



New Free Literacy Resources for Adult Learners

SASKATOON (December 6, 2011) – READ Saskatoon celebrated International Volunteer Day on December 5th with the launch of a series of revised literacy handbooks for literacy volunteers and adult learners. The books, funded by The Saskatoon Community Foundation and The Saskatoon United Way and Area, ensure adult learners have the tools needed to improve their literacy skills.

READ Saskatoon's literacy handbooks "**More Than Words**" and "**More Than Numbers**" encourage tutors and learners to practice a "learner centered approach" to their learning. "These resources provide the conversation that builds the trust between the tutor and the learner" says Carey Rigby-Wilcox, who has received support from READ Saskatoon. "Resources build trust, trust builds confidence, and confidence builds progress."

Executive Director, Sheryl Harrow says, "The ability to use and understand information is fundamental to daily life at work, at home and in the community. A 2003 study found that among Saskatchewan adults aged 16 to 65, approximately 33% struggle with the literacy skill demands of a knowledge society. What few people know is that 80% of the people who rely on READ Saskatoon's free literacy services are employed. In fact, they are underemployed with most of them earning less than \$20,000 per year."

Literacy influences our health and well-being, our sense of personal security, and participation in our community and society. Literacy is a basic skill that every Canadian should possess. Research shows that individuals with high literacy levels are healthier, have better jobs and a higher income, and are more involved in their community.

For over 30 years READ Saskatoon has developed successful strategies to engage trained volunteers in the delivery of free adult and family literacy programs. The organization's business plan for 2012 to 2015 includes plans for READ Saskatoon to double its activities and operations by 2020. Learn more at www.READSaskatoon.com.

About READ Saskatoon:

Recognized as a leader in the literacy community, READ Saskatoon provides quality literacy programs to individuals, families and workplaces. For over thirty years, the organization has provided free literacy programs through a small group of highly-qualified staff and trained dedicated volunteers. Last year:

- 860 adult learners received free literacy support through a literacy program or from a trained volunteer literacy tutor.
- 221 trained volunteers provide over 31,000 hours and \$470,000 of free literacy support to individuals and our community.
- 964 children and 842 parents and/or caregivers participated in free Family Literacy programs.
- 254 staff from schools, preschools, daycares, business and community based organizations received free Family Literacy Training.
- Workplace Literacy and Employee Development Workshops were embraced and delivered at 19 Saskatoon businesses.

For more information, please contact:

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