



# FESA's News & Views

Home of LAPS

## Message from the Co-Executive Directors

Welcome to our new world! As of April 8th, FESA has moved to a new site. Have you recorded our new contact information? Check the details on page 8. On a sad side, we had to say goodbye to our long standing home, Bow Valley College, which has hosted FESA since our fledgling days in 1995. We are very grateful to the many people in the numerous departments at the College who have supported and encouraged us in so many ways over the years as we cut our teeth. We also wish them every success as they endure a major renovation which will support their ever expanding and exciting mandate.

On the bright side, we now inhabit three times the space, with furniture donated by Shell, and funds from our Anonymous Donor to support our technological needs and the transition period that FESA is grappling with. In fact, on page 8 you will find a list of the many generous donors who have assisted us through direct and/or in-kind gifts as we tiptoe through the quagmire that moving presents.

As you browse through our issue, enjoy stories of successful LAPS programs operating in Northern Manitoba and Ontario as well as exciting initiatives like Calgary's Parties with a Purpose and the Literacy Specialist work in Alberta. Smile as you read about our Bookmark project. Oh, and check out our award winning Board Member, facilitator, PACT Program, and student.

### Inside this issue:

Message from the Co-Executive Directors	1
P.A.C.T. Celebration	2
Circles of Learning	4
LAPS in Review Issue II	3-6
Party with a Purpose!	7
Milestones & Memories	8

We have so much to celebrate and are grateful to so many people who encourage us in a myriad of ways as we work with multi-barriered families to add to their language and literacy skills. Send us a note and let us know what is going on in family literacy in your area! Enjoy a relaxing and serendipitous summer.

Laureen MacKenzie & Elaine Cairns  
Co-Executive Directors

### Meet the Staff!



Eris & Laura

Welcome and best wishes to Laura Golebiowski, who is majoring in Communication Studies at the University of Calgary, and has joined the FESA team for her first work-term with the Co-operative Education Program. She is very excited to be working with the organization.

Eris started working with FESA last summer also for her Co-operative Education Program at the University of Calgary. She now continues to work part-time and is enjoying it very much! We have valued her energy, enthusiasm, and commitment this year.

\* Toutes nos excuses à nos amis Francophones, mais le manque de subvention ne nous permet pas de traduire ce bulletin.



## ***P.A.C.T. Celebration***



On Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. Calgary's Child Magazine 2008 Parents' Choice Awards were held in the Safari Lodge at the Calgary Zoo, and the PACT program was the proud recipient of "WINNER" in two categories:

### ***FESA Values its Generous Donors***

- Alexina Giovannetti
- Brenda Henley
- Catherine Goulet
- Christine Sparrow
- Claudia McClelland
- Don & Marcia Bobyn
- Jan Eden
- Jim Montgomery
- Joanne Good
- Joanne Lapins
- Joelle Iwanic
- Karen Hollas
- Kathryn Kelly
- Lori-Lynn Gulstene
- Louise Cairns
- Maria Hodge
- Martin Molyneaux
- Mike Harris
- Nancy Hetherington Peirce
- Sharon Parker
- Susanne Bracken
- Trisha Mackay
- Valerie Ritter

1. Best Playgroup  
*Best Parent Support Group*  
*PACT (Parents and Children Together) is a unique, family oriented health promotion program that offers education and support to stay at home parents of pre-school children birth to five years. Each week half the parents meet in a discussion group with a qualified Parent Educator discussing a variety of*

*topics dealing with the challenges and delights of living with pre-school children. The rest of the parents observe their preschoolers at play in a child-directed play program, supervised by a qualified children's play coordinator (CPC). See [www.pact.9f.com](http://www.pact.9f.com) for more information*

The Parents' Choice Awards symbolize a commitment to families in our community.

Now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, these awards recognize quality family retailers and services that provide support, service and fun for families in our community. Providing and nurturing the strong family network within Calgary and area is what Calgary's Child is all about.

At present we have approximately one hundred families per session registered but the votes of previous parents have obviously contributed to this award.

