



ELSA Net **NEWSLETTER**

Spring 2010 | Issue 21

Building Community in the Classroom and Beyond



Feature Article

'New Faces of British Columbia': a unique fieldtrip experience for ELSA classes

Child Care Feature Article
Community as an Educational Resource



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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

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The ELSA Net Newsletter is available in PDF format on the ELSA Net website: www.elsanet.org.

Contributions to future editions of the ELSA Net Newsletter are welcomed at esl@elsanet.org.

Newsletter Team

Colleen Rogan
Carmen Larsen
James Harder
Vania Ganacheva
Clara Wong

Update from the Ministry

Update on the Immigration and Welcome BC Branch Training Initiatives Plan

The BCSAP Training Audit Database - A collection of training (courses, workshops and programs) and content experts (groups and individuals) will be launched in April. Watch for a demonstration at ELSA Net Regional Meetings to kick off the launch for ELSA Service Providers. In addition, the Training Committee is exploring other options to promote and introduce the database as a resource for service providers exploring training options.

The Role Specific Competency Committees have wrapped up and produced a list of competencies for the seven roles: Management, Administration Support, English Language Instruction, Child Care Provision, Settlement Support, Volunteer Coordination and Job Search & Career Planning. You may have been involved in the Needs Assessment Survey done in the fall of 2009. The next step will be to survey provider staff on the list of role specific competencies for the top one or two roles within their jobs (as most jobs in the sector involve more than one role). Staff completing the survey will be asked to review each competency and rate the level of proficiency needed for their job and whether they need more training in this competency. The Role Specific Competency Survey will run from April 19-30, 2010.

IWBC Branch Newsletter is in the works and will be released soon. The newsletter will be posted at the following link: http://www.welcomebc.ca/en/service_providers/publications_and_reports/publications/branch_newsletters.html.

ELSA Net Update

By Brenda Lohrenz

Some exciting professional development opportunities on the horizon to give us that extra “spark” we all appreciate at this time of year.

Surrey Conference - Sheraton Guildford in Surrey

April 16

Lower Mainland Conference - BCIT Downtown

April 29

‘Building Community in the Classroom and Beyond’

Looking forward to a great day of publishers and enlightening topics at our upcoming ELSA Net Conferences. Sure to please, workshop titles for instructors include ‘Effective Literacy Techniques’, ‘Challenging Learning for Adults’ and ‘Theatre as a Second Language’. Childcare staff will appreciate the Story Telling session, and support staff can enhance their cross-cultural communication and referral skills. See you there!

Medical Emergency Workshop Materials

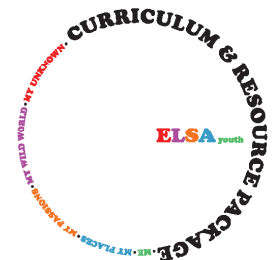
Medical Emergency Workshops that were brought to

your classrooms care of our dedicated instructor consultants last fall met with rave reviews. One student who subsequently used 811 for a medical emergency, sent us an e-mail to let us know how this class helped save his life! We are now excited to announce that these workshop materials will soon be available on the instructor resource section of our website. We are always happy to hear instructor (and student) feedback on our materials, so be sure to drop us a line regarding any of our resources.

ELSA Youth Curriculum

Although classes aren’t anticipated until the fall of 2010, our engaging curriculum has been launched and is now available for downloading at www.elsanet.org. Kudos to our wonderful consulting team Roxanne Heichert, Diana Jeffries, and Andrea Solnes, and a special salute to the project advisory committee members for their input into this truly creative and colourful resource.

Happy spring weather everyone!



ELSA Net Update

ELSA Net Board of Directors 2010

ELSA Net Society Officers

Nina Miller, President
Katie Graham, Vice President
Jean McRae, Secretary-Treasurer
Dale Hunter, Past President

Lower Mainland - Public

- Franca Zumpano, Burnaby Continuing Education
- Marta Batory, Richmond Continuing Education
- Richard Sim, Vancouver Community College (Alternate)

Lower Mainland - Private

- Bernard Tang, Excel Education Centre
- Christine Woods, New Westminster English Language Centre
- Paul Badger, Vancouver Formosa Academy (Alternate)

Lower Mainland - Non-Profit

- Nina Miller, MOSAIC
- Katie Graham, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.
- Diana Smolic, Immigrant Services Society (Alternate)

Surrey / Delta

- Lenard Langlois, DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society
- Devinder Chattha, PICS
- Ewa Karczewska, Immigrant Services Society (Alternate)

Fraser Valley

- Corinne Voys, Abbotsford Community Services
- April Neave, Chilliwack Community Services (Alternate)



Vancouver Island South

- Jean McRae, Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria

Vancouver Island North

- Valerie Macdonald, Assessor
- Jackie Martin, Cowichan Intercultural Society (Alternate)

East and South Central BC

- Paul Lagace, Kamloops Cariboo Regional Immigrant Society
- Hilma LaBelle, South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (Alternate)

North and North Central BC

- Joan Haack, Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society of Prince George
- Marie Grinstrand, Northwest Community College - Prince Rupert Campus (Alternate)

Assessment Centres

- Wes Schroeder, Western ESL Services
- Vasso Vahlas, Surrey Language Assessment Centre (Alternate)

ELSA Net Update

I'm seeing STaRS 2

By Clara Wong, STaRS Consultant, ELSA Net

The rewrite of STaRS is progressing very smoothly. I am pleased to say that we are on schedule and everything is looking great!

The STaRS Business Requirements Scope document has been signed and we are currently in the process of gathering data requirements. This includes reviewing ministry business processes and reviewing previously logged enhancements, fixes, and bugs to make sure nothing is missed during this phase. Our contractor is busy working on finalizing the Business Requirements Document and will be producing a few prototype screens.

Following this data requirements phase, the ministry and the STaRS Build Team will be starting the design and development phase. A Sandbox (test) environment will be created to allow the STaRS Advisory Group and the ministry an opportunity to enter business scenarios and to train users.

