on how to use it. The Instructor's Manual also has suggested activities to use with newcomers. The resources, like many promising practices, have applicability beyond the ESL and Settlement fields. Go to www.oclf.org/en/newcomers.php to access all the resources, including an online banking machine.

Adult Learning Network

In June 2009, many participants at the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre's Symposium agreed there was a need to support a new initiative which would seek to sustain a pan-Canadian, bilingual network of key stakeholders—governments, educational institutes, community organizations, researchers, practitioners and learners. ALN's goal is to build a bilingual pan-Canadian forum where it is possible to exchange knowledge, to share strategies and to further research in the field of adult learning.

ALN director, Danielle Charron, is supported by a Network Committee and an Executive Committee. Both committees are composed of volunteers from different sectors and regions of Canada. MCL's Field Development Officer, Lindsay Kennedy, is a member of the executive committee. The initiative is hosted and supported by the University of New Brunswick's Faculty of Education, with financial support from the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) and New Brunswick's Department of Post-secondary Education, Training and Labour. For more information check out the ALN website at: <http://aln-rcc.ca>.

Influencing Public Policy: Rules for Charities Engaging in Advocacy

The Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations has created an overview of the Canada Revenue Agency's rules for Political Activities by charities. The document provides information about and examples of activities that are unrestricted, limited and prohibited by the CRA. If your organization is NOT a registered charity then these rules do not apply to you. Download the overview from: www.calgarycvo.org/sites/default/files/resources/InBrief_7_CharitiesAdvocacy_FINAL.pdf.

A Report Card on Canada

The Conference Board of Canada has a website called *How Canada Performs: A Report Card on Canada*. On this site you will find an assessment of how Canada's quality of life compares with that of its peer countries. The Conference Board publishes an overall report card as well as individual ones that measure performances in six categories:

Economy, Innovation, Environment, Education and Skills, Health, and Society. The report card on education and skills notes that "... long-term structural issues are not being adequately addressed through Canada's current approach to education and skills... Canadians need to have access to education and skills outside the traditional school system." You can download the report at: www.conferenceboard.ca/HCP/Details/Education.aspx

Upskilling - Events, Conferences and Workshops from across the Continent

Family Literacy Day

ABC Canada Foundation has officially kicked off family literacy day 2010 by launching its annual Munch at Home contest. For more information go to: www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca.

Canada: Cultivating Connections: 2010 National Family Literacy Conference

Cultivating connections will be held at the Shaw Conference Centre in Edmonton Alberta, Canada, from July 15 – 17, 2010. This conference will be of interest to all those who work with families and are interested in fostering family literacy. Delegates will include those from Alberta and across Canada, and also from the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries. Conference keynote speakers include Peter Hannon, Elsa Auerbach, Snoeks Desmond, Eve Gregory and Thomas Sticht.

The **Call for Abstracts** is now open. You are invited to submit an abstract for the conference. The complete Call for Abstracts, with information on conference streams, is now available on the conference website at: <http://famlit.ca/cc>.

US: National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)

Mark your calendars now to attend NCFL's 19th Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas, April 11-13, 2010. This year's conference focuses on:

- Breakthrough solutions and strategies for family literacy connected to technology, health, sustainability and the environment
- Access to the nation's latest research and evaluation on literacy
- Free resources to supplement programs currently supporting literacy efforts for second language learners, adults, children and community

- Networking and learning opportunities with researchers, practitioners, administrators and funders throughout the U.S., as well as leaders on the international scene
- What the future holds for families

To learn more or register online go to: www.familit.org/conference.

Recession, Recognition, Recruitment and Renewal

The Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment presents its 2009 Fall Focus Workshop and Annual General Meeting in Toronto, Ontario, November 15-17, 2009. For more information and to register go to <http://www.capla.ca/News.php>.



If you have an event or conference you would like us to include in literacy.ca *EXPRESS* send us an email. The next issue will be published in February 2010. **Deadline for submissions is January 29, 2010.**

Membership

If you aren't already a member, or haven't renewed your membership, please click on www.literacy.ca/?q=membership to go to the membership form on the MCL website. We have two types of membership available – general and organizational. If you have any questions about becoming a member, or renewing your membership, please call the office at 613-563-2464 or email us at mcl@literacy.ca.

In the Future

In a future issue of literacy.ca *EXPRESS* we will be highlighting the linkages between literacy and other issues. If you know of a great partnership or collaboration between a literacy organization and an organization in another other field (poverty, as an example) please contact Lindsay at lindsay@literacy.ca. This will be a great opportunity to share information and knowledge with your colleagues across the county!

Also, if you have suggestions for topics and articles, websites or conferences you'd like us to include in the future, please contact Lindsay.



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