

Annual Report | 2021 2022

NWT LITERACY COUNCIL



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Who We Are

The NWT Literacy Council is a not-for-profit organization. We promote and support the development of literacy and essential skills in all the official languages of the NWT.

VISION

People in the NWT will have the skills they need to be full and active participants in their family, in their community, in their culture, and in today's society.

MISSION

The NWT Literacy Council builds capacity through literacy training, research, resource development, and promotion for the benefit of all Northerners.

What We Do

- Each year we provide workshops, training, and professional gatherings for community-based literacy practitioners. Topics include family literacy, Indigenous language literacy, embedding literacy and essential skills, youth and adult literacy, proposal writing, program planning, facilitation skills and workplace learning.
- We develop, publish, and distribute resources and learning materials for community-based family literacy, youth and adult literacy, and Indigenous language programs.
- We conduct research into issues that affect literacy and essential skills development in the NWT, and monitor and share research from other places that impacts our work here.
- We promote the value of literacy and essential skills through the materials we produce and the events we sponsor. Events include International Literacy Day, NWT Literacy Week, National Family Literacy Day, Indigenous Languages Month, and the Peter Gzowski Invitational (PGI) for Literacy.
- We have an extensive network of interested stakeholders and partners, and share information about literacy and essential skills with them through our newsletters, e-news, social media and website.
- We promote the use of plain language and offer fee-for-service plain language design, writing, and editing services.
- We monitor and respond to territorial and national literacy and essential skills policies.
- We offer non-formal literacy and language programs to newcomers through our Community Connections program.



"I have been able to share my learnings with Elders I work with. They are very proud of what I have accomplished and I'm also proud of myself. It's nice to be able to say little things like good morning to them! Thank you NWT Literacy Council for an amazing month of learning!"

President's Message



Hello, NWT Literacy Council members and friends! I am proud to present to you the NWT Literacy Council's 2021-2022 Annual Report.

This has been a big year for the NWTLC as the organization purchased a building, added new projects and staff and began new partnerships. The staff at the Council worked extremely hard to continue adapting to living and working in the pandemic. The team continued to deliver quality programs both in person and virtually. Thank you to all of the staff and community partners for another very successful year!

Over the 2021 summer, NWTLC staff packed up the offices the organization had been in for over a decade, and spent many hours walking down memory lane. There were photos and news articles from our organization's very first days, including visits from Peter Gzowski and Mr. Dressup, and from many community-based projects. There were over 30 years' worth of resources NWTLC has created. Moving was a big job, but it was also good to reflect on this history. It is great to see the staff settling into their new space and dreaming of what they can do with more room.

As I read through this year's programming, I was once again reminded of just how much this organization does and what a great resource it is for northerners. I was happy to see the continuation of work in NWTLC's core projects, as well as some exciting new work.

The NWTLC has a mandate to support the literacy development of northern youth, adults, and families. With a passionate team of staff, contractors, partner organizations and participants, so much work takes place each year. Thank you to all of those who support our work. We look forward to working with you in 2022-2023.

– Ken Latour, President NWT Literacy Council





Staff Members

- Kathryn Barry Paddock, Executive Director
- Helen Balanoff, Project Manager (*Not pictured*)
- Katie Johnson, Family and Community Literacy Coordinator and Program Director (from October 2021)
- Charlotte Upton, Canada Learning Bond Coordinator and Skill Builders for Youth Coordinator
- Uma Sivakumar, Office Manager (to September 2021)
- Karen Johnson, Integration Literacy Coordinator
- Stephanie van Pelt, Integration Advisor
- Grayce Patino, HIPPY Coordinator
- Riley Menard, Summer Student (June-August 2021)
- James Franklin, Summer Student (June-October 2021)
- Balqisa Kulan, Summer Student (June-August 2021), Administrative Assistant (from October 2021)
- Jeremy Mousseau, Community Literacy Coordinator (from July 2021)
- Kristie Leach, Community Literacy Coordinator (from January 2022)
- Nicole Sharp, Family and Community Literacy Coordinator (from January 2022)
- Gillian Moir, Project Manager (from March 2022) (*Not pictured*)

Board of Directors

PRESIDENT

- Ken Latour

VICE PRESIDENT

- Rosemary Gill

TREASURER

- Rachel VanderVeen

SECRETARY

- Melani Adams

Yellowknife, Ndilo and Dettah Regional Representative:
Rachel VanderVeen

Deh Cho Regional Representative: Rosemary Gill

Beaufort Delta Representative: Melani Adams

South Slave Regional Representative: Minnie Whimp

Sahtú Regional Representative: Vacant

Tłıchq Regional Representative: Vacant



Resources

This year we created several new resources, and updated some existing ones.

