

South Shore Literacy Council's Annual Report 2024-2025

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SOUTH SHORE
LITERACY
COUNCIL

CONSEIL
DE LITTÉRATIE
DE LA RIVE-SUD

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INTRODUCTION

The South Shore Literacy Council is dedicated to life-long literacy. In 2024-2025, we delivered courses for early childhood, school age, secondary school, adults and seniors. Annually, we manage 18 programs. Mother Goose, our pre-literacy music class, held 250 sessions for hundreds of families. We partnered with Montreal Diet Dispensary for monthly English-Language workshops on infant nutrition for the Healthy Early Years initiative. We hosted a Speech Pathologist specializing in bilingualism. We visited 700+ students with Canadian authors Lana Button, Sandra Dumais and Briana Corr Scott. We introduced a workshop on combatting disinformation for sixth grade, high school students and seniors. The topic has never been more relevant. We provided bilingual micro-libraries for the community women’s shelter, REACH campuses for neurodiverse students and the Heritage High School New Directions program for students suffering with high anxiety. We expanded our Peer-Tutor training program and reached 111 more potential tutors. We partnered with ACCESS Adult Education to provide employment and English mentoring for 16 new students. The CARE-SHARE Club for neuroatypical adults emphasized poetry, song-writing, meditation, art and videography. We reached hundreds of seniors in our lifelong literacy programs. This year, we added to our repertoire. We facilitated the Lifelong Learning senior’s group bi-weekly and offered age-specific curriculum on financial literacy, vaccines, resilience, cancer research, genealogy and enhanced communication. We continued our French-language partnerships with *La Concertation d’Alphabétisation de Longueuil* and *ConParle Famille*.

By the Numbers:

- The SSLC manages 18 programs for lifelong learning.
- We provided **early childhood programming for 844** participants.
- We facilitated programming for **1,134 primary school-age students**.

- We reached **137 secondary school-age students**.
- We tutored **40 adult learners**.
- We delivered programs for **524 seniors**
- In total, we reached **2,679** participants.

MISSION AND TARGET POPULATION

The South Shore Literacy Council is a non-profit, English-language organization dedicated to offering free literacy programming. We offer literacy programs for early childhood, primary and secondary school, neurodiverse adults, adult students returning to school and seniors. We are committed to improving the quality of life through transmitting literacy skills. We are committed to building community through individual interactions and committed volunteerism.

SERVICE AREA

The Council's principal service area is the Shore Shore of Montréal (Montérégie). The SSLC provides community-based English-language services for participants in: (Listed alphabetically)

- Boucherville
- Brossard
- Candiac
- Carignan
- Chambly
- Greenfield Park
- LaPrairie
- Longueuil
- Saint-Amable
- Saint Bruno
- Saint-Constant
- Saint-David
- Saint-Hubert
- Saint-Hyacinthe,
- Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu
- Sainte-Julie
- Saint-Lambert
- Saint-Luc
- Ville Lemoyne



SERVICE AND ACTIVITIES

1. Early Childhood – Ages 0-4

- The Mother Goose Pre-Literacy Program for Parents and their Young Children (ages 0-4)
- Early Childhood Healthy Early Years Project (HEY)
- Early Childhood Materials for Victims of Domestic Violence

2. Primary School – Ages 5-11

- Kindergarten Literacy Initiatives
- Author Visits
- Reading Workshops
- Peer Tutor/Homework Tips Workshops

3. Secondary School Age – Ages 12-17

- Peer Tutor Training
- Reading at REACH Secondary School
- Partnership with Heritage High School New Directions
- Disinformation Workshop

4. Adults – Ages 18-54

- CARE-SHARE Club for Neurodiverse Adults
- Tutoring
- ACCESS Tutoring
- ARC English Conversation Classes for Health Professionals

5. Seniors – Ages 55+

- Personal Enrichment Programs/Life-Long Learning
- Intergenerational Programs (Grandparent's Week at Mother Goose)
- ARC Partnership for Senior Programming

6. Promotional Activities

7. Community Partnerships

8. Governance



BOARD AND STAFF DIRECTORY

Board of Directors 2024-2025:

President: Caryn Shacter
Vice-president: Helen Noakes
Secretary: Mary O'Malley
Treasurer: David Schurman
Director: Annie Beauregard
Director: Sarah Di Milo
Director: Kevin Wright



Office Staff:

Executive Director: Rachel Wagner
Program Development Agent: Anne Mackay



CARE-SHARE Club Staff:

Program Animators: Patricia Giannakos
Joel De Villiers

SSLC Mother Goose Staff:

Program Animators: Laurel Hewitt
Jana Johnson
Maureen Summers-Lépine



FUNDING SOURCES

PACTE - *Programme d'action communautaire sur le terrain de l'éducation* (PACTE) is a provincial grant administered by the *Direction de la formation générale des adultes* (DFGA). The grant is designed to cover recurring operational expenses. It is the main source of funding for the SSLC.

