

Central West Coast Dual-Language Literacy Plan



Hishuk ish is'awalk. (Everything is one.)
-- Nuuchahnulth primary teaching

Table of Contents

Forward	3
Introduction	5
Executive Summary Central Region West Coast Dual-Language Literacy Plan.....	7
Section 1: Municipality of Ucluelet	10
Section 2: Ucluelet First Nation – Ittatsoo	20
Section 3: Toquaht First Nation – Macoah	31
Section 4: Municipality of Tofino	40
Section 5: Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation – Executive Summary	50
Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation – Opitsaht	52
Section 6: Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation – Esowista	61
Section 7: Ahousaht First Nation – Ahousaht	69
Section 8: Hesquiaht First Nation – Hot Spring Cove	80
Appendix A	91
Appendix B	95

Forward

In June 2008 three separate meetings took place on the West Coast (District of Ucluelet, Tin Wis - Tofino and Ahousaht – Flores Island) to gather community perspectives on a Central West Coast Dual-Language Literacy Plan. This plan included five Nuuchahnulth First Nations and two municipalities. The communities represented were: Hot Spring Cove (Hesquiaht First Nation), Ahousaht (Ahousaht First Nation), Opitshat and Esowista (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation), Ittatsoo (Ucluelet First Nation), Macoah (Toquaht First Nation), and the Tofino and Ucluelet Municipalities.

Norine Messer (Make Children First Coordinator/Coastal Family Resources Coalition Facilitator), Perry B. Perry (Assistant, Literacy Plan Launch) and Lori Walker (Program Manager, 2010 Legacies Now/Literacy) organized and facilitated the three meetings. In addition to these meetings, two band councils and the people of Hot Springs Cove were also presented with the literacy plan's initiatives and goals. From the feedback gathered it was apparent that sufficient interest existed to move forward with a letter of intent to Literacy Now. The letter of intent indicated the desire to develop a Dual-Language Literacy Plan to support both English and Nuuchahnulth.

In September 2008 acceptance was granted from Literacy Now for the Dual Language Plan. The Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) was/is the Steward of the \$20,000 awarded, and Theresa Gereluk was hired as the Literacy Outreach Coordinator in October 2008. Operating on 17 hours per week, Theresa's goal was to visit each of the communities and develop a Regional Literacy Plan that reflected and supported the uniqueness of each community and their individual priorities.

The Coastal Family Resource Coalition supported the initiative by acting as a Secondary Task Force. A smaller sub-committee comprising of Norine Messer, Jennifer Auld, Gertrude Touchie, Sarah Spencer, Eleanor Gee and Carol Martin took the Lead Role of the Dual-Language Literacy Plan Task Force. The members of this task force represented each of the participating communities as well as key community stakeholders. Presently, the named Sub-Committee Task Force members remain in position, with future community representatives to be included from three more communities.

The Dual-Language Literacy Plan was developed through interactive community meetings, small group/focus meetings, interviews, and phone/email consultations.

This plan reflects the convergence of communities, perspectives and people. Heartfelt gratitude comes to each of you for your time, suggestions, ideas, hopes and dreams.

A comprehensive list of participants can be found in Appendix 'A'.

The author and contributors of this plan acknowledge this plan is a "living plan"; one that will evolve and transform as it progresses over the next few years. Our fundamental goal is to positively influence the lives within the participating communities today and, ultimately, to the Seventh Generation. We welcome and look forward to the process unfolding, knowing full well that learning comes through both stillness and action; that, essentially, everything is one.

Introduction

To strengthen an individual is to strengthen a family which, in turn, strengthens a community. To support one language is to support the other which, in turn, supports literacy. As the Literacy Outreach Coordinator traveled between the communities it became apparent that the Dual-Language Literacy Plan was and is manifested in a Nuu-chah-nulth primary teaching, *Hishuk ish is'awalk*, or Everything is one. There are no opposing dualities; there is simply a continuum of learning, a connecting force. To support literacy in one language is to support literacy in the other. Everything is one.

In September 2008 Literacy Now provided funds to the Vancouver Island Health Authority to develop a Central West Coast Dual-Language Literacy Plan. Over the next nine months multiple avenues were used to gather pertinent community information in order to assemble an understanding of each community's literacy profile. These profiles included strengths and opportunities, potential challenges, community priorities, recommendations and an evaluation plan.

Through the Coastal Family Resources Coalition monthly meetings the Literacy Outreach Coordinator gathered feedback on the language plan from each community. This alleviated the main Task Force having to duplicate meetings due to the multiple roles Coalition members held.

Literacy Today

The initial responsibility of the Literacy Outreach Coordinator was to inform and educate people on a more holistic perspective of literacy.

The following message began each community meeting, group meeting, individual interview and consultation in an effort to establish purpose, initiate conversations, encourage positivity, and welcome progressive or creative possibilities and suggestions.

As the world becomes more complex, so too does the definition of literacy. It is evolving from a narrow definition to a broader view. Where once literacy was thought of as encompassing only basic reading and writing, perhaps at a certain grade level, we now accept a more complex and dynamic view of literacy – as enabling participation in family, work and community life. It is made up of essential and transferable social, cultural and academic practices

and understandings, involving not only the communication skills of reading, writing and mathematics, but also problem solving, decision-making, technology and social skills.

(2010 Literacy Now Community Literacy Planning Guide)

Central West Coast Dual-Literacy Plan

The intention and uniqueness of the Dual Language Literacy Plan is to discover and celebrate the individuality of each community and establish similarities in strengths, challenges and priorities.