We have high hopes that STaRS 2.0 will correct current functionality issues, as well as address data integrity and data flow processes, be more effective during the lifecycle of a student, provide accurate and timely reporting, and meet current ministry IT standards and business requirements.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers who contributed their time and effort in helping the ministry with this project.

For more information, please contact Clara Wong at Clara.Wong@gov.bc.ca.



Thank you to our PD Committee and Conference volunteers:

Brenda Lohrenz	Jeff Graham
Carmen Larsen	Joy Matino
Colleen Rogan	Kathleen Denkwalter
Clara Wong	Linda Peteheryc
Ewa Karczewska	Vania Ganacheva

A decorative graphic on a light green background. It features several stylized flowers of various colors (green, orange, yellow) and sizes. The flowers are arranged in a vertical line on the left side, with smaller white flowers scattered across the bottom.

Feature Article

‘New Faces of British Columbia’: a unique fieldtrip experience for ELSA classes

By Andrea Solnes

If you and your ELSA students want to see our province through a different lens, be sure to plan a fieldtrip to the ‘New Faces of British Columbia’ photography exhibit. The vibrant images captured by local photographers represent some of the many facets of our diverse society and provoke thought and discussion about our changing communities. Children, new immigrants, people at work, people at play - the photographs invite unique responses to familiar questions: Where are you from? Where are you going? How do you feel? As teachers, students and members of other communities, the exhibit asks us: What part do we play in this myriad of humanity?

‘New Faces of British Columbia’ is Immigrant Services Society of BC’s second foray into photograph exhibits. It premiered last year when Chelsea Hug, Marketing Coordinator at ISSofBC, wanted to create the opportunity for Vancouverites and new photographers throughout BC to express their vision of diversity. “I thought that rather than build something which said what diversity and multiculturalism was to us (as a large immigrant serving organization) we would let the photographers answer what it meant to them. It was a chance to reflect on the changing faces that make up Vancouver and BC, and essentially portray what the new Vancouver is.”

This year’s exhibit has grown substantially, thanks to funding from the Ministry of Citizen’s Services through its ‘Embrace BC’ program. Like last year, photographs were submitted and then juried by a panel comprised of Debra Zhou, Gallery Coordinator for Centre A; Alden Habacon, Manager for Diversity Initiatives at CBC and editor of Schemamag.ca; Michael Filimowicz, Lecturer at SFU; Patricia Huijen, Educator at the Museum of Luxembourg; and Patricia Woroch, CEO of the Immigrant Services Society of BC. “In choosing a photograph”, Woroch comments, “My first thought was



would I like to talk to this person and if the answer was yes, I would then look at composition, lighting, etc.”

Thirty-three photographs were chosen and ISSofBC has since taken them on tour: to the Nanaimo Museum, in partnership with Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society; to Legal Grounds Coffee House, in partnership with Abbotsford Community Services; and to the Two Rivers Gallery in Prince George, in partnership with the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society. “One comment I heard more than once”, Woroch recalls, is “I never realized we were so diverse.”

This year’s exhibit has also become more accessible to English learners, particularly ELSA students. Theresa Howell, ELSA Instructor at ISSofBC, has created an inspiring 63-page manual of activities for ELSA classes. These materials are developed for 3 levels: Literacy/ Level 1; Level 2/3; and Level 4/5. Each level includes 3 pre-teaching activities that can be done before going to the exhibit, a contact sheet for the fieldtrip, and 2 out-of-the-box extension activities that can be done as follow up to the fieldtrip. Theresa has provided a fresh approach to the themes of emotions, colour, personal experiences, including coming to Canada, hobbies, and multiculturalism. Activities include vocabulary development, collaging, discussion, reading, listening, a boardgame, and photo stories, as well as photo cards and worksheets using the images from the photo exhibit.

(Continuing on page 7)

Feature Article

The 'ELSA Literacy to Level 5 New Faces of British Columbia' package will be available at the upcoming ELSA Net Conference on April 29th at BCIT's downtown campus. Theresa Howell and Andrea Solnes will be doing a presentation with the materials, and will also be at the publisher's display. Pick up a copy of the materials, and plan on taking your students to the exhibit the following week!

For more information on the 'New Faces of BC' exhibit and the ELSA materials, please call or email Andrea Solnes at 604-684-2561 or andrea.solnes@issbc.org



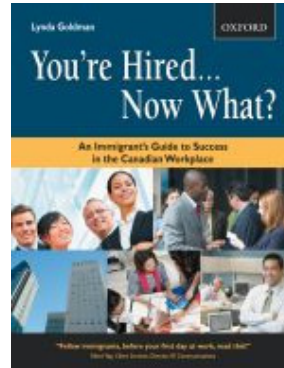
'New Faces of British Columbia' is presented by Immigrant Services Society of BC with funding from Embrace BC.

It will be showing at the Centre A Gallery, 2 West Hastings Street, Vancouver from April 29 to May 6, 2010.



Resources

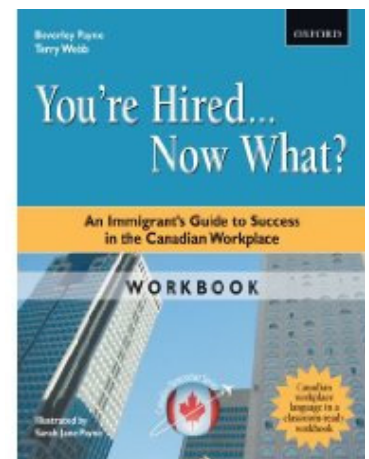
Book Review



You're Hired, Now What? An Immigrant's Guide to Success in the Canadian Workplace is a new publication in the Oxford Canadian Newcomer Series. As the title suggests, the book is geared towards newcomers who want to better understand Canadian workplace language, culture, and practices. There are 17 chapters covering topics such as: projecting a professional image, non-verbal communication in Canadian workplaces, business writing, office politics, small-talk, business etiquette, and managing your time.

