



Parents, are YOU ready for Back to School?

## **400,000 in Metro Edmonton struggle to read** **Edmonton & area literacy groups declare September Literacy Month**

EDMONTON - Believe it or not, more than 400,000 adults in the Edmonton area struggle with reading!

42% of Canadians, nine million adults between 16 and 65 years of age, have literacy levels that do not allow them to engage fully in our knowledge-based society.<sup>1</sup>

“In a world of enormous wealth, in a world in which education and knowledge are the necessary passports to a better life, the scale of illiteracy is truly staggering,” said UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on August 24<sup>th</sup> as he declared September 8<sup>th</sup> *International Literacy Day*.  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/sgsm12423.doc.htm>

So widespread is the problem that 12 literacy groups in the Edmonton area have united under the *Literacy Works* banner to draw attention to this astonishing reality and declare the entire month of September as **Literacy Month**.

Throughout the traditional “Back to School” month, **Literacy Works** is asking parents if *they* are ready for back to school - if *they* can read well enough to help their children with their homework - if not, **there is assistance available**: simply pick up the phone and **dial 211** (the Support Network helpline).

Helping your child with homework is only one of a myriad of daily activities that are difficult for adults who have trouble reading. Consider how hard it is for them to:

- understand their medical prescriptions
- understand credit and banking statements
- fill out a job application
- qualify for apprenticeship training

Throughout Literacy Month, Literacy Works will announce a number of events beginning with **International Literacy Day, September 8<sup>th</sup>**.

- 30 -

### **PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS of Literacy Works**

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1. *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey, 2003*