The desire was to develop a plan that combined literacy skills in English and Nuu-chah-nulth yet would support positive holistic development in individuals, families units, and whole communities. We recognized and honored that a fundamental importance for First Nation Peoples is to know their language and traditions as they lie at the core of their identities; therefore this literacy plan begins to identify ways to support and encourage literacy development via the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditions.

We envision this plan will offer a continuum of literacy initiatives that will bridge cultures and positively impact the learning of all peoples, regardless of age. It is designed to spark hope in communities, encourage positive and progressive possibilities, and build a strong foundation for future generations. This is our Literacy Legacy to the Seventh Generation.

Each participating community is represented in this plan through an executive summary, recommendations, vision, community profile, literacy inventory, and action plan and evaluation process.

Central Region West Coast Dual-Language Literacy Plan

Executive Summary

As the world becomes more complex, so too does the definition of literacy. It is evolving from a narrow definition to a broader view. Where once literacy was thought of as encompassing only basic reading and writing, perhaps at a certain grade level, we now accept a more complex and dynamic view of literacy – as enabling participation in family, work and community life. It is made up of essential and transferable social, cultural and academic practices and understandings, involving not only the communication skills of reading writing and mathematics, but also problem solving, decision-making, technology and social skills.¹

The Central West Coast Dual-Language Literacy Plan has selected regional and community based recommendations that reflect and celebrate the Nuu-chah-nulth primary teaching: *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one. The recommendations are intergenerational and hold the potential to promote strong literacy skills in Nuu-chah-nulth and English.

In respectful consideration to the funding awarded for this regional literacy plan, and the scope of the geographical area served in this plan, the need behind the community recommendations indicate that extended funding and sources will be needed in order for this plan to come to fruition. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will actively seek additional avenues to support this.

This literacy plan recognizes there are additional recommendations that will require time rather than financial contributions. Whenever and wherever possible the Literacy Coordinator will assist and facilitate those literacy endeavors and work in partnership with community partners. That said, there are also additional recommendations that will require expanded funding to support regional perspective endeavors such as the Nuu-chah-nulth Language Authority. Therefore in conjunction with the community the Literacy Coordinator will work in partnership to address literacy recommendations with a regional-inclusive perspective.

¹ Quote from 2010 Legacies Now – Community Literacy Planning Guide. Page 2.

Feature Recommendations

- To regionally promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as stated by the 2010 Legacies Now Community Literacy Planning Guide. This new expanded definition is more encompassing and respectively inclusive of the contributing skills and abilities of all peoples.
- To develop an intergenerational, interactive early childhood adult and child program that is oral language-based with a blend of uniquely designed resources/materials to support the language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. The resources and materials will be developed in conjunction with youth and Elders/Seniors in order to make the learning experiences transferable to home environments. The format will be similar to a Mother Goose program but the content will be enriched and designed to reflect the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) To develop the early literacy resources and material in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. (The content will reflect the seasonal traditions and celebrations.)
 - B) To support Elders/Seniors in learning basic computer skills.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club which brings youth from various local communities to together explore their talent for visual arts. Project Suggestion: the photography group will provide the pictures for the early literacy resources and material. To further extend the participation in this project, the Elders will be asked to guide the use of the Nuu-chah-nulth language component and the content of the resources and material.
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training throughout the region that combines these two vital skills. Literacy And Parenting Skills (LAPS) is a family literacy plan that was developed at Bow Valley College in Alberta. There is an Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills program as well, which takes into consideration the learning needs and styles of First Nation people in both rural and urban settings. There are Train-the-Trainer workshops and trained facilitators in the Courtenay area. This recommendation supports the positive effects of cross-generational learning; although the focus is on helping children and youth the adult's literacy skills are enhanced and enriched at the same time. As confidence increases in the adults their sense of accomplishment may lead to further personal initiatives to increase their training, education and employment skills.

- To organize a writing program that promotes individual writing skills and intergenerational relationships. Writing programs such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language support adults and Elders/Seniors to write about their life experiences. Elders/Seniors will be given the option to work on their stories individually or be paired up with youth to work on these stories and up-load them on to a computer. The printed version of the story would then be given as a gift back to the Elder/Senior. The learning experience is multi-faceted as both the youth and Elder/Senior gain the potential for a meaningful connection, as well as writing skills.

Executive Summary: Ucluelet

The Ucluelet Dual-Language Literacy Plan has selected community recommendations which reflect and celebrate the Nuu-chah-nulth primary teaching, *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one. These recommendations are intergenerational and hold the potential to promote strong literacy skills in Nuu-chah-nulth and English.

In respectful consideration to the funding awarded for this regional literacy plan, and the scope of the geographical area served in this plan, the need behind the community recommendations indicate that extended funding and sources will be needed in order for this plan to come to fruition. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will actively seek additional avenues to support this.

This literacy plan recognizes there are additional recommendations that will require time rather than financial contributions. Whenever and wherever possible the Literacy Coordinator will assist and facilitate those literacy endeavors and work in partnership with community partners. That said, there are also additional recommendations that will require expanded funding to support regional perspective endeavors such as the Nuu-chah-nulth Language Authority. Therefore in conjunction with the community the Literacy Coordinator will work in partnership to address literacy recommendations with a regional-inclusive perspective.