Although the book is written in clear, simple language, appropriate for newcomers between CLB 5-8, it can be a bit dense at times. It may be useful to break up the information with jigsaw activities, or use only small sections from each chapter at one time, along with the corresponding pages from the student's workbook. Some of the highlights of this book include: short, real-life immigrant stories to contextualize each topic, brief descriptions and/or suggestions on Canadian workplace practices, action plans for readers to try out some of the new ideas and concepts, and business 'buzzwords' that are common in Canadian workplaces. Some of the more interesting buzzwords include: bigwig, brownie points, breathing space and elbow room.

The student workbook includes useful sections for reviewing key concepts and new vocabulary items. Each chapter in the workbook concludes with a variety of writing assignments that are benchmarked from CLB 5-8, as well as group work assignments, and individual assignments. *You're Hired, Now What?* and the student workbook seem to have a lot to offer to newcomers who want to learn more about working in Canada.



Resources

ELSA Net EFW 4/5 Networking Session - Using Authentic Materials

By Carmen Larsen

On February 5th ISS in New Westminster hosted an ELSA for the Workplace 4/5 networking session. I'd like to thank all of the participants who not only gave up their Friday afternoon to take part, but also came with tons of great authentic materials and creative ideas on how to build lessons around them. Here is just a sampling of those resources and ideas.

Community and Continuing Education Calendars

Students can use Community and Continuing Education calendars to practice skimming and scanning skills, and compare workshops or courses from different institutions. These can also be used, along with the Internet, for an extended project in which students first identify their career training goals and then research and map out a plan to achieve them.

Making Career Sense of Labour Market Information

This website has a range of tables and figures that students can discuss, compare, and write paragraphs about. There are different graphs on projected numbers of job openings for each province that might be useful for a comparison writing assignment at <http://makingcareersense.org/figures/figures.htm>

Metro and 24 Hours Newspapers

Every Monday, both of these free newspapers include a great section with work-related topics. The Metro has its "Workology" section, and 24 Hours has "Workzone." Students can be put into groups and given different articles to summarize. These articles are also great for practicing the use of context clues to figure out the meaning of new vocabulary. Here are the links to the online versions.

Metro: <http://www.metronews.ca/vancouver/work/workology>

24 Hours: <http://vancouver.24hrs.ca/PDF/>

You Tube Super Bowl Ads

For introducing the importance of body language, one instructor suggested watching Super Bowl commercials with the sound muted. After watching the ad, students are asked to identify the body language that helped them understand how the characters were feeling.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/adblitz>

Job Ads on Craig's List

There is a wide variety of job ads on Craig's list, which can be printed out, discussed, and compared. Students can discuss which ads they would or wouldn't apply for and why. This is also a great opportunity to introduce the topic of scam ads and how to avoid them.

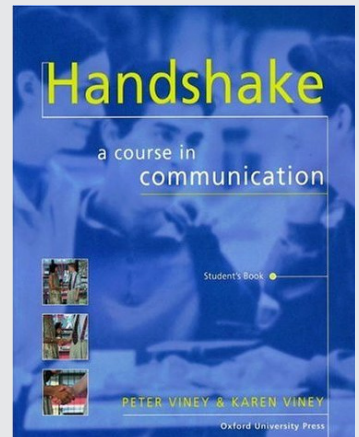
<http://vancouver.en.craigslist.ca/jjj/>

Although it's not authentic material, the book

Handshake: a Course in Communication, by Peter Viney and Karen Viney (ISBN 978-0-19-457220-0) was also highly recommended for the EFW 4/5 class.

There is a chapter on body language that makes a great follow-up to the Super Bowl ads.

If you have other ideas or suggestions for using authentic materials in 4/5 classes, and would like to share them with your ELSA colleagues, email them to Carmen at carmenl@elsanet.org.



Other EFW News

New ELSA for the Workplace Links on ELSA Net Website

Check out the new link for ELSA for the Workplace on the teacher's resource page. You'll find links to lesson ideas and materials, employment resources, newsletters, and information on essential skills at http://www.elsanet.org/links_workplace.html

Resources

Cyber Space

Immigrant Employment Council of BC

The Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) website has a lot of information on training programs for newcomers. This may be a great site to use for project work, as students can research and report on different organizations and institutions that offer post-ELSA training. Look under Service Provider Info - Training & Assessment Services.
<http://www.iecbc.ca/>

BC Internationally Trained Professionals Network

The BC Internationally Trained Professionals Network website is also a great resource for ELSA students who are wondering about their employment training options after ELSA. The site includes information on training programs, a Calendar of Events and a Discussion Forum on which newcomers can connect with other internationally trained professionals.
<http://www.bcitp.net/index.php>

Guest Speaker Carousel

By Carla Mountali

For the last several years, in the Collingwood Neighbourhood House ELSA program, we have used a guest speaker delivery method that we call the Guest Speaker Carousel. We invite 6 to 8 agencies within a topic area. Topics such as employment programs, government services, and community services have been presented to our students in this way. Speakers are invited to come for a 1 ½ to 2 hour period on the same day. We set up a number of tables that corresponds with the number of invited guests and several classes of students are divided into an equivalent number of groups. The groups can be determined in a variety of ways: randomly, by level, or as chosen by the students. Each speaker moves between the small groups of students, giving repeated 10-15 minute overviews of their agency's programs, providing print resources, and answering questions, until they have met with all of the groups of students. The small group approach with guest speakers is ideal for our students as it facilitates small-group interaction, providing shy or less capable students with the opportunity to ask questions in a low-risk setting. The guest speaker carousel is an excellent alternative to panels because it provides exposure to a variety of agencies' services and programs, while ensuring that the student audience is active in their learning and receiving directly applicable information and referrals.

