



# Literacy Links to Employment

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## Out and About

LLSC staff can be found at community events such as:

- On Rogers TV, with segments on the shows “Espectacular” and “The Muslim View” (throughout July)
- Collège Boréal & Goodwill Focus Groups (July 29)
- ACFOLA Focus Group (August 5)
- SWIM: Single Women in Motherhood Focus Group (August 13)

## LMP Project Update

After a great response, our Literacy Links to Employment newsletter distribution list has grown tremendously! Our 2nd issue reached roughly 3000 people through email, and over 100 copies of the newsletter were hand-delivered to immigrant support organizations throughout London, including local politicians.

In recent months, we have spoken with London immigrants to learn more about their employment goals and skills, and their knowledge of locally available literacy programs. We’ve spoken to over 50 people through focus groups and one-on-one interviews, including 18 community leaders and service

providers. We are pleased to have connected most recently with London’s Francophone immigrants through a focus group at Collège Boréal. Literacy Link South Central is grateful for the opportunity to have developed stronger connections with London immigrants, and we look forward to gathering even more feedback in the weeks ahead. We hope that the information shared about literacy programing will help provide London’s immigrants and the organizations that serve them with additional tools for success.

If you would like more information about literacy visit [www.llsc.on.ca](http://www.llsc.on.ca)

## Literacy and... ESL

English as a second language (ESL) focuses on English language acquisition for those who do not speak English, but who are literate in their mother tongue.



Literacy programs focus on reading, writing, math, computer skills, communication, document use and upgrading other Essential Skills for those who can speak and understand either English or French.

Literacy is important because it affects peoples’ lives directly, impacting their employment, health, family, and community involvement. Both Literacy and ESL classes can help immigrants integrate into Canadian society, depending on their skill level and individual needs.

## Information from Focus Groups

Literacy Link South Central continues to hold focus groups with local immigrants, community leaders, cultural organizations and representatives from employment and social service agencies. At these focus groups we gather thoughts on factors that affect immigrant participation in adult literacy programs, and learn about participants' employment goals and skills. We want to know how we can support immigrants in accessing literacy programs, and our goal is to provide literacy programs that can bring them a step closer to employment.

We've spoken to people from many diverse backgrounds, and

have noted that most immigrants we spoke with weren't familiar with literacy programs, but were interested in learning more. With an understanding of what London's free literacy programs offer, the people we spoke with were able to share great suggestions for what literacy programs provide that would assist immigrants in gaining valuable employment skills. We consistently heard how valuable literacy programs that help people upgrade reading, writing, verbal communication and networking and working with others are.

As we look deeper into employment goals with our focus group attendees, we're hearing frequent mentions of wanting to get into the fields of Personal Support Worker (PSW), social work, clerical and nursing. We've

also noted a trend in the need for a valid Canadian driver's license either to get to workplaces not located on bus routes, or for transportation-based employment. We look forward to identifying ways that literacy programs can help immigrants reach these specific goals.

Literacy Link South Central will continue to gather feedback from immigrants through the middle of August 2015, and will be compiling a report based on that feedback along with a list of recommended program changes in the fall of 2015. If you would like to share your thoughts with us, we would be happy to schedule a one-on-one interview, or invite you to a focus group. Please contact us at [literacylink@gmail.com](mailto:literacylink@gmail.com) or 519-681-7307.

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## Immigrants and the Labour Market: A London Perspective

The City of London has released a comprehensive report exploring the local immigrant labour market.

This report is the result of a project undertaken by the City of London, which looked at what employment supports and services are working well, best practices that could be shared, and where there are barriers and challenges to overcome.

The City of London will be using the information in this report to support key goals in their 2015-

2019 Strategic Plan. The London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership (LMLIP) will also be using it as a resource as they develop their 2016-2019 Strategic Plan, and it is hoped that other organizations will use it in their work supporting immigrants in the London area.

