



About Family Literacy Day

Family Literacy Day® is a national awareness initiative created by ABC Life Literacy Canada in 1999 and held annually on January 27 to raise awareness of the importance of reading and engaging in other literacy related activities as a family. More than 1.5 million Canadians have already participated in the initiative since its debut. Taking time every day to read or do a learning activity with 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.

Every year on Family Literacy Day thousands of events coordinated by literacy providers, schools, libraries and community organizations take place across the country. These activities range from fundraisers, book drives and children's reading circles, to literacy themed contests and family games nights. In 2011, the theme was *Play for Literacy*, and thousands of Canadians celebrated by participating in play themed events. For more information on Family Literacy Day, visit www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca.

Take the Learning Journey

In 2012, all Canadians are invited to Take the Learning Journey! Learning happens everywhere, and it's easy to embrace it and make learning part of your daily life. The benefits of dedicating this time together on a daily basis, whether reading and writing, playing and exercising, or simply talking about your day, are far-reaching and beneficial for everyone. Increased literacy levels among parents mean more reading and literacy building activities in the home, preparing their children for success in school and encouraging a lifelong love of reading and learning.

About ABC Life Literacy Canada:

ABC Life Literacy Canada is a non-profit organization that inspires Canadians to increase their literacy skills. We mobilize business, government and communities to support lifelong learning and achieve our goals through leadership in programs, communications and partnerships. ABC Life Literacy Canada envisions a Canada where everyone has the skills they need to live a fully engaged life. For the latest news and information on adult literacy please visit www.abclifeliteracy.ca, follow us on **Twitter** @Life_Literacy or join our **Facebook** page.



www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca

Quick Facts

1. Family Literacy Day takes place every January 27 across Canada.
2. Family Literacy Day 2012 is the 14th year of the initiative.
3. Family Literacy Day is celebrated by thousands of families every year. Over 1.5 million Canadians have taken part in initiative, which debuted in 1999 by ABC Life Literacy Canada.
4. In 2009, more than 120,000 Canadians participated in the nation wide Family Literacy Day World Record Attempt to beat the record of 78,791 adults and children reading together.
5. Family Literacy Day is a means of reaching not only children, but also the adults in their lives with the literacy message. It encourages adults to spend time engaged in a literacy activity together daily.
6. A few minutes of family reading a day helps both parent and child in a very big way. It prepares children for challenges ahead, encourages a lifetime of reading enjoyment, and sharpens an adult's literacy skills.

Questions & Answers

Q: What is Family Literacy Day?

A: Family Literacy Day is a national awareness initiative created by ABC Life Literacy Canada to reinforce the importance of families reading and engaging in activities that build knowledge for future success. This special day is celebrated on January 27 each year.

Q: Why is family literacy so important?

A: Developing early childhood reading and writing skills helps develop the learning skills necessary for good communication later in life, and can ultimately contribute to a child's chances for success. Also, reading ability is like a muscle – if you don't exercise it often you may not be able to maintain the same level of reading ability as you age. We call it the "use it or lose it" principle. So you can understand why reinforcing reading and writing as a family activity benefits people of all ages!

Q: How is Family Literacy Day celebrated?

A: Every year, Family Literacy Day includes thousands of activities coordinated by literacy providers, schools, libraries, families and community organizations across the country. These activities range from fundraisers, book drives and children’s reading circles, to literacy themed games and contests. The nice thing about Family Literacy Day is that you don’t have to participate in a formal event to be a part of this initiative – it can be celebrated by simply setting aside 15 minutes of family time to read with your children, play a board game, write a letter or even follow a recipe together.

Q: Where can people find more information on Family Literacy Day?

A: People should contact their local literacy organization or ABC Life Literacy Canada. ABC Life Literacy Canada can be reached by calling 1 800 303 1004, via email at fld@lifeliteracy.ca or online at www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca.

Q: Is literacy such a big issue in Canada? How many people are actually illiterate?

A: The word “illiterate” is no longer used in literacy circles, as it really represents only a small portion of the Canadian population (less than five per cent). “Low literacy skills” is the term that is now used to represent the four out of 10 adult Canadians, age 16 to 65 – representing 9 million Canadians – that have serious problems with reading, writing and math. These individuals fall below level 3 on the prose literacy scale.

Q: How does this break down regionally across the country?

A: Canadians’ literacy skills vary from region to region. Generally, there are more Canadians with higher literacy skills in the Western provinces and Ontario, and more Canadians with lower literacy skills in the Eastern provinces and Quebec.

Q: Where can people get more information on statistics surrounding the literacy issue in Canada?

A: People can visit the ABC Life Literacy Canada website for more information on literacy related activities at www.abclifeliteracy.ca. They can also visit the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD) website at www.nald.ca which provides statistical information on this issue.

For more family literacy tips, Family Literacy Day activity ideas and other information, please visit www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca.