

## **CLUB AMICK ANNUAL REPORT - 2008/09 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Overview**

Club Amick is a book club for children in Ontario's remote First Nation communities. Participants are approximately 4,265 children in kindergarten to Grade 6 who live in 35 of the 49 fly-in and remote communities located in the James Bay Treaty 9 territory and Ontario's portion of Treaty 5. Each club member receives a children's book and an activities-oriented newsletter four times per year.

Club Amick is the fourth phase of former Lieutenant Governor Bartleman's Aboriginal Literacy initiatives. It complements the Lieutenant Governor's Aboriginal Book Drive, the Lieutenant Governor's Aboriginal School Twinning Program and the Lieutenant Governor's Aboriginal Summer Literacy Camps that targeted the needs and interests of First Nation youth in remote northern communities.

Club Amick is budgeted at approximately \$240,000 per year for 4,200 children. The largest expenditure is for books which average about \$40 per child per year. In total, the program costs about \$55-\$60 per child. Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS) and Ontario Library Service – North (OLSN) coordinate all aspects of the book club.

The book club has four main objectives:

- Promotes literacy and the love of books among native children;
- Provides continuity, through ongoing support, to participants in the Lieutenant Governor's Summer Literacy Camp program and to other children in the target communities;
- Creates awareness of and takes steps to address the need for childhood literacy support in remote First Nation communities;
- Promotes awareness across Ontario about the importance of childhood literacy.

### **Book Selection**

A team of librarians select the books using the following priorities: Age and culturally appropriate material, First Nation authors where possible, Canadian authors where possible, Canadian publishers where possible. Community/school supporters are engaged in the selection process when possible.

The selection of books for each of the four annual distributions is based on a theme. Themes are broadly interpreted to allow as much variety as possible when selecting books. Themes for 2008/09 were: Laugh-Out-Loud (Fall 2008), Mysteries (Winter 2008), Food (Early Spring 2009), and Water (Late Spring 2009). The 2009/10 themes are: Adventure (Fall 2009); Magazines (Winter 2010); Music (Early Spring 2010); and Friendship (Late Spring 2010). The activities-oriented newsletter shares the same themes as the book selection and supports literacy activities in the home, community and school.

## **Evaluation Methods**

In order to ensure continued success of the Club Amick book club, a survey was conducted among Club Amick communities in 2008 to gather input about the effectiveness of the club in promoting reading. Generally, responses were very favourable. As a result of feedback, a programming component was introduced. To monitor how successful the programming component has been a further evaluation method was implemented. This included tracking the following increases in: the number of postcard sent in by readers; the number of contest submissions from readers; the increase of communication (e-mail, phone calls, and letters) received by the Club Amick advisor from community educators and supporters of Club Amick.

## **Programming**

A programming component was introduced in 2008/09 which consists of contests and initiatives. Contest newsletter, book themes, Contests include Win-An-Artist, Read-a-Thon, Post Card, Create a Comic Strip, and Poetry. The 2009/10 school years will also include a Create Your Own Adventure Map Contests and a Magazine Cover Contest. Initiatives include the Club Amick school calendar and the Club Amick twinning program.

## **Website**

The Club Amick website has been updated to include information on programming. The informative Club Amick website features a variety of useful information. In 2008, new links were added to the website. Club Amick readers and Club Amick supporters can now find information on contest postings, recent winners, and upcoming initiatives or events. The website will continue to be updated when necessary.