Special thanks go out to FESA for their support, encouragement and belief in the value of the program. Thanks are also extended to all the loyal PACT staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication, and to all the Churches who so generously provide space for us each week. Special thanks to Advent Lutheran Church for their recent donation of \$1000.00 to the program.

*Celia Osenton, P.A.C.T.*

### ***Alberta's Community Spirit & United Way***

In late April, Premier Ed Stelmach and Community Spirit Minister Lindsay Blackett announced that \$100 million would be dedicated to the Community Spirit Program. This program will spend \$80 million each year on tax credits on donations for Alberta charities that exceed \$200. \$20 million each year will be given to Alberta charities as matching grants of up to \$25,000 to their own generated donations.

Meanwhile, through the Donor Choice Program of the United Way of Calgary and Area, donors can request that their gifts be sent to designated charities across Canada or to a particular area that they wish to support. We would like to thank our Board President Ida Stanley-Tober for making a contribution through this program.

#### **How you can help**

It takes time, money and dedication in order to provide programs that help those parents most in need..

If you would like to find out more about our programs or how you can help support our work, please call

**(403) 250-5034**

If you would like to donate, simply send a cheque made out to:

**The Further Education Society**

**Bay 52, 3033—34th Ave**

**NE Calgary, AB, T1Y 6X2**

We will be happy to issue a tax receipt.

## ***Tips & Program Progress***

### ***Tried & True Tips for Facilitators***

Do you have a group of parents and children needing to hear more positives from each other? Try giving parents and the children plasticine or playdough. Ask the children to create something showing what mom or dad are “good at”, and ask the parents to create something showing what their child is “good at”. Remind everyone not to tell anything about what they’ve created! Explain that some people may enjoy making a small sculpture, for example a pair of hiking boots, while others would prefer to make a letter of the alphabet, for example, an “h” for “hiking”.

Then, the parents try to guess what the children have represented, and the children try to guess what the parents have represented. After some guessing, everyone confirms or reveals what they are trying to show the other is “good at”. Parents and children will be very pleased and flattered to hear what the other has to say. The group will have fun sharing all the guessing and hearing what all the sculptures mean. This is a real bonding exercise and self-esteem builder for both parents and children. It helps them see that they do some things very well in the eyes of the other, and helps them learn habits of positive communication.

Sue Phillips

#### **Inside this issue:**

Ontario Native Literacy Coalition	1
Mentoring on the Island	2
Circles of Learning	4
From a Trainer’s Perspective	5
Tried & True Tips	7

### ***TELUS and Baby Power***



Our Books for Babies/JumpStart program has received a tremendous boost from TELUS this past month. Thanks to their generous donation, we will be able to continue offering this popular program to new parents through 2008 and into 2009.



### ***FESA Brings Family Literacy to the Workplace***

The Office for Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES) has approved FESA’s proposal to embed family literacy into the workplace, building on the LAPS program, to explore this integration. Our recent LAPS work with Wal-Mart has demonstrated the importance of bringing such initiatives to low literate workers. This two year project will involve work in Alberta and British Columbia, and we believe that we will develop a model which can be replicated and/or adapted for many different work settings across Canada. Imagine how such an initiative might attract reluctant and eager learners alike back to learning! We are grateful for this opportunity and will bring you updates from time to time!!!

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Issue II

## ***Circles of Learning***

The Ontario Native Literacy Coalition (ONLC) welcomes this opportunity to share information about its new program:

### **Completing the Circle: Teaching our First Teachers *Literacy and Learning for Aboriginal Families***

The Ontario Native Literacy Coalition is a provincially funded umbrella organization that supports the work of 26 Native Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs located across Ontario and speaks to the specific concerns related to Aboriginal Literacy in this province.

For the past year ONLC has been working on a new family literacy program, based on the A-LAPS model developed by the Further Education Society of Alberta. Our intent was to create a culturally relevant family literacy package for use in Ontario with the Ojibwe, Cree, Oji-Cree and Mohawk people we serve but that also had the flexibility to be adapted to other groups. ONLC would like to thank Laureen MacKenzie and Elaine Cairns for providing permission to adapt the original A-LAPS product and for their support and interest during the development of our program.

