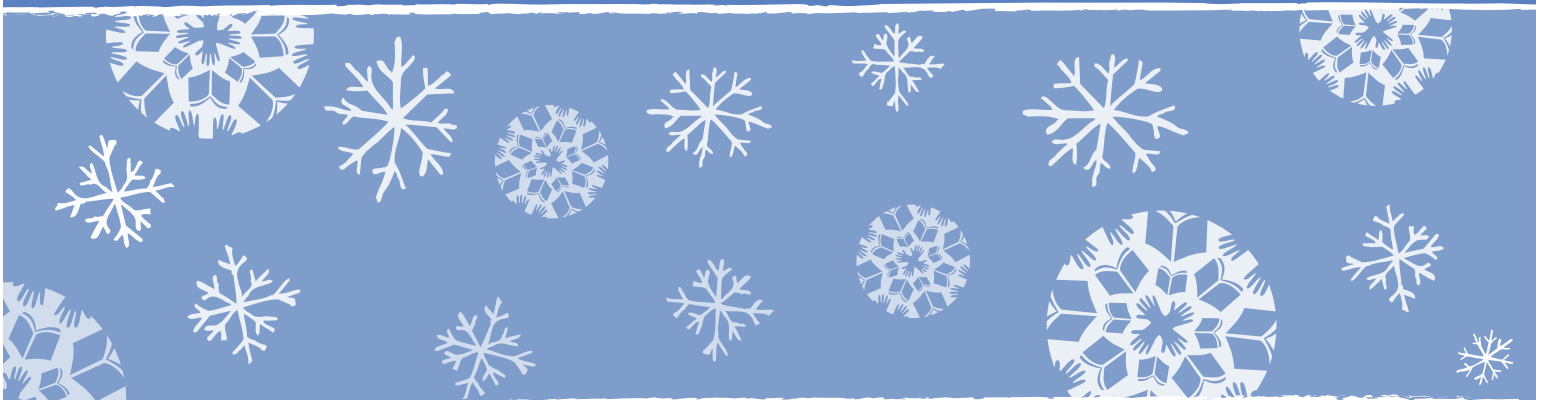




Yukon Literacy Coalition



2020-2021 Annual Report

The Yukon Literacy Coalition is a society of people dedicated to improving the quality of life of all Yukoners. We do this by building the foundational skills required for lifelong learning; acknowledging that we are all adapting to an ever-changing world.

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President's Report

What an interesting year it has been for the world with the Covid-19 pandemic. Although the Yukon Literacy Coalition was unable to always offer face-to-face programming this year, they continued to find ways to keep connected with families and ensure that all Yukoners had the opportunity to keep learning together in their bubbles. They sent out literacy activity bags, created online programming and kept in touch with isolated Yukoners through phone calls and online.

As Covid-19 restrictions were lifted in the fall of 2020, the Family Literacy Centre opened with strict safety protocols that ensured a safe and fun learning experience for all visitors. In the spring of 2021, the Pioneer Hotel in Shipyards Park opened again with new protocols to ensure the health and safety of all visitors. A team of staff visited almost every Yukon community in the spring of 2021, checking in to see how our communities were doing, what they needed, and to offer much needed programming.

The YLC staff make me feel proud to be the President of such a unique society. A society that is guided by the values of unity, honesty, kindness, loyalty, and generosity. These values are expressed in the services that they offer to our territory.

Thank you. Gunalcheesh.

Kelly Johnston, President

Board of Directors

Kelly Johnston (President) – Teslin

Patricia Brennan (Vice President) – Francophone

Dawn Marino (Secretary/Treasurer) – Pelly/Carmacks

Deb Chadwick (Director) – Watson Lake

Sam Johnston (Director) – Yukon First Nation Elder

Luke Faught (Director) – Whitehorse

Shelaine Charland (Director) – Ross River/Faro



Executive Director's Report



This was a year to remember. Although it was tough in many ways, we at the Yukon Literacy Coalition are very grateful for many gifts that came our way. We worked with kind and considerate funders within the Yukon Government Department of Education. We would like to give special thanks to Anton Solomon and Catherine St. Germaine for working with us on the ground and to Minister Tracy McPhee and Deputy Minister Nicole Morgan for their continued support. We were able to adapt and continue with programming throughout the entire year, despite the challenges of Covid-19. The staff came together as a team to create innovative ways to continue to offer learning opportunities to all Yukoners.

Our family programming included distributing literacy activity bags that included arts and craft supplies, dry ingredients to make a family meal, books, and games. We went online with story times and activities/crafts. We opened our centres as soon as we could safely and went back out on the road when we were able.

In the spring of 2021 Erin and Samantha, our youth financial team, visited almost every school in the Yukon teaching basic financial skills to all grades. We did a tour of the Yukon on which Darby and Victoria did a financial literacy needs assessment, while Stephanie offered family literacy workshops.

As well as maintaining all of our regular programming we've initiated some new projects, including the Heritage Garden in Shipyards Park. Under the guidance of master gardeners Agnes Seitz, Gertie Scharrer, and Randy Lewis we built and planted a beautiful, plentiful garden. It is designed to be a learning/teaching garden and we anticipate in January 2022 starting a 10-month gardening course that covers everything that is needed to garden in the north. Another notable project we're trying to get off the ground is a bus that will be converted into a Family Literacy Centre on wheels. We are currently fundraising and have almost reached our goal of \$60,000. We've found the bus that we want to buy and hope to have it in the Yukon by the fall of 2021. This bus will make our community outreach programming much easier, and we will be able to participate in many more culture camps, festivals, and other Yukon summer events.

Thank you to all of our sponsors, supporters, volunteers, friends, colleagues, clients, and everyone else who makes our work possible.

Beth Mulloy, Executive Director

2020-2021 Highlights

Dän Ts'ānānān - Our People Working Together program

The Yukon Literacy Coalition (YLC), Champagne Aishihik First Nations (CAFN), and Yukon College worked together on a 40-month project called Dän Ts'ānānān, which was a federally funded program designed to increase capacities and employment for CAFN citizens. The vision of the program was to deliver innovative and culturally appropriate programming that focused on peoples' strengths and brought about positive change for at-risk citizens. The intention was to increase literacy and employment skills of CAFN youth and adults that were out of school, under-employed, or unemployed.

One of our program initiatives was a Greenhouse Workplace Training program. The 21-week program was designed to combine wellness, non-formal learning (soft skills) and formal learning (hard skills), with the operation of two commercial greenhouses. In the summer of 2020, due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, we hired a Haines Junction resident, Leslie Cromwell, to support the Greenhouse Workplace Training program. She worked alongside Dän Ts'ānānān staff to support the gardening program throughout the 21 weeks. In addition, YLC staff developed a greenhouse and garden manual for CAFN that can be used for a gardening program in future years.

Another program initiative was developing a step-by-step document on how to run a Social Enterprise. This document was finalized in the fall of 2021, after YLC staff did a review of Food Security programs throughout northern Canada. The Dän Ts'ānānān project ended March 31st, 2021.



Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy has looked a little different this past year. The Covid-19 pandemic caused a big shake up on everyone's relationship with money. We have continued to be creative with how to share information with those not connected to social media, such as providing a full page spread in the Yukon News on the topics including how to teach your kids about money, scams, debt, and a fillable budget.

We travelled to Ross River and delivered a two-day workshop to a Youth Employment program, facilitated an afternoon workshop for the KDFN home maintainer program, travelled to Watson Lake to facilitate a two-day workshop and ran a workshop for women at the Jackson Lake Healing Camp.

In the early spring of 2021, we launched a Yukon-wide survey and visited Haines Junction, Burwash, Beaver Creek, Carmacks, Pelly, Mayo, Dawson, Faro and Ross River to speak with stakeholders about how we can best deliver future Financial Literacy workshops in their communities. We will be piloting some new programming in the fall of 2021 with workshops focused on specific topics such as: saving for retirement, learning about scams and how to start investing.