1. *Little Chefs*. This resource has been updated with a new unit and more activities in each unit, including discussion prompts. The updated resource was printed and distributed to facilitators.
2. *Read the Rainbow*. This is a list of books by authors and/or illustrators who identify as members of the 2SLGBTQIPA+ community, and/or featuring gender and sexuality diverse characters. A poster was completed as well as the first draft of a Family Literacy activity resource. This is a partnership with the Northern Mosaic Network.
3. *Learning in the Kitchen*. This resource for the Skill Builders for Youth program was printed and distributed to facilitators.
4. *Planning Your Career Workbook*. This was reprinted for our Empowering Northern Youth through Career Development program.
5. *Indigenous Languages Month BINGO Cards*. The adult and youth cards were made to promote the use and revitalization of Indigenous languages in the NWT. People recorded their responses on paper, in photos and through social media posts. These can continue to be used by community programs.

PGI for Literacy Virtual Trivia Night

This year we hosted a virtual trivia night as our annual PGI for Literacy fundraiser. Ollie Williams, from Cabin Radio, challenged teams to two rounds of trivia on Zoom. We hope everyone had fun checking their knowledge of the NWT and of children's literature. Thanks to our generous sponsors, participants and the support of the Peter Gzowski Foundation, we were able to raise \$10,000 for the Bison Bus Mobile Family Literacy Centre!

Course and Resource Development to Support ALBE Programming

(funded by Aurora College)

Our work on Literacy and Essential Skills (LES) Courses continues with Aurora College. This year we completed a draft of the Introduction to Support Assistant Course 1, began work on Course 2, and completed the Prior Learning Assessment and Review Course for community learning centres. We also presented information on the LES courses at Aurora College's Professional Development sessions for community adult educators and campus instructors. We reprinted our ever-popular Northern Biographies for distribution to community learning centres, and continued to update our current research information on adult education.

Adult Literacy Supports

*(funded by GNWT Education,
Culture and Employment)*

We did a review of our weekly e-news and, based on the results, we changed it to a monthly publication with a new format. We also produced one edition of our paper-based newsletter, *Literacy Matters*. Our social media interactions increased this year and our weekly blogs remain very popular. Our plain language services were more popular than ever this year, and we are happy to see so many groups interested in using plain language. Our website and resources for adult learners continue to be well used. Thank you to everyone who participated in events during NWT Literacy Week.

NGO Stabilization

*(funded by GNWT Municipal
and Community Affairs)*

Our Stabilization project focussed on our move to our newly-purchased office building. This included renovations to the building, as well as the move itself and new furniture. We also had monthly staff-led team building sessions, and professional development with the Northern Mosaic Network.



Indigenous Languages Month

(funded by GNWT Education, Culture and Employment)

February was Indigenous Languages Month (ILM). The primary goal of this initiative is for language champions from Indigenous language communities to extend their effectiveness and inspire greater change through increased opportunities to share. This year's theme was "Let's Go Fishing".

Educational and promotional events including youth and adult bingo were offered throughout the month. All events were well received and attended, in person and online. Winners of ILM events included speakers of all nine official Indigenous languages, from all five NWT regions. Giveaway items included themed multitools, fishing gloves, net needles, lures, and kneeling pads. We wrapped up the month with the annual Indigenous Languages gathering.



Family Literacy

(funded by GNWT Education, Culture and Employment)

This was another year of learning as we supported community facilitators in changing their work, as we also changed our plans, due to the pandemic. We had fewer community projects than before the pandemic, but more than we had last year. Facilitators were so creative in the ways they offered programs. We funded 15 programs in 11 communities. We also provided event grants to six groups in four communities to celebrate National Family Literacy Day.

We hoped to host our annual Family Literacy Training Institute in-person this year, but had to reschedule twice due to COVID restrictions and then moved it to virtual. There are new facilitators in Aklavik, Fort Simpson, Wekweètì, Inuvik, Hay River, Fort Smith and Yellowknife. Training groups included:

- 24 students from Aurora College's distance Early Learning and Childcare Program.
- 15 students from Aurora College's campus-based Early Learning and Childcare Program.
- 7 participants from various other organizations.



Supporting Children's Inclusion and Participation

(funded by GNWT Education, Culture and Employment)

This was the third and final year of a project to support the Dezoah Undaa Etleh Koke Aboriginal Head Start in Fort Providence. After planned training could not take place, AHS staff identified a need for equipment to support sensory and language needs of students. NWTLC contracted a Speech Language Pathologist and Occupational Therapist to create a list of suggested items. AHS staff then chose which items they would like purchased.

Canada Learning Bond Take-Up

(funded by Employment and Social Development Canada)

Most of the training and take-up events this year had to be cancelled or postponed. We hosted several online information sessions as a part of our Family Literacy Training Institute. The trained community champions continue to support families to access the CLB program.



Skill Builders for Youth

(funded by GNWT Education, Culture and Employment)

Our Skill Builders for Youth program is about re-engaging youth with learning and their community. We provide training and mentorship to develop community capacity, and then offer funding and ongoing support to help community members run youth literacy programs.

Nine Skill Builders for Youth projects were successfully completed in nine different communities. This is fewer than our usual number of projects due to the pandemic. Resources were updated and created. After seven years, the program continues to receive overwhelmingly positive feedback from youth and facilitators.