Since early last spring, ONLC has been working with a volunteer advisory group made up of experienced literacy practitioners from the Native stream, a representative of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, and a local Ojibwe Elder. With their guidance ONLC produced **Completing the Circle**, a

program that provides emphasis on traditional and cultural values, including a Medicine Wheel teaching in each unit of instruction, new graphics created by an Aboriginal artist and many new and amended activities for parents.

Another significant and exciting addition to our program is a strong emphasis on the essential skills. Each unit of instruction has a series of optional essential skills activities supported by a strong information/background section for facilitators which explains how essential skills training fits into all aspects of family literacy instruction and, indeed, family life. All the activities in the **Completing the Circle** program have been articulated to the five (5) literacy levels used in Ontario as well as to the more universal IALS and essential skills levels, which adds another dimension of usability and accountability to the program.

Recently the final draft version of **Completing the Circle** was piloted by Native LBS programs in Fort Frances, Windsor and Fort Erie as well as a Friendship Centre in Sudbury and the Kettle and Stoney Point Public Library. The survey results were very positive and once a few small changes are made, based on evaluation comments, it will be ready for printing. ONLC hopes to have copies available by late April or early May. Requests for more information and/or enquiries about this resource can be directed to ONLC at [onlcadm@bellnet.ca](mailto:onlcadm@bellnet.ca).

*Marnie McIntosh, Ontario Native Literacy Coalition*

### ***Northern Manitoba's Learning Circle***

Has it ever been exciting to be working with the people of Pelican Rapids and Sapotaweyak!! Parkland Regional Health Authority along with Further Education Society of Alberta have worked together to have a Song and Rhyme group up there. Grandfathers, Grandmothers, Aunties, Uncles, Brothers, Sisters, Fathers and Mothers and Children all come out to join in on the Song and Rhyme Group. As we gather in the community center we have a circle of mats set around some blankets. On our blankets we have books for the people to read and the little children to enjoy until we start. As we begin the songs and rhymes we can see closeness within the circle. The laughter and the talking between the songs and rhymes is music to my ears. When we are about to close our circle we read a story, ask every one to join us for a snack, and then we start giving out the door prizes. Every time we head up for the group, we are filled with



excitement knowing that we have such a great time with all of the people who come to share. They all love their little ones and celebrate the chance to work with them to show their love and interest in guiding their education. I feel a great privilege to be part of the learning circle. Thank you. *More pictures on the next page >>*

*Charlotte Healy, ALAPS Facilitator & Trainer*

## ***From a Trainer's Perspective***

This past year, it has been my pleasant task to offer several LAPS and A-LAPS training events in British Columbia, particularly on Vancouver Island where I live. Brenda Olinek and I prepare together and then facilitate the content of the training. Lately, we have traveled to meet with groups in the Port Hardy / Port McNeill area, the Comox Valley / Campbell River area, with additional participation from smaller mainland communities like Bella Coola and from Northern Gulf Islands. Incidentally, our last training was sponsored by Success By 6, through Aboriginal-specific designated funds.

In my role as Regional Literacy Coordinator, I travel to many of these areas to provide support for a variety of literacy programs and initiatives. Following any LAPS / A-LAPS training, I like to follow up with newly-trained facilitators to see if they are using the skills and materials they acquired during the training. Back in their home communities, some will have met with unexpected challenges in getting started. A follow-up phone call gives us a chance to talk about different approaches or ways to partner with other agencies and institutions to offer the program to parents.

For instance, LAPS and A-LAPS programs are being offered in several elementary schools to parents of children in Kindergarten and to parents of children aged

3 to 5 years old. Families who plan to enroll their children in local schools in coming years, are accessible through the Ready, Set, Learn program here. Also, many parents who attend a Mother Goose program (in a school or other centre) are keen to take another program, like LAPS.