Constructing Effective Learning and Literacy Societies (CELLS)

CELLS, also known as our “Community Literacy project”, works with facilitators from Yukon communities to design and run unique literacy programs. Facilitators are trained how to design and create their specific programs and learn how to embed literacy and essential skills. Three communities took part in the CELLS programs this past year. We worked with a facilitator in Watson Lake to run a once-a-week sewing program where all participants learned how to use a sewing machine and left the workshop with their own jelly roll quilt. The facilitator hopes to continue a ‘drop-in’ sewing program in the community. Our board member, Deb Chadwick, attended, and then continued the program with a second group of quilters.

We also worked in partnership with the Carmacks Recreation Centre to offer two ‘drop-in’ painting workshops in February and May 2021. The third program was a workshop series in Haines Junction. Three workshops were offered to the community: how to plant seeds, how to build a cold frame, and small engine repair. All workshops were well received in the community, especially the small engine repair.



Heritage Learning Garden

In the beginning of summer 2021, we developed and built a Heritage Learning Garden adjacent to the Pioneer Hotel in Shipyards Park in Whitehorse. We had assistance from Greenspace North Landscaping and Design with clearing the space, installing the fence, and helping to fill all garden boxes with topsoil purchased from the City of Whitehorse. Gardening expert Agnes Seitz provided a planting plan for each box, guidance throughout the planning and implementation of the garden, as well as some excellent starter plants. The garden will provide an opportunity for people to learn about planting, maintaining, and harvesting. The vision is to have family literacy programming, workshops for adults, and teachings about traditional healing plants. The focus for the 2021 season is on building the infrastructure of the garden and our own internal gardening expertise. We are looking forward to delivering programming in the garden for the 2022 season.

I yéi jinéiyi, i jeyées yéi jinganéi - Making Work, Work for You Program

The *Making Work, Work for You* program was a 12-week hands-on learning program that started in Carcross in July 2020. It was designed in partnership with Carcross Tagish First Nation to help participants plan, develop, and operate a small business. Participants successfully developed and operated a business, “Carcross Fireweed Tea & Bannock”, once per week at the Fireweed Community Market. They learned how to develop a marketing plan, a menu, a cost strategy and how much they were profiting each week. They worked as a team to spend the mornings producing multiple flavors of bannock including plain, rosemary & olive, cinnamon sugar and blueberry lemon. They spent time picking fireweed flowers and then making fireweed jelly to sell with the bannock. They also sold hot tea and coffee at their market table. In addition, each participant developed a formal business plan to start their own businesses.



Youth Financial Literacy

We identified the need for a Yukon specific, youth-focused financial literacy training that met the unique circumstances and needs of our Yukon youth. We provide youth with relevant information that allows them to learn, understand and develop the skills required to become more confident and informed about the decisions they make regarding personal finances and their futures. This approach allows us to meet our youth at their level and tailor learning and skill development to the unique circumstances of specific youth, their communities, and their stage in life.

The Youth Entrepreneurship Program

In the summer of 2020, YLC launched a youth entrepreneurship initiative, offering opportunities, guidance, and support to Yukon youth (12-18 years old) who wanted to work for themselves. The Yukon Literacy Coalition helped with start-up costs, marketing, budgeting, and business planning, among other things to help the youth succeed thereby fostering financial skill development. As part of the program, all participants engaged in a fulsome youth entrepreneur workshop.

The program was extended to run over the course of the school year and applications closed as of May 2021. A total of 19 young entrepreneurs participated in the program. Some of their businesses included a community service birdhouse project, a sport photography business, a wood shop business (building coasters, cutting boards and key chains), an odd jobs maintenance and snow removal business, a homemade 100% biodegradable beauty bar business, and a comic book/graphic novelist.

Youth Financial Literacy Workshops

Youth Financial Literacy workshops are an extension of our current financial literacy program, aimed at teaching foundational financial skills to youth of all ages in order to provide them with the necessary tools to make good financial decisions. The program's objective is to increase the likelihood of children having a positive relationship with money and increasing the chances of youth having financially secure lives when they become adults. The program format is broken down into groups by grades (K-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12) and taught through workshops ranging from 30 to 60 minutes.

