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www.elsanet.org
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Holding on to Our Kids and Reaching out to Our Community

By Brenda Lohrenz

Even in all the rush of organization and last minute event preparation, the final week of October gave me pause for thought. At the ELSA Pro D event in Burnaby held on October 24th, we heard Dr. Gabor Maté speak about his recent co-authored book *Holding On To Your Kids*. We were a captive audience as Dr. Maté talked about how as a culture we are failing not only immigrants coming to this society—but also our own kids.

In our haste to jump into the 21st century with the gadgetry, work ethic, and lifestyle that goes with it, somehow a context for attachment has been lost. Being connected is an essential need for children, and attachment to someone needs to last for as long as development is taking place.

What of the attachment void in our culture?

In the past, or even if we look to other cultures in the world today—a whole network of adult attachments can be found in the clan, tribe, village, community, neighborhood, and extended family. This community of surrogate parents sets the context for healthy childhood development. And this is the world that many of our immigrants arrive from, cultures that work on behalf of parents and support the authority of elders.

Dr. Maté talked of children in our society today looking to their peers for orientation. As attachments change, so does a child's sense of values. The culture of sameness becomes the norm—dress, music, speech, etc.—all based on peer modeling. Dr. Maté posited that what happens to the immigrant population shortly after arrival to Canada is an acceleration of what has happened to the rest of our population. The result? A flat lining of culture.

Later in that same October week, I attended a Cross-Cultural Mental Health Conference themed "Families in Transition." Here, Dr. Maté's message was not only validated, but also referred to in some of the outcomes that manifest themselves in immigrant and refugee popula-

tions as they experience this dramatic cultural shift.

Presenters talked of immigrant youth referring to themselves as "transformers"—wearing certain clothing and perhaps acting a certain way at home, while having a change of clothes and a different persona lying in wait at their school locker. Acceptance among peers equals a sense of safety to this group, while rejection at home can cause stress and loss of identity. Many of these youth pay the price by becoming involved in gangs or criminal activity or retreating within and experiencing wide-ranging symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Although both success stories and challenges (Cont'd on page 3)



Participants attend the Keynote Address at the Lower Mainland Pro D Day



Updates from the Ministry

Update from the Settlement and Multiculturalism (SaM) Division

By Alison Dudley, Manager Stakeholder Relations, Settlement and Multiculturalism Division

In June, following the announcement of the new provincial government Cabinet, responsibility for immigration policy, immigrant settlement, and multiculturalism was transferred to the Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism. At the same time, responsibility for international qualifications recognition, labour market integration of immigrants, and business immigration was transferred to the Ministry of Economic Development. SaM is now operating as a Division of the Ministry of Attorney General, though it retains the same structure and office location as it did before the transfer.

Alternative Delivery Pilots

In April, the SaM Division launched pilot projects offering alternative forms of English language instruction in four communities in the North and Interior where classroom attendance levels have declined in recent years due to decreases in immigration to these communities. Pilots have been established in Salmon Arm, Revelstoke, Smithers, and Terrace.

In Salmon Arm and Revelstoke, the pilots are being run by Okanagan University College and involve classroom instruction led by volunteer tutors from the college's TESL program and a hybrid system of classroom instruction and assisted learning in a language lab, respectively.

In Smithers and Terrace, the Smithers Community Services Association and the Terrace Volunteer Bureau are coordinating volunteer-based tutoring programs modeled on Vancouver Community College's Homefront Learning Program. Under the model, learners and volunteer tutors are matched on a one-to-one basis and receive approximately 6-8 hours of instruction per week. VCC was contracted to provide initial support and training to the pilot sites.

Patricio Ibarra has developed an evaluation framework for the pilots and will be conducting evaluations at each of the sites in November. SaM staff are looking forward to learning more about the outcomes of the pilots, which will inform decisions on whether the pilots will be extended and/or expanded to other communities next year.

Enhanced ELSA Pilot

Over the summer, a review was completed of the Enhanced ELSA pilots that finished in March 2005. The pilots were developed to determine the effectiveness of providing higher level English language training to adults who were at CLB 5 & 6 and who stated they were destined for the workforce. The pilots were designed to see how an Enhanced ELSA 4/5 program might aid these learners in improving the necessary English language skills needed to pursue employment and career advancement goals. Based on the review, the Ministry has concluded that the pilots substantially met their objectives.

The findings showed that 70 percent of students gained improvement by one or more Benchmark from entry to the end of the first session and that 65 percent of students gained improvement by one or more Benchmark from the first to the second session. Ninety-five percent of the participants reported that they were better prepared for the labour market after completing the pilot classes and said that their confidence in using English had greatly improved. Based on these findings, the Ministry is continuing to determine the feasibility of offering Enhanced ELSA as part of regular BCSAP programming.

Client Satisfaction and Outcomes Survey

A second round of client satisfaction and outcomes surveying was conducted with ELSA students and other BCSAP clients in July. Telephone surveys were administered in nine languages to approximately 800 ELSA students who participated in classes between April 2004 and March 2005. Aggregate survey results will be reviewed by SaM staff and members of the performance measurement advisory committee for ELSA in November prior to the completion of the final report. The final report will likely be released in December/January, along with individual organization results. SaM wishes to thank all ELSA Net members of the advisory committee for their assistance in preparing the second survey and in interpreting the results: Vern Webster, Hilde Schlosar, Nita Jacob, Yvonne Chard, Brenda Lohrenz, Nina Miller, Assunta Rosal, Lynn Letchford, and Dale Hunter.





Update for National Network for LINC/ELSA/MIIP-ESL

Manitoba Innovations – The Entry Program

By Brenda Lohrenz

Sharing with the National Network group meeting at the ATESL conference in Alberta November 3rd and 4th provided insights on immigrant settlement language programming across the country, especially in Manitoba.

With growing success in attracting immigrants, Winnipeg is now experiencing class waitlists. The solution? If you have lived in Manitoba for less than three months, you can register for the Entry Program—a four-week language and orientation program for newcomers.

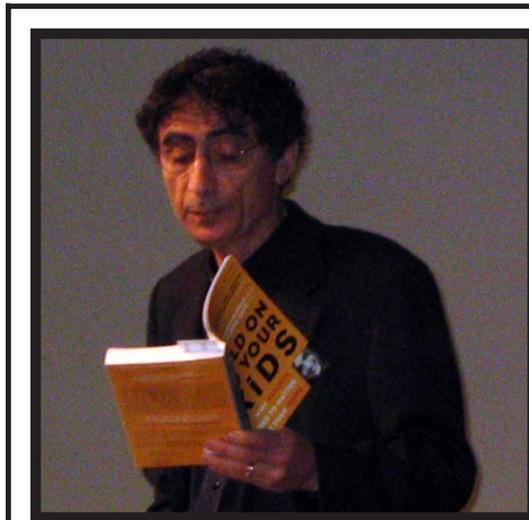
Coordinator Grace Eidse reports that this popular program has been offered at the foundations, beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels (to a benchmark 8) since October 2004. Weekly topics for the month-long course were identified in collaboration with Winnipeg settlement agencies. Every Wednesday an expert comes in to speak on one of the topics—all the student levels join together for this talk along with interpreters for every language group. Twenty languages are represented. Sometimes advanced group volunteers act as interpreters and receive reference letters from the program in return.

And what of the outcomes of the Entry Program? Students have an excellent chance to meet others while in transition. Often friendships created in these classes extend into their home lives and provide valuable interactions they otherwise wouldn't have. Certainly initial settlement issues are covered and there is an opportunity for information sharing

on key issues that may affect their adaptation process. The positive feedback for this program since its inception has helped it become an ongoing part of Manitoba's settlement language services.

This is not the only noteworthy initiative coming out of Manitoba. At the National Network meeting in Alberta, a Saskatchewan presenter discussed the process of introducing portfolio assessment to staff and students through use of a downloadable document called "Collaborative Language Portfolio Assessment: Manitoba Best Practices Guide." Margaret Hnidy of the Regina Open Door Society spoke enthusiastically about bringing students into the CLB evaluation process, ensuring their active participation in formulating language goals through the use of individual portfolios.

For more information, please visit www.immigratemanitoba.com and do a search on Collaborative Language Portfolio Assessment.



Lower Mainland Pro D Plenary Speaker
Dr. Gabor Maté: "Holding on to
Our Kids in a New Culture"

Holding on to Our Kids (cont'd from page 1)

were shared at the Mental Health Conference, it was a group of African teens that really had an impact on all who attended. The project they were involved in incorporated cultural wisdom through storytelling and proverbs brought to the youth by African elders. The youth were then sponsored to design and produce a rap video based on the talks. The video and the youth involved were memorable. The project appeared successful at pulling together diverse contexts and making sense of different worlds. It also gave me hope in that it demonstrated how agencies and frontline workers are out there making a difference.

What can this example contribute to our ELSA classrooms? Perhaps by bringing in examples of cultural bridging to show our students, we can help them create their own paths. Certainly communities can support this process, and providing the tools of communication while connecting our students to the community in which they live is a valuable resource that we can offer. In addition, if immigrant and refugee parents can find the supports they need, they will be in a better position to support their kids and navigate the challenges of transition to a new culture.

What of attachment in a society of peer orientation? There is much we can learn from those arriving. Hopefully as we work to better support these newcomers to Canada we can also reach out in our own communities, which will in turn serve to enrich the lives of our own families and neighborhoods.



Lower Mainland Professional Development Day

Review of Your Magical Brain Workshop—with Gary Anaka

By Marie Grinstrand, NWCC, Prince Rupert

Anyone standing outside Room 307 at the recent ELSA Pro D Event in Burnaby would no doubt have been amused to hear the sound of enthusiastic chanting:

I've got a brain—YES! I like to use my brain—YES!
Learning is fun—YES!

Even more amusing was the sight of workshop participants, with arms crossed, tapping the tops of their heads, tugging on opposite earlobes, and tapping their opposite thighs and knees, in a lively session of "Brain Gymnastics" led by enthusiast Gary Anaka—definitely a man who practices what he preaches.

According to Gary, our brains need physical activity in order to learn. That's why we were standing on our feet instead of remaining passively in our chairs. Other essential ingredients for optimum learning are repetition and fun and concrete models—that's why we were standing up wiggling our fingers (aka "our dendrites") and drawing on our hands and forearms to create a model of "Brain Geography," or what is known in more serious circles as *the transmission of information from the dendrites along the axon to the synapse*. Another one of Gary's messages to teachers is "Go beyond the 'see it, say it, write it' style of teaching and incorporate 'move' and 'experience it'." So we stroked our forearms in an effort to feel the process of repetition involved in building up a thick layer of myelin along the axon, for that's what memories are, folks, myelin on the axon.

After Gary had helped us warm up our brains for learning and helped us see our brains' operating system in a whole new light, he had lots of interesting and serious information to share with us via the more traditional teaching styles—overhead projections of pictures of brain cells, pictures of memory loss, pictures of brain

damage, and pictures of brain activity involved in different classroom activities. Gary shared anecdotes and insights from his many years of teaching, as well as techniques he learned in his training as a *Brain-Based Learning Facilitator*. In a handout he lists websites, videos, books, and magazines on brain health and brain-based teaching resources. Gary has written a slim book containing much of the information in his workshop and it's reasonably priced at \$20.

However, to really get the essence of what he teaches, you need to attend one of his workshops.

Gary taught me how my brain works—YES!

You can reach Gary by e-mail at ganaka@telus.net. For more information on the Jensen Institute where Gary took much of his training, you can go to www.thebrainstore.com. Gary will be one of the keynote speakers at the 2006 BC TEAL Conference at Vancouver Community College, March 10th & 11th.



Gary Anaka's magic at work. Your Magical Brain participants at Lower Mainland PD show us what active learning is all about!

Last Day of Term

Maninder Gill, ELSA Student at PICS

It was our last day of ELSA classes at PICS. We ended the term by celebrating at our teacher's house. Even on our last day, we learned many new things. We learned how to do yoga and how to meditate to kill stress. We had potluck, so we had lots of foods from different cultures to share. We talked and talked and talked for many hours. All our teachers were there. We took many pictures. I found out that people in Canada are very friendly and very sincere. I'd like to thank my teachers and all the people who run the ELSA Program. The program helps us very much. The teachers work hard to teach us English to help us to have good lives in Canada. I can't wait to start my class again in September. I will try to practice my English during the summer months. Thank you everyone.

From Our Community of Service Providers

In This Small Room with Lilacs: ESL on Linden Street

I've arrived to read them poems.
I explain the word pomegranate:
Say red, round, sweet, rubies,
and they smile, nod.
Yes, says Ludmilla,
in the Ukraine, the same.
Osmany, from Cuba says,
sometimes we have them at Christmas.
Yes, he says, rubies.