Boomerang Bags

(funded by GNWT Environment and Natural Resources)

In March, newcomers to Canada were invited to come to NWTLC to learn to sew. NWTLC purchased sewing equipment, and donations of fabric were requested to help community sewers reduce waste. The project helps to reduce fabric waste while creating reusable cloth bags. An instructor taught participants how to make pillowcases and pajama bottoms. Participants then began making reusable shopping bags. The bags are part of an international program called Boomerang Bags. The women who are sewing are excited to learn new skills.

Empowering Northern Youth Through Career Development

(funded by Government of Canada's Youth Employment and Skills Strategy)

In November 2021, representatives from NWTLC met with collaborators from the Yukon Literacy Coalition and Ilitagsiniq-Nunavut Literacy Council to outline a new, tri-territorial career development program. The goal is to help youth aged 15 to 30 navigate the labour market and transition into sustained employment through culture, skills development and meaningful work experiences.

NWT's first cohort began in March in a learning space located in YK Centre. Over four weeks, participants took part in a variety of learning experiences including Łiwe (fish) camp, making sealskin mitts, improving computer skills, resumé writing, beading, and other career development activities. Seven youth ranging in age from 21 to 28 began the program, and five began work or work placements (two weeks/60 hours) directly from the program.



Three for Change

(funded by Employment and Social Development Canada)

Three for Change is a collaborative project between the Yukon Literacy Coalition, Ilitagsiniq-Nunavut Literacy Council and NWT Literacy Council, funded by Employment and Social Development Canada. The goal of the project is to develop social enterprises and Skills for Success training that will support people to find success in business development. Staff of the three partner organizations met to begin the work in March 2022.



Literacy Programs for Newcomers

(funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada)

Community Connections

Various programs are offered to help newcomers to Canada improve their English through non-formal language learning. The programs focus on Indigenous culture, local history and aspects of life in Yellowknife to help people adjust to their new environment. Recreational activities include snowshoeing, berry picking, paddling, gardening or swimming (often ladies only). Through these activities, new immigrants make friends and connections across cultures. United Way NWT and City of Yellowknife generously provide grants to allow for a wider range of activities to take place.



Multi-Cultural HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters)

This year we doubled the number of participants, from four children to eight. Seven of these children were able to complete the entire 30-week curriculum. Parents of these youngsters also completed the 30 home visits through the year. Mothers, who are the major participants in this program, have become more confident as they develop their English communication skills through teaching their children lessons each week. Families have come out from their isolation and have participated more in the activities in their communities.

Integration Advising

From a career search workshop to meeting the local RCMP to an introduction to financial literacy – this year was filled with learning opportunities for newcomers to Yellowknife who are keen to make connections and learn about their new community. Both group and one-on-one information sessions, virtual and in-person, were offered to folks new to Yellowknife. We also hosted an outdoor cultural exchange and sharing workshop.



Training

This year, we hosted the following trainings:

- **Family Literacy Training Institute:** Training for facilitators working with children aged 0-6 and their parents or caregivers. Three virtual trainings were offered.
- **Facilitation Skills:** NWTLC hosted virtual training sessions on Facilitation Skills for GNWT Healthy Family Program staff and Family Preservation Workers.
- **The Role of ECEs in Early Literacy – You can do it, we can help:** A workshop for Aurora College Early Learning and Childcare students, presented in partnership with the Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation.
- **Reading to Your Baby:** Workshops for Yellowknife Public Health and Moms, Boobs and Babies' Post-natal Program.

Our staff attended the following training or professional development sessions:

- Indigenous Evaluation Workshop – The Canadian Evaluation Society, Nova Scotia Chapter.
- Workplace First Aid – Arctic Response.
- Introduction to 2SLGBTQIPA+ Identity and Allyship – Northern Mosaic Network.
- Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Homecoming Conference.
- Side-by-Side: Celebrating the Diversity of Fatherhood Conference – Dad Central Canada.

- Looking Within – Nobody's Perfect National Conference.
- Parenting Matters: Supporting Indigenous Fathers – Saskatchewan Prevention Network.
- Non-Profit Management Certificate courses – Simon Fraser University.
- Recreation for Mental Health – NWT Recreation and Parks Association.
- Clear Language and Design webinar – ABC Life Literacy Canada.
- Get Set Learn Family Literacy Training – Project READ.
- Instructional Skills Workshop – Aurora College.

Congratulations to our Executive Director, Kathryn, on her graduation with a Certificate in Adult Education from Aurora College this year!



Funders and Supporters

PROJECT FUNDERS

- Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment
- Aurora College
- Government of Canada, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada/ Gouvernement du Canada Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
- Government of Canada Employment and Social Development Canada/ Gouvernement du Canada, Emploi et Développement social Canada
- Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Municipal and Community Affairs
- City of Yellowknife
- United Way NWT

DONORS (OVER \$500)

- Kelly Slack
- Shauna Morgan



PGI FOR LITERACY FUNDRAISER SUPPORTERS

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- The Yellowknife Book Cellar
- YKPT

NWTLC would like to extend our appreciation to all of our funders, donors and supporters. Without this support, we would not be able to provide the services that we do to NWT residents.