Feature Recommendations

- To develop an intergenerational, interactive early childhood child and adult program that is oral language-based with a blend of uniquely designed resources/materials to support language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. The resources and materials will be developed in conjunction with youth and Elders/Seniors in order to make the learning experiences transferable to home environments. The format will be similar to a Mother Goose program but the content will be enriched and designed to reflect the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) To develop the early literacy resources and material in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. (The content will reflect the seasonal traditions and celebrations.)
 - B) To support Elders/Seniors in learning basic computer skills.

- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club which brings youth from various local communities to together explore their talent for visual arts. Project Suggestion: the photography group will provide the pictures for the early literacy resources and material. To further extend the participation in this project, the Elders will be asked to guide the use of the Nuu-chah-nulth language component and the content of the resources and material.
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines literacy and parenting Skills. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS) are family literacy programs developed at Bow Valley College in Alberta. There is an Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills program as well. There are trained facilitators of this program living in the Courtenay area.
- To organize a writing program that promotes individual writing skills and intergenerational relationships. Writing programs such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language support adults and Elders/Seniors to write about their life experiences. Elders/Seniors will be given the option to work on their stories individually or be paired up with youth to work on these stories and up-load them on to a computer. The printed version of the story would then be given as a gift back to the Elder/Senior. The learning experience is multi-faceted as both the youth and Elder/Senior gain the potential for a meaningful connection, as well as writing skills.

Ucluelet

Nuu-chah-nulth Meaning: Safe Landing Place or Safe Harbour

Background

Located on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, the Municipality of Ucluelet is a small community that exemplifies “Life on the Edge”. With the Pacific Ocean, Pacific Rim National Park and the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve on their doorstep the individuals, families and the community represent a rich diversity of lifestyles.

With a population of approximately 1,500 people, the community includes the following amenities:

- District of Ucluelet Mayor and Council
- Ucluelet Economic Development Corporation
- Eco-industrial park
- Ucluelet Chamber of Commerce
- Alberni Valley Employment Centre
- Government Office (servicing the Central West Coast Region)
- Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL); Post Office
- Real estate offices
- School District # 70 Ucluelet Elementary School and Ucluelet Secondary School
- North Island College Centre
- R.C.M.P. and Coast Guard, Fire Hall
- Westerly News and Westcoaster On-line
- Banks, retail stores, restaurants, hotels and resorts
- Ucluelet Medical Centre
- Westcoast Community Resources Society
- Churches, and various community services and societies
- Tourism services; whale watching, golf, hiking, kayaking, fishing

Historically, employment in this area has primarily depended on resource-based industries such as fishing, forestry and mining. Over the past two decades these areas have experienced a significant market reduction; tourism is now one of the main employment sectors.

Vision Statement

We value literacy as an integral foundation, linking our community and moving us forward in a positive, progressive manner. From our youngest community member to our oldest we believe everyone has a unique and vital role to play. We celebrate a dual-language initiative that will enrich our lives and to our Seventh Generation.

Findings from Community and Individual Consultations

The following information was gathered by the West Coast Literacy Outreach Coordinator. Participants included various government ministries as well as service providers of the Coastal Family Resources Coalition who provide support services to the whole community. Business and parent voices were also included to further enhance and guide the recommendations.

The Early Years: Birth to Six Years

As speech and language development is the foundation for all future literacy development, it is necessary to support and enrich early learning experiences for infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children. Knowing this, it is essential to include parents, grandparents and additional family members in these early learning experiences as multi-generational activities and events promote the transfer of learning. This is crucial to strengthening literacy skills in Nuu-chah-nulth and English.

School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 Years

Education, both formal and informal, is fundamental to the holistic development of youth. For strong literacy skills to be achieved a balance of learning and mentoring opportunities need to be presented through multiple venues. Leadership roles will promote trust, understanding, self confidence and healthy lifestyle choices.

Due to the proficient computer skills youth possess it was proposed that the youth engage with various projects that would have them working with multi-generational people who are unfamiliar with computers. An additional area for consideration was incorporating more learning opportunities for youth through traditional and contemporary art: painting, carving, music, theatre, and various media avenues.

Young Adults and Adults

The needs of this age group are of significant importance to the community. Practical and effective employment skills and competence in parenting and healthy lifestyle choices are deemed crucial for individual, family and community well-being. Literary skills are recognized as the connection between all these areas.

Elders/Seniors

In respect to the knowledge, wisdom and life-experiences that the Elders/Seniors hold it is essential they are offered opportunities to interact formally and informally with infants, young children, youth and young adults. This age group also needs to engage with other Elders/Seniors in order to enrich each other's lives, share memories and continue along their own individual and healing journeys.

Community Strengths

Central to Ucluelet's strengths is the combination of community services and organizations who are participants in the Coastal Family Resources Coalition.² In Ucluelet there is a solid commitment to working together for the benefit of the whole community and a strong history of working positively and progressively with neighboring First Nation communities to promote cultural and tradition awareness and respect. This is accomplished by effective relationships and partnerships that represent an open-minded approach to progress.

The educational fabric of the community represents a full life-process. School District #70 has a StrongStart program located at the Ucluelet Elementary School that will be entering its fourth year in September 2009. Ucluelet's elementary school and secondary school are in close proximity to each other and SD #70 has demonstrated a commitment to promoting Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional cultural teachings. In the 2009-2010 school year Nuu-chah-nulth Language IRP (Grades 5 – 12) will be

² The Coastal Family Resources Coalition has contributing participants from: Ministry of Education-School District # 70, Ministry of Health – Vancouver Island Health Authority, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Make Children First, Westcoast Community Resources Society, Municipality Council Members, Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, Community School, Parks and Recreation: Ucluelet and Tofino, Family Ties: Ucluelet and Tofino, Pacific Rim Hospice, Community Children's Centre, Ministry of Housing and Social Development, Legal Service Society, Nuu-chah-nulth Family Services, Representatives from the First Nation Communities of: Hot Spring Cove, Ahousaht, Opitsaht, Esowista, and Ittatsoo.

implemented. The Nuu-chah-nulth language will be a recognized second language choice for entrance into higher educational institutions.

The Westcoast Community Resources Society is an essential community resource as well, providing family programs such as: Children & Teens Who Witness Abuse Counseling, Community Outreach, Community Youth Worker Counseling, Women's Outreach and Stopping the Violence Women's Counseling.

North Island College Centre is open four days a week and offers work-related training and certificates as well as Adult Basic Education. Support is also provided for students studying in an on-line format.

Within the past year the Ministry of Children and Family Development reinstated a full time social worker to service the West Coast Region. (Due to budget cuts this position was eliminated a number of years ago and the West Coast was managed by personnel in the Port Alberni office.) Another position recently filled is the Child and Youth Mental Health practitioner for the area.

A new community centre is under construction with an expected completion date of February 2010. This venue will be used by multiple municipal, community and family services (including a daycare centre) and will be an Integrated Services Hub-Model work environment. This design is expected to enhance services for families and promote healthy community activities and events.

Plans are underway for an Early Childhood Care and Education program to be taught on the West Coast. This program would have an enriched approach to learning by including a First Nation focus. Funding has been directed towards this project by the Westcoast Family Resources Coalition, Success by Six and the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council.

Community Challenges

The 2006 Census indicates that the unemployment rate in Ucluelet is higher than BC's average. Ucluelet's unemployment rate is high for part of the year due to the seasonality its tourism sector. Between 750,000 and 1,000,000 visitors arrive annually on the West Coast during the high season; this places a significant demand on all levels of services and amenities.

Furthermore, according to the 2006 Census approximately one quarter of Ucluelet's population does not hold certificates, diplomas or degrees. This is a high percentage of people who will struggle with employment opportunities unless they up-grade, specialize in a trade or acquire higher education.

Limited child care options exist in the community and there is a shortage of qualified Early Childhood Care and Education practitioners in the region. Quality child care is strongly linked with employment and pursuing educational goals.

Affordable housing has been a concern for many years with extreme cases leading to homelessness. Limited availability of apartment/rental buildings and affordable housing has created a troubled housing market. According to the 2006 Census there are 640 private dwellings by usual residence and the average value of a home in Ucluelet is \$336,345.

Food security is also an increasing concern. To help with this issue the Ucluelet Community Food Initiative has been established to search for effective avenues to address this vital and basic human need.

Substance abuse and family violence is also a concern. A multi-faceted approach must be implemented and supported in order to deal with the core issues for those involved.

Limited medical services exist in Ucluelet; currently, there are no birthing services on the West Coast. Families expecting a baby must travel to outside communities such as Port Alberni, Nanaimo or Courtenay. The West Coast Region is challenged by finding medical professionals (doctors and nurses, mental health practitioners) who are interested in relocating to the West Coast.

Some family support services³ that are critical to the development and well-being of families are not provided locally on the West Coast. At present they are delivered by agencies and organizations from Port Alberni. Due to weather and severe road conditions during the winter months only limited services are available.

³ Examples of family services: Speech and Language Pathologist, Outreach Therapy: Occupational Therapy & Physiotherapy, Child Care Consultant, Ministry of Housing and Social Development, Community Dental Hygienist, Community Nutritionist, Hearing and Audiologist, Vision Screening and Care.

Community Recommendations

1. Early Literacy

A clear directive was given to focus on supporting early childhood literacy initiatives to establish a passionate learning culture and perspective in both children and their families. This will lay the foundational groundwork for all future learning and educational opportunities. The goal is to enhance what currently exists for early literacy experiences by creating additional initiatives to extend effective learning activities into multiple environments.

Recommendations are:

- To develop an intergenerational, interactive early childhood adult and child program that is oral language-based with a blend of uniquely designed resources/materials to support language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. The resources and materials will be developed in conjunction with youth and Elders/Seniors in order to make the learning experiences transferable to home environments. The format will be similar to a Mother Goose program but the content will be enriched and designed to reflect the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.
- To examine existing training such as Parents as Literacy Supports (PALS), Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool-aged Youngsters (HIPPY), Moe-the-Mouse, and Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS).
- To establish intergenerational activities and events to utilize the Elders/Seniors knowledge, teachings and language and to extend cultural traditions to infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children and their families.
- To support the plans for an Early Childhood Care and Education program with a First Nation focus to be offered on the West Coast.
- To support the development and creation of a new child care facility along with the new community centre.

2. School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 years

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To view visual and performing arts as literacy contributions and organize/arrange events to promote these avenues.

- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club⁴. This club brings youth together from various local communities to explore their talents in this genre.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) To develop early literacy resources in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages to be utilized within the Central West Coast Region.
 - B) to support Elders/Seniors with computer skills.
- To support the establishment of Reading and Art Cafes by working in conjunction with School District #70.
- To support the learning of traditional Nuu-chah-nulth language and culture in all West Coast School District #70 schools.

3. Young Adults and Adults

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines these two areas. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS) are family literacy programs that were developed in Bow Valley College in Alberta. There are trained facilitators in the Courtenay area to support Train-the-Trainer workshops.
- To organize community events and activities that support cross-cultural celebrations for the entire community.
- To support adult language classes that include traditional teachings, songs, drumming and dancing.
- To promote the educational opportunities provided through the North Island College Centre.

4. Elders and Seniors

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To provide opportunities for Elders and Seniors to learn basic computer skills with youth as their mentors.
- To organize a writing program, such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language, to support Elders/Seniors in writing about their lives. Another component to this initiative would be to pair the Elders and the youth in order to transfer the Elder's stories onto a computer. The printed version of the story could then be given back to the

⁴ The First Nation Youth Photograph Club is a project out of Make It Happen – Nurturing Youth and Community Capabilities, a registered, non-profit society, operating out of Tofino but occurring throughout the Biosphere region.

Elder/Senior as a gift. The Writing Out Loud program has been offered in Ucluelet and Ittatsoo. In both locations the participants found the writing experience motivating and of significant value.

Evaluation Plan

Involvement in the evaluation of this literacy plan will include the Literacy Plan Task Force, project partners, Coastal Family Resources Coalition participants and additional interested parties and project participants from all age levels (early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors).

The evaluation will be prepared by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and guided by the Task Force and the Coastal Family Resources Coalition. The evaluation will be designed in a menu format and will include various methods to gather information. The menu will consist of group discussions, small group round tables, individual consultations, anecdotal stories and interactive surveys.

The evaluations will focus on:

- Effectiveness of delivery.
- Participation and level of interest.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as determined by participants.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as noticed by family or community members.
- Information gathered from all age levels: early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors.
- Suggestions for changes or improvements to the Implementation of the Literacy Plan.
- Next steps.

The information gathered will be interpreted then compiled into a report that will be shared and celebrated with project funders, the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, project partners, and additional interested parties and project participants from all levels. We anticipate the report to be creatively designed in order to showcase the overall vision, that *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Executive Summary: Ucluelet First Nation

Nuu-chah-nulth Meaning: Safe Landing Place or Safe Harbour

The Ucluelet First Nation Vision Statement is located on their website and details their commitment to their people, language, traditional teachings, land and water. The Ucluelet First Nations feel that today's positive decisions will be felt throughout future generations.

The Ucluelet First Nation Dual-Language Literacy Plan has selected community recommendations which reflect and celebrate the Nuuchahnulth primary teaching, *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one. These recommendations are intergenerational and hold the potential to promote strong literacy skills in Nuuchahnulth and English.

In respectful consideration to the funding awarded for this regional literacy plan, and the scope of the geographical area served in this plan, the need behind the community recommendations indicate that extended funding and sources will be required in order for this plan to come to fruition. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will actively seek additional avenues to support this.

This literacy plan recognizes there are additional recommendations that will require time rather than financial contributions. Whenever and wherever possible the Literacy Coordinator will assist and facilitate those literacy endeavors and work in partnership with community partners. That said, there are also additional recommendations that will require expanded funding to support regional perspective endeavors such as the Nuuchahnulth Language Authority. Therefore in conjunction with the community the Literacy Coordinator will work in partnership to address literacy recommendations with a regional-inclusive perspective.

Feature Recommendations

- To develop an intergenerational, interactive early childhood child and adult program that is oral language-based with a blend of uniquely designed resources/materials to support language development of Nuuchahnulth and English. The resources and materials will be developed in conjunction with youth and Elders in order to make the learning experiences transferable to home environments. The format will be similar to a Mother Goose program

but the content will be enriched and designed to reflect the dual languages, and the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.

- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Developing the early literacy resources and material in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. (The content will reflect the seasonal traditions and celebrations.)
 - B) Supporting Elders in learning basic computer skills.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club which brings youth from various local communities to together explore their talent for visual arts. Project Suggestion: the photography group will provide the pictures for the early literacy resources and material. To further extend the participation in this project, the Elders will be asked to guide the use of the Nuu-chah-nulth language component and the content of the resources and material.
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines literacy and parenting Skills. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS) are family literacy programs developed at Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators of this program living in the Courtenay area.
- To organize a writing program that promotes individual writing skills and intergenerational relationships. Writing programs such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language support adults and Elders to write about their life experiences. Elders will be given the option to work on their stories individually or be paired up with youth to work on these stories and up-load them on to a computer. The printed version of the story would then be given as a gift back to the Elders. The learning experience is multi-faceted as both the youth and Elder gain the potential for a meaningful connection, as well as writing skills.

Ittatsoo

Background

The community of Ittatsoo is located on the east shore of Ucluelet Inlet of Barklay Sound, 28 km from the Municipality of Ucluelet. There are approximately 600 members of the Ucluelet First Nation with roughly 200 members living in Ittatsoo. Ucluelet First Nation is one of the five nations of the Maa-nuth Treaty. The Maa-nuth Treaty was ratified on June 15, 2009 in a historic Federal government legislative move.

According to the First Peoples' Language Map there are: 11 people who are fluent Ucluelet First Nation speakers, 24 people who have a knowledge or speak somewhat of the language, and 50 people who are learning speakers.

Community governance is overseen by a Chief, Chief Councilor and six Councilors. Portfolios held within the council are: Economic Development, Fishery and Forestry, Finance and Personnel, Housing, Community & Human Services, Youth and Culture, and Education & Enrolment.

Historically employment in the region was focused on the resource-base sectors of fishing and forestry. Throughout the past decades, these areas have experienced a significant market reduction and tourism is now one of the main employment sectors.

