



Literacy Links to Employment

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Out and About

LLSC staff can be found at community events such as:

- LMLIP Self Employment Info Session (May 13)
- Adult Education Learner Awards (May 14, May 27)
- Literacy discussion with Paris Meilleur, Senior Policy Advisor to Premier Kathleen Wynne (May 22)
- Community Leader and Service Provider Focus Group (June 8)

LMP Project Update

Our first “Literacy Links to Employment” newsletter reached a wide audience thanks to the help of community members and local service agencies. It reached almost 600 people and organizations throughout London by email. We delivered an additional 80 paper copies to Library settlement workers and agencies who work with London’s immigrants.

We received lots of positive feedback from attendees of our webinar “Through the Looking Glass: Immigrant Perspectives on Literacy”, which we hosted on March 9 and April 1. We

welcomed over 50 attendees, representing adult education, employment, settlement and health agencies. If you would like to see the webinar, it can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/124936082>.

We are hosting a series of focus groups and interviews to discuss factors that might affect immigrant participation in adult literacy programs. Our goal is to help remove barriers and provide literacy programming that will help London’s immigrants reach their employment goals. If you would like to participate, please contact us at literacylink@gmail.com.

Employment and... Essential Skills

There are nine Essential Skills that everyone needs to both get and keep a job, to adapt to changes in the workplace, and to move on to better employment in the future. Those Nine Essentials Skills are:

Reading	Document Use	Continuous Learning
Numeracy	Computer Use	Oral Communication
Writing	Thinking	Working with Others

Literacy programs can help you achieve your goals through upgrading the Essential Skills that employers are looking for. Improving your ability to write reports, understand and create documents, do math, use computers, and learn so you can continue your education.

To find out more, contact Literacy Link South Central 519-681-7307

Women of the World

Literacy Link South Central welcomed 7 Peer Leaders from the London Intercommunity Health Centre's "Women of the World" (WoW) program for a literacy awareness workshop and focus group on March 28th.

After learning what literacy is and how it impacts our daily lives, the Peer Leaders agreed that there is a great need to inform London's immigrants about literacy programs. They want immigrants to know how literacy programs can help people build the skills they need to achieve their goals.

"The first thing that came to my mind is that Literacy is reading and writing, but I learned it is more than that!"

~ WoW Peer Leader

The Peer Leaders were pleased to find out that Literacy and Basic Skills programs are FREE, and let us know that many people think there is a cost associated with them.

When we asked about how to inspire people to attend literacy programs, they recommended letting people know that they are offered along bus routes in many locations around the city. That literacy programs are staffed with people who are knowledgeable

about accessing additional services such as transportation, employment assistance and childcare support is an additional motivator.

Literacy Link would like to thank WoW Program Coordinator Ola Lawal and all the Peer Leaders for joining us for an informative afternoon – your feedback was appreciated. For more information about the WoW program, contact Ola at 519-660-0875 Ext.251.

Merrymount's Mutual Aid Parenting Program (MAPP)

This spring, Literacy Link South Central worked with Yasika Jarquin from Merrymount's Children's Centre to organize 3 "Immigrants Perspectives: Literacy and Employment" focus groups with participants in their Mutual Aid Parenting Program (MAPP).

MAPP is a self-help group where parents come to share their

concerns. MAPP parents get help, give help and learn to help each other and themselves.

At each of the focus groups, which were held at the Family Centre Carling-Thames, Family Centre Westmount, and the South London Resource Centre, we asked participants to share their thoughts about literacy. We also asked them

to help us better understand how literacy programs can better support immigrants in achieving their employment goals.

We want to thank the 22 parents from London's Hispanic communities who participated and provided such valuable input. We truly appreciate everything you shared with us. Literacy Link South Central would also like to extend our thanks to Yasika Jarquin for her support, with organizing these focus groups.

The MAPP group is offered at various locations throughout London. For more information, contact Yasika or Maria at 519-434-6848 Ext. 282.



A Little Thing Can Make a Big Difference

By Amy Thompson
Employment Counselor
London Employment Help Centre

[Upgrading the literacy skills needed for the workplace can make all the difference as a job seeker](#)

Literacy skills are needed in every workplace. Even for basic jobs, employees today need the fundamental Essential Skills to be successful. And in these economic times, the competition for jobs can be high. If a job seeker's literacy skills are strong, it helps them to compete in the field.

Today's employers are looking for people with strong skills, including the ability to work well in a team, understand and fill out paperwork, and communicate clearly with others. These are all Essential Skills, which can be developed through literacy programs in our city.

In my job as an Employment Counselor, I can help people identify if upgrading their literacy skills will give them the tools they need to be successful. There was a civil engineer who came to me not long ago. He had been laid off from a high-level job in a local company, and when I asked him the reason, he said they told him that his communication skills weren't strong enough. Since



English was his second language we discussed whether his English language skills could be the issue, but he spoke English well and neither of us believed that to be the problem.

He has worked in a very high position, and his actual work wasn't the problem. So what was it?

I referred him to Literacy Link South Central, who were able to speak with him and discuss his communication skills. His speaking and listening skills were strong enough, so they referred him to the literacy program that they believed would be the best fit for him.

At his new literacy program, he was matched with a tutor who helped him identify the areas where his communication could be tweaked, and together they worked on a plan for him to reach his goals. It was a little thing that would make a big difference to him and his confidence level - he was very pleased.

After upgrading his communication skills in that literacy program, he's gone on to another high paying job. For him, life is moving on in the best possible direction.

Did you know...?

- According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts"
- According to the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALS), workers with higher literacy skills earn more income, experience shorter periods of unemployment, and are more likely to find full-time rather than part-time work.
- According to the study *The Impact of Basic Skills Programs on Canadian Workplaces*, 94% of respondents reported that basic skills programs positively influenced participants' reading, writing and oral communication skills in ways that benefit the workplace.

Highlight: The Canadian Latin American Association (CALA)



London is a vibrant, culturally diverse city in which immigrants make up 21.5% of the population. Latin Americans represent the largest visible minority in our city.

The Canadian Latin American Association (CALA) is a nonprofit organization that works with the growing Latin American population in London and area. Since its inception in 2007, CALA has been dedicated to orienting, assisting and empowering the Hispanic community in London.

Over the past year CALA has undergone several changes, which include bringing an administrative team on board, and the

implementation of a new strategic plan. The plan is driven by 5 pillars focusing on:

1. being a welcoming organization for all
2. the empowerment of the Latin American community
3. being sustainable
4. creating meaningful connections
5. and most importantly, sharing our Latin American culture.

In light of this new vision, CALA is currently developing programs for youth, families, women and seniors. All CALA programs are offered in English and Spanish and are not limited to the Latin American population. CALA organizes more than 7 events throughout the year with the goal of integrating the community and funding programming.

The upcoming Latin Gala on June 27th will raise funds to support the establishment of CALA CASA, a program for Latin American seniors that will provide culturally focused activities facilitated in Spanish, helping seniors become more integrated and involved in their community.

For more information about Latin Gala or our organization visit our website at calalondon.org or call us at 226-700-1405.



In 2014, Literacy Link South Central produced a series of videos featuring learners from various cultural backgrounds, literacy experts and community leaders sharing their stories about the impact of literacy on their communities. Check them out! www.llsc.on.ca/news/video-campaign-launch

Contact Information

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