

Canadian Library Association / Association canadienne des bibliothèques Position Statement on Action for Literacy Position Statement

Approved by: Executive Council ~ February 7, 1993; Amended June, 1993

The Canadian Library Association believes that:

1. Every person has an equal right to access to information, to all forms of knowledge, to creativity and intellectual activity.
2. Literacy is a basic human right. Literacy creates the conditions by which citizens can participate in decision-making in all areas of society, including economic, political, social and cultural activities.
3. People learn in many different ways throughout their lives. Life-long education, formal and informal, should be available for every person in Canada.
4. Libraries have an important role to play in promoting literacy and life-long learning.

As a result, the Canadian Library Association encourages its members to take action in their communities to promote literacy and life-long learning through the following activities:

- a. Find out about literacy needs and resources in your community.
- b. Recognize that people who have difficulty with reading and writing have the right to use the library and all its services.
- c. Provide training programs for library staff to increase awareness about literacy, and to develop sensitivity and skill in responding to the needs of people who have difficulty with reading and writing.
- d. Make sure that people have access to library materials, facilities, equipment and staff assistance without having to depend on printed information.
- e. Provide print and non-print resource material about literacy and literacy issues for learners, literacy practitioners and the general public.

- f. Advocate and solicit funding for adequate and appropriate library and information services for people who have difficulty with reading and writing.
- g. Encourage libraries and library organizations to work with literacy programs and adult learners' groups to develop library and information services that effectively meet the needs of people who have difficulty with reading and writing.
- h. Develop services to meet the special needs of people who have difficulty with reading and writing, such as:
 - o information and referral services that do not depend on print
 - o information about literacy programs in the community
 - o space, equipment and time for literacy programs or individual tutoring
 - o literacy programs developed in consultation with the community.
- i. Implement a book selection policy which includes materials for adults at a variety of reading levels, including the beginning level. Guidelines for selecting adult literacy materials are available from various literacy organizations.
- j. Ensure that print and non-print materials for adult new readers are easily accessible.
- k. Promote the publication of print and non-print materials that are interesting and useful for adult new readers, such as:
 - o collections of writing by adult literacy students
 - o bibliographies of adult literacy materials
 - o materials produced in more than one medium-print/video/audio tapes.
- l. Use clear language and design in all communications, especially those intended for library users.