Within the community the following amenities are located:

- Ucluelet First Nation Band Office
- Health Centre
- Recreation Centre
- Heat/Hydro/Water Utility
- Garbage/Sewage Facility
- Fire Hall
- Daycare/Preschool
- Ittatsoo Learning Centre – Adult Basic Education
- Ucluth Development Corporation Building
- Marina

Vision Statement

The following quote is taken directly from the Ucluelet First Nation Vision Statement: "We will value education to develop important life skills and further our economic independence."

In regards to the West Coast Dual-Language Literacy Plan the Ucluelet First Nation see themselves as a people coming together to live in harmony with each other and with nature. With respect and dignity they will continue down the path of healing and recovery, a journey which starts with the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings, and carry forward the lessons of the past in order to guide them into the future. They see the importance of strong literacy skills for all their people as a central component that will build a strong community. They celebrate the primary Nuu-chah-nulth teaching, that *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Findings From Community and Individual Consultations

The following information was gathered by the West Coast Literacy Outreach Coordinator through a combination of community meetings and individual consultations. Participants included various staff members of the Ucluelet First Nation, Ittatsoo service providers and participants of the Coastal Family Resources Coalition who provide family/community support services in the area, including government ministries. Additional information was gathered through relevant resource material. From these collective avenues the following community strengths, challenges and recommendations were developed.

The Early Years: Birth to Six Years

The Ucluelet First Nation believes the key to understanding one's identity is to understand one's language and traditional teachings. To that end, they realize that strong early literacy skills are critical to young children's success. Oral language skills need to be at the centre of children's learning, therefore it is imperative that speech and language are supported and encouraged in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages. Infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children need to have opportunities to interact with their peers, as well as family and community members.

The families of Ittatsoo would benefit from a variety of programs offering a menu of activities for families that promote meaningful, intergenerational learning exchanges. It is important for young children to have early literacy

learning daily, both at home and in the community, to strengthen the development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages.

School –aged Youth: 7 – 18 Years

For the holistic development of the Ittatsoo youth they need to be involved in a blend of learning environments that are both formal and informal. These learning environments must be located within their own community as well as in the Municipality of Ucluelet. It is recognized that all students must travel each day to attend school. Both the local elementary and high schools are located in the Municipality of Ucluelet, 28 km away.

Youth learning needs to be grounded in Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings as that is where their true identity lies. Multiple creative venues must be used in order to enable youth to demonstrate mentor and leadership roles; opportunities such as these will promote trust, understanding, self-confidence and healthy lifestyle choices.

Young Adults and Adults

The family unit is celebrated as the strength of the community. The ability to move forward as a people will be made possible through the commitment of young adults and adults who seek out their identities and core beliefs through the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings. Healthy and respectful interactions and family environments are critical for the development of children and show respect to Elders.

The Ucluelet First Nation believes that when they know who they are they will be able to move forward with practical and effective parenting skills, personal education, and training that will lead to sustainable employment and healthy lifestyle choices.

Elders

Elders are fundamental to the future of the Ucluelet First Nation. They are their existing connection to the past and hold the crucial teachings for the future. They are the living and breathing learning resources for their whole nation. The Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings are the essence of who the Ucluelet First Nation are as a people; they need the guidance of the Elders who have experienced the past and learned imperative lessons that hold the possibilities of tomorrow.

Community Strengths

The strength of the Ucluelet First Nation is the 600 members of which approximately 200 call Ittatsoo home. It is the desire of the Ucluelet First Nation to live in a respectful balance with nature and each other to lay the foundation for responsible living. Amongst band and community members there is a strong belief in the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional way of life. The Ucluelet First Nation believes that in order to take a positive, contributing role within the region there needs to be a delicate weaving together of traditional and contemporary ways.

A Daycare/Preschool Program is located within the community and the dedicated staff members support the learning of the preschool-aged children. Within the Head Start Preschool curriculum is the Moe-the-Mouse program which incorporates speech and language that supports both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages.

The community Health Centre offers limited services to the people of Ittatsoo. Medical and dental services are available in neighbouring Ucluelet and Tofino.

Over the past three years there have been new housing units built to provide safe, accessible dwellings for families and Elders.

Within the community there is an underlying desire for children and youth to concentrate on the establishment of personal educational foundations. Literacy and the expanded initiatives that integrate both English and Nuu-chah-nulth (such as those detailed in this literacy plan) are recognized as essential to the promising future of the whole community.

The Ittatsoo Learning Centre, which supports an Adult Basic Education program, exists within the community to support members to attain their high school diploma/equivalence. Recently the a-ma'a-sip program was introduced into the community and is delivered two days a week. This program helps people understand how they learn, giving them the tools and resources to move forward with their education.

The Elders are seen as a valuable strength and resource within the community. Some are currently active in supporting language and traditional teachings within the community and in various capacities in Ucluelet, including Ucluelet Elementary and High School.

Historically, the governing body of the Ucluelet First Nation (the Chief, Chief in Council and Council members) has worked in collaboration with community of Ucluelet to build positive and enriching partnerships. Parks and Recreation and School District # 70 Ucluelet Schools are strong supporters of the families of Ittatsoo.

The Ucluth Development Corporation has been moving the Ucluelet First Nation forward in a steady, progressive manner by encouraging a diversity of business ventures. These include: Iisaak Forestry, Hittatsoo Limited Forest Company, the Thorton Motel, a marina, Eagle Rock Aggregates project and Upnit Power Corporation.

The Ucluelet First Nation is one of five bands in the Maa-Nulth Treaty. This treaty will provide support for the development of a framework that reflects the beliefs of the Ucluelet First Nation.