I move on to starfish,
show them the ones on my wrist.
They cling to rocks at low tide
in a magenta wash.
Soo Jin, from Korea, says they are
sometimes the colour of the sun.

I move on to red-winged blackbirds,
show them a picture;
tell them how I shower outside
each morning,
hear their song like falling water.

Outside, they all say,
even in winter? asks Alexandra,
from Russia, imagining ice and snowdrift.
Even in winter, I say.

But now, there are the ravens, hummingbirds,
the music of blackbirds,
that I hear every morning,
speaking a language
I can't understand.

Wendy Morton, ELSA Student at Victoria Read Society



Childminding: Langley ELSA Program

By Annemieke Vrijmoed, New Directions, Langley

In April 2005, the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services began a two-month childminding pilot project in Langley for ELSA students. The project was deemed to be successful and has now been extended until next year.

The contract is a partnership between New Directions and local daycares. Rather than have childminding services on site, ELSA students who require daycare for pre-school aged children register their kids, with the aid of our ELSA staff, at a local daycare close to the student's home or our school. New Directions then covers the costs, up to a set amount, for the childminding fees. The use of childminding services is reported monthly in STaRS.

Currently, there are four children registered in daycare, but we anticipate a great need for this service as new students register for ELSA in Langley.

STaRS Pro D Day Workshop

By Ming Berka, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

Over the years, STaRS users have developed their own ways of using the system. Many users have experienced problems with STaRS, perhaps because they were trained by users who were not very experienced with the system. Sometimes users haven't realized that doing some tasks a certain way will not produce the necessary information for others or the right data for future reports.

The STaRS Working Group, therefore, decided to put on a workshop at the Lower Mainland Pro D Day in hopes of ensuring the following:

- more accurate data
- easier comprehension of data, even among people who do not regularly use the system
- easier accessibility of information by Ministry people and other users

The notes from this Pro D session may become the beginnings of a more complete User Manual to replace the old STaRS protocol.

If you have any questions, please forward them to Joe Nguyen: joe.nguyen@gov.bc.ca or 604.775.0663, who will replace Patricio Ibarra as the main contact person for STaRS enquiries.



From Our Community of Service Providers

PIRS Blended Program

By Cathi Moss & Patricia Steiner, PIRS

PIRS has been working with Queen Alexandra Elementary School to provide a “blended” (Stream 1-3) ESL program for women for the past three years. Being part of the school community is wonderful. The women who have kids in the school are connected to the school and involved in many events and programs. The Multicultural Liaison Workers, the Principal, and other staff members come to the group regularly to offer information and invitations to participate.

but three, their first language is Vietnamese, so we have an Outreach and Settlement Worker who speaks both Vietnamese and English.

Blended programs are designed for people who cannot succeed in a regular ELSA class. There are many reasons why this might be so: cultural issues, lack of confidence, poor mental or physical health, emotional trauma, family issues, childcare needs, single parenting, time constraints for women with young and school-aged children, and eligibility requirements. Every person has his or her own particular reason. In spite

to the participants, which, in turn, reduces the barriers and challenges being faced. It is part of the Outreach Worker’s job to be connected to other community workers, such as Community Health Nurses and Financial Aid Workers. Many women are referred to the blended program by such workers. The OW is also responsible for recruiting women to the program, for it is she who has the connection to the community and to isolated families who need the program.

The ESL part of the blended program has similarities to the ELSA program. Each term the curriculum is

developed around the needs of the students. Last term, the Queen Alex program did an extensive unit on food. Participants learned the vocabulary and classifications for a variety of common Canadian foods and learns count and non-count nouns and quantifiers. They discussed different food outlets and how to order in a



Women and staff from the PIRS and Queen Alexandra Elementary School Blended ESL Program

The PIRS team consists of the ESL Teacher, the Outreach-Settlement Worker, two Children’s Program Workers, and volunteers. The women have their class in a multi-use portable every Tuesday and Thursday morning. The children, who are with the PIRS Early Childhood Educators, are in another, bigger portable, which also houses an after-school care program and other family-oriented programs. Right now, the class is comprised of 18 women. For all

of all the challenges, attendance is regular and the class has formed a cohesive group. Although all of them are from low-income families they are more than generous when it comes to sharing food from their countries. We have potlucks often. While the whole team works together to enable and encourage participation in the class, the Outreach Worker (OW) plays a particularly important role in this regard. The OW offers bridging and referral services

restaurant. The class then went on a field trip to Aunt Leah’s Kitchen where the students had a typical Canadian meal. After our lunch, a speaker from the organization spoke about job opportunities in the food industry. The field trip was followed-up with a section on shopping, which included a field trip to the local Safeway.