ARC - Assistance and Referral Center. ARC has funded the SSLC specifically for our Mother Goose Program, Healthy Early Years Project and the CARE-SHARE Club.

CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre - *Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux* in conjunction with the *Table de Concertation CONParle* provides funding for our Early Childhood Programming.

Desjardins - The Mount-Bruno branch of Desjardins funded our Mother Goose program in the local elementary school.

LQ - SSLC is represented as a member of LQ (Literacy Quebec), and receives funding for participation in projects sponsored by this organisation.

Les Éclaireurs de la Vigie Rive-Sud - *Les Éclaireurs* is a French-Language partner organization and have elected the SSLC to be the fiduciary for a community project in 2025.

Financial contributions are accepted through Canadahelps.org from individuals and other groups or organizations in support of our work. As a registered charity we provide official receipts for tax-deductible contributions.



1. EARLY CHILDHOOD – AGES 0-4

SSLC MOTHER GOOSE PROGRAM

The SSLC Mother Goose Program is the foundation of SSLC’s coordinated literacy outreach for young families. It is a pre-literacy music program for parents and their infant children, ages 0-4, offered free of charge to participants. It’s specifically structured to provide:



- Parent-child interaction
- Language acquisition and
- Socialization

Professionally trained animators, Laurel Hewitt, Jana Johnson, and Maureen Summers-Lepine model oral traditions of interactive rhymes, songs, structured play, story and dance. The animators invite parents to disconnect from their electronic devices and ultimately reconnect with their family. The material is uniquely focused on demonstrating optimal one-on-one time between parent and child.

Program Statistics:

- In the 2024-2025 season, we hosted hundreds of families. We provide 7 weekly in-person classes and 1 online option. The SSLC is associated with the Montérégie’s CONPARLE Early Childhood table.

	Fall 2024 Session		Winter 2025 Session		Spring 2025 Session		
Site	Adults	Children	Adults	Children	Adults	Children	Totals
Greenfield Park 1	20	24	24	32	17	25	142
Greenfield Park 2	17	20	18	22	19	21	117
Brossard 1	17	20	11	15	21	22	106
Brossard 2	18	21	21	22	21	22	125
Online	5	6	7	9	6	7	40
St. Lambert 1	18	22	12	13	14	15	94
St. Lambert 2	18	23	18	23	15	19	116
St. Bruno	8	10	8	9	9	12	56
							796

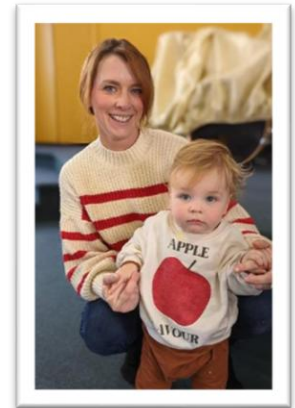
Quotes from Participants:

Parent-Child Interaction

- “The animators are the sunshine to our Monday mornings! My 16-month-old son and I are thrilled to sing and dance with as much fun and carefreeness as we do at Mother Goose. It is fun for both mom and baby! My son's communication through baby signing has increased significantly because I reinforced the same hand gestures at home that we saw weekly through the songs at Mother Goose.”

Amanda from LaPrairie

- “I participated with my 3-year-old daughter who is quite shy and after almost 10 weeks she started opening up during the sessions, participating more and dancing. She always hums the songs days after the classes. This hour a week helped me bond with her, which was very important for us. She got a baby brother 6-months-ago, and attending the class was something we could do just by ourselves.” Iva from Greenfield Park



Language Acquisition

- “When I first brought my son, one of my biggest concerns was his stranger anxiety and shyness. If someone was to take video footage of him from the first day versus now, no one would ever know he had those characteristics! He now calls out answers, talks to the animators, and is much more assertive.” Danielle from Brossard
- “Mother Goose really promotes pre-literacy skills with our little ones while having fun in a non-judgmental environment. It is amazing to do this in a second language and have exposure at an early stage.” Eliane from Brossard

Socialization

- “Mother Goose has provided invaluable uninterrupted one on one time with each of my children and that is hard to achieve in a lot of other settings. I have made long lasting friendships, and when I was feeling lonely and isolated as a first-time mom, received support, advice and a reason to leave the house while I struggled. My time with this

program will soon come to a close as my youngest is almost aging out, but the memories I will take away from this time with my children are so great to look back on.” Allyson from St. Hubert

- “This program really was a saving grace during our time in Quebec. My kids really enjoyed going to this every week. It was the only program that really allowed us to make friends and feel welcome. We are still in touch with participants from previous groups. Jana and Laurel were excellent at fostering a fun, positive, and welcoming environment. They made my kids feel very comfortable. My kids love to sing the songs we learn at Mother Goose and I really think it has helped their language skills and their confidence.” Emily from Candiac

The program is offered in English. (Our animators speak English and French.) Our allophone participants speak the following home languages: (Listed alphabetically): Arabic, Bengali, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Créole, Farsi, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Malagasy, Mandarin, Marathi, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Tulu, and Vietnamese.

Participants: 796

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Laurel Hewitt, Jana Johnson, Maureen Summers-Lépine, Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay, ARC Staff Members: Debra Dorey and Christine Prince

Partners: ARC, St. Paul’s Anglican Church, *La Maison de la Famille de Brossard*, Mt. Bruno Elementary, and St. Lambert Elementary School

HEALTHY EARLY YEARS PROGRAM

Through ARC, the SSLC receives funding to provide health education to young families (HEY). We began the program in 2019. This year we focused on nutrition for parents and their infant children. We partnered with the Montreal Diet Dispensary (ALIMA) to offer monthly online sessions to our Mother Goose Families. The 2-hour sessions were animated by 3 registered dietitians.



We likewise collaborated with Speech Language Pathologist, Amanda Pedriks, to provide a workshop on bilingualism in the home. As many of our participants are allophone, language acquisition and

proficiency is a consistent concern for our families.

Participants: 28

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Laurel Hewitt, Jana Johnson and Maureen Summers-Lépine, Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay, ARC Staff Members Debra Dorey and Christine Prince.

Partners: ARC, Montreal Diet Dispensary (ALIMA) Amanda Pedriks, SLP, SpeakAble Speech & Language Services

EARLY CHILDHOOD MATERIALS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The SSLC continues our partnership with the local women’s shelter *Pavillon Marguerite de Champlain* to provide early childhood learning materials. For the 2024-2025 holiday season, the SSLC donated a mini-library divided by language and age to be distributed to families in transition.



Participants: Approximately 20 participants

Resources: SSLC Staff Member: Rachel Wagner, PMC Staff: Deborah Pearson

Partners: Pavillon Marguerite de Champlain, *ConParle Table de Concertation*

2. PRIMARY SCHOOL – AGES 5-11

KINDERGARTEN LITERACY INITIATIVE



On 25 November, the SSLC provided story time for 54 kindergarten students at Mt. Bruno Elementary. On 26 November 2025, we had an encore performance at St. Lambert Elementary for 30 participants. In partnership with the Richelieu Valley CLC, we provided \$500 for a kindergarten library for 32 incoming students

Participants: 116

Resources: SSLC Staff Member: Rachel Wagner, Riverside School Board Staff: Annie Beauregard and Michael Sitruk

Partners: Riverside School Board

AUTHOR VISITS

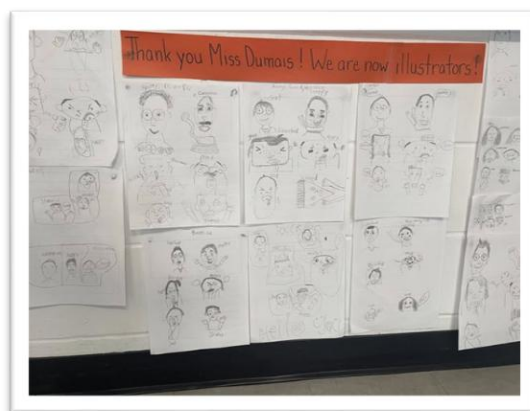


The SSLC hosted Canadian authors Lana Button and Sandra Dumais. Lana Button started as an actress, pivoted to education and now is an award-winning children’s author. She writes on her website, “I am most thrilled when I hear that my stories and my presentations have inspired a child, given them a chance to cheer, and helped them find their own voice.”

Author and illustrator, Sandra Dumais has been associated with the SSLC for the past four years. She states, “I love to draw with kids and teens,

and like showing kids small tricks to overcome their frustration at “not knowing how to draw.” We collaborated with three Riverside School Board Community Learning Centers.

We likewise facilitated visits for author Briana Corr Scott at William Latter and St. Jude Primary Schools.



Date	Author	Number of Classes Visted	No. of Participants
15 April 2025	Sandra Dumais	15	315
16 April 2025	Lana Button	13	273
30 April 2025	Briana Corr Scott	6	114
			702

Participants: 702 Elementary School Students

Resources: Authors: Lana Button, Sandra Dumais and Briana Corr Scott, SSLC Staff Members: Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay, RSB Staff Members: Michael Sitruk, Annie Beauregard, and Brian Peddar

READING WORKSHOP

On 13-14 May 2024, Rachel Wagner visited 12 classes (216 students) at William Latter school and



presented reading workshops. The workshop is adapted for multiple levels. We explore picture books, chapter books, non-fiction, and graphic novels. The students were surprised that each genre had wide crossover. Cycle 3 students expressed as much enthusiasm over non-fiction as graphic novels.

On 21 November 2024, we presented the workshop for 16 parents at St. Jude Elementary. Having 16 vested parents at a school identified as socially disadvantaged was particularly notable.

Participants: 232 participants at William Latter and St. Jude School

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff Members: Michael Sitruk and Brian Peddar

Partners: William Latter School and St. Jude School

PEER TUTOR /HOMEWORK TIPS WORKSHOP

To create an ultimately inclusive presentation, we combined the peer tutor and homework tips workshops for 4 classes on 19 February 2025 at Harold Napper school. Our intent was that every student who attended, whether or not they selected to participate in the peer-tutoring program, would leave with practical skills to apply to their individual study routines. We asked students what was their ultimate takeaway. They responded,

- “Recognize that my learning style may be different.”
- “It’s okay to take breaks if I’m consistent.”
- “Snacks help.”
- “I can be my own teacher.”

Participants: 84 Students



Resources: SSLC Director, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff, Leigh Bulmer and Cycle 3 teaching staff at Harold Napper School

Partner: Riverside School Board

3. SECONDARY SCHOOL – AGES 12-17

PEER TUTOR TRAINING



The SSLC has long partnered with secondary schools to recruit students to act as peer-tutors. These peer tutors are trained by the SSLC and subsequently matched by their schools to students who would benefit from peer-to-peer support. This year, we expanded our program to include 12-year-old students at Harold Napper School. In total, 84 students participated.

Participants: 84

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff Member, Leigh Bulmer, & Cycle 3 Teachers

Partners: Riverside School Board

READING AT REACH SECONDARY SCHOOL

Since 2019, the SSLC has provided monthly programs for neurodiverse students at the Riverside School Board REACH schools. We visited Centennial Campus and provided programming for 5 classrooms. These students, many of whom are accompanied by a one-on-one assistant, are particularly attentive. The teachers are vested and the experience is always a highlight of our monthly programming. Our key partner is Maureen O’Connell, she preps the students before our arrival. Because she’s such an ardent advocate, the student follow suit.



Participants: 34

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff Member Maureen O’Connell

Partners: Seaway CLC, Riverside School Board

PARTNERSHIP WITH HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOL NEW DIRECTIONS PROGRAM

The SSLC became aware of the New Directions programs when we met the lead teacher, Jason Glowa. The program works with students who suffer from exceptional anxiety and struggle to integrate into a standard classroom. Mr. Glowa has created a literal safe space for learning. When we suggested a partnership to provide a classroom library for reluctant readers, he immediately accepted. He wrote, “Thank you to the SSLC for such a generous and amazing donation! My students are thrilled to have new books to comb through and discover.”

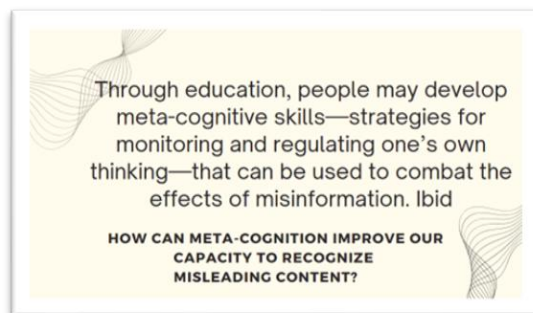
Participants: 19

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, RSB Teacher, Jason Glowa

Partners: Riverside School Board.