Community Challenges

The 2006 Census rate indicates that the unemployment rate in Ittatsoo is recorded at 20% while the BC provincial rate is approximately 6.0%. Employment through the tourism sector is available part of the year, but year-round sustainable employment is needed to bring stability to the community. The Ucluelet First Nation has been working towards job creation endeavors; they believe that in the near future the number of employed band members will increase and unemployment will decrease. Federal statistics suggest that only one third of the population have attained an educational level of a high school diploma or higher. That leaves a large portion of the population who will struggle with employment opportunities unless they up-grade, specialize in a trade or acquire higher education.

Presently, there is only one licensed day care in the community. Within the region there is a shortage of qualified Early Childhood Care and Education practitioners. Quality day care is strongly linked with employment and pursuing educational goals, therefore attention must be given to this challenge.

Medical and dental services are delivered in Ucluelet, but there are no birthing services on the West Coast. Families expecting a baby must travel to outside communities such as Port Alberni, Nanaimo or Courtenay. Historically, the West Coast Region struggles to find medical professionals (doctors, nurses, mental health practitioners) who are interested in relocating to the West Coast.

Substance abuse and family violence are community concerns that require a collaborative approach to effectively deal with the core issues for those involved.

There is a need for a community gathering place for Elders, like a café style environment for them to socialize in both languages with family and community members. The people of the Ucluelet First nation believe the community would benefit from increased opportunities to learn the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings. From infants to Elders, the need is there to hear the language sounds, words and phrases, and to incorporate them into everyday use within the family environments. As well, there is a need for a recreational centre to promote healthy, active life style choices.

A number of family support services⁵ that are critical to the development and well-being of families are not provided locally on the West Coast. At present they are delivered by agencies and organizations from Port Alberni. Due to weather and severe road conditions during the winter months only limited services are available.

Community Recommendations

1. Early Literacy

A clear directive was given to focus attention on supporting early childhood literacy initiatives to establish a passionate learning culture and perspective in both children and their families. This will lay the groundwork for all future learning and educational opportunities. The goal is to enrich and enhance what currently exists for early literacy experiences and create additional initiatives to extend effective learning activities into multiple environments.

Recommendations are:

- To develop an interactive child and adult program that is oral language based, to support the language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. Design resources and material to support the learning experiences to be transferred also into the home environments. The format would be similar to a Mother Goose

⁵ Examples of family services: Speech and Language Pathologist, Outreach Therapy: Occupational Therapy & Physiotherapy, Child Care Consultant, Ministry of Housing and Social Development, Community Dental Hygienist, Community Nutritionist, Hearing and Audiologist, Vision Screening and Care.

program, but the content would be enriched and designed to reflect the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.

- To evaluate training such as Parents As Literacy Supports (PALS), Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool-aged Youngsters (HIPPY), Moe-the-Mouse, Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Parenting and Literacy Skills (A-LAPS).
- To establish intergenerational activities and events to utilize the Elders knowledge and teachings of language and cultural traditions for infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children and their families.
- To support the plans for an Early Childhood Care and Education program with a First Nation focus to be offered on the West Coast.
- To explore avenues to utilize the StrongStart program offered at Ucluelet Elementary

2. School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 years

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To view visual and performing arts as literacy contributions and organize/arrange events to promote these avenues.
- To support the establishment of tutors for students in elementary school, as well as high school.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club⁶. This club brings youth together from various local communities to explore their talents in this genre.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Develop early literacy resources in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages to be utilized within the Central West Coast Region.
 - B) Develop a project that showcases Ittatsoo Youth's artistic talent and includes an entrepreneurship component. To develop a calendar that promotes traditional language and teachings, along with pictures of artwork created by the youth. These calendars could be used as gifts as well as sold at various tourism locations and community events to encourage sustainability into the project.
 - C) Support Elders with computer skills.
- To support the establishment of Reading and Art Cafes by working in conjunction with School District #70, These Reading and Art Cafes would be offered in Ittatsoo, as well as at the Ucluelet schools.
- To support the learning of the Nuu-chah-nulth language and culture in all the West Coast School District #70 schools.

⁶ The First Nation Youth Photograph Club is a project out of Make It Happen – Nurturing Youth and Community Capabilities, a registered, non-profit society, operating out of Tofino but occurring throughout the Biosphere region.

- To promote the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program.

3. Young Adults and Adults

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines the two areas. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) is a family literacy plan that was developed in Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators in the Courtenay area. There is an Aboriginal program also, called A-LAPS, which takes into consideration the learning needs and styles of First Nation people in both rural and urban settings.
- To organize community events and activities that support cross-cultural celebrations for the whole community. For example, host a literacy night with a selection of literacy-based activities for multiple learning levels.
- To support adult language classes that include traditional teachings, songs, drumming and dancing.
- To promote the educational opportunities provided through the Ittatsoo Learning Centre, as well as the North Island College centre in Ucluelet.
- To promote the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program

4. Elders

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To provide opportunities for Elders to work with children, youth and young adults on projects such as the creation of early literacy resources, a community calendar, language and traditional teachings classes.
- To provide opportunities for Elders to learn basic computer skills, with Youth as their mentors.
- To organize a writing program, such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language, to support Elders in writing about their lives. Another component to this initiative would be to pair the Elders and the youth in order to transfer the Elder's stories onto a computer. The printed version of the story could then be given back to the Elder/Senior as a gift. The Writing Out Loud program has been offered

in Ucluelet and Ittatsoo. In both locations the participants found the writing experience motivating and of significant value.

