



Build Your Skills
Shape Your Future
Kingston Literacy & Skills

KL&S furthers the development and growth of adult and family literacy in Kingston and surrounding communities.

Family Literacy

Reflections

A publication of the Centre for Expertise in Family Literacy at KL&S

Fall 2010

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Family literacy is about the ways families use literacy in their daily lives.

It is about how families:

- Learn
- Use literacy to do everyday tasks
- Help children develop literacy skills
- Use literacy to maintain relationships with others and in the community
- Interact with organizations and institutions

AFLO

Action Family Literacy Ontario

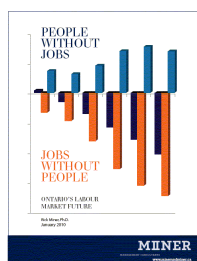
Question

Between 1996 and 2001, how many new jobs created in Ontario required post secondary education or training?

- 81%
- 35%
- 53%

See answer on page 3

Will We Respond Quickly Enough?



“While much of the world is understandably focused on the current recession, there is a looming demographic and labour market crisis which has the potential to shake the very foundations of our society and economy. The crisis arises from the intersection of two meg-trends: an aging population and an emerging knowledge economy.”
People Without Jobs, Jobs Without People Miner R., 2010

Yikes, the first baby boomer is 65 years old this year! Retirement for millions of people is about to begin. Even though unemployment is high right now, in future years there will definitely be fewer skilled people to fill more knowledge-based, highly skilled jobs.¹

Two challenges emerge. We need to increase the Canadian workforce to compensate for the baby-boomer retirements. At the same time, we need to find ways to increase the skill levels of those in the workforce in order to adapt to a more knowledge-based economy.²

One strategy is to increase the numbers of people in the workforce who are members of groups that are usually under-represented. Aboriginals, **women** and persons with disabilities are all under-represented in Canada’s workforce.³

Is History Destiny? Resources, Transitions and Child Education Attainments in Canada HRSDC 2002, used three cycles of the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (1994, 1996, 1998) to study the relationship between a child’s past and who he or she becomes. This report revealed that long-term child attainments are greatly impacted by characteristics of the mother.

A mother’s education level is particularly important.⁴ Past child attainments have a significant relationship with future achievements. In other words, past disadvantage can grow into ever larger problems for the child over time.⁵

For example, a child with a young mother who has not completed high school and lives in the bottom 25th percentile of income in 1994 obtained scores on mathematics tests four years later in 1998 that were 13% to 22% lower than the child, who has an older mother with a university degree living in the top 75th percentile of income.⁶

Poverty also impacts child outcomes. Young children are more likely than any other age group to live in a household in which the head is unemployed.⁷ Many population-based studies show that income is strongly linked to children's education outcomes. These outcomes are very sensitive to the depth, duration and timing of poverty. Even **modest increases in family income result in significant educational gains**, particularly in families of very young children. Canada has a child poverty rate between 15.8% and 18% which is one of the highest among Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.⁸

People Without Jobs, Jobs Without People shows Canada's pressing need to make sure our workforce is prepared for the future. It also describes our need to make sure under-represented groups are in the workforce. Women are one of those groups. As well, we need to act quickly to make sure Canadians are becoming better educated and more skilled. These Canadians are today's parents and their children.



Is History Destiny? Resources, Transitions and Child Education Attainments in Canada shows the connection between a mother's education level and her children's academic attainment.

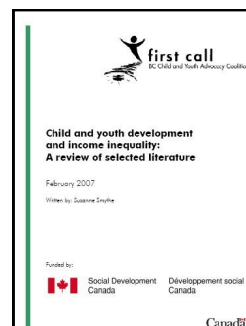
Child and Youth Development and Income Inequity: A Review of Selected Literature shows how poverty negatively effects Canadian children and families.

What does this have to do with family literacy?

Family literacy programming has the potential to **offset some of the effects low income and low parental educational attainment has on young children** by:

- Encouraging under-educated parents, especially mothers of young children to begin upgrading while their children are still at home to help them prepare to learn the new skills that will be required for the **knowledge based economy and the workplace**
- Preparing under-educated parents to enter the workforce and **raise family income**.
- Providing quality children's programming to the children of parents in a family literacy upgrading program to **support school readiness**
- Teach parents about their children's learning and how to help them succeed academically
- Providing an opportunity for parents and professionals to observe children in the program and make **appropriate referrals** if necessary

Now more than ever, we need to make sure every person, child or adult, is educated well enough to reach their fullest capacity and potential. We also need to make sure there are educational services for members of the workforce to maintain skills and learn new ones. This action combined with others such as flexible education options, more immigration of skilled workers and quicker recognition of these skills and flexible retirement options will go a long way to ensure Canadian prosperity and our ability to maintain services for everyone. We need to act quickly.



Notes:

1. *People Without Jobs, Jobs Without People* Miner R., Miner Management Consultants, 2010 page 1
2. *ibid*
3. *People Without Jobs, Jobs Without People* Miner R., Miner Management Consultants, 2010 page 13
4. *Is History Destiny? Resources, Transitions and Child Education Attainments in Canada*, Hoddinott J., Lethbridge L., Phipps S., HRSDC, 2002 page i
5. *Is History Destiny? Resources, Transitions and Child Education Attainments in Canada*, Hoddinott J., Lethbridge L., Phipps S., HRSDC, 2002 page ii
6. *Is History Destiny? Resources, Transitions and Child Education Attainments in Canada*, Hoddinott J., Lethbridge L., Phipps S., HRSDC, 2002 page i
7. *Is History Destiny? Resources, Transitions and Child Education Attainments in Canada*, Hoddinott J., Lethbridge L., Phipps S., HRSDC, 2002 page 6
8. *Child and Youth Development and Income Inequity: A Review of Selected Literature*, Smythe S., First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, 2007 page 1
9. *People Without Jobs, Jobs Without People* Miner R., Miner Management Consultants, 2010 page 7-8
10. *ibid*

Events**Family Literacy Day****Thursday January 27, 2011**<http://abclifeliteracy.ca/en/family-literacy-day>**Family Resource Programs****FRP Canada Conference**

Montreal Quebec April 26-29, 2011

[http://www.frp.ca/index.cfm?](http://www.frp.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewpage&pageid=472)[fuseaction=page.viewpage&pageid=472](http://www.frp.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewpage&pageid=472)**National Centre for Family Literacy**

National Conference on Family Literacy

Louisville Kentucky April 3-5, 2011

<http://www.famlit.org/conference/>**International Reading Association Convention**

Orlando Florida May 8-11 2011

<http://www.iraconvention.org/annual-convention.php>**Forecasts****More and more in Canada:**

- Aging retirees
- Expensive services needed for elderly retirees
- Prosperity will depend on a knowledge-based economy
- A need for a labour force that has new skills and knowledge
- People with post secondary education and training
- Financial and social challenges for a society faced with the burden of providing services for everyone

**Fewer and fewer in Canada:**

- People who are in the workforce — *in future there will fewer in the workforce by the millions*
- Skilled workers who can respond to an always changing knowledge based economy

1997→BC Ministry of Skills Training Education — **75%** of new jobs and replacement jobs will need post secondary education or training.

2007→HRSDC — **65%** of all new jobs created between 2007 and 2012 will need post secondary education or training.

2007→US researchers — **78%** of job openings from 2004 to 2014 will need post secondary education or training.⁹

Answer**Ontario Reality**

2005→Ontario Ministry of Education - **81%** of the new jobs in Ontario between 1996 and 2001 required management training, apprenticeship training or a college/ university degree or diploma.¹⁰