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The ELSA Net Newsletter is available in PDF format on the ELSA Net website: [www.elsanet.org](http://www.elsanet.org)

Contributions to future editions of the ELSA Net Newsletter are welcomed at [esl@elsanet.org](mailto:esl@elsanet.org)

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## ELSA Net

English Language Services  
for Adults Network

### Our Mission

*ELSA Net empowers its members, throughout the province of British Columbia, to help their clients achieve language and resettlement goals by providing leadership, communication networks, and resources.*

### Our Vision

*Excellence  
in Settlement Language Services.*

Our values reflect our passion for education and support our success.

Excellence  
Diversity  
Unity  
Communication  
Accountability  
Teamwork  
Ethics

## ELSA Net

English Language Services for Adults Network

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## Update from the Ministry

### Immigration and WelcomeBC Branch (IWBC) Update - Fall 2009

- The Immigration and WelcomeBC Branch was announced in early September with Deb Zehr as the new Executive Director. This new Branch sees the amalgamation of the former Immigrant Integration Branch in Vancouver, primarily responsible for the delivery of settlement programming, and the Immigration Policy and Initiatives Branch in Victoria, which oversees the administration of the Agreement for Canada-British Columbia Cooperation on Immigration and relationships with other provincial and federal partners. The Immigration and WelcomeBC Branch will remain under the Labour Market and Immigration Division of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, and Shannon Baskerville will continue as the Assistant Deputy Minister.
  - An ELSA advertising campaign is currently underway across the province. Transit ads will be running across the Greater Vancouver and Greater Victoria regions until December, along with advertisements in targeted community newspapers across the province. In early 2010, advertisements in non-English media and for radio and TV will also be launched.
  - Translated versions of the Newcomers Guide to Resources and Services will be available in four languages in late fall. The Guides will be available in Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, Korean and Punjabi and an order form will be available on the WelcomeBC website at [www.welcomebc.ca](http://www.welcomebc.ca). The Guide will be translated into Arabic, Farsi (Persian), French, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese throughout 2010.
  - The Branch received approval in September to move forward with a refresh of STaRS. The STaRS working group, which includes service providers, will be working closely with the Branch refresh team. The first meeting will be held in late October/early November. User testing will take place with both Branch and service provider end-users. More information about the timeline of the project will be communicated once a contractor has been hired to lead the project.
  - IWBC is currently coordinating a formative evaluation of the enhanced childcare elements of ELSA and Stream 1/3 blended programs. An advisory committee of various providers has been working closely with Branch staff on the development of surveys and evaluation process. The formative evaluation, which focuses on the service planning and delivery process, is expected to be completed in November 2009. This will be followed by an outcome evaluation this winter.
  - A review of Combined 4/5 Labour Market Focused pilots in the regional communities is currently underway. The review will consist of data from reports as well as feedback and observations from service providers. The results of the evaluation will be communicated to service providers in late fall.
  - The IWBC is planning to conduct the biennial client outcomes survey this fall. Timelines are currently being confirmed and will be communicated with ELSA providers to ensure that teachers and students are aware of the survey.
  - A new Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program newsletter will be released in the fall. To find out more about the WICWP program or to subscribe to the newsletter, please visit the service provider page under the WelcomeBC website, and click on "News Stories".
- For more information, please contact Lily Grewal at 604-775-0674 or at [lily.grewal@gov.bc.ca](mailto:lily.grewal@gov.bc.ca).



## Message from the President



*By Dale Hunter,*

*ELSA Net President*

Things are looking good for ELSA Net and the ELSA enterprise these days. We've seen some difficult times and it feels good to be looking at stability, and indeed at growth and expansion. As a result, ELSA Net has taken on new staff in new roles and expanded its scope considerably to further enhance services to members.

In my president's message last spring, I remarked that the energy level, commitment and optimism in ELSA Net were high across the whole organization, and I think that is even truer now. ELSA Net has plenty of projects under its belt and is looking for opportunities to deliver and facilitate training. Our Internet resources are better than ever with Moodle training and online productivity tools in use, and more and more members getting up to speed on online learning - a direction important for our sector.

Our member organizations are now all in a position to access more training resources, thanks to the BC Training Agreement, and I'm confident this will pay off in furthering benchmark implementation and assessment capacity, and further supporting the high quality of instruction and settlement service that we provide. It may take us a while to navigate the logistics of this new Training funding, but I'm confident we will all soon find ourselves able to offer and access significantly more training than in the past.

I regret to say, my new job as Dean of School of Language Studies at VCC makes it impossible for me to do an effective job as President of ELSA Net Board, and I will step down from my position at the end of December. Working with ELSA Net staff, the Board and with members has been a privilege, and it's been a lot of fun - we have plenty of stories to share! I will be happy to be of service as Past President, and give any assistance I can to ELSA Net in the future.

### ELSA Net Staff 2009/2010



Executive Director: Brenda Lohrenz

Instructional Resource Coordinators:

Colleen Rogan and Carmen Larsen

ECE Resource Coordinator: Judy Olivieri

STaRS Consultant: Clara Wong

Office Manager: Vania Ganacheva

Bookkeeper: Marian Ennis

## ELSA Net Update

### Paralympic/Olympic Speakers Event at Collingwood Neighbourhood House

By Carmen Larsen



On November 4<sup>th</sup>, Collingwood Neighbourhood House hosted the Host a City Happening Paralympic/Olympic Speakers Event. For this

event, ELSA Net invited one Paralympic athlete, Andrea Holmes, and one Olympic athlete, Ruky Abdulai, to

come and speak to ELSA students about their experiences as competitive athletes. The evening began with a 'mixer'

which got all of the students from 5 different organizations enthusiastically mingling and asking each other questions about the athletes in preparation for the speeches. After the mixer, representatives from the province and the city welcomed the participants and spoke about their



excitement regarding the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games. Then, the speeches began.

Using videos and slide shows, both women gave moving accounts of their struggles and successes as competitive athletes. Ruky talked about coming to Canada from Ghana and how hard it had been to learn English. Rolling her eyes and smiling, she



described how her teammates at SFU would often pretend to understand what she was saying when they



really had no idea, which made audience members nod and laugh in complete understanding. Andrea showed the prosthetic she uses to compete with, joking that it

looks more like a weapon than a leg, and explained how challenging it had been to learn how to walk, run and eventually compete with it. However, the most inspirational moment of the night was when these two brilliant athletes described how proud they felt of representing Canada at the Paralympic and Olympic games, winning their medals, and achieving their dreams. The audience applauded loudly when Andrea showed the bronze medal she won at the Pan American Games, and the torch she ran with during the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Torch Relay. And they were stunned when Ruky and a volunteer



held either ends of a piece of ribbon to illustrate the unbelievable 6.72 metre distance she jumped in 2008. After the speeches, students had the opportunity to talk to the athletes, and get pictures and autographs. Also, Lindsay Stewart from 2010 Legacies Now was on hand to give students information about volunteer

opportunities at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. It was a great way to celebrate the coming Olympic and Paralympic Games in Vancouver.





## ELSA Net Update

### ELSA Net is in the classroom with Emergency Health Services Workshops

By Colleen Rogan



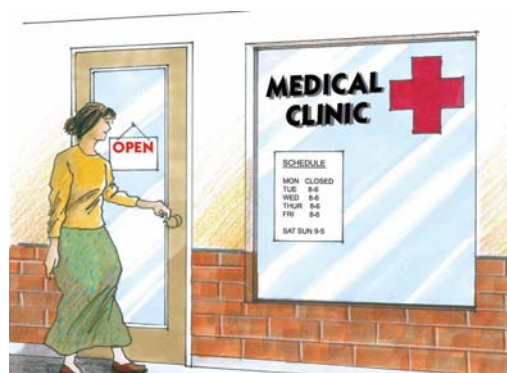
ELSA students are learning about how to access health services as 3 consultants travel to 90 classrooms around the province. Workshops cover the topics of calling 9-1-1, visiting a walk in clinic, calling 8-1-1 and calling BC Poison Control. Workshops feature a series of interactive activities including listening to authentic dialogues, role playing and using the internet. Professional graphics and realia bring the workshops to life. Students and teachers alike have been giving the workshop rave reviews.

Here is what some of you have to say:

*Class was interesting. I like the teacher. I like many things new. (ELSA Student)*

*I like the visuals and the listening. (ELSA Student)*

*....very absorbing and super effective, students loved and enjoyed the class and they found the content very relevant to their needs. (ELSA Teacher)*



Keep an eye on [www.elsanet.org](http://www.elsanet.org) early next year when the workshop materials will be posted for teachers around the province to use!

### ELSA Youth Curriculum

In the works is a dynamic curriculum that focuses on the needs and interests of youth ages 17-24.

### More sharing sessions

Look forward to more sharing sessions this fall! Our first instructor session will be for literacy instructors on Friday, December 11th. SUCCESS Surrey will be our host venue.

### October 13th Resource Fair

ELSA Net hosted a Resource Fair in the Alice Mackay room at the Vancouver Public Library downtown. Twenty-two publisher and nonprofit organizations attended and instructors came to explore new resources and services, meet new people and some even went home with raffle prizes.

## ELSA Net Update

### Accessing Community Health Services Videos and classroom resource materials

By Colleen Rogan



ELSA Net is excited to introduce two new videos for the ELSA classrooms. These 3-5 minute videos follow a small family through an emergency situation and a visit to the walk in clinic. Professionals from EComm, BC Ambulance, AMSSA, Healthlink BC, BC Poison Control and Vancouver Coastal Health provided us with authentic dialogues, resources and accurate medical information making these videos an invaluable made in BC resource. Videos were distributed to all ELSA schools in BC this fall. Teaching materials to accompany the videos can be found on the Teacher's Resource page at <http://www.elsanet.org/>

#### Calling 9-1-1 ELSA level 1

Emily's dad collapses when returning to the car after shopping. A stranger comes to help Emily by calling 9-1-1. This video uses authentic dialogue from BC Ambulance!



#### Visiting a Walk in Clinic ELSA level 2

Victor is having troubles with blurred vision, weight loss and feeling tired, but he doesn't have a family doctor. His daughter, Emily, takes him to a walk in clinic.

ELSA Net would like to thank our project funders:

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development -  
Immigration and WelcomeBC Branch,  
AMSSA and The City of Vancouver.



## Feature Article

### ESL and Special Needs: A Few Words from the Valley

By Paula Mannington,



In the fall of 2008, Abbotsford Community Services began piloting an *Information, Support and English Language Services for Multi-Barriered Adults (Stream 1/3 blended)* program for Sudanese families. Funded by the BC Settlement and Adaptation Program (BCSAP), our pilot aims to enhance settlement services and English language training for refugee families facing multiple barriers (e.g. housing; transportation; food; health; parenting; education;

economics; navigating the community) to integration into our community.

The language, literacy & settlement issues for this group are complex. The adults, particularly women, have had limited education in their first language and some are learning to read & write for the first time. They come from a high-oracy culture and struggle to develop strategies to deal with our print-rich Canadian culture.

For example, supporting the educational needs of children in a highly literate, bureaucratic society becomes even more challenging for parents with older children who also have little or no prior school experience or children who have been diagnosed with physical or developmental disabilities. Undiagnosed learning disabilities and mental health issues complicate matters for both adults and children as there is no single professional who can answer questions concerning identification, assessment or appropriate instructional provisions.

The format of our language instruction has included a mix of classroom instruction, home visits, and guided community contact assignments. Transfer of knowledge requires experiential learning and highly contextualized instruction.

(continue on page 9)



## Feature Article

Our method of language training has combined elements of: Participatory; Whole-Part-Whole; Explicit Strategy Instruction; and Competency-Based Methods. Regular feedback from an outreach worker helps shape curriculum development and allows for a more meaningful, personally relevant, family-centred program.

We believe the project is finding ways to instill a sense of belonging and self-esteem, and consequently the chance to improve language skills, settlement knowledge, and community connections. As we strive to better meet the needs of and to advocate for our ESL literacy learners and their families, we look forward to increasing collaboration with the broader community and embarking on new partnerships for the 2009-2010 program year.

### Contact:

Paula Mannington,  
Abbotsford Community  
Services  
[pmannington@shaw.ca](mailto:pmannington@shaw.ca)

## Vicarious Trauma

Adapted from *AMSSA - Cultures West* Vol 27, No. 1: Spring 2009 by Liz Choquette

Liz Choquette describes vicarious trauma as the change we undergo when repeatedly exposed to others' traumatic experiences. As a result an empathic instructor, childcare worker or support staff may begin to view the world and experience people differently. It is important to notice the signs of vicarious trauma and take steps to keep ourselves healthy.

In her article *Vicarious Trauma - The Secret Shame of Caring*, Liz outlines the following "preoccupations" that workers may feel as a result of vicarious trauma:

- We may have no time or energy for ourselves
- We feel disconnected from our friends and family
- We wish to withdraw socially
- We become cynical, pessimistic, and feel hopeless
- We have nightmares or intrusive images regarding clients' experiences
- We begin to see the world as unsafe or "bad"
- We become numb and have difficulties with our emotions
- We feel helpless and inadequate

Because we can be affected by the work that we do, self care is an important part of our lives. Liz recommends three important ways to address vicarious trauma:

1. **Awareness** - we must be aware of ourselves physically and emotionally and take steps to managing our health
2. **Balance** - try not to become absorbed in our work. Live a balanced life! Remember to play and relax
3. **Connecting** - Communicate and connect with others to avoid feelings of isolation

By taking care of ourselves, we are better able to help others. Liz leaves us with these words to live by:

Live-Cry-Jump-Play-Learn-Yell-Meditate-Create-Travel-Protest-Read-Garden-Exercise-Eat Pray-Teach-Write-Touch-Look-Listen-Talk-Sing-Stop-Breathe



## Resources

### Learning Disabilities Checklist

*Learning Disability is the term currently used to describe a handicap that interferes with someone's ability to store, process or produce information. Learning disabilities create a gap between a person's true capacity and his day-to-day production and performance. (Levine, 1984)*

A checklist was designed for Bow Valley College's ESL Literacy programs. It aims to help instructors determine whether or not an ESL literacy learner might have a learning disability that interferes with his or her learning. Although many of the patterns could also apply to English speakers, this list has been designed specifically for English as a



Second Language literacy learners. It is not designed to professionally diagnose students. If you begin to notice inconsistencies in the learning patterns of your student and you suspect that it is more than just a language-learning problem, refer to the checklist. Mark off behaviors that the learner exhibits consistently and monitor this behavior over a period of time. Watch for patterns in where the learner seems to have difficulty.

For a copy of the Bow Valley Learning Disabilities Checklist go to [www.elsanet.org](http://www.elsanet.org)

### All Stressed Up? - Know where to go - Workshop Opportunity

by Marianna Paulson

Could stress be impacting your ability to effectively address your needs and those of your students? When the cause of stress is addressed, as opposed to the symptoms, improvements are made in communication, problem-solving, decision-making, creativity and health.

Ever have a near-miss while driving? Your colour changes, pulse rate and breathing increases - this is a very real and immediate response to stress. However, we are often unaware that our body is constantly responding and making subtle adjustments to what we see, hear, smell, and think. The physiological and chemical changes that take place create side-effects which are either positive or negative - life-enhancing or life-depreciating.

Learning how to transform your stress requires knowledge, awareness and application. In order to make changes, we need to become aware of how our thoughts and feelings are impacting our emotional, mental and physical health and have the knowledge of how to change and the practise at implementing those changes.

Attendees will be taken through several exercises that will either confirm what they already know or will cause them to reconsider how they are doing things and whether there is a way in which to make heart-driven improvements.

Contact:  
Marianna Paulson, B.Ed., B.P.E. -O.R.  
Licensed Stress Coach  
[www.auntiestress.ca](http://www.auntiestress.ca)  
[info@auntiestress.ca](mailto:info@auntiestress.ca)  
604.507.9970  
Skype: AuntieStress

For more information go to [www.elsanet.org](http://www.elsanet.org)

## Resources

### New Workshops and groups:

#### Mandarin Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program

From Oct 15 to Nov 19,  
6 Thursday mornings  
From 9:30-11:30am  
Child minding is provided



#### Chinese Women Group FUN FUN ESL, conversation for beginners

Reopens in September, every  
Thursday from 12:30-2pm  
Child minding is provided

#### Rainbow Series: Children Mental Wellness

Cantonese and Mandarin workshops  
From Sept 17, 2009 to March 18, 2010  
One Thursday afternoon from 12:30-2pm  
Child minding is provided

#### For information and registration contact:

Sharon Kwok  
Settlement and Family Worker  
Kiwassa Neighbourhood House  
604-254-5401, 222  
2425 Oxford Street, near Hastings/  
Nanaimo St., Vancouver, BC, V5K 1M7  
Fax: 604-254-7673  
email: sharonk@kiwassa.bc.ca

## Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program at VCC

The program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Adults (DHH) at the Broadway Campus of Vancouver Community College may be an option for ELSA students who have hearing loss, and who are consequently unable to progress in their classes.

DHH offers deaf and hard of hearing students the opportunity to learn English in small (maximum of 8 students per class) classes that are set up for deaf and hard of hearing students needs. The desks all face each other so they can see the other students when they speak or sign. The classrooms have the latest assistive listening devices (FM sound fields as well as FM's set to the student's individual needs).

The pace of the DHH classes takes into account the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. For example students with a hearing loss find it difficult to take notes and watch the instructor at the same time, the DHH instructors pause while teaching to allow students to write without missing information.

DHH lessons include materials relevant to students who are deaf and hard of hearing. These materials include life stories of everyday and prominent or accomplished people who also have a hearing loss, the latest technologies, and services available, including some settlement information.

DHH also offers students the opportunity to develop social groups and network with other students who share the same experiences - frustrations and accomplishments.

DHH is a tuition free program, students pay a small student union fee (about \$35.00 for part time and \$70.00 for full time).

DHH welcomes any opportunity to assist students with a hearing loss. Please feel free to have students or instructors contact us for more information.

#### Shannon Hougham

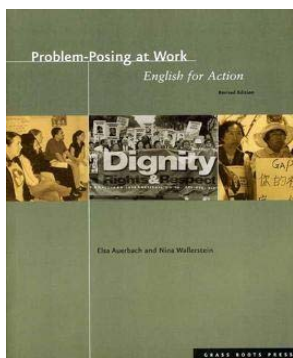
Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Adults  
Vancouver Community College  
1155 East Broadway, Vancouver BC V6K 1S1  
604-871-7342 , shougham@vcc.ca



## Resources

### Book Review

by Carmen Larsen

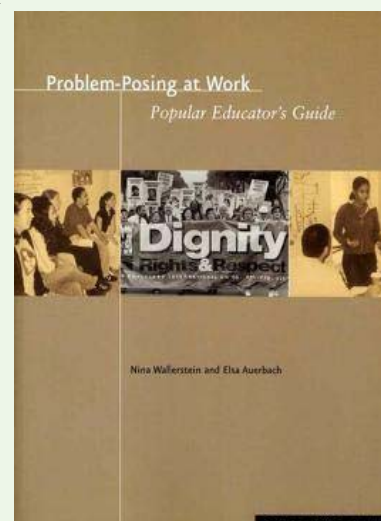


#### *Problem-Posing at Work: English for Action*

by Elsa Auerbach and Nina Wallerstein is a thought provoking adult ESL student book containing 30 lessons which are designed to deal with some of the workplace issues experienced by newcomers to North America. This book is based on Elsa Auerbach's original book titled *ESL for Action*. It uses the problem-posing approach of Paulo Freire to encourage learners to analyze their own experiences in order to build the language, communicative skills and knowledge needed to obtain a healthy working situation. This book includes authentic stories about workers' experiences in their new communities, some of the difficulties they have faced, as well as the ways they

have improved their circumstances. Each lesson gives learners an opportunity to learn about, describe and discuss a different workplace situation, while reflecting on and sharing their own work experiences. The lessons include information about topics such as workers' rights, workplace health and safety, and the effects of globalization. Each chapter also includes contextualized grammar lessons and opportunities for learners to learn about and practice different reading strategies and listening strategies. Furthermore, this intermediate to advanced book contains not only American content, but also information about Canada workplaces. Because this book looks at workplace related issues through a social justice lens, some of the topics are controversial and instructors may feel the need to modify the lessons slightly. However, the problem-posing method used in this book offers instructors a way to really bring the experiences of the learners into the classroom.

*Problem-Posing at Work: Popular Educator's Guide* gives a clear explanation of the theory of 'problem-posing' as described by Paulo Freire and of the rationale for using 'problem-posing' in adult ESL classes. It also outlines strategies and tools which may help instructors apply the problem-posing approach effectively in their own classroom. It is a very useful resource for instructor new to problem-posing or instructors who are looking for more information about this style of teaching.

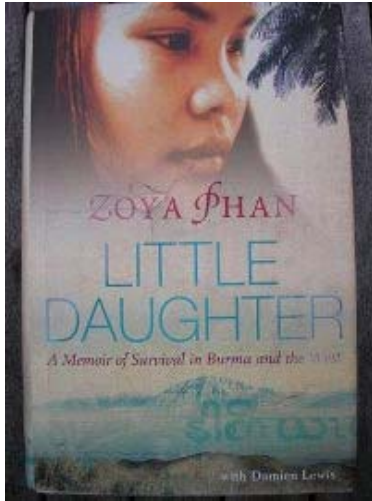




## Resources

### Little Daughter

by Annemieke Vrijmoed, *New Directions, Langley*



*A Memoir of Survival in Burma and the West*  
By ZOYA PHAN  
with Damien Lewis  
Viking Canada,  
335 pages (\$32)

A must read for anyone who is working with Karen refugees

or any other ethnic refugee group. The book is a story of survival of Zoya, a Karen, who lived in the jungles of Burma with her parents, sister and brothers. At the

age of fourteen Zoya and her family had to flee the attacks of the Burmese army. For 2 years Zoya joined thousands of refugees hiding in the jungle. Her family scattered, Zoya sought sanctuary across the border in a Thai refugee camp. Eventually she was able to escape, first to Bangkok and then in 2004 to the UK, where she claimed asylum. She now lives in London and works for the human rights organization Burma Campaign, UK.

Although a little slow in the beginning, the story becomes much more interesting as Zoya enters her teenage years. It gives an excellent insight of the plight of the Karen people: the ethnic cleansing by the Burmese army, the relentless attacks and the urge to survive. I can highly recommend this coming-of-age story!

## YMCA Community Services

### YMCA Banking seminars

CIBC and the YMCA have partnered to offer free Banking and Financial seminars to newcomers in Vancouver. We are excited to assist newcomers make an easier transition to understanding financial options and opportunities available to them here in Canada. If you have any participant groups or individuals who want to attend, please have them contact us.

### Banking in Canada

Designed to help you make informed decisions on building a credit history, saving and investing in Canada.

### Teaching Your Children About Money

Providing parents with helpful tips to teach their children the value of money and how to save for their children's education.

### Starting Your Own Business

Discover how knowing your goal, strategy and developing a smart business plan will help your business succeed in Canada.

We welcome you to share this email or the posters with contacts, key people in your organization, or sharing a place on your posting board.

For more information go to [www.elsanet.org](http://www.elsanet.org)

## Resources



### Childcare Resources



#### The Importance of Play (DVD)

Westcoast Family Resources Society has developed a wonderful 30 minute film on DVD focusing on the Importance of Play. The DVD shows a diverse range of parents and their children ages 0-12 in many play settings. In the DVD the Westcoast registered Play Therapist talks about how play can build bonding and attachments. The DVD is available narrated in : Cantonese, English, Farsi, Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese. Each non English language DVD comes packaged with an English disc. Parents may watch the English version and have their first language disc as back up. Cost is \$6 each English only, \$12 for English and one other language. For further information contact Carol at [carol.anderson@westcoastfamily.org](mailto:carol.anderson@westcoastfamily.org)

#### Westcoast Mobile Lending Service

Westcoast Mobile Lending programs offers games, books, videos to parents, grandparents and caregivers in the Vancouver lower mainland. This is a free service for more information contact 604 709-5661.

#### ★ Training Opportunities

##### *No Body's Perfect*

The BC Council for Families is offering a *No Body's Perfect* training session from December 7 to 9. Contact [Rubyb@bccf.bc.ca](mailto:Rubyb@bccf.bc.ca) for more information.

##### *ECBC Conference*

Take out your 2010 Calendars and mark May 27-29, 2010 for *ECBC Conference* in Richmond. More info visit [www.ecbc.ca](http://www.ecbc.ca).

##### *Tough and Tender Issues*

Date: January 20 , 2010  
Time and Location: TBA  
Presenter: Gyda Chud

Workshop Description: We know that positive relationships with families are key to positive experiences for their children, yet there are times when we need to interact with parents around "tough and tender" topics and these conversations are never easy! Join us to explore this theme, to gain strategies for these kinds of discussions and to build confidence for moving forward.

To register or for more information, please contact:

Noella at 604 540-2140 or by e-mail at [cmonkey@telus.net](mailto:cmonkey@telus.net)

## Resources

### On the Floor

By Judy Olivieri

Childcare Resources

Children Learning English as a Second Language: Language Acquisition or Language Disorder?

Young children who are learning English as a second language often exhibit error patterns that can look like language disorders, when they are in fact part of the normal process of second language acquisition. It is important that parents and early childhood educators of ESL preschoolers recognize these patterns as language differences rather than a communication disorder in order to avoid unnecessary referrals. Here are a few hints for parents and caregivers concerning speech language pathology and when you do need to refer preschooler?

#### Understanding and Using Language:



Parents may wish to refer to a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) if:

- \*The 2 year old is not talking.
- \*The 3 year old is not consistently using 3 word sentences.
- \*The 4 year old only uses sentences of 4 words in length.

\*The child appears to not understand language and cannot follow directions.

#### Hearing:

Refer to SLP if:

- \*The child has frequent ear infections in combination with a speech language delay.
- \*The child responds to people only when they are in visual range.

#### Speech sound Production

Refer to SLP if:

- \* The 3 and 4 year old is difficult to understand.

#### Voice

Refer to SLP if:

- \*The child has an unusual voice (scratchy, raspy or nasal sounding)

#### Communicative Behaviour:

Refer to SLP if:

- \*The child seems unable or reluctant to start a conversation with parents, caregivers or friends.

#### Fluency

Refer to SLP if

- \* The child hesitates, repeats words or sounds when talking
- \*The child elongates words, stops and restarts or struggles.

It is valuable to understand that young children who are learning a new language focus on listening to and attempting to understand the new language before trying out what they have learned. Parents and caregivers need to be patient and provide support as the child acquires the skills and confidence to speak. The most important thing is that parents, caregivers read, sing, play and build language with their young child to help the child develop confidence and trust in their ability to learn the language.

## Cyber Space

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*By Colleen Rogan*



### Learning Disabilities Project

A Whole Life Approach to Learning Disabilities in Adult Literacy Settings is a new two-year professional development project that will support adult literacy educators to address

learning disabilities in their practice settings.....(read more)

[Learning Disabilities Project : Home](#)

### Learning Disabilities Project Contacts:

Kate Trethewey: [ktrethewey@literacy.bc.ca](mailto:ktrethewey@literacy.bc.ca), 604-684-0624 ext.108

Emily Hunter: [ehunter@literacy.bc.ca](mailto:ehunter@literacy.bc.ca), 604-684-0624 ext. 102

### BC Workinfonet

Click on Persons with Disabilities for a list of organizations and websites. There is also a section for newcomers!

[BC Workinfonet : Website Directory](#)

### The Red Book Online

The 2007-2008 Red Book is packed with information on community, government, social, and health services available across the Lower Mainland. It is the most comprehensive guide of its kind and many professionals working in the field consider it to be the "Bible" of community resources..... (learn more)

[Red Book Database Searching Page](#)

### Disability Resource Network of BC

Check the resource page for e journals, links to BC institutions and more

[Disability Resource Network](#)

### Learning Disabilities Association

Serving Vancouver, Richmond and Surrey, Learning Disabilities Association has a seemingly endless list of resources and programs for adults and teens.

[Learning Disabilities Association of Vancouver BC](#)

### Coastal Mental Health

Visit this website for information on volunteer opportunities, tours, information on Psychosiphobia and translated materials

[Coast Mental Health](#)





## From Our Members

### Recognizing Excellence!

by Paul Naismith



I would like to commend Marianne Akune for her fine contribution to Excel Educational Centre in Richmond, British Columbia. Marianne brings enthusiasm and creativity to the school even on the wettest and darkest of winter days. She thrives on bringing students into the community and teaching them about the importance of social responsibility. An excellent example of this would be her coordination of our school fundraiser for the HSBC Children in which our students raised thousands of dollars in aid of the BC Children's Hospital Foundation through hard work and determination. Marianne inspired dozens of our students to participate in the Children on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009 as well, with all of them leaving the event with a profound realization that they can become caring and compassionate Canadians and vibrant members of their community.

Stay gold Marianne, you are an inspiration to your students and colleagues alike.

#### What's New from Gladwin Language Centre ?

by Joan Berndt

##### Free Public Education Workshops

GLC in Abbotsford is offering a series of Free Public education Workshops at the school on Wednesday evenings. The goal of the workshops is to provide insight into multiculturalism in order to enhance cross cultural communications and multiculturalism in the Abbotsford and surrounding community. The series began with a workshop presented by Dr. Ruth Anaya, Professor of Cross-Cultural Studies at Trinity Western University. Dr. Anaya present on cross-cultural communications and presented again on the topic : Multiculturalism in the Workplace on October 21, 2009. Other workshops include a series on ESL teaching: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking; Attracting Cross-cultural membership, Stopping and Identifying Racist Behaviour, and a session especially for immigrants on volunteering in the community and the available options in Abbotsford. The series will culminate in an Open House on

March 29, 2010 at Gladwin where students and multicultural organizations from the community will present information, cultural traditions, food, dance, and many other activities.

The workshops are free and open to anyone interested in attending. Call Joan at Gladwin(604-854-8160) for more information and/or view our website for the schedule.

[www.gladwinlanguagecentre@telus.net](http://www.gladwinlanguagecentre@telus.net)

##### An Interesting Program for ESL Students

Novel studies for ESL students have begun at Gladwin Language Centre. The series began last spring when Phil Sherwood began a novel study on Les Miserables. In addition to the novel study, students from his class attended the May theatre presentation at the Arts Club. The idea was so successful, that Gladwin has decided to offer another novel study- Anne of Green Gables- on Monday afternoons. The course uses a Penguin Reader version of the novel and will follow up the study with a viewing of the movie. Due to all the student interest in the class, we have had to divide the group into 2, in order to accommodate.



## From Our Members

### Helping Families Thrive - A story from Penticton

by Hilma LaBelle

This July a newcomer family from the Congo came into our community. The husband was recruited by an Agricultural Research Centre along the lake. The mom is a Medical Doctor with 2 young girls aged 4 and 9 months. The 4 year old was born extremely prematurely and consequently has significant neurological issues. She was unable to walk, talk or feed herself.

Although we were not offering child services through the summer the mom "bonded" with us as she was alone all day. We set up volunteers to support mom and children and connected mom to the local Neurological Society and the Public Health Nurse.

Mom and children have been coming in every day - yes every day!! to play in the daycare area, utilize the toys and stimulate the special needs child.

The 4 year old is now talking. She can say hi and bye. She is walking with assistance, smiles when she recognizes a face and is trying to feed herself.

Both parents were so happy to have somewhere to go and someone to direct them to other local support services. They even agreed to participate in our Peach Festival Parade. I can tell you people openly cried when they saw how happy the 4 year old had become, how relaxed mom was and how beautiful they all looked in their costumes.

The family is now settling well. Mom has started ELSA classes and we are continuing to support the family as a whole.



*Fifi Nogoma (mom), Alegra Yawadio (baby), Alekjandra Mihailovic (student/ volunteer), Shoko Watanabe (volunteer), Destiny Yawadio (little girl-standing), Yuko Nakata (volunteer).*

## From Our Members

### Our Students

#### An Immigrant's Perspective

by Shima Faraji



People immigrate to Canada for different reasons. Some immigrate because they are not successful in their country so they want to try their luck elsewhere, while some immigrate for the chance to live in a well-developed country. I immigrated to Canada to live in a well-developed country, and for the opportunity to continue my education.

I immigrated to Canada four months ago. When I came here everything was interesting to me. I had a hard time in the first few weeks because I missed my family and friends and I felt lonely. I had lost my job due to immigrating and I had to speak English as well as adapt to Canadian culture.

In my first week I came to Immigrant and Community Services in Penticton. The lady who works in Settlement helped me to apply for my SIN card and Medicare. To improve my English abilities they introduced me to a very nice Canadian girl. We had some appointments with each other and she explained some Canadian cultural information to me. I also had the chance to speak English with someone whose mother tongue is English.

After about three months the English classes for adults (ELSA) began. Therefore I had the opportunity to participate in an English class. I enjoy my class so much that I drive about 120km a day to take part the class. This class is more than an English class for me. Besides learning English, I am able to get some information about my new country's culture. There are some Canadian holidays such as Halloween or Thanksgiving that I am not familiar with so my lovely teacher gives me information about the history of the holidays. Participating in this class helped me to find new friends, so I feel less lonely.

Any immigrant has a hard time in the first two years. They have to put their best foot forward to adapt to everything. After a while they can manage their life. I wish all immigrants the best.





## From Our Members

# Our Students

### Learning to Read

by Linda Davies

When I first walked into the Literacy classroom last February, I had no idea what was in store for me as a new teacher of six Karen refugees from Burma. "Make it meaningful" was my mantra, and I looked for ways to connect realia to sound and symbol. It was particularly difficult when one of my students, Kyi Shwe who is hard of hearing, responded to feeling threatened or overwhelmed by turning off his hearing aid. How could I break through the barriers of resistance? Not by force, but by gentleness, patience, and



willingness to repeat, over and over again, we built a relationship of trust. One day while I was using the flip chart, I left the page up even though I intended to move on to the next part of my lesson. Kyi Shwe came up to the flip chart and, pointing to the letters, began spelling out the words. Then he tried sounding out the words for the class to repeat, as though he was the teacher. The students watched for my response.

I enthusiastically supported his efforts. We were equal partners in learning. It was a turning point for the students, which sparked a keen interest in learning to read. I've learned from the Karen that a supportive, caring community atmosphere is more important than technique. If the students know that you care, they will learn.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FeKLRsbPts>







## From Our Community



### Fact Sheet

#### CNIB Helps British Columbians Who are Blind or Partially Sighted

More than 110-thousand British Columbians have significant vision loss. As the population ages in the next twenty years, that number is expected to double. CNIB (formerly known as Canadian National Institute for the Blind) is here to help. CNIB is Canada's oldest charity, formed to help soldiers with eye injuries returning from WWI.

Today, CNIB has services for anyone living with low vision or blindness. Those services range from training on how to get around the house or the city after vision loss, to how to use special computers, go back to school or get into the workforce.

CNIB is a source of information, support and services to allow people living with vision loss to lead independent, productive lives.

In Vancouver and Victoria, CNIB's offices also have

stores, which sell products to make living with vision loss easier.

To find out more about CNIB, our services or our products, contact one of these offices around BC.

**Vancouver**

100-5055 Joyce Street  
Vancouver, BC V5R 6B2  
Phone: (604) 431-2020  
Fax: (604) 431-2099

**Prince George**

100-490 Quebec Street  
Prince George, BC V2L 5N5  
Phone: (250) 563-1702  
Fax: (250) 563-1787

**Kelowna**

247 Lawrence Avenue  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 6L2  
Phone: (250) 763-1191  
Fax: (250) 763-1129

**Victoria**

2340 Richmond Road  
Victoria, BC V8R 4R9  
Phone: (250) 595-1100  
Fax: (250) 595-1129

#### Frontier College: Communities Coming Together Conference

##### Walk a Mile in Doris Cheung's Shoes

*by Janet Massaro*

Frontier College facilitated yet another excellent hands-on Community Conference last July. Doris Cheung from the Learning Disabilities Association in Vancouver presented "Walk a Mile in My Shoes, a learning disabilities simulation workshop".

Doris' goal was to provide us with a frame of reference of what it is like to have a learning disability. She started with her own story, one of a young girl who struggled to find a way through her own disability and that of her family who wrestled with this new and foreign diagnosis.

Doris rolled up our proverbial sleeves and dropped us into a maze of exercises and activities that challenged our own perceptual awareness. Writing skills were hobbled by using non-dominant hands to replicate shapes; by counting from 975 to 1037 while tracing along a line that looked like a horizontal explosion of noodles. We were urged to read sentences rife with words randomly chopped

into bits of non-familiar clusters, and we were asked to read it out loud, in front of everyone.

There was little nurturing when you stumbled over a consonant. We followed the straight lines of a five-point star using the reflection of a mirror. My lines were feathery, not bold, no matter how hard I held that pencil. We dug around a story that represented words with clumps of letters and then were compelled to answer comprehension questions.

Personally I struggled with not cheating. The fear of humiliation overtook my intellectual curiosity and I would rush ahead to sort out the tasks just in case I would be called upon.

Doris also walked us through our own conceptions of learning disabilities and provided us with a framework balanced with strategies, definitions and statistics. A relief from the duress of the simulation exercises! It was a thoughtful and well-crafted workshop. I did feel like I had walked a mile in the shoes of a person with learning disabilities.



# From Our Community



IMMIGRANT SERVICES SOCIETY of British Columbia



FAMILY SERVICES OF GREATER VANCOUVER



## ANNOUNCE:

### TRAUMA, INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR REFUGEES IN VANCOUVER & BURNABY

#### Services:

- **Trauma assessment and treatment**
  - Family Services of Greater Vancouver
    - #202 - 1193 Kingsway Vancouver
  - Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture (VAST)
    - 2618 E. Hastings Street, Vancouver
  - Vancouver Coastal Health (Bridge Clinic)
    - 2450 Ontario Street, Vancouver
  - Fraser Health Authority (New Canadian Clinic)
    - 7423 Edmonds Street, Burnaby
- **Counselling (clinical and non-clinical)**
  - Family Services of Greater Vancouver
    - #202 - 1193 Kingsway Vancouver
  - Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture (VAST)
    - 2618 E. Hastings Street, Vancouver
- **Settlement and adjustment services (information, orientation, service linking and referral)**
  - Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISSofBC)
    - Multiple locations
  - Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture (VAST)
    - 2618 E. Hastings Street, Vancouver

#### To refer a refugee client for:

- **Trauma assessment, counselling and treatment:**
  - ☉FSGV - Intake Worker / 604-874-2938
  - ☉VAST - Eidy / 604-299-3539
- **Settlement and adjustment services:**
  - ☉ISSofBC - Mohsen/ 778-321-3235
  - ☉VAST - Eidy / 604-299-3539

This Program is funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development



## From Our Community

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# Banff Conferences

By Colleen Rogan



From BC  
at the LESLLA symposium:

*Lisa Herrera,  
Lois Armerding,  
Colleen Rogan, Joan Haack  
and Paula Mannington*

Two exciting events held back-to-back in Banff this fall brought together ESL professionals from around the world.

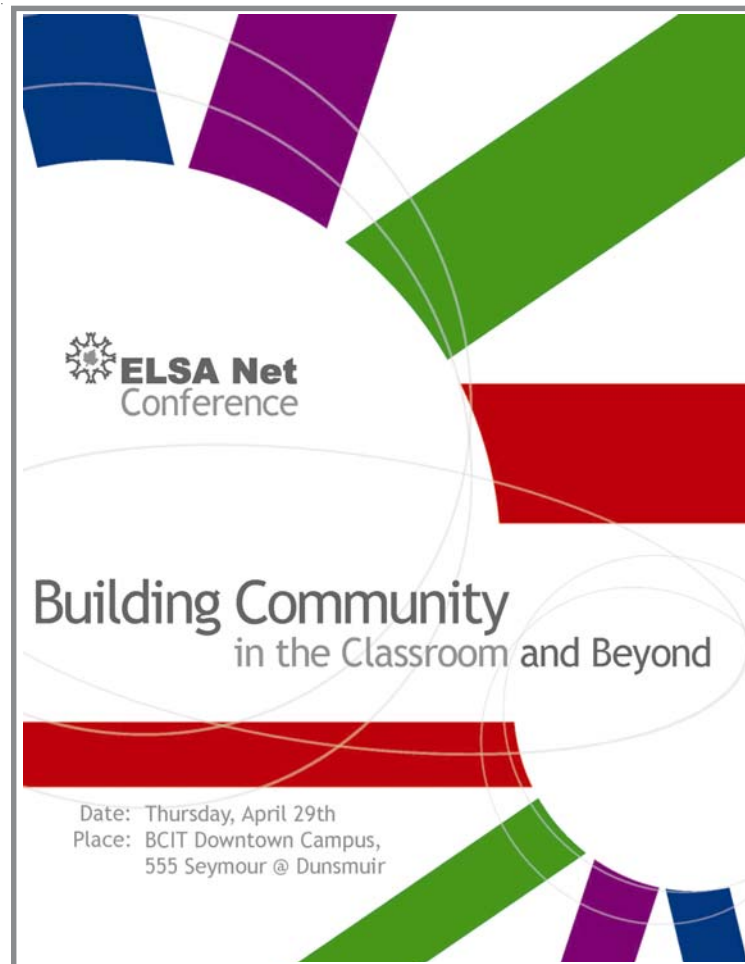
The LESLLA (Low Educated Second Language and Literacy Acquisition) International Symposium focused on research and practice in several areas of ESL literacy. Each day opened with an interesting and inspirational keynote speaker: Heide Wrigley, Stephen Reder and John Archibald. Researchers and practitioners travelled from Australia, England, Denmark, Germany and across Canada and the USA to share current research, resource and practice.

TESL Canada followed the LESLLA Conference. The weekend began with an address for Heide Wrigley followed by Bonnie Norton and Lionel Laroche the subsequent days. With over 100 sessions to choose from, it was difficult to know where to begin!

Participants from both events came away with armfuls of new ideas and resources. Here are a few I'm sure you'll want to explore!

- ❖ From Australian Adult Migrant English Program the *Get Wise* videos and teaching resources are excellent. They are especially appealing for our young adult learners.  
[Course: The Adult Migrant English Program \(AMEP\)](#)
- ❖ From Bow Valley College comes the Learning for Life: An ESL Literacy Handbook. It can be ordered directly from Bow Valley College for about \$30 plus tax, shipping and handling. Contact Diane Hardy at [dhardy@bowvalleycollege.ca](mailto:dhardy@bowvalleycollege.ca) for more information.
- ❖ Be sure to check the *Literacywork* from Heide Wrigley [LITERACYWORK INTERNATIONAL](#). Especially useful is the ESL by Design page! Another useful site from Heide is the Coalition for Limited English Speaking Elderly [Welcome to CLESE.org](#)

## Spring 2010 Conferences



### BC TEAL's 42<sup>nd</sup> Professional Development Conference

Dear TEAL member,

The 42nd Annual TEAL Conference will be held April 30th and May 1st at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) downtown campus.

The theme will be: **Taking Stock: Teaching and Assessing in a Global Context**

We hope you will join your colleagues from across the province to take part in this stimulating professional development opportunity.

If you would like to present at the conference, please go to the BCTEAL website at [www.bctéal.org](http://www.bctéal.org). Go to 'Conferences', then 'Call for Presentations April 2010'. There, you will find the guidelines for presenters and the online submission form. Only online submissions will be considered.

The deadline for submission is January 22, 2010, but we encourage you to get your submission in before the holidays!

Many thanks,  
Lois Armerding & Nila Gopaul, TEAL Conference Chairs