By Colleen Rogan

VCC - student websites

This site offers plenty of links for students and teachers to explore. There are also NEW ESL podcasts!
<http://eslprograms.vcc.ca/ESLWEB/WebActivities/webactivities.html>

LINC Home Study Newsletters are great for finding reading materials for your students. There are always new recipes as well.
<http://www.linchomestudy.ca/OnLine/newsletter.aspx>

The Best of the Reader

The title says it all. This website houses a collection of your favourite Westcoast Reader articles and teachers' notes.
<http://bestofthereader.ca>

Learning and Violence

This website shows how violence affects learning. Written and developed by Dr. Jenny Horsman.
<http://www.learningandviolence.net>

Successful Communication Handbook

An easy to read handbook on spoken and written communication.
<http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/successe/successe.pdf>



The Westcoast Reader

Find the new Westcoast Reader here.
<http://blogs.capilanou.ca/westcoastreader/2010>

Action Research in Workplace Education

Thinking of doing some action research? This is the perfect guide to get you started.
<http://www.nald.ca/CLR/action/cover.htm>

NWT Literacy Council has numerous "How to" resource books. This one is called Environmental Print Games. It outlines the steps to hosting a games night with parents and children.
<http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/howtokit/enviro/cover.htm>

Money Savers for New Parents

This booklet outlines simple ways to save money as a new parent. The ideas can easily be adapted for use in the classroom or with parents in ELSA programs.
<http://www.consolidatedcredit.ca/debt-learning-center/money-savers-new-parents.aspx>

Childcare Resources

Community as an Educational Resource

By Judy Olivieri

Technology in the 21st century plays an important role in how early childhood educators provide care for the young children in their facilities. At the touch of a button educators have access to numerous resources through the expanding worldwide web. Educational media fills store shelves with visual media to capture childrens' attention and educate them. Many of these technological resources enhance the qualities of our programs, educate the children, and provide opportunities for families. However, as Early Childhood Educators, we should also recognize that there is a valuable resource which can be found right in our back yards and does not require a computer modem. This resource is our communities. Community is one of the richest educational resources for the young child, because when children interact with the community, it provides authentic experiences. Community educational resources may be categorized as *natural resources, people resources and material resources* (Gestwiki, 2004).

Natural Resources: within reach from an ECE centre, childcare providers may find natural resources such as businesses, transportation systems, fire halls, parks, and recreation areas. Each one of these offers countless learning experiences for young children.

People Resources: every neighbourhood has its own socioeconomic, racial, and cultural make up. Educators who can familiarize themselves with the customs and lifestyles of people resources in the community surrounding their centre may find richness and diversity to share with children. Parents themselves may be a key asset for assisting teachers in this learning process. They are a helpful community's people resource.



Material Resources: educators who are able to make community connections with businesses, advocacy groups, and other community services may be able to seek and gather material resources for their curriculum and offer different learning opportunities.

When we build relationships beyond our classrooms we introduce young children to the value of their communities. No child is too young to learn the valuable lesson of making a contribution to and feeling like a member of a community.

So the next time you think you need to surf the Net to find some new curriculum ideas for an early childhood education programs, reflect on the power of the community connection and how this connection can enrich a child care facility's curriculum. Connection to communities can provide support for creating community interest and link the child, parent, and educator to authentic learning experiences.

Work Cited:

Gestwicki, C (2004) *Home, School and Community Relations* -5th ed. New York: Thomson Delmar Learning

Childcare Resources

Exploring Your Community: Activities for children and parents

By Judy Olivieri

Natural Resources

Take a Truck Walk

Purpose and Learning Outcomes:

- To see different kinds of trucks
- To notice size, shape and characteristics of trucks
- To learn more about the work trucks do
- To learn about safety around trucks

Vocabulary:

Introduce different truck words to children and parents in family sessions to enhance language inclusion at school and at home

tow truck, dump truck, refrigerator trucks, semi-trailer truck, fire truck, delivery truck, motor, body, cab, truck driver

Introduction Activities:

Before going on the walk introduce in the classroom pictures of and books about trucks and transportation. Ask questions to children on how cars and trucks are different, and ask children if there are different kinds of trucks and what makes them different. Suggest going for a walk to see if there are any trucks in the community. Look at what kinds there are and what they are doing. Take a digital camera to document the field trip for further discussions with the children.

Follow up Activities:

- Talk about the walk, review the digital pictures and let the children share their experiences.
- Set up a truck repair shop and gas station for the trucks in the preschool.
- Bring in a variety of boxes and have the children create their own vehicles.

Parenting Sessions:

If the walk can take place with the parents and children, there is a great opportunity to engage children and parents in conversation they can share beyond the classroom. Photographs are wonderful to

share with families. Together a parent and child can make a photo collage of the images they saw on the walk. Pictures can also be labelled, making the picture colleague print-enriched to foster language learning.

People Resources

Take a Neighbourhood Walk

Purpose and Learning outcomes:

- To look for different types of houses
- To learn about the parts of a house
- To learn who lives and works in the neighbourhood
- To observe the area surrounding the houses and where their school is.

Vocabulary:

apartment building, house, two storey house, door, window, roof, porch, yard, fence, gate, brick, clothesline, garden, garage, driveway, stairs, patio.

Introductory Activities:

Have the children tell you about where they live. Have the children draw or make out of clay, blocks or boxes the house/apartment they live in.

Follow Up Activities:

- Use felt shapes to make houses on the flannel board.
- Discuss the parts of the house.
- Show the children a blueprint and help them make their own house plan.
- Bring in tents, large boxes and blankets and have the children create their own houses.

Material Resources

Making a connection to national, provincial, regional and community services is simplified when early childhood educators have access to the Internet. Westcoast Childcare Resource Services, at www.westcoast.org, has created numerous links to services and advocacy groups across the province. Go to links and surf your area of interest.

Local merchants and other businesses in communities also play an important role in the wellness of a neighbourhood. Being connected to local special events and other celebrations provides social opportunities for children and their families.

From Our Students

Experience of 2010 Winter Olympic Games

By Wendy Tang
ELSA Level 5
S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

In order to let us care more and feel more about the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, our ELSA teacher, Margaret, took us on a field trip to downtown on Feb. 11. To me, it was really a rewarding and lucky trip which gave me a chance to deeply experience this Winter Olympics.

During this field trip, we visited the Canadian Northern House and the BC Hydro Power Smart Village. While feeling the cheerful Olympic atmosphere in downtown, we enjoyed a wide range of activities such as building an inukshuk, dancing on a sustainable dance floor, and viewing beautiful artwork. We also took part in the BC Hydro daily draw to win tickets to the 2010 Winter Games, but I didn't think that I could be the lucky one to win the prize. So, it surprised me so much when on the evening of Feb. 12 I received an email informing me that I won a pair of tickets. Although I was not a sports fan, I thought that was a lucky and great chance to experience the Winter Olympic Games in person. On Feb. 13 my husband and I went to pick up the two tickets for Women's hockey between Canada and Slovakia at 5pm.