Concepts that are taught follow the learning outcomes of the Yukon math curriculum under financial literacy but have been modified to take a northern approach through activities and engaging material. Elementary grades learn fundamental money skills such as: what is money, earning money, making spending decisions, saving, being responsible with money, and separating needs and wants. High school students are taught more advanced financial skills such as setting a savings goal, sources of income, making good financial decisions, reading a pay stub, basics of budgeting, credit, and debt basics, saving for post-secondary, and expenses for living on your own.

In the spring of 2021, a total of 48 youth financial literacy workshops were taught to students throughout the Yukon. Workshops were taught at Jack Holland Elementary School, Whitehorse Elementary School, Takhini Elementary, FH Collins, Vanier, Tantalus School in Carmacks, Ghùch Tlâ School in Carcross, Del Van Gorder School in Faro, Ross River School in Ross River, Robert Service School in Dawson, and Chief Zzeh Gittlit School in Old Crow.

Seniors Making Connections Through Digital Literacy

This program focused on training seniors how to use iPads. We recognized that throughout Covid-19 seniors were isolated and required to turn to technology to stay connected and supported. Through a train-the-trainer approach, we trained a senior from Carcross, Beverly James, how to use an iPad. She learned how to facetime, the basics of online banking, how to create a spreadsheet on excel, and the general use of the iPad. We worked closely with Bev for 4 weeks, then she began teaching the program to 9 other seniors in Carcross. The program successfully ran twice per week for 4 weeks. At the end of the program, each participant got to take home their iPad to continue to better their knowledge and skills.



The Yukon Imagination Library

The Yukon Imagination Library (YIL) continues to provide quality literature to children across the Territory and memberships increase steadily both for long-term residents and newcomers to the Yukon. Many titles have been added recently, including board books for infants and toddlers, books with northern-specific content, and books authored by Canadians. Currently, one of the most popular titles is written by Canadian Astronaut Chris Hadfield.

YLC staff continue to manage local YIL accounts and assist families that require help to engage in the program. The Family Literacy Centre's own Imagination Library collection continues to grow as titles are added to the service. YIL stories are utilised in programs and story times, and frequently serve as inspiration for activities. As YIL books are often included in donations, YLC is able to provide them to daycares and other relevant organizations across the Yukon, and to offer them to the general public through our free bookstore.



Family Literacy Centre



The importance and value of the Family Literacy Centre (FLC) and the work we do there with families has been reinforced during the pandemic. Many parents were faced with challenges in their daily parenting and turned to the FLC for support. The FLC re-opened its doors to the public on October 13th of 2020, after having closed due to Covid-19 in mid-March. Prior to opening, the first two weeks of October were spent setting up a Covid-19 safe space in the FLC. This involved putting many of our supplies and toys into storage, rearranging furniture, and shelving, and adding new signage and floor markings. New cleaning and sanitation procedures were developed, and janitorial

services increased to create the safest possible conditions for our clients. Group programs at this time were not allowed to operate in accordance with Yukon Government regulations, but we were pleased to be allowed to open our space for drop-in and self-directed play with various Covid-19 protocols in place. Despite all of the initial challenges, the FLC was able to welcome back many returning families, as well as welcome many new families throughout the winter.

Our popular annual FLC Christmas party could not take place this year, but we replaced this by sharing 250 free tea boxes for Yukon families which were distributed at Shipyards Park. Each box served 4 and included tea, sandwiches, treats and an activity book. In addition to the boxes, the FLC partnered with the City of Whitehorse for their Christmas Storytime videos which were filmed in the Pioneer Hotel.

We took part in the Kwanlin Dün First Nation Kindergarten Fair and facilitated a Birth Stories session on Zoom, with the theme of 'having a baby during a pandemic' with midwife Kathleen Cranfield co-facilitating.

The Used Book Drive has continued to be a success, with many incoming boxes and bags of books being donated by families to be redistributed.