For more information, call PIRS at 604.298.5888 or go to www.pirs.bc.ca.



Regional News

Review of Lower Mainland Pro D Day Panel: Understanding the Chinese, Iranian, Korean and Indian Student in your Classroom

By Carla Mountali, Collingwood Neighbourhood House

All too often as instructors of ESL, we feel intimidated when faced with correcting etiquette problems in our classrooms. Who am I to teach another adult, who may or may not be older than me, how to live? Don't all people, regardless of ethnicity or cultural background, know that it is rude to bump into a classmate and not say excuse me? How is it that students will exhibit behaviours that are so contrary to our common Canadian notions of what is polite?

Burping, working one's jaw, chewing with one's mouth open, explaining terrible cases of diarrhea or hemorrhoids as reasons for absence, sitting spread-eagled in a tilted-back chair, talking while others are presenting information, refusing to work with students of the opposite sex, reading a grammar text when the teacher is giving instructions, pointing, not bothering to learn classmates' names, enthusiastically clearing one's throat, not paying attention in class except when faced with a test, spitting, ignoring classmates, only engaging with the teacher, and avoiding eye contact—many of us have been faced with questions of personal manners that leave us dumbfounded as to what to do. Fortunately, the panel of S.U.C.E.S.S. staff (Azita Bagheral, Gurpreet Nagra, Gina Hong, and Ming Berka) was able to give us some insight into how to deal with these and other cultural misunderstandings at



*Interior Regional group with Trudy Dirk (centre)
TRUDY DIRK—25 years of Excellence and dedication as
Executive Director of Kamloops Cariboo Regional Immigrant Society*

"Working at Kamloops Immigrant Services is the best job in Kamloops because of the wonderful clients, new experiences, and learning about other cultures. I was very privileged working with the best Board of Directors, Staff and Community Partners," said Trudy Dirk.

Long-time colleague of Trudy, Carol Wutzke of Vernon & District Immigrant Services Society adds, "Trudy has been a forerunner for clients and settlement agencies in the Province of BC. Her helpful spirit and support will be greatly missed."

the recent ELSA Net Professional Development Day.

As uncomfortable as I was to correct my students' manners, and as unsure as I was of how to approach the question of etiquette while maintaining the dignity of both teacher and students, I was thrilled to learn that I have been in the wrong. I was making preposterous assumptions about students' prior learning in the arena of public courtesy that I would never dare to make about their background knowledge of English and content areas. It is our responsibility as ELSA teachers, then, to adopt some of the panel's many useful suggestions and consciously include Canadian culture and courtesy in each unit we teach.

IMSS-PG Receives Citizenship Award

On October 21, 2005, Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society received the Citation for Citizenship Award from CIC. This award honours individuals and organizations for outstanding contributions in helping newcomers successfully integrate and settle in Canadian society. Only three awards are given out every two years. This is the first year Prince George has received the award. IMSS was nominated by Mayor Colin Kinsley. Tony Cochlan, manager of the CIC Centre in Prince George, presented the award at an award ceremony. IMSS will celebrate 30 years of service in January 2006 and is very proud of this award.



From Our Classroom to Yours

Childminding Philosophy Statement

By Sunita Johal, PICS

My name is Sunita Johal. I am a new childminding instructor at PICS and I would like to share my philosophy statement that I follow when teaching at any centre.

I believe all children are competent, unique individuals with their own levels of development that can overcome any challenge that is given to them. I believe young children learn and develop through playing with hands-on materials used in everyday life and through small group interactions with other children.

I have a commitment to honouring cultural diversity by respecting each child's individual culture. I encourage parents to become involved in introducing their culture and I try to provide multicultural literature and arts and crafts.

The teacher's role in the learning process is to provide an enriching environment through modeling and positive guidance where children can learn to socialize positively among their peers. Children should have a nurturing and positive educational experience in which they develop a positive self-concept.