That was an impressive and wonderful evening in my life. When we arrived at Canada Hockey Place, there were crowds of people waiting outside the different screening entrances. What made us more excited was that our seats were in a suite where there were good viewing seats, comfortable couches, and washrooms. During the game, the workers from BC Hydro served us drinks and snacks. This was my first time to watch a hockey game in an arena and I knew little about hockey, but I was unexpectedly attracted to it. The whole arena was filled with people in red-coloured Olympic outfits and swarming with different sized Canada flags. The Canadian fans' enthusiasm impressed and affected me so much that I cheered and applauded the Canadian women's team with them. I felt that those Canadian players were very strong in skills, running speed and team work. At last, they won the game at an unbelievable score of 18:0. At that moment, all the people stood up and cheered. It was like a big festival and celebration I witnessed and participated in.

This unique and amazing in person experience stimulated my desire to get more involved in this Winter Olympics.

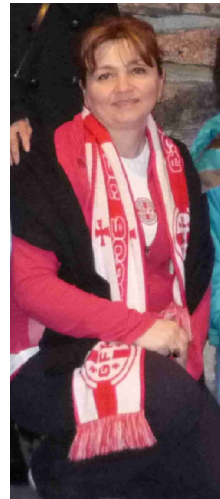


So, from that day on I became concerned about all the games that followed. It might be a once in my life chance to be so close to the Olympics that it would be kept in my memory forever.

2010 Olympic Games

By Nino Bokuchava
ELSA Level 5
S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

I am happy to live in this country where the Olympic Games take place and we have a chance to be the host.



In fact, I had the chance to meet the athletes and the Olympic committees from my country—Georgia, and the president too, in person.

Unfortunately, before the opening of the Games, a horrible thing happened. Our Georgian 21 year- old luger, Nodar Kumaritashvili, was killed in a crash during training. This tragic news was devastating not just for the small Georgian community, but also for all the Canadians who supported us. The Vancouver government helped us to pay respect to the deceased according to our culture and traditions. That is much appreciated by the local Georgian community. In his speech on TV the Georgian President named the support of Canadians as “a celebration of humanism.”

The Opening Ceremony of the games excited me. I learnt more about aboriginal cultures and history. It was too sad that warm weather badly affected the games. Fortunately, organizers were able to put the Olympics back to the desired course and to present to the world a real celebration.

Although Georgian athletes could not show themselves as the best, I'm proud of Canadian's medals because I am Canadian as well as Georgian.

From Our Students

Chinese New Year Parade in Vancouver

By Ellen Cheng

ELSA Level 4, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

There was a special parade to celebrate Chinese New Year in Vancouver's Chinatown on February 14. I was very happy, because I watched the parade that day which started with firecrackers.

First of all, I was lucky to see the Mayor of Vancouver, Mr. Gregor Robertson, and other leaders in the parade. The mayor wore a red Chinese jacket, which means happiness and joy in China. I also saw Da Shan in the parade. He is famous in China. A reporter was interviewing him at that time.

Many organizations took part in the parade. I saw S.U.C.C.E.S.S., HSBC, Global Chinese Press, and student marching bands. I also saw the dragon dance and lion dance. The children's lion dance was especially cute. There was a special Canadian team in the parade. They were walking, dancing, and playing musical instruments. Everyone was dressed as a tiger. Some of them wore tiger face, and others wore tiger clothes. Oh! This is the year of the tiger!

In fact, many people stood on both sides of the road to watch the parade. Someone in the parade presented red envelopes, which is traditional. I was excited to receive a red envelope. When I opened it, it contained a piece of candy wrapped in a Canadian flag.

This was my first Chinese New Year in Canada. It was also an interesting and meaningful New Year for me. The Chinese New Year parade in Vancouver left a deep impression on me.



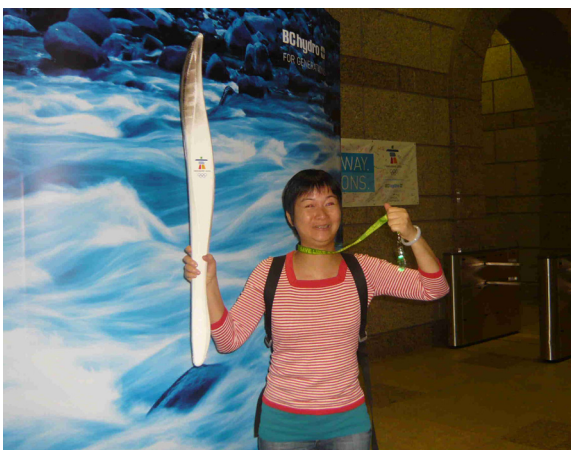
(Ellen, front left, with her classmates)

The Field Trip to BC Hydro Power Smart Village

By Donna Lihua He

ELSA Level 4, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

On February 11, our class went on a field trip to the BC Hydro Power Smart Village, which was displayed by BC Hydro during the Winter Olympics.



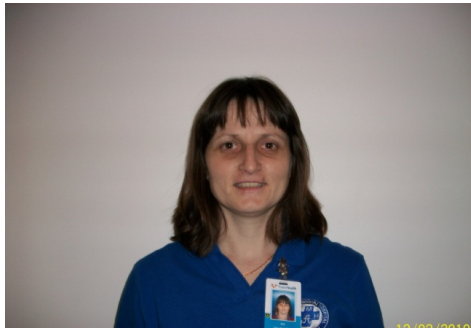
We went there and had a lot of fun. The village had many parts. I liked the part called JOIN TEAM POWER SMART. It showed us a film that taught us how to save power. The Village also had another bonus. We were allowed to take a picture with a real Olympic torch. Can you imagine that? At the village, the staff were super friendly and quite happy to answer all of our questions. At last, we got a glowing medallion as a souvenir for our visit.