The Pioneer Hotel

Despite the uncertainty of the pandemic, the summer of 2020 at the Pioneer Hotel was quite successful. As one of the few children and family programs able to open to the public - and the only drop-in program that did not require registration - local families greatly appreciated having a safe environment to play and socialize. Although the building was closed due to Covid-19 safety protocols, our staff was able to provide activities, free books, snacks, and resources outside for visiting children and families. Visitors enjoyed socially distanced activities like circle time, various arts and crafts, story time, and nature-based activities. On rainy days that made outdoor programming difficult, we offered take-home craft kits for families to pick up and created outdoor physical literacy challenges, such as park-wide scavenger hunts for families to engage in. Due to Covid-19 concerns, many of our partner groups modified their programs and were unable to join us at the Pioneer Hotel. As such, our staff provided craft kits, literacy activity bags, books, and resources to augment their work.

The Pioneer Hotel summer season of 2021 opened on May 30th to strong attendance and many first-time families. All programs took place outdoors – rain or shine – and included activities like puddle painting, insect hunts, and seed planting. Aside from our regular drop-in play time and free books, visitors enjoyed a range of new outdoor toys, such as giant board games, t-ball, and a toddler trampoline. We once again provided take-home craft kits, snacks, and YLC resources which were very popular with families. Wednesdays were particularly fun as our staff read stories on air for Arts in the Park. With Covid-19 regulations somewhat relaxed, many partner groups were able to return to the PH for modified programming. Due to an unfortunate outbreak of Covid-19 among children and youth in June, the Pioneer Hotel closed for two weeks to help halt community spread. During this downtime, the building was cleaned, painted, and refreshed in preparation for reopening in July.



Community Outreach and Engagement

While most in-person festivals, culture camps, and events were cancelled, our Community Outreach program remained vibrant through 2020-2021. With generous donations from community partners, our staff was able to assemble hundreds of literacy activity bags for children and families across the Yukon. Various themed bags were produced and included a variety of YLC resources, arts and craft materials, books, cut-and-paste activities, cards and dice, hot chocolate, traditional stories, and much more.

YLC provided resources to many local programs supporting families sticking close to home, including Takhini Elementary School, the Dusk'a Head Start Program, the Kwanlin Dun House of Learning, and the Marsh Lake Family Program. Staff supported the Whitehorse Public Library in creating Covid-19 safe program alternatives, partnered with the City of Whitehorse to produce online content for the Santaland Celebration, connected with Communities Building Youth Futures Yukon in their action plan to bolster Yukon youth, and partnered with the Inclusion Yukon Transitions to Adulthood Program that provides employment skills development opportunities to local teenagers with special needs.

In the spring, staff joined Kluane First Nation and the Kids of Kluane Lake School for Dzana Du (Muskrat Camp). We brought Family Literacy activities on the road to Pelly, Mayo, Faro, Ross River, Dawson, and Carmacks. Sadly, a Covid-19 outbreak in the early summer months halted travel and resulted in the cancellation of multiple culture camps and events that staff were scheduled to attend. In response, YLC began development of an online children's portal that will have a library of interactive videos for families, including science-themed activities, arts and crafts, songs, rhymes, and story times.

In March 2021, we started fundraising to purchase and retrofit a 24-passenger bus that would allow us to safely take our family literacy outreach program on the road. This would be our "Family Literacy Centre on Wheels", in which we could provide free family literacy programming. It would be stocked with a free library and resources to help parents support their children's language and literacy development. The bus would allow us to visit and deliver programs in rural communities and gatherings including festivals, fish camps, culture camps, general assemblies and kids' summer camps.



Family Literacy Day 2021

In response to Covid-19, many in-person public events were cancelled across the Yukon throughout 2021. As such, YLC offered an alternative chance for families to celebrate Family Literacy Day safely from home by producing 435 literacy activity bags and dispersed them to families in all Yukon communities. Each bag contained many items including dry ingredients to make a family meal (soup, bread, and a drink), YLC resources, books, a recipe book template, colouring pages, and craft supplies. Feedback on the bags was unanimously positive, with many families sending personal thanks and photos of themselves enjoying the activities together. This initiative was made possible with the help of many volunteers, community organizations, local donors, and YLC partner groups.

Website development

In October 2020, the Yukon Literacy Coalition launched a new and improved website. Thank you to Aaron Janke for his design and building work and to Lisa and Victoria for their dedication and hard work to make it happen.

