

Literacy Abbotsford teams up with local library to deliver digital literacy program to seniors

Literacy Matters Abbotsford is a community literacy organization aiming to connect literacy services to individuals and address the literacy gaps in Abbotsford. This is just one of the many organizations hosting a series of workshops aimed at helping adults improve their digital literacy skills.

The Challenge

When Sharon Crowley, Literacy Outreach Coordinator at Literacy Matters Abbotsford, read about a new digital literacy program in ABC Life Literacy Canada's monthly newsletter, it caught her eye.

The organization, based in Abbotsford, BC, had been struggling to serve the adults in their community. As a small organization with extremely limited resources and no physical office, this program seemed like the answer she had been looking for.

The program was called *Youth Teaching Adults*, and the premise of it was to bring together teenage volunteer tutors with adults who wanted to learn more about technology. The program was free to run, and she would be provided with lesson plans on workshop topics like Google search, Google maps and how to use social media.

Without a physical location to host a workshop, Sharon contacted Kerry Martin at Clearbrook Public Library to see if she would be interested in partnering. Kerry was keen to get involved as the library also wanted to provide more support to adults in the community. However, due to administrative issues, the library was unable to host the workshop.

Thinking about how they might be able to address the issue of finding a place to host the workshop and finding adults to take part, Sharon decided to bring the workshop to the adults. She contacted Garden Park Tower in Abbotsford, a senior's community organization and independent living residence complete with meeting rooms and other amenities. They happily agreed to host the workshop and had several adults instantly sign up to take part.

The Solution

Together with Clearbrook Public Library, Literacy Matters Abbotsford hosted three workshops at Garden Park Tower. Kerry facilitated the workshops while Sharon managed the administrative side of things, such as signing up volunteers. Since it was summertime, it was easy to line up youth volunteer tutors through the library's Teen Advisory Group and Abbotsford Youth Commission, an organization representing youth in the community.

The workshops ran effortlessly, with minimal facilitation needed.

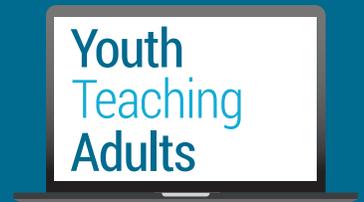
Each week, the adults returned to learn more about technology. Deeming the workshops a success, Literacy Matters Abbotsford and Clearbrook Public Library plan to run more in the future.

To learn more about the program or to book a workshop in your community, visit YouthTeachingAdults.ca.

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“The youth volunteers were great. They jumped right in without any prompting and just asked the adults what it was they wanted help with, and showed them how to do it. The workshops were highly-tailored to each individual's needs, and we didn't need to use the existing lesson plans, but it's good to know that they're there just in case.”



*Sharon Crowley
Literacy Outreach Coordinator at
Literacy Matters Abbotsford*