As a sponsor of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, BC Hydro does not just promote business, it also tells the public how to save power through fun and games. Some people said that the 2010 Olympic Winter Games wasted money. However, in this case, if the public learn that saving power is important and practise that, can you imagine the outcome when resources and money are saved at the same time?

From Our Students

My first volunteer job in Canada

By Eniko Horvat, student of New Directions, Langley



Every Friday I go to Langley Memorial Hospital to do some volunteer work. Last year I started volunteering because I like to help people in need and feel useful.

At first I thought that volunteers was not important, as I thought it was just a little job. But now I realize that volunteer work is as important as a paid job. Most patients have disabilities and they need some help to get in and out of the dining room.

My section is the Dining Room where patients have breakfast, lunch and dinner, but also spend time playing, reading newspapers, or talking to each other.

Because I'm an ESL student I thought I couldn't understand their needs or likes, but it is not true. I always bring some newspapers and they like to read and discuss the articles with me while I get them some water, juice or coffee. When I don't have anything to do, I fold towels for them. When lunch is served, I get them the tray. They have their name on a paper so it is easy to find their tray.

Some patients also need to be fed but the volunteers are not allowed to feed them.

The nurses always thank me after I have finished my work. Now I know it is important to help people because they are so weak, they can't open

their juice, milk, or even their package of crackers.

When a volunteer misses her work, the nurses have more work to do and there aren't enough nurses for all of the patients.

In the end, doing volunteer work means dedicating a part of your time to help other people, and the reward is you'll feel good and useful. One day we'll be like some of these patients and we'll need some help too. Then I will appreciate having a volunteer when I need it.

Winter Festival

By the ELSA 2 morning class at South Vancouver Neighborhood House

Last year on November 28, 2009, we had a Winter Festival at South Vancouver Neighbourhood House. It was from 11 am to 3 pm. There were games, food, music, 50/50 tickets and a silent auction. Also, there were activities for children. The librarian from Fraserview read them stories.

The ELSA 2 students were part of the Winter Festival. We made colourful decorations for some of the rooms and we helped with Bingo. First, we learned how to play Bingo in our classroom. We practiced saying the numbers clearly and writing them on the whiteboard. We learned how to talk about the Bingo game rules.

On Saturday, November 28, most of the ELSA 2 students were able to come to the Neighbourhood House. Many of us brought our families. Some of our children helped with Bingo, too. We taught lots of people how to play Bingo.

Both adults and children played many games. Sometimes we translated the numbers into Mandarin or Cantonese. Two bingo cards cost \$1.00. The winners received prizes. Some of the students donated prizes. Many people

came from the community, including newcomers. Everyone had a good time. We practiced speaking English, met some new people, and made a little money for South Vancouver Neighbourhood House!



Field trips and guest speakers at New Directions, Langley

By ELSA 2 and 3 students at New Directions, Langley

At New Directions we organize bi-monthly field trips in and around the community or invite guest speakers to our school. We also appreciate it if our alumni come back to school to share their "Life After Elsa" experiences once they have graduated. One of these alumni



is Serena Oon who recently started her own coffee shop in downtown Langley. The students from levels 2/3 visited her and her husband last February to learn more about the "ins and outs" of starting your own business.

To read some of the interviews go to [New Directions Field trips at www.elsanet.org](http://www.elsanet.org).

From Our Community

Promoting Accessible Healthy Living

By Melissa Jay

At a family dinner, I smiled at my grandmother and she smiled back with a wide almost-toothless grin. Her front teeth holding on by a mere thread. Growing up, I had regular medical checkups. My grandmother did not have such luxuries in rural China. No, her tooth decay and gum disease are byproducts of poor diet and lack of access to dental care. She immigrated to Canada, acclimated to the Canadian lifestyle, worked at a corner store, and raised a family. In China, regular medical checkups were not available for my grandmother. So, when she came to Canada she didn't find it a necessity.

Although it's true that upon arrival immigrants are generally healthier than the Canadian born population, their health begins to deteriorate the longer they stay. Medical problems can arise, like it did for my grandmother, as immigrants age and adopt negative health behaviors such as a lack of physical activity and eating unhealthy diets. These issues can develop into chronic health problems and diseases. Education, as we know, is a critical way to prevent and manage these health conditions.

My grandmother could not speak English. As a result, she didn't know what health care resources were available or how to access them. Like it was fifty years ago for my grandmother, immigrants and newcomers to Canada face numerous barriers, separating them from the education they need. Many immigrants are confronted with cultural and language barriers, as well as trouble accessing resources and navigating the health care system.

Attempting to address these issues is the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA), who for the last five years has hosted the Vancouver Diversity Health Fair. The largest event of its kind in Canada, the Fair aims to promote healthy living among the Lower Mainland's multicultural communities. The Diversity Health Fair brings a unique and direct approach to promoting, educating, and raising awareness of health. Essentially a one-stop-shop, the Fair brings together numerous health care resources while ensuring that information is provided in multiple languages from French and Farsi to

Mandarin. As multilingual volunteers will be available, attendees can comfortably converse and ask questions about health. At the Fair, the public can learn about general health practices, crucial health issues, disease prevention, living actively, and eating right, regardless of their native tongue.

As obesity-related illnesses are growing exponentially, (such as diabetes and heart disease) the 2010 Diversity Health Fair will focus on the theme of healthy living and healthy weight. Fun and educational, the Fair will also feature over fifty health related exhibitor booths, interactive games, health screenings and tests, a kid's activity area, fitness and cooking demonstrations, multicultural entertainment, as well as door prizes and giveaways.

The 2010 Vancouver Diversity Health Fair will take place on May 29, 2010 from 10am - 4pm at the Croatian Cultural Centre.



2010 Diversity Health Fairs

Abbotsford - Saturday, June 5, 2010

Kelowna - Saturday, May 15, 2010

Nanaimo - Thursday, May 6, 2010

Vernon - Friday, September 17, 2010

Victoria - Saturday, September 25, 2010

Maple Ridge - End of June, 2010

AMSSA - Vancouver - Saturday, May 29, 2010

For more information contact AMSSA or go to ELSA Net Events calendar at www.elsanet.org/resources.html.