The new website has an abundance of pictures and information about our numerous current and past projects. There is a new engaging section called “All About Food” that has information about gardening in the North. Our next exciting website addition will be a “For Kids” section to engage families in family literacy programs online.



Literacy This Week

We partnered with the Yukon News this year to start a weekly column called “Literacy This Week” where our staff wrote and shared articles on various topics. We’ve written articles on national days including Family Literacy Day, National Read Aloud Day and Random Acts of Kindness Day. We’ve put in articles on family literacy, financial literacy, and digital literacy. We have also made interactive articles like literacy bingo where families could do the activities on the bingo card and enter the draw to win a prize.

Professional Development

Throughout the year, we’ve had staff renew their First Aid certificates, attend the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate Education Conference (online), take part in multiple sessions of Trauma Training, and obtain their Food Safe certificate.

Our Partners, Supporters and Funders

Air North	Cultured Fine Cheese	Multicultural Association of the Yukon	Watson Lake Daycare
Angellina's Toy Boutique	Del Van Gorder School	Multicultural Centre of Yukon	Well Read Books
Arctic Star Printing Inc.	Due North Maternity and Baby	Murdoch's Gem Shop	What's Up Yukon
Arts in the Park	Dusk'a Head Start	Nelna Bessie John School	Walmart
Association Franco-Yukonnaise	Eliza Van Bibber School	Northwest Territories Literacy Council	Well Bread Culinary Clinic Inc.
ATCO Electric	Elks Whitehorse	Northwestel	Whitehorse Food Bank
Atlin Mountain Coffee Roasters	Employment and Social Development Canada	Nunavut Literacy Council	Whitehorse Public Library
Baked Cafe	Fireweed Market	Na-Cho Nyak Dün First Nation	Winterlong Brewing
Boreal Clinic Therapeutic Summer Camp	First Nations Bank of Canada	Paradise Alley Gifts	Wykes Independent Grocer
Boston Pizza	Ghùch Tlâ Community School	Partners for Children	Yukon Arts Centre
Bubbles Daycare	G-P Distributing	Polarity Brewing	Yukon Brewing
Bullet Hole Bagels	Healthy Babies, Healthy Futures	Pretty, Neat Yukon	Yukon Built
Canada Games Centre	Healthy Families	Real Canadian Superstore	Yukon College
Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program	Horwoods Mall	Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon	Yukon Energy
Canadian Tire	Icycle Sports	Ross River School	Yukon Film Society
Carcross/Tagish First Nation	Itsy Bitsy Yarn Store	Save-On-Foods	Yukon Government
Carcross/Tagish Development Corporation	Japanese Association	Scotiabank	Yukon Health and Social Services
Carmacks Recreation Center	KampYukon	Skookum Jim Friendship Centre	Yukon Health and Wellness Fair
CBC Yukon	Kaushee's Place Women's Transition House	Staples	Yukon Imagination Library
Challenge Community Vocational Alternatives	Kelly Johnston	Sue Warner	Yukon Public Libraries
Challenger Geomatics	Klondike Kettle Corn	Ta'an Kwach'an Council	Yukon Territorial Government
Champagne and Aishihik First Nations	Klondike Rib & Salmon	TD Canada Trust	Yukon News
CIBC	Kluane First Nation	Tantalus Community School	Yukon University
City of Whitehorse	Kluane Lake School	Tanya Handley	Zero Waste Yukon
CKRW The Rush	Kwanlin Dün First Nation	Teslin Tlingit Council	
Coast Mountain Sports	L'AFY	Tim Hortons	
Coles Bookstore	La Leche	Triple J's Canna Space	
Commission Scolaire Francophone du Yukon	Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon	Tr'ondek Hwech'in First Nation	
Community Foundations of Canada	Les Essentielles	United Way	
Community Women's Group	Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation	UPS Store #302	
Council of Yukon First Nations	Lumel Studios	Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre	
Crowe MacKay LLP	Mac's Fireweed Books	Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation	
	Mayo Daycare		
	Monika Melnychuk		



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