DISINFORMATION WORKSHOP

In conjunction with St. Lambert International School, we started a pilot project to assist Secondary 5 students to verify their research and resources. 21 students attended. The participants were vested learners and asked probing questions like, “What is absolute truth?”, “What if my parents are misinformed?” and “Are we all blind to our biases?” The teacher who requested the session, signed on for another workshop in fall. She expressed that the workshop was foundational to everything the students write. In an age of instant answers, student learned that the process is the means by which long-term memories and deep learning are achieved.



Participants: 21

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Rachel Wagner, RSB Staff Member, Annie Beauregard

Partner: St. Lambert International School

4. ADULTS (AGES 18-54)

CARE-SHARE CLUB

The South Shore Literacy Council has hosted a group of adults with varying abilities for more than ten years. Our group members have diverse difficulties including intellectual limitations, mental health challenges, and physical disabilities. Based on their collective experiences, the group voted to adopt the name “CARE-SHARE Club.” They reasoned that it reflected their individual concern to provide empathy and understanding among group members.



Staff Members, Patricia Giannakos and Joel De Villiers maintained a weekly curriculum and practiced for the culminating theatre activity.

Our lesson plans reflect our larger goals to:

- Improve writing and reading fluency
- Develop life and social skills
- Apply strategic participation and leadership skills
- Follow an art curriculum
- Present an original theatre production annually

This year the group wrote an original poem to honor, Ruth Thomas, the former leader who passed away in 2022. Below are the first two stanzas:

Ruth, oh Ruth
You stood for love and truth
You never judged a soul
For what they say or what they do
Ruth, oh Ruth
You always were so kind
You always made the time for us
And shared your heart and mind

Your words filled our souls
Like sunshine fills a room
You cried with us and tears fell
Like a drop of morning dew
She came in with a smile
And warmed us with her hugs
She made us feel at home
And built a family with love

Participants: 10

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Patricia Giannakos, Joel DeVilliers and Anne Mackay

Partners: St. Mary's Parish

TUTORING:

We recruited new tutors this year to work specifically with students from ACCESS Adult Education Centre. To support learning, we hosted returning student and tutor pairs in our office. The SSLC has reconfigured the office space to include 6 work stations and 4 computers to accommodate in-person learning.



ACCESS TUTORING

In addition to the tutoring that is provided through the CARE-SHARE Club, The SSLC provided tutoring in collaboration with ACCESS Adult Education Centre. This year we again implemented the Skills for Success Framework and taught classes on the following topics:

Topic/Skill

- Addressing Change/Adaptability
- Inclusivity/Collaboration
- Para-Language/Communication
- Working Smarter/Creativity and Innovation
- Skills Updates/Digital
- Problem Solving/Motivation
- Context/Reading
- Messaging/Writing

In conjunction with the classes, we introduced students to free employment counseling through *Espace Pivot*. One student needed to return to China during the course of the session. She signed on in the middle of the night to participate by Zoom. She expressed that she does everything possible to augment her children's opportunities to have an "easier path."

Participants: 24 Students

Resources: SSLC trained volunteer tutors, SSLC Staff Anne MacKay and Rachel Wagner, CLC Coordinator, Annie Beauregard

Partners: Riverside School Board

ARC ENGLISH CONVERSATION COURSES FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

In conjunction with ARC, McGill University, CISSS-Montréal Centre and the Community Health and Social Service Network (CHSSN), the SSLC has provided 57 individual English conversation courses for health professionals. These classes were created to improve health professional's ability to interact with English-speaking clientele. Students are matched to a tutor for weekly lessons. Anne Mackay's student, Brigitte, mentioned that she's seen real-time improvement and is truly more comfortable speaking English. Before, she was shy to admit to her clients that she could express herself in both languages. Now she invites the interaction.

Participants: 6

Resources: SSLC Staff Member, Anne Mackay

Partners: ARC, McGill University, CISSS-Montréal Centre and the Community Health and Social Service Network (CHSSN)

5. SENIOR – AGES 55+

PERSONAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS/LIFE LONG LEARNING

In October 2024, we partnered with the Lifelong Learning group on the South Shore and offered to administer their bi-weekly programming. At every session, new participants joined. Collectively they expressed gratitude for the standardized scheduling, diverse presenters and topic relevancy. We hosted 15 sessions in 2024-2025.