Families should be involved in their child's development. They should include elements of their culture in the child-care setting to support the child, both at home and at the center. The childminding program at PICS is a play-based centre which encourages childhood friendships through group play and acknowledges their importance in each child's life.

Ranjit, the Childminding Assistant, and I guide children through problems by using problem-solving techniques, offering choices followed by logical and natural consequences, and re-directing. My goal is to respect each child's feelings while anticipating problems and situations by setting clear, simple, and consistent limits.



Finding a Job in Canada

By Ruifang Fan, former ELSA Student

When I arrived in Canada last February, I had only a few friends. Some of them had lived here seven years and some about a year or less. They taught me a lot about living here. One friend took me to get my phone installed and another gave me information on life in Canada.

At the beginning, I felt that my English was not good enough and that is why I took an ESL course at the end of March. I got help from my teachers at New Directions. They were teaching me not only English, but also about how to have a better life in Canada. I appreciated their help very much.

After ELSA I wanted to find a job. Being trained as a mechanical engineer in China, I thought I had a better chance to work as a draftsman as I had no work experience in Canada. To get a better idea of how to find a job in Canada, I went to CERC in Langley last September. I entered a Job Search Program for Immigrants with professional experience and an advanced level of English. After I finished the course, I was interviewed on September 27th by Lockerbie and Hole Company in New Westminster. To prepare myself for the interview

I searched for information on the company on the Internet. I found that the company is very successful in Canada, and as I got to know more about it I built up my confidence for the interview. After the interview, they told me that I had to visit their other office in Abbotsford. I was excited because I knew I had the job!

I started working for Lockerbie and Hole one week after my interview. Although I feel very tired now, I enjoy working there very much. I'd like to thank all my teachers at New Directions and Surrey-Delta Immigrant Services Society for helping me to get ready for my job.

Community Perspective

From the Outside In

By Osman Akhtary, Tor Ludin & Saleem Spindari

Earlier this year, with the sponsorship of ISS, 22 people from the Afghan, Kurdish and Somali communities came together as the “Media & Advocacy” group to promote understanding, interconnection, and cooperation between these emerging communities and the broader Lower Mainland community.

Since then there has been training and much informal work in communities. Today, with our purposes of “Sharing Information and Building Bridges,” is our first formal presentation. Our presentation has 3 sections.

1: “Departure and Arrival”

Each of us had different circumstances of flight. One panelist, a senior law enforcement officer, fled from Afghanistan at the time of the Russian occupation; the Kurdish panelist, a qualified interpreter/translator fled the regime of Saddam Hussein in 1997; and the third panelist, a qualified ESL teacher/trainer, fled Afghanistan in 1992.

We observed that a lot depends on the circumstances of flight from the home country and one’s status on arrival in Canada.

For example, the refugee who arrives in Canada with good command of English and Landed Immigrant status has a much different experience from a refugee claimant or someone who arrived under a “Group of 5” sponsorship.

2: “Adjustments and Challenges”

Our level of education and English language skills had a major effect on how things developed after we arrived. We were each surprised to find that our level of education and our command of English, while making adjustment easier, did not often pave the way to employment opportunities. Among the challenges we faced were the following:

- Convincing employers to take foreign-based training seriously
- Getting foreign credentials evaluated and creating timely, affordable pathways for foreign-trained professionals to qualify in Canada

We believe it is important that we newcomers practice patience and awareness. We also feel it would be practical and beneficial to have regular follow-up by service agencies, about how people are doing, then adjusting “Best Practices” if indicated.

3: “Coming from a Muslim culture to a Western culture.”

Among the examples raised are these:

- Learning to be self-assertive after having been raised to be self-effacing
- Explaining ourselves and our religion, especially since 9/11
- The effects of stereotyping on Middle Eastern women



*From the Outside In Lower Mainland Pro D Day Panel Participants:
Osman Akhtary, Tor Ludin & Saleem Spindari*

- Not having accurate information about Canada when we arrived
- Getting Canadian experience, even as a volunteer
- Adjusting to vast cultural differences
- Differing patterns of adjustment for parents than for children
- Adjustments specific to women.
- Learning about the different roles of police, government, and laws

- The effects of stereotyping Middle Eastern people on the basis of old stories, old movies, and the action of some extremists in recent times

It is very important for all of us, Muslim and non-Muslim, to take all opportunities to educate ourselves. We need to build ties and work together to create the most inclusive, respectful society possible.



