

# Adult Literacy & Essential Skills



Tillsonburg & District **Multi-Service Centre (MSC)**  
Serving the Community since 1978

FALL  
2011

**"Someone you know may need us"**  
[www.multiservicecentre.com](http://www.multiservicecentre.com)

## International Literacy Day –September 8, 2011

### Info-Tid-Bits:

Check the MSC web site (noted above). Two volunteers (Colin and Dorothy) share their stories about being a tutor!

There are many reasons why adults lack in literacy skills. Some did not spend adequate time in school. Some may have missed school to farm-related activities. Some families moved frequently, preventing adequate adjustment to school. Some may have grown up in poverty or experienced poor health. Learning disabilities impact on learning. There are a multitude of reasons why people have literacy issues. People lack literacy skills due to "lack of opportunity".

Literacy programs can make a difference. In

2008-2009 there were approximately 200 Ministry—Literacy & Basic Skills programs in Ontario. Approximately 52,000 students were provided service. 34% of students exited the program into employment. Another 31% of students went on to further education and training. Many students enhanced daily functional skills and experienced increased independence and confidence.

The United Nation's International Literacy Day - September 8, 2011 is in place to raise awareness of literacy and its impor-

tance in the areas of health, education and human rights.

Consider September 8, 2011 as a day to "tell your story": Why you became a volunteer; what literacy has done for your student's independence and self-esteem; why we need to be grateful to have literacy skills; how literacy is functional and suited to meet our daily needs. The absence of literacy skills could be considered as the "hidden handicap". Tell others how much literacy counts!

### Enclosures:

Token of Appreciation

Library News- Flyer

Volunteer Satisfaction Survey

Invitation Learning Disabilities Workshop

Student Activity

## Volunteer Tutors—Win an E-Reader!

Those volunteers registered with the Adult Literacy & Essential Skills Program will have their name entered into a random draw to win an E-Reader! The draw will take place on September 8, 2011 and the winner will be contacted. What a



wonderful gift for an avid reader and great volunteer committed to assisting others! The prize was donated by Literacy Link South Central in recognition of International Literacy Day and the value of volunteer tutors!

## Learning Disabilities Workshop—for Volunteers

Learning Disabilities affect one or more of the ways that a person takes in, stores, or uses information. LDs come in many forms and affect people with varying levels of severity. Between 5 and 10 percent of Canadians have learning disabilities. They are a life-long condition – they do not go away – but can be accommodated by using areas of strength to compensate and by use of technology.

A quick example: a student

could have a learning disability that affected her reading-and-understanding. She knows how to read, but the process of decoding the words and sentences takes so much effort that she comprehends little of what she's read. This student has learned that this is the case, and now records lectures to listen to later, and listens to audio-books on tape and CD. She has compensated by using her strong listening skills. Learning disabilities and their effects are different from

person to person, so a person's pattern of learning abilities needs to be understood in order to find good, effective strategies for compensation. (Taken from Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario website)

**Workshop Date:** Sept.28. 2011

**Speaker:** Tracy Fawdry, E.D. Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario-London

**Where:** Community Employment Services (MSC Woodstock Location), 40 Metcalf Street, Woodstock

**SEE ENCLOSED FLYER FOR FURTHER DETAILS**

## Volunteer Satisfaction Survey

Each year the program approaches volunteers to request their assistance and input in completion of the Volunteer Satisfaction Survey. This is an opportunity to provide feedback to staff regarding your involvement in the program and the support and recognition you receive as volunteers. In addition to the standard questions, we ask you to provide any fur-

ther comments you may have. In response to previous recommendations, we have provided Volunteer Development Workshops, addressed individual questions and improved some program procedures. (The survey is enclosed – green sheet.) Should you have suggestions regarding additional questions to ask during our next survey, we would be open to

hearing from you.

Our intention is to provide the best service we can to our volunteers who work frontline with students. Please note that you have the option to remain anonymous, if you wish. We would be most appreciative to receive the survey, when you forward your tutor report on October 5, 2011.

## Tutor Training-September 24th and October 1st

The Adult Literacy & Essential Skills program will be offering core training to new volunteers interested in tutoring on Saturday September 24, 2011 and Saturday October 1, 2011. At times, some present volunteers have shown interest in attending the training, as a refresher.

Please note, that if you would like to attend the core training you would be welcome to do so. Contact Wendy Woodhouse (519) 842-9000 ext. 266 or Lisa Acchione (519) 539-8161 ext. 292.