The Aboriginal Head Start Family Coordinator is hoping to have A-LAPS as one of their regular programs. Last November, all the service providers at AHS in Courtenay attended the A-LAPS facilitator training, as they wanted to know as much as those who were actually going to facilitate the program. Great enthusiasm!

Another agency that offers LAPS to parents is the Comox Military Family Resource Centre. This centre provides services to families attached to the Canadian Forces Base here. The Coordinator and LAPS Facilitator says that parents love LAPS. They appreciate having a boost in their parenting skills and the support of a caring group, as many of them are single-parenting for long stretches of time – when their spouses are deployed to far-away places.

*Judy Brooks, ALAPS/LAPS Trainer*

### ***Mentoring***

When it is possible, new facilitators really appreciate having a mentor to guide them through their first sessions. Over-the-phone planned prep time is effective and, better still, co-facilitating for one or more sessions. Another valuable experience is getting facilitators together for an 'in-service' event, or when that's not an option, a telephone conference serves the same purpose. Facilitators can talk about aspects of delivering the sessions, program "marketing", recruitment of participants, and everything in between. Often, a little post-training support goes a long way in rekindling the enthusiasm everyone felt during the training.

*Judy Brooks, ALAPS/LAPS Trainer*



*More pictures from the Northern Manitoba Learning Circle.*

## ***LAPS in the Community***

### ***Kids Share Their Love of Reading!***

HIPkids is a flexible volunteer opportunity for children, youth and families to help worthwhile causes each month. In January of 2008, the agency promoted was The Further Education Society and the project was “Design a Bookmark!”

HIPkids were asked to make a bookmark and decorate it and collect new or gently used books to give to the Further Education Society who in turn will give the books to children in their programs who want to learn to read.

The involvement was amazing! There were 26 groups who participated and donated over 2,000 books and book marks. These donations were collected by HIP staff and delivered to the agency. The generosity of the HIPkids enabled the staff at the Further Education Society to be able to issue books to EVERY program participant and still have leftovers!

*Janica, Humanity in Practice (HIP)*



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Issue II

### ***FESA’s Literacy Specialist Work***

What is a Literacy Specialist? A Literacy Specialist is an agent of change, a community developer and animator, a carrier of the “importance of literacy” message. FESA is pleased to encourage Literacy Specialist work in the community by engaging Jane Clarke and Elaine Cairns, certified Literacy Specialists, to deliver workshops in Literacy Awareness, Plain Language and Family Literacy Awareness. Over the last few months, workshops have been delivered to interested community groups who want to become more literacy-friendly. Jayne and Elaine delivered workshops at the Calgary Learning Centre, the National Association of Speech Language Pathologists & Audiologists conference in Kananaskis, and at the Alberta Association of Registered Social Workers conference in Edmonton.

Jayne and Elaine say what is truly inspiring about their work is the “light-bulb” moments they see in their workshops. Participants are often surprised to realize that many of their clients have literacy challenges and are pleased to learn strategies that will assist them to work with these clients. FESA is proud to support this work and also thanks Literacy Alberta for partnering on this initiative.

## *Party with a Purpose!*

Recently, we have had moms contact us asking what they can do for birthday parties that are a little more selfless. Most of us are fortunate and the need for more gifts is secondary to wanting to teach our children about true giving; the seeds of philanthropy are becoming important to sow. Thus, Party with a Purpose!

Planning a birthday party or a gathering of friends? Make your next get together a *party with a purpose!*

Humanity In Practice (HIP) offers party ideas that are fun, easy ways to help some worthwhile causes. Your guests will enjoy being a part of a group that is having fun while helping others.

There are 5 different agencies that you can choose to support. Each agency has a simple donation request that your guests can bring to your party in lieu of a birthday present or hostess gift.

1

### Pillow Party

The YWCA gives to each new resident a new pillow and pillow case to own as they enter the shelter.

**Party Project:** Ask each guest to bring 1 standard size pillow and a pillow case. Have each guest decorate the pillow case using fabric paints, stencils or embroidery. Stuff a pillow into the case and wrap a bow around each. If you like you can include a card or journal and pen with it. (Gift cards for pillows are welcomed too as it saves on storage space!)