Evaluation Plan

Involvement in the evaluation of this literacy plan will include the Literacy Plan Task Force, project partners, Coastal Family Resources Coalition participants, participating First Nation Communities and additional interested parties and project participants from all age levels (early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders).

The evaluation will be prepared by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and guided by the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, and participating First Nation Communities. The evaluation will be designed in a menu format and will include various methods to gather information. The menu will consist of group discussions, small group round tables, individual consultations, anecdotal stories and interactive surveys.

The evaluations will focus on:

- Effectiveness of delivery.
- Participation and level of interest.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as determined by participants.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as noticed by family or community members.
- Information gathered from all age levels: early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors.
- Suggestions for changes or improvements to the Implementation of the Literacy Plan.
- Next steps.

The information gathered will be interpreted then compiled into a report that will be shared and celebrated with project funders, the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, First Nation Community Partners, and additional interested parties and project participants from all levels. We anticipate the report to be creatively designed in order to showcase the overall vision, that *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Executive Summary for Toquaht First Nation

Nuu-chah-nulth meaning:

People of the narrow place in front or

People of the narrow channel

The Toquaht First Nation Dual-Language Literacy Plan supports the selected community recommendations from within the Region which reflect and celebrate the Nuu-chah-nulth primary teaching, *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one. These recommendations are noted as intergenerational and hold the potential to promote strong literacy skills in Nuu-chah-nulth and English.

In respectful consideration to the funding awarded for this regional literacy plan, and the scope of the geographical area served in this plan, the need behind the community recommendations indicate that extended funding and sources will be needed in order for this plan to come to fruition. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will actively seek additional avenues to support this.

This literacy plan recognizes there are additional recommendations that will require time rather than financial contributions. Whenever and wherever possible the Literacy Coordinator will assist and facilitate those literacy endeavors and work in partnership with community partners. That said, there are also additional recommendations that will require expanded funding to support regional perspective endeavors such as the Nuu-chah-nulth Language Authority. Therefore in conjunction with the community the Literacy Coordinator will work in partnership to address literacy recommendations with a regional-inclusive perspective.

Feature Recommendations

- To develop an intergenerational, interactive early childhood child and adult program that is oral language-based with a blend of uniquely designed resources/materials to support language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. The resources and materials will be developed in conjunction with youth and Elders in order to make the learning experiences transferable to home environments. The format will be similar to a Mother Goose program but the content will be enriched and designed to reflect the dual

languages, and the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.

- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Developing the early literacy resources and material in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. (The content will reflect the seasonal traditions and celebrations.)
 - B) Supporting Elders in learning basic computer skills.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club which brings youth from various local communities to together explore their talent for visual arts. Project Suggestion: the photography group will provide the pictures for the early literacy resources and material. To further extend the participation in this project, the Elders will be asked to guide the use of the Nuu-chah-nulth language component and the content of the resources and material.
- To support classes for the Nuu-chah-nulth language and teachings
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines literacy and parenting Skills. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS) are family literacy programs developed at Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators of this program living in the Courtenay area. There is an Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills program as well.
- To organize a writing program that promotes individual writing skills and intergenerational relationships. Writing programs such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language support adults and Elders to write about their life experiences. Elders will be given the option to work on their stories individually or be paired up with youth to work on these stories and up-load them on to a computer. The printed version of the story would then be given as a gift back to the Elders. The learning experience is multi-faceted as both the youth and Elder gain the potential for a meaningful connection, as well as writing skills.

Macoah

Background

The Toquaht First Nation has a band membership of 137 people. The Indian and Northern Affairs Canada statistics from June 2009 indicate that 8 people currently live in the community of Macoah, with 7 people living on other Reserve Land. The remaining 122 live in other communities.

Macoah is located on Macoah Passage in North Barkley Sound. There are limited amenities found in the community. There are nine housing units with heat/hydro/water utility. The Band office and health centre are located in the Municipality of Ucluelet. Access to Macoah is either by water or by the Toquaht Forest Service Road off Highway 4.

The Toquaht First Nation is one of the five nations of the Maa-nuth Treaty which was ratified on June 15, 2009 in a historic Federal government legislative move. This is a significant step towards the desire of multi-faceted future developments for the Toquaht First Nation.

The governing system is comprised of a Hereditary Chief and two Councilors. With the ratification of the Maa-nuth Treaty there are plans to blend the hereditary and elected governance systems to effectively move the Toquaht First Nation forward.

There are numerous Toquaht First Nation members that are involved in business and economic development ventures within the area.

According to the First Peoples' Language Map there are: two fluent Toquaht First Nation speakers, two people who have a knowledge or speak somewhat of the language, and 30 learning speakers. In the past there has been language classes offered through the Du Quah Gallery and it is the desire of this literacy plan to support the continuation of these Nuu-chah-nulth language classes and traditional teachings.

Although there are limited numbers of Toquaht First Nation living in Macoah, the Toquaht First Nation still support the West Coast Dual-Language Literacy project as they see the positive impact this project will have on the lives of their people wherever they live on the West Coast.

Vision Statement

The Toquaht First Nation believes that for their nation to thrive and move forward their people need to be grounded in their traditional language and teachings. The lessons of their past will guide them today and into the future, and the wisdom of the Elders is seen as the moving force.

The Toquaht First Nation believes that their identities are intricately connected to their language, traditions, land and resources, and they are committed to respecting and protecting these areas. They recognize the vital importance of strong literacy for their people and they understand literacy to be a core component in the creation of a strong and healthy Nation. They celebrate the primary Nuu-chah-nulth teaching: *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Findings from