If you know of someone interested in becoming a vol-

unteer tutor, please pass along the contact number. You might want to highlight your experiences as a volunteer: empowering others to become more independent, increasing skill development and enhancing self-esteem in adult students.

## Literacy Library Renewal –Tillsonburg Location

This past summer the Adult Literacy & Essential Skills program staff were fortunate to have a Summer Student involved in a Literacy Library Framework project. The intent of the project was to evaluate the present literacy library in Tillsonburg and to consider recommendations for change. The end result of the implementation plan is a library that is effective, appropriately categorized/catalogued and user friendly for volunteer tutors. The purpose of the project is to support volunteers in their commitment to tutoring and to provide resources that are easily accessible.

The enclosed flyer provides an overview of the new library system. At the library you will find:

- A Library Manual
- A Card Box
- A Book Drop Off Box

Upcoming: A file cabinet including a variety of handouts and exercise sheets.

Please review the enclosed flyer and drop by to see our "New Library Look". If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact staff.

### Discarded Books-Free for the Asking

There have been a number of old books that have been discarded. If you are interested in perhaps looking at these books, please contact Wendy or Maureen at (519) 842-9000 ext. 266 or 270. These books are free for the asking.



## Back on Track— Back to the Books

With the arrival of September comes the intention of establishing a regular routine. For some students and tutors, this takes the shape of— Getting Back on Track—to ensure lessons take place on a regular basis. Here are a few tips for tutors to assist in this regard. Should there be any questions/concerns in resuming lessons, please be sure to contact staff:

\*Call your student to regenerate lessons (unless other arrangements have been made).

\*If your student's schedule has changed, or your schedule has changed.....discuss an alternate time to meet.

\*Contact the office should you need support or direction in regenerating lessons.

\*If you require books from the office, please let us know.

\*Resume lessons with review. A little "review and reinforcement" will be helpful in cases where lessons were interrupted by summer activities.

\*If you feel that lessons need a "boost", or a "change".....something to generate further interest and motivation, please call the office. We would be pleased to offer some ideas!

\*Please contact the office

to let us know if you have any difficulties in resuming sessions. We would be pleased to help.

\*If you feel it is time to revisit goals with your student or discuss changes in your student's training plan—it might be timely to review this. Do not hesitate to contact staff about this.

Special thanks is extended to volunteer tutors for their efforts in guiding students to improved literacy skills and goal success!

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## Tips for Completing Tutor Report

Don't wait until the end of the month to complete the report. You might want to consider making weekly entries on the report over the four-week period. (On some occasions, tutors have noted that they have forgotten some details about previous lessons, when they come to complete the report at the end of the month). Please forward your tutor report by the 5th of each month.

Remind yourself why your student is in the program. Although all students wish to upgrade - what is their goal area? Please consider this when selecting/using the skill books/resources and filling out the tutor report. This will make reading and writing relevant for students.

There may be times when a student is unable to voice a goal. How do we find a goal? When discussing work, leisure time etc. with your student, you may "discover" a goal. "Explore this." (Sometimes students are not aware of the capacity of literacy so they are unsure about their goals.)

Offer comments about progress, challenges and observations.....information that you feel would be pertinent. The comments section can be the basis for discussion when tutors and office staff connect. "Think out loud."

Do not hesitate to identify concerns or difficulties. Contact the staff. We are here to serve you. This could include, but is not limited to, such areas as: absence of progress, tutoring strategies, roadblocks, scheduling of lessons etc. Call staff for assistance. We would like to hear from you.

## Volunteers: Timeless & Precious

Time is going by too fast, people are in a rush, my neighbours don't know me and I am becoming impersonal in a strange world that craves meaning. How can I find meaning in this world? How can I find a world that speaks to caring, giving and altruism? Volunteering has sometimes been captured in the following quotes:

- I feel grounded when I volunteer. I know I have an impact on

someone's life.

- I feel like I belong in my community when I volunteer.
- Volunteering is an investment in humanity.
- Volunteering offers me the opportunity to share part of me with someone else - to make a difference.
- Why should we expect "goodness" from our community, if we don't invest in it ourselves?

Volunteers are timeless and precious souls in a complex world. They are our gold nuggets in frontline service delivery.

### To Our Literacy Tutors:

*We commend you for offering meaning to our communities. We recognize you for your insightfulness in the meaning of volunteerism. You are precious and timeless in our eyes. Sincere appreciation and thanks. You are timeless and precious!*