



## Family Literacy Program **COMMUNITY STORY**

### North Central Family Centre: Family Literacy Program

By Kim Wenger, Executive Director

Our Family Literacy Program at the [North Central Family Centre \(NCFC\)](#) addresses the intergenerational nature of literacy and provides developmental experiences for young children before they enter into the school system. Parents are offered parental support to encourage healthy patterns of family interaction. We often say, “we, as parents, are our children’s first and most influential teachers.”

Reading together is always number one in our agenda. We read daily, but each day we do so in a different manner. We do a keepsake art piece together as a bonding moment. We cook and bake together. We then sing, or dance, play a game, and each activity focuses on the theme of the day. At clean up time, we make up hampers for the families to take home which often help with much needed items.

We’ve had several families attend. It is important to provide a space and opportunity for families to bond and participate in educational programming. Oftentimes caregivers are struggling with health, safety, bonding, and parenting, and require extra support. After a few months of attending we find the adults learn gentle parenting skills, feel confident in helping their children regulate emotions, and improve their own literacy skills, which creates a healthy bond with their children. Soon, participants who have been in the program long-term become leaders for the newcomers, developing leadership skills and a sense of community. Families build a supportive network with each other. When children and their caregivers feel safe, they can go out of their comfort zone, learn new skills, meet new people, and mature in a safe space in preparation for their school years soon to come.

The way the families enter the building speaks volumes. They look forward to coming and when they arrive, they are eager to interact with the staff and other participants. The participants often recommend the program to their neighbours and friends and a referral is one of the highest forms of compliments. The group breathes life into the centre as children are our future. The love and support families feel from staff and their community is a beautiful thing to see. It helps create a strong, safe future for the next generation.

“My kiddos have gotten so much smarter, they didn’t know how to use scissors, or help themselves much and now they are better at home. Plus the keepsakes we make in class are so memorable, thanks NCFC.”

- Mom with 3 children in the program

“The kids love coming and asking to come to class the minute they wake up. It helps me get them to bed because I say, go to bed if you want to go to Literacy.”

- Mom with 2 children in the program

---

Family Literacy Day is happening on January 27, 2022 to raise awareness about the importance of reading and engaging in literacy-related activities as a family. Please visit the [Saskatchewan Literacy Network](#) for more information on how you can acknowledge the day in Saskatchewan.

“On Family Literacy Day we get together with our local library and welcome our regular families and the public to a celebration. We read, distribute teddy bears, send families home with new books donated by our local library, and more. We feel it’s important to come together, normalize daily reading, and normalize that we all come from different walks of life, different socioeconomic statuses, and from a different developmental levels of literacy, yet we all can share in bonding.”

- NCFC

---