Upcoming Events

AMSSA's Multicultural Health Fair: Learn How to Live Healthier & Be Safer

Currently, ESL students are at high risk of suffering from lifestyle-related diseases. According to the World Health Organization, the needless deaths of more than a million Canadians will be the result of having smoked too much, exercised too little, and eaten unhealthy foods. Of those million, over 300,000 will be immigrants to Canada. Many will suffer twice the burden because they will have been unable to access medical information or health services due to language, culture, and access barriers. In BC alone, 2.7% of the population does not understand English or French.

Newcomers to Canada often need access to useful information on health issues that affect them, such as the stress of moving to a new country, establishing a social network, searching for employment, and learning a new set of social protocols and languages. To help raise awareness and provide culturally responsive information about health to newcomers, AMSSA (Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies) will host its 2nd annual Multicultural Health Fair, the largest Multicultural Health Fair in Canada, which aims to "Promote Healthy Living among BC's Multicultural Communities."

ESL teachers in the Lower Mainland are invited to attend and take part in 2006's exciting event. As a special component and a learning opportunity for students, packages will be downloadable on our website for teachers to encourage students to fully participate in the Fair. The packages include a map with directions to the Health Fair, activity sheets

with new vocabulary, and lesson plan ideas, and scavenger hunt games that can only be completed by attending the event.

The Health Fair is a free event that invites visitors to discover the secret to get fit, stay healthy and stay safe. This one-stop shop for health information and preventative health issues answers questions about healthy foods and connects the multicultural community to BC's health resources. Interactive health services will also be available on site in the languages of new Canadians.

When: February 18, 2006, from 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

Where: Collingwood Neighbourhood House, 5288 Joyce St., Vancouver (with ample parking & direct transit access)

What:

- Health information for all phases of life from birth to old age in eight languages: French, Punjabi, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Farsi, and Tagalog
- Over 50 exhibitors: health promotion, fitness, chronic diseases, disaster preparedness, and home and work safety
- Fun health activities including medical tests, fitness classes, workshops, food demonstrations, and taste tests
- Children's corner
- Famous local personalities
- Contests and prizes

For more information, e-mail healthfair@amssa.org, call 604.718.2783, or visit www.amssa.org.

A HEADLINES THEATRE Production

VANCOUVER
Nov 17 - 20
and 23 - 27
at 8pm
2 for 1 Preview Nov 16
Tickets \$15
Box Office: 604.871.0508
or to buy tickets online click here

SURREY
Dec 1 - 4
and 7 - 11
at 8pm
Tickets \$15 + \$1.45
service fee at the
Box Office: 604.501.5566
www.arts.surrey.ca

Ross Street Temple
Community Annex
8000 Ross St, Vancouver
(at E 64th Ave off SE Marine Dr)

Surrey Arts Centre
Studio Theatre &
13750 - 88th Ave, Surrey
(at King George Hwy)

Reservations Recommended

we all share the problem.
the solutions are

Here and Now
ਏਥੇ ਤੇ ਹੁਣੇ

Here and Now:
Forum Theatre Exploring the
Connections between Street
Violence & Issues at Home

In recent years, the Lower Mainland Indo-Canadian community has been a target of media attention. *Here and Now* investigates the real stories behind the media coverage. It shares the struggles of a community and invites you, the audience, to offer solutions.

For tickets and information call 604.871.0508, or go to www.headlinestheatre.com.



New Resources for the Classroom

Literacy Classes: Teacher Centered or Student Centered?

By Sandra Price-Hosie

In teaching literacy level adult ESL, I'm often asked which approach works best—the student-centered approach or the teacher-centered approach? The first answer that comes to mind is the current, politically correct one—student centered.

The importance of understanding the individual differences in adult literacy students and of tailoring and varying teaching to include strategies and materials that work for the variety of students in our classes can never be overstated. A teacher needs to look at why a particular student is placed in a literacy class, why they haven't learned to read and write in English before, and how best a particular student can be taught—what materials and methods will succeed with that student. It is essential to plan and teach all lessons, incorporating various learning styles so that each student can make progress in their own way.