2

### Animal House

The Calgary Humane Society is home to over 1,000 lost or abandoned animals each year. Help them feel at home with a donated toy.

**Party Project:** Ask each guest to bring a present for an animal living at the shelter in lieu of a birthday gift. It could be a toy, or a can of food or a pet blanket.

4

### Party For Baby

The Louise Dean Centre is an alternative program of the Calgary Board of Education which offers academic learning, health support and counseling for high school graduation to pregnant and parenting teens.

**Party Project:** Bring diapers, formula, a new toy, blanket or diapers in lieu of a gift. You can tailor your party to bring a gift from a particular room of the house (like a bathroom, choose a towel or soap or rubber duck).

3

### Survivor Winter!

The Alex Community Health Bus is Calgary's only mobile nursing and instrumental support facility. Last year the bus provided approximately 8,800 client services to low-income individuals!

**Party Project:** Have each guest bring a winter accessory like mittens, scarf or hat in lieu of a gift. (This is a great idea for a knitting group to do too!). You can add accessories or fabric paint to decorate the items.

5

### Bookworm

The Further Education Society's goal is to pave the way life long learning opportunities for every person in Canada. These books will be given to an adult learning to read to their young child.

**Party Project:** Bring books, book marks, Chapter gift certificates in lieu of a gift.



E-mail Humanity In Practice at [hip@shaw.ca](mailto:hip@shaw.ca) with the theme you wish for your party and they supply you with ideas and an invitation (to print and copy) which tells your guests what they can bring and how this will help others living in our community.

Janica, Humanity in Practice (HIP)

## *Milestones & Memories*

**April**

### **Celebrating Lifelong Learning!**

Congratulations to our award winners, Rowshon ana Sheuly, Carol McCullough and Brenda Henley. Rowshon, a FESA facilitator won Calgary Learn's Life of Learning Award (LOLA) in the learner category for her great personal growth from learner to facilitator and awesome dedication to the community. Carol McCullough, a longstanding and valued FESA Board Member, won the Literacy Alberta Award of Excellence in the practitioner category for her many contributions to the field. Brenda Henley, another FESA facilitator, working with the PACT Program, won the Calgary Learn's Life of Learning Award in the instructor/facilitator category for her passionate and enthusiastic work as a parent educator. We are all inspired by your indomitable spirits and commitment to lifelong learning! Well done ladies!



*Rowshon ana Sheuly*

**April-May**

### **Office Move ~ A Community of Generous Spirits**



*Boxes, boxes, and more boxes!*

FESA recently left its long-time home at Bow Valley College for our new office space. We discovered generosity on a whole new level as we faced the challenges that a major move entails. So many community organizations/businesses assisted us with donations, large and small, which allowed us to continue our work throughout the chaotic weeks. Thank you to the following:

The Administration, Duplicating, IT and Shipping departments of Bow Valley College • Cole International Inc. • Jano Lehocky, Jessica Morden and Paige Phillips of Shell Canada • Kevin, the Department Manager of Home Depot • Todd Matusik of Office Repairs Plus • Emily Rude of Vibrant Communities • Dean & Klara of Sign-A-Rama • Holly of RAM Carpet Cleaning • David Leung of David Locksmith • I.T. Canada International • Campbell Business Services • 4 Star Computers • Kevin, Sue and Paige Philips, Elaine & Dick Cairns, Pat Hawkins, John and Laureen MacKenzie, and our board members Jane Stothers and Ida Stanley-Tober

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter—please contact us at (403) 250-5034 or [elam@furthered.ca](mailto:elam@furthered.ca)

### **FESA News & Views**

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Further Education Society

[www.nald.ca/fesa](http://www.nald.ca/fesa), [www.nald.ca/laps](http://www.nald.ca/laps)

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We welcome contributions of interest to LAPS Trainers and facilitators in addition to other practitioners within the family literacy community.

Contributions may be sent directly to the LAPS main office via e-mail c/o [ecairns@furthered.ca](mailto:ecairns@furthered.ca), or faxed to (403) 250-5029.