



Annual Report: 2016 – 2017

Fostering Literacy

Decoda

LITERACY SOLUTIONS

Decoda Literacy Solutions is BC's provincial literacy organization. We provide resources, training, funds and support for community-based literacy programs and initiatives in over 400 communities across BC.

Mission: We work to increase the literacy and learning skills of children and families, youth, adults and seniors to improve their quality of life at home, at work and in the community.

Vision: A British Columbia where everyone has the literacy skills they need.



Family Literacy Week 2017's theme was 'Tuning Into Music'



The Decoda Literacy Library is free for anyone in BC to borrow!



Message from the Board Chair and the Executive Director

Partnerships are key to the work of Decoda Literacy Solutions. During 2016-17, we continued to build on important relationships, as well as begin working with new supporters of literacy in BC.

Our partnerships with the BC Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training enable us to sustain BC's community literacy network and provide professional development and support to Community Adult Literacy Program (CALP) providers throughout our province. With the support of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) we have been able to offer our popular Immigrant Parents as Literacy Supporters (IPALS) program in more sites and serve greater numbers of newcomer parents and children. Our new relationships with BRIT Insurance and the MariaMarina Foundation enabled us to begin our three-year 'Fostering Literacy' pilot project, to support children who struggle with reading in the early elementary school years.

As Decoda was successfully sustaining and growing programs and support for literacy in BC, the Board and Executive Director were taking action to be a more efficient organization. We moved from spacious to 'cozy' new office space and hired a part-time Executive Director to reduce administrative costs. The Board and Executive Director are grateful for the way staff have worked together to successfully make these changes, all the while keeping the support for community literacy outreach, literacy programs, and awareness at the forefront.

We thank and appreciate the many partners and donors that support Decoda's literacy work in BC! We look forward to a bright start to 2018.

Anne Cooper, Board Chair

Jacque Taylor, Executive Director

Our Work

Literacy Outreach Coordination

We support a network of 101 Literacy Outreach Coordinators who work in over 400 BC communities.

In 2016-17, we saw a 19% overall increase in activity throughout the network:

- **1,932** community members worked on community-based literacy action plans
- **12,676** adults engaged in improving their reading, writing, technology and financial skills
- **21,077** adults engaged in their children's learning
- **33,063** children engaged in early literacy learning
- **22,854** school-aged children and youth engaged in improving their reading, writing and financial skills
- **4,226** seniors engaged in improving their reading, writing, technology and financial skills
- **84,615** people participated in literacy related workshops, seminars and events



Lien was interested in taking a baking course, but first had to upgrade her skills. She was pregnant, so a friend suggested she join the Young Parents Education Program (YPEP) in Cranbrook. She phoned the next day and was called for an interview. She was "so happy." When Lien had her second baby, she went back to school five days later. She could take her baby with her as YPEP has daycare for students. In March, Lien graduated from the Professional Cook Training Program at College of the Rockies. She says, "YPEP is the best program, all the staff work very hard to support the students. They are very helpful. I can't say thank you enough for that. I'm so grateful."

Fostering Literacy

We had a successful first year of this three-year pilot project in Abbotsford. Children who struggle with reading received one-to-one tutoring and their families learned strategies to support the children's learning. We are excited to add 13 sites across the province for 2017-18!

I think the most enjoyable part of this program is creating a relationship with the child you tutor. It becomes more than just one hour of reading ... you start to look forward to that part of the day when you see them again. I was prepared to see growth in my learner but I didn't expect to see growth in myself. Meeting with her twice a week grounded me. (grade 11 tutor)



Immigrant Parents as Literacy Supporters (IPALS)

Immigrant Parents as Literacy Supporters (IPALS) is a play-based, bilingual family literacy program. Children develop language and literacy skills in English to help them prepare for school, while their parents practice English in an informal setting.

In 2016-17, 19 program sites in 14 BC school districts provided high quality, culturally responsive programming for 496 newcomers.

Nisreen came to Canada from Syria in January 2016. In Syria, she worked as a kindergarten teacher. This fall, Nisreen spoke at our Literacy is Life event at the Vancouver Public Library. Here is some of what she said:

I came to Canada with my husband and six children as a refugee. I came looking for safety and a better future. I was very worried about a new beginning ... One day I met Sherifa and she invited me to her program, Health and Wellness for Women, at Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House and then I participated with her in the IPALS program.

I want to say something to people ... it is just two words but they helped me a lot. KEEP GOING – because life is worth it. Finally, I want to recommend more IPALS programs to help newcomer families integrate and succeed in Canadian society.

Did you know?

Open digital badges are a new way to show what you know and can do. In 2016-17, 45 community-based literacy programs awarded 333 badges to adult learners through Decoda's Adult Literacy Database.

The Westcoast Reader has been a valued resource for working with adult learners for over 30 years. We are proud to now be the publisher of the Reader.

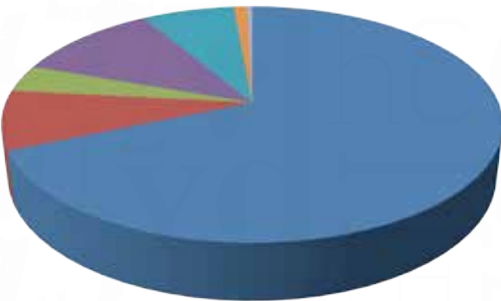
September is Literacy Month in BC! Literacy is Life is a province-wide campaign led by Decoda to raise awareness and funds for literacy. This year's theme was Fostering Literacy.



Financials

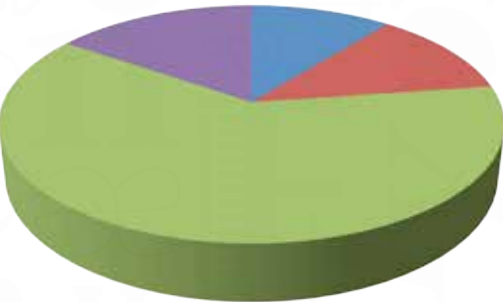
Revenue

Province of British Columbia	\$2,790,000
Federal Government	\$329,176
LIFT Philanthropy Partners' Society	\$150,599
Contribution from others	\$450,075
Program Services	\$289,910
Donations and Fundraising	\$43,470
Interest and other revenue	\$14,731
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	\$4,067,961



Expenses

Adult Program	\$436,020
Family Program	\$484,841
Community Program	\$2,503,739
General Office and Fundraising	\$623,822
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	\$4,048,422



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