



**Early Literacy Alliance
of Waterloo Region**

Partnering for early literacy. Ensuring a strong future.

The Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region (ELAWR)

Presentation at Speech Services Niagara 2015 Conference

by Kim Krueger-Kischak and Gabriele Croft, Co-Chairs of ELAWR

Dec 1st, 2015



Why is early literacy important for Waterloo Region?

- Waterloo Region's low literacy levels are higher (24%) than the national average (15%) (Source: Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy in Canada, www.statscan.ca)
- Our children are below Ontario baseline average in social competence, communication and general knowledge as they enter school; 15.7% are seen as vulnerable to learning challenges, which is higher than the provincial average of 13.8%. (Source: Community Fit for Children Report)



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Brief history

- LLL conference in 2007 generated community interest
- Jan 2009 initial meeting of ELAWR - defined Terms of Reference, common language
- Early work – blog, logo, website, early literacy professional learning cafes
- Conference 2010, 2012, 2014; source of some dedicated funding for other assets
- In-kind support of two co-chair positions and member time and resources



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Our goal: To improve literacy skills for all children
(birth to 6) in our community

Our objectives:

- Share
- Promote
- Educate
- Advocate



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Success: Working Together for Early Literacy



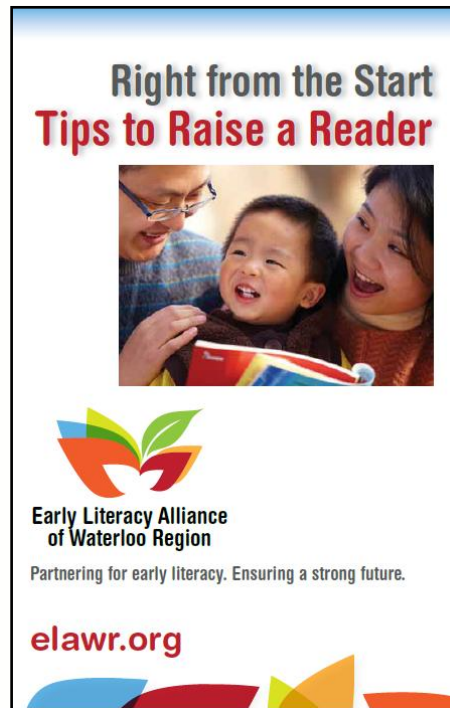
22+ member organizations and community advocates in Waterloo Region



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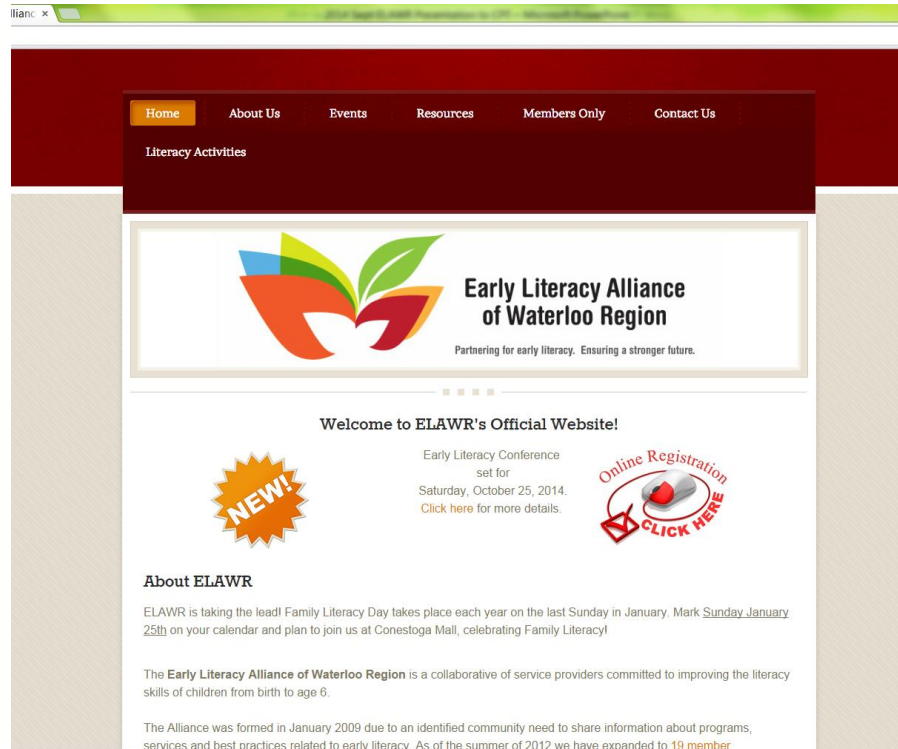
Success: Common Messages



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Success and Challenge: Website and Social Media



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Success: Promoting Literacy at Community Events

- Word on the Street
- Kidspark
- Family Literacy Day



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Success: Professional Learning




Literacy Cafes




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\$80.00 CAD

Saturday,
October 25,
2014



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CONESTOGA
Connect Life and Learning

**Living Literacy
Throughout the Day**

Full Day Early Literacy Conference at Conestoga College
for Professionals Working with Children Birth to Age 6

2014 Conference Brochure and Guide

CONESTOGA COLLEGE
DOON CAMPUS
299 Doon Valley Drive, Kitchener, Ontario
N2G 4M4



Conferences



Success: Lynda Silvester Award for Collaboration from the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation

- Two year funding for:
 - Strategic Planning (complete): whole committee over three sessions and also external key influencers in the community; share mission, vision, values
 - Community and Marketing Strategy (in progress)
 - Advocacy (in progress)



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Success: Strategic Plan

Vision (Our Ideal Future):

Every child achieves their literacy potential. Families know the importance of early literacy, actively participate in their children's literacy development daily and when their children need more support they know how to readily access the help they need. Providers of children's services work well together to deliver exemplary programs and services. Our early literacy movement benefits the community, contributing to life-long success and well-being for all.

Mission (Our Role In Creating Ideal Future):

Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region ignites and drives a sustainable early literacy movement.

Values (What We Hold Dear):

Universal access to early literacy programs and services
Early literacy is integral to life-long success and well-being
Collaboration among children's service providers
We speak with a united voice
Respect for all stakeholders



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New Goals and Key Initiatives

- 1) Create Awareness of the Importance of Early Literacy
- 2) Influence the Influencers
- 3) Provide Professional Resources and Learning Opportunities
- 4) Build Health Care Providers Distribution Channel
- 5) Enhance Organizational Effectiveness



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Work Plans

- 1) Strategic Planning
- 2) Advocacy
- 3) Communications Strategy



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The Early Literacy Alliance of Waterloo Region (ELAWR)

Keep in touch and up to date!

Website: www.elawr.org

Facebook: EarlyLiteracyAllianceOfWaterlooRegion

Twitter: @EarlyLiteracyWR