Below is a sampling of the programs the SSLC offered:

- **How to Combat Disinformation**

Survey quote, "Everyone got to discuss the topic together. It was very informative and I loved it. I now understand how the brain works and its relationship to learning."

- **Vaccines for over 50+**

Survey quote, “Knowledgeable and well-spoken presenter. I learned the importance of multiple vaccines. This should be done yearly.”

- **Resilience**

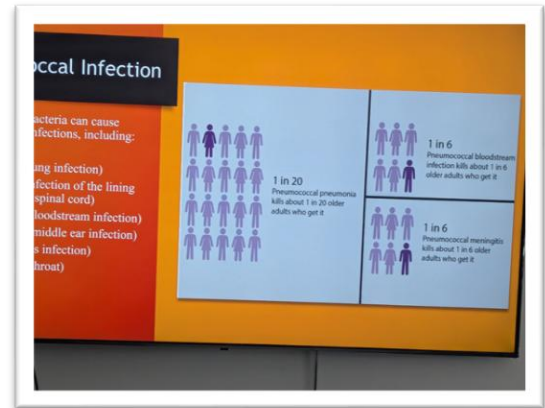
Survey quote, “It allowed me to examine my coping skills and learn more about myself. It was perfect.”

- **Financial Management**

Survey quote, “I enjoyed most how knowledgeable Liam (the presenter) was. I learned the importance of diversification.”

- **Genealogy**

Survey quote, “The presentation was well-paced with nice touches of humor. I learned about more (FREE) ancestry sources.”



Participants: 428

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay and Board Member, David Schurman

Partners: Greenfield Park Community Centre

INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS

The SSLC hosted grandparent’s week at Mother Goose again. It’s an absolute “keeper.” Grandparent’s Week was well-received and we had visitors at each of our 8 sites. We had record-breaking attendance. 45 grandparents joined us this year (versus 16 last year).

Participants: 45

Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Laurel Hewitt, Jana Johnson, Maureen Summers-Lépine, Anne Mackay and Rachel Wagner

Partners: ARC, *ConParle Famille* and *Desjardins*



ARC PARTNERSHIP FOR SENIOR PROGRAMMING



In addition to the Lifelong Learning group, we provided workshops on media literacy to ARC's senior groups in Greenfield Park and Chambly. A novel concept for participants was the realization that confirmation bias is amplified by the use of filter bubbles, or "algorithmic editing". Algorithmic editing displays to individuals only information they are likely to agree with, while excluding opposing views.

Participants: 51

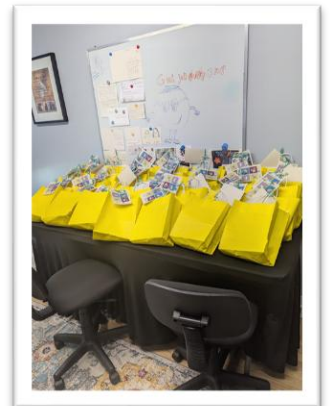
Resources: SSLC Staff Members: Rachel Wagner and Anne Mackay, ARC Staff: Therese Callahan and Tania Blood

Partners: ARC

6. PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

MOTHER-GOOSE BOOK BAGS

The SSLC prepared and distributed 100 book bags to our Spring Session Mother Goose Families. Each bag contained promotional information, books, a parent-child reading guide, and English Language Community information from *Naître et Grandir*.



COMMUNITY FAIRS

The SSLC participated in the Regional Health and Social Service Partner Table (RHSSPT) community fair on 1 June 2024. Our kiosk was situated on Old Greenfield Park's main street. The event coincided with a local



festival to maximize traffic. Pre-eminently, we distributed informational materials and touted volunteer opportunities. On 12 September 2024, we were invited for the first time to participate in the St. Mary's Primary School Community Fair. This school is identified as one of the highest-need populations on the South Shore. We distributed journals and Mother Goose materials. Of all the promotional events that we've attended, this was a standout. From 4 pm – 6 pm there was a constant flow of parents

and community partners. In the October 2024 Board Report, the Executive Director noted, “I’ve rarely had such meaningful interactions in a promotional setting. Parents either were interested in attending our programs or had already benefited from our services. I’d happily participate in another fair under the same administration.”

SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

The SSLC has transitioned our promotional outreach to social media. We have 550+ active followers and greater interaction than we previously accomplished through email campaigns.



We have institutional accounts on Facebook and Instagram.

FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES AND CONSULTATIONS

In 2024-2025, we actively sought alternate sources of funding. We consulted with the following:

- Grace Hogg with the HOGG foundation. We exchanged strategies for optimizing funding and retooling our applications.
- Thomas Ledwell with Ledwell strategies in conjunction with the Community Literacy Empowerment Initiative. (CELI)
- Marlo Turner Ritchie with Social Impact Consulting was impressed by our level of preparation and pro-activity. Exceptionally, she forwarded us a list of private funders.
- We consulted with Dominique Rioux to establish our eligibility for PSOC funding.
- We reached out to contacts within the CHSSN to establish how filtering models for funding could be optimized to reach on-the-ground community organizations.
- We were referred to Angèle Mullins through a Literacy Québec contract. Mme Mullins reviewed our HR practices and gave us advice on current best practices.
- We submitted our application to the Peter Gzowski Foundation to perpetuate our early childhood programming.

- We consulted the Zeller’s Family Foundation to establish community and classroom libraries for underprivileged populations.
- A private donor increased her contribution from 5k to 25k for the Care-Share program.
- We hosted a For the Love of Literacy Tea. 65 of our members attended.



7. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:

LISTING OF PARTNERS

We have continued all of our partnerships from previous years. Principal partners include (listed alphabetically):

ARC - Assistance and Referral Center

CAL – *Concertation Alphabétisation Longueuil*

CHSSN – Community Health and Social Services Network

CISSS – *Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux*

CLC – Community Learning Centers

CONPARLE – Early Childhood *Table de Concertation*

Desjardins – *Caisse Desjardins du Mont-Saint-Bruno*

GPKC – Greenfield Park Collective/*Collectif*

ESPACE PIVOT – Youth Employment Counseling

FHL – Fraser-Hickson Library

LQ – Literacy Québec

MEPEC – Montérégie East Partnership for the English-Speaking Community

MFDB – *Maison de la Famille de Brossard*

Préville – Préville Fine Arts Centre

RSB - Riverside School Board

SRM – Senior’s Respite Montérégie

PARTNERSHIPS WITH FRENCH LANGUAGE TABLES:

The SSLC continues our partnerships with *ConParle* and *Concertation Alphabétisation Longueuil*. The CAL partnership is historic. Our organizations have co-existed for decades. This is the first time in the 45-year history of the SSLC that we have been invited to participate on the French-language table for literacy. The grouping of 6 literacy councils is the ultimate opportunity to exchange best practices, collaborate on mutual projects and represent literacy needs and funding requests collectively for the Longueuil municipalities.

The *Conparle* table includes multiple opportunities to participate on committees. This year, the SSLC hosted meetings for school readiness and participated in the coordination committee’s formation of a group to decrease screen usage in early childhood.

8. GOVERNANCE

BOARD MEETINGS

The SSLC held 9 board meetings in 2024-2025. Our Board of Directors is comprised of 7 members. The SSLC maintained 4 sub-committees formed to facilitate recommendations and processes.

- **Communications Committee** – Tasked with reviewing public communications and social media.
- **Finance Committee** - Considers the viability of new projects, new hires and financial sustainability.
- **Personnel Committee** – Dedicated to standardizing employee evaluations, job postings and salary augmentations.
- **Nominations Committee** - Seeks new board member nominations and provides recommendations for the presidency.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The SSLC held our Annual General Meeting via Zoom on 27 June 2024. There were 13 participants. The SSLC Director presented the annual report, the treasurer gave our financial standing and the slate of directors was approved.

CONCLUSION

The South Shore Literacy Council has had another eventful year. In 2023-2024, we reached more participants than we'd ever reached in our 45-year history. In 2024-2025, we topped that! We are thrilled to have begun a successful kindergarten initiative, doubled the number of peer-tutors, and expanded our senior's offerings exponentially. It reflects our commitment to literacy for all ages and stages. Remarkably, this was accomplished with a conservative budget, multifunctional staff and extensive consultations to establish diversified funding structures. We received the following feedback from Kristia, a young mother, "This program has been a lifeline in a time of isolation." She represents our larger motivation.

We recognize our Board, our Staff, our partners, funders and participants as integral to our forward movement as the South Shore Literacy completes its 45th year on a continued upward trajectory.