The report is focuses on 4 major themes:

1. timely economic integration
2. coordination and marketing of services available for immigrants
3. enhancing available services and supports
4. reducing barriers

To review the full report, visit: [http://sire.london.ca/view.aspx?cabinet=published\\_meetings&fileid=188509](http://sire.london.ca/view.aspx?cabinet=published_meetings&fileid=188509)

**Immigrants are significant for London's future economic success.**

The City of London report "Immigrants & the Labour Market"

## Finding the right literacy program for you

### Liteacy Link South Central can help match you with a program that suits your needs

In the City of London there are 11 different literacy programs. Each of them offer Ontario residents 19 years of age and older an opportunity to improve their skills in reading, writing, math, communication, computers, and other essential skills for the work place. But with so many to choose from how do you know which program is the right one for you? We spoke to Literacy Link South Central Staff to find out more about these programs and how they differ from one another.

#### Where can someone attend a literacy program in our city?

There are 11 literacy programs in London, offered in a variety of places. You can attend Literacy programs through community-based agencies, school boards, and colleges in our city, so there are lots of options!

#### What are some of the differences between them?

All programs can help you improve literacy skills, prepare you to earn a high school diploma or an equivalent certificate (GED). They can assist you in upgrading the essential skills needed for employment, beginning an



apprenticeship, moving on to post-secondary education, or just being an independent, engaged citizen. That said, there are some programs that specialize. For example, there are literacy programs geared towards youth (age 19-29), others best suited for those struggling with a physical disability, programs offered entirely in French, and so on.

#### What else should someone take into consideration when looking for a literacy program?

Aside from being able to communicate in one of Canada's two official languages at roughly a Canadian Language Benchmark Level of 6 or above, when recommending a literacy program we ask people how they learn best. Literacy programs are offered in small group, classroom, and one-on-one settings, using both computer-based learning and more traditional tutoring and guidance. We look at matching you with a program that will best suit your learning style and your needs.

If you would like help finding a literacy program that's right for you, please call the staff of Literacy Link South Central at 519-681-7307. They would be happy to speak to you about your needs and goals, and recommend a program for you.



Do you know that there is a free online learning program that provides flexible opportunities to upgrade your reading, writing, math, computer and other essential workplace skills? It's called the LearningHUB, and it can help you:

- get ready to take a Secondary School credit course or the Grade 12 equivalency test (GED)
- prepare to get a job, or to perform better in an existing job
- be more comfortable with your skills as you enter a College, University or an apprenticeship program
- feel better about yourself and your ability to reach your goals

The LearningHUB is ideal for those who are unable to access in-person literacy programming, who prefer a combination of in-person and online learning, or who simply find it easier to learn online. For more information or to register, visit [www.learninghub.ca](http://www.learninghub.ca).

# Newcomer Settlement Services at the South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre

As of July 1<sup>st</sup> 2015, the Newcomer Settlement Services of the South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre (SLNRC) moved to their new location at South London Community Centre. These new, state-of-the-art offices will provide settlement services in a welcoming atmosphere.

At present, 3 settlement services programs fully funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) are available for newcomers through the SLNRC. These programs are:

## 1. Information & Orientation:

Information & Orientation staff at two locations (SLNRC and Village Green Community Church) work closely with newcomers to assess their needs, guide them to make informed settlement decisions and provide them with timely, useful and accurate information. Settlement plans are set up for newcomers to meet their settlement



needs and help them establish priorities. Information is provided so that newcomers know their rights and obligations. A number of one-on-one, family and group information sessions are organized to enhance the integration of newcomers in the society.

## 2. Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS):

In partnership with the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) and the London District Catholic School Board (LDCSB), SWIS Workers in more than 20 designated schools in London assist newcomer students and their families to settle into their schools and community.

## 3. Library Settlement Partnerships (LSP):

In partnership with the London Public Library, an LSP Worker is available at the Jalna Branch of the Library to meet with clients to assess their needs. They will help newcomers to set individual priorities and facilitate referrals to the most appropriate community services. Citizenship classes are organized on Saturdays with Childcare provided to participants.

For more information about Settlement Services through the South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre, please contact 519-686-8600 x 7350 or email [info@slnrc.org](mailto:info@slnrc.org).

## Contact Information

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