

Encourage literacy at home for best results

Children raised in literate households are likely to enter grade one with several thousand hours of one to one pre-reading experience behind them. But what about children that have limited access to learning opportunities at home?

Approximately nine million adult Canadians suffer from low literacy; hundreds of thousands of these individuals have children. Unfortunately, several of these children end up falling behind in school because they are not given the same opportunity as their peers to read at home and engage in early learning activities.

Encouraging parents to take time every day to read or do a learning activity with their children is crucial to a child's development. Even just 15 minutes a day can improve a child's literacy skills dramatically, and can help a parent improve their skills as well.

We know that parents lead busy lives and may not have time to read to their children. Add to that parents that have low reading confidence and children almost never enjoy a bedtime story.

To ensure both children and adults are improving their literacy skills, encourage parents to do fun activities that are part of daily routines or that don't feel like learning. Spending time playing a board game, writing out a shopping list, counting out change at the grocery store or following a recipe all incorporate literacy and learning.

Family Literacy Day®, taking place across Canada on January 27, 2012, is the perfect opportunity to encourage learning at home. There are so many learning opportunities in daily life – we just have to embrace them!

For more information on Family Literacy Day, including tips, activities and event ideas, visit www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca.

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