From Our Community

ESL Week

April 25 - May 1, 2010

In the city of Vancouver

Whereas, Metro Vancouver is renowned for its multiculturalism and now has the second-highest proportion of foreign born residents in Canada; and

Whereas, over the past four decades, immigrants have added to our city's diversity by bringing their culture, customs and heritage which has resulted in a rich blend of various traditions and languages; and

Whereas, learners of English as a second language are represented by a large cross section of individuals that includes students of elementary

and secondary schools, colleges, universities, public and private schools, and adult education centres, all pursuing literacy and basic skills; and

Whereas, the professional organization of British Columbia Teachers of English as an Additional Language (TEAL) is hosting their 42nd annual conference on April 30th and May 1st, 2010 at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT, downtown campus) consisting of workshops, presentations and plenary speakers to continue to develop the skills and abilities of its members;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Gregor Robertson, as MAYOR of the City of Vancouver, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM the week of April 25th - May 1st, as, "ESL WEEK"

In the City of Vancouver
Gregor Robertson
Mayor of Vancouver

Chinese New Year Party at Waverley StrongStart

By Joni Kwan



StrongStart is a drop-in program for both children aged 0-6 and adult family members to participate together in a joyful environment to learn and play.

One of our goals is to introduce our participants to various social or cultural events, such as Christmas, the Olympics, Valentine's Day, etc.

Recently we held a Chinese New Year party here to celebrate the coming of the year of tiger, so that families could have fun while learning at the same time.

On February 17, Chinese New Year, we asked parents to bring some snacks to share with each other. We borrowed books about Chinese New Year from the library, so that both parents and

children could learn something about this long standing traditional Chinese festival. Everyone helped to decorate our classroom in a colorful and festive mode.

We prepared some traditional foods and toys. We handed out the traditional 'Red Pocket' with a chocolate gold coin in it to symbolize good luck. A lot of people came and they dressed up in their best clothes, many in traditional Chinese clothing. We sang, and we told stories. Children especially enjoyed trying out the lion dance. It turned out to be a very enjoyable event and everyone had a great time.

From Our Community

Women of the World

By Janet Les

Chilliwack ELSA 4/5 Instructor

WoW

Women of the World

A social network for
immigrant women

Come and join us - meet women
like you - make new friends

NEXT GET TOGETHER:
Friday, January 28, 2009 - 7:30 pm
Hostess: Janet Les
Address: 10150 Gillanders Road
(north off Yale Road)
Theme: New Year's resolutions
Bring a snack to share

For information, contact
Doutzen Hofstede - doutzen@hotmail.com
Janet Les (604) 794-3772 janetles@shaw.ca

WOW! It's a lot of fun! Chilliwack Women of the World (WoW) meet monthly for food and fellowship. We adapted this idea from a similar initiative in Abbotsford. With very little effort, immigrant women have an opportunity to socialize and meet other women just like them.

I printed a half-page flyer on bright paper and distributed it to ELSA classes and a few other popular immigrant hang-outs. We met at my home on a Friday evening and at different locations from then on. We don't meet in the summer, but have a BC Day afternoon yard party instead, when women can bring their families.

On the last Friday evening of the month we meet at a WoW member's home from 7:30 to 9:30. The hostess provides seating for about 20, coffee, juice, and plates. Guests bring a snack to share with an ingredient card, if warranted, eg., vegetarian. At the meeting, the next month's meeting flyer is provided, a guest book is passed for everyone to sign, as well as a sign up sheet for first-time attendees to receive monthly email. I send an email the middle of each month with the next date, address, directions, and theme.

We start the evening with a 15 minute "meet and greet." Then everyone gets some food (a highlight!) and we sit around the room. Each lady introduces herself and shares her thoughts on the theme of the night. Questions and comments are welcome. After that, we may get some more refreshments and chat with each other until it's time to say good bye.

Themes have included New Year's resolutions, friendship, names, food, Best ___ in Chilliwack, holidays, vacations, etc. Sometimes we forget about the theme and just chat. Whatever works, as long as everyone is having fun. One WoW meeting was a baby shower for a new young mother awaiting her permanent residency. Guests brought a wrapped anonymous gift and WoW, what a lot of onesies!

Women are free to share needs, promote their business, brag or complain, all in good humour. We have a collection box where ladies are encouraged to deposit a loonie. With this money, when someone has a special circumstance (marriage, baby, surgery, death in the family) I buy her flowers or a gift from the group.

The goal is to socialize, so speaking in their own language to another newcomer is okay. Language and cultural differences have not been a challenge. We have a few regular attendees who work with immigrants: a settlement worker, an elementary school ESL teacher, a retired immigrant childcare worker, and me, who help ensure that everyone is included and offer rides from our neighbourhood.

Attendance has varied from 16 to 21. If we get much larger, we may need to have two groups, but so far, so good. Some women come every month, some once in a while, some only once. We always have someone new, and so the fun continues.

The only complaint we've had is that there is no WoW for men. Hopefully, someone will initiate something for the men, but meanwhile no men or kids are allowed at Chilliwack WoW. It's a special time for the ladies only.

Email me if you would like more information or the template for our flyer to adapt for your community. Start a WoW group in your area. We can WoW the whole province!

janetles@shaw.ca

From Our Community

AMSSA Supports Newcomer Children



The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA) is a provincial not-for-profit, non-partisan umbrella organization representing and serving over 75 immigrant settlement and multicultural agencies in BC. In 2009, AMSSA launched a new initiative called the AMSSA Newcomer Children's Advocate Program to build capacity in the area of early and middle childhood of newcomer children. AMSSA is currently working with its member agencies and other stakeholders to improve the outcomes for newcomer children - their cultural transitions, their social integration, their schooling outcomes, and their physical and mental well-being.

As part of the initiative, AMSSA launched a new website called the AMSSA Newcomer Children's Information Exchange (ANCIE), which provides an overview of issues confronting newcomer children, as well as current research, educational materials and resources for service providers, educators and policy makers. The information can be accessed through a searchable database, or by browsing different themes.

Together with the Office of the Representative of Children and Youth in BC, AMSSA also hosted regional consultations with service providers working with newcomer children in BC. Participants shared the unique needs and challenges facing newcomer children, as well as the barriers affecting their successful integration. One of the most common barriers identified for newcomer children was language, which affects not only children born abroad, but also children born in Canada. Newcomer children are faced with the task of learning a new language, as well as cultural norms, etiquette, slang, and inter-personal cues. These findings will be available in a report, which is scheduled to be released in May.

AMSSA gratefully acknowledges the United Way of the Lower Mainland for its financial support.

To access the ANCIE website, please visit www.amssa.org/ancie. For more information about AMSSA's Newcomer Children's Advocate Program, please contact Rishima Bahadoorsingh at newcomerchildren@amssa.org.



Who are Newcomer Children?

Newcomer Children are children aged 0-12 years, born abroad or in Canada, with one or both parents having immigrant, refugee or temporary resident status. The term "newcomer" is used rather than "immigrant," as it is inclusive of categories that may not fit under the classification of "immigrant." It includes temporary foreign workers, live-in caregivers, and international students.



Why focus on Newcomer Children?

It is often assumed that children adapt more quickly to change than adults. However, similar to adults, newcomer children may face complex and conflicting emotions, such as excitement, fear of the unknown, or sadness due to separation from loved ones. For some newcomer children, the immigration process represents an easy transition, and they are able to integrate into the community without much effort. However, for others, it can be an uphill battle that leads to frustration, loneliness, or aggression. Newcomer children often require specialized supports to help them in their transition to a new country.



THEMES

- Early Childhood Education
- English as a Second Language
- Family Dynamics
- Health and Wellness
- Multiculturalism and Identity
- Migration and Integration
- Schooling
- Socio-Economic Background

Welcome

ANCIE is a website created to provide information and resources for British Columbia service providers, educators, policy makers and the general public on newcomer children – kids aged 0-12 from Immigrant, Refugee, and/or Temporary Resident families.

This site features:

- A searchable database of useful research reports, educational materials, and web links;
- Theme pages that provide a general overview of key issues affecting newcomer children; and
- An archive of the ANCIE Bulletin, our monthly e-newsletter



ANCIE has been created to support the work of AMSSA's Newcomer Children's Advocate Program, an initiative funded by the United Way of the Lower Mainland, promoting and advancing the interests of Immigrant and Refugee children.

For more information on AMSSA's Newcomer Children's Advocate program, or to submit a resource to be included in the ANCIE database, please email: newcomerchildren@amssa.org.



From Our Community



AMSSA Research Connections (ARC) E-Portal

On October 14, 2009, the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC officially launched the AMSSA Research Connections (ARC) website. ARC was funded by Metropolis BC (MBC), a joint project directed by Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia that funds, produces, and disseminates research to aid discussion on Canada’s (and BC’s) emerging immigration policy issues. ARC features a database of Research Papers from 1996 to the present.

Intended for BC settlement and social services providers, policy makers, and the general public, ARC provides a brief overview of issues in immigration and settlement organized along the following themes:

Immigration Process and Trends	Health and Wellness	Integration and Adaptation
Income Security	Policy and Law	Employment and Labour Market
Education and Language	Housing and Shelter	Multiculturalism and Identity

With an easy to use search function and brief summaries of each research paper, users can quickly and efficiently find the research most relevant to their needs and interests, and can download any paper as a PDF document.

The site also includes a multimedia page featuring the videos from our AMSSA Research Connections (ARC) webcast symposium series, links to other useful research-related sites, and BC’s only comprehensive glossary of immigration and settlement terms and acronyms.

ARC is available at www.amssa.org/arc/.



From Our Community

Financial Literacy Workshops – Make Money Make Sense



The Financial Literacy Workshop is a *free program* funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada offered through partnership between Social and Enterprise Development Innovations (S.E.D.I.) and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. The program is designed to help newcomers gain knowledge and understanding of our Canadian financial

system. After taking the program, participants will be able to better understand this system, to make their own choices about their money, and to understand their rights and responsibilities.

The program consists of 10 modules that will deliver the fundamentals of everyday money matters over 9 hours of workshop time. Workshops are conducted in the following languages: English, French, Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Swahili, Arabic, and Farsi. A certificate will be awarded upon completion of all 10 modules. Topics covered include the following: budgeting and saving; banking; credit and debt management; basic investing; consumerism; and taxation. Workshops are held at various S.U.C.C.E.S.S. locations in the mornings, afternoons, and evenings. For a current list of upcoming workshops, contact Jennifer Mach, Program Coordinator.

Workshops in English are also available for integration into ELSA programs at Levels 4 and 5. Instructors interested in incorporating this workshop into their current class schedule, can contact Jennifer Mach at 604-408-7274 ext. 2045 or Jennifer.mach@success.bc.ca.

Access Community through English

By Amea Wilbur

Access Community through English (ACE) is an ESL/Life Skills program delivered through Vancouver Community Mental Health Services (VCMHS).

In September 2008, we started an ESL class for people who have experienced trauma. This class is open to people who have a mental health contact within VCMHS or a relevant health contact in the community.

The 1 1/2 hour class is held once a week at Grandview/Woodlands Mental Health Team office (2250 Commercial Drive, Vancouver). It is a multi-level ESL class with a maximum of 6 participants taught by ACE staff.

We would be happy to come and meet with you to further discuss this initiative as well as to inform you of ACE's other ESL/Life Skills services.

Please feel free to contact me or Sandra Slind at 604-251-2264 or e-mail Amea.Wilbur@vch.ca or Sandra.Slind@vch.ca.



Join us in celebrating our
30th Anniversary ABEABC Conference
“Inspiring Skills for Success”
April 15/16, 2010 at Harrison Resort and Spa, Harrison Hot Springs, BC

Our Annual Spring Conference focuses on excellence in professional development and recognition of practitioner perspective in the design and implementation of policy and programs.

For more information go to: <http://www.abeabc.ca/conferences.htm>.

Get the latest ABEABC Newsletter at <http://www.abeabc.ca/pubs.htm>