Adult students have to be self-motivated to achieve success. They cannot be coerced into paying attention and doing exercises they do not find worthwhile. Adults are not always comfortable with the type of work they must do in literacy classes, so the work and vocabulary must be relevant and meaningful. The required language learning exercises must have a purpose that these adult students can perceive. Most ESL adult literacy classes should be taught using small group configurations where students work on their own and with partners and small groups, learning and working at their own pace with a great deal of self-teaching and peer-teaching taking place.

The true literacy level class cannot really be successful without the all important introduction of basic language, oral vocabulary, letter identification and formation, and sight reading lessons. And all of these activities are best done in a controlled, teacher-centered classroom environment. For those key moments when completely new vocabulary is presented in oral, then in written form, the teacher requires the complete attention and concentration of the literacy students for that brief period where real learning begins to take place. Similarly, when a new sound is introduced in phonics or a new letter shape is presented in printing or writing, the full involvement of each student in the class is needed to achieve success and advance the students on the road toward literacy. At these times, a teacher-centered configuration of the class is best, with each student having a clear, unhindered view of the white board, chart, or realia table. At these times, the teacher must be able to make eye contact with all students to see that learning is taking place and to ensure that the literacy student's attention is directed toward the material in question.

Consequently, in this, like most other topics in the general field of ESL Adult instruction, the best approach is an eclectic one, and the best attitude for the teacher is a flexible and adaptable one. The effective teacher of Adult ESL Literacy will simply adapt and change as the needs of the moment dictate, using teacher centered, whole-class, and ask-and-respond techniques for initial input instruction and use diads, small groups, or large groups, as required by the various language learning activities.

In the end, as long as all students leave each class feeling that they have done well, learned something useful, and made positive steps toward their goal of learning to read and write in English, then the class has been successful. The road to literacy in English for many students is long, difficult, and tedious, and students need teachers who are patient, understanding, and adaptable enough to take them down that road.

All About Literacy, A "How to" Book for Teachers of Adult ESL Literacy by Sandra Price-Hosie is available from Trafford Publishing at www.trafford.com.

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Coordinator's Report

Thanks to the hard work of ELSA Net members volunteering on committees and contributing their time, another busy fall has been successfully negotiated. A big thank you to everyone who has played a part in our fall schedule.

Special thanks to our ELSA Net board officials—Ming Berka of S.U.C.C.E.S.S., President; Yvonne Chard of Delta Continuing Ed., Vice-President; and Nita Jacob of Coquitlam Continuing Ed., Secretary Treasurer, who tirelessly work on behalf of all ELSA Net members.

Finally, many thanks to my invaluable, behind-the-scenes counterpart, ELSA Net administrative assistant, Erika Del Carmen Fuchs, who navigated many last minute challenges and kept things running smoothly.

We look forward to more collaboration with all of you in 2006!

BC TEAL Events in 2006: Call for Presenters and Submissions

Look out for two BC TEAL events next year!

The next BC TEAL session is on February 18th (location TBA). There is a call for presenters.

The BC TEAL 38th Annual Conference entitled *The Cycle of Knowledge*, will take place March 10th & 11th at VCC (King Edward Campus). There is a call for submissions, which are due by December 15, 2005. For general guidelines on submissions, or more information, contact the BC TEAL office: call 604.736.6330, e-mail admin@bctéal.org or go to www.bctéal.org.

ELSA Net Overview

English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) is a funding stream of the British Columbia Settlement and Adaptation Program. ELSA Net is a society of ELSA Service Providers, which consists of organizations such as settlement agencies (non-profit organizations), community and university colleges, school board continuing education departments, and private schools offering ELSA Programs.

The purpose of ELSA Net is to facilitate the effective delivery of English Language Services for Adults throughout the Province of British Columbia taking into account and recognizing regional differences and needs.

The objectives of ELSA Net are to carry out the following functions to assist in attaining the purpose of ELSA Net:

- (a) Recommend policies and procedures to the Ministry (Ministry of the Attorney General) regarding ELSA;
- (b) Provide a forum for networking by Members;
- (c) Provide professional development opportunities for employees of the Members;
- (d) Promote program research and development;
- (e) Establish and maintain an effective structure for communication and coordination among Members;
- (f) Provide representation of and information about ELSA and ELSA Net at the local, provincial and national level; and
- (g) Provide advice to the Ministry regarding ELSA.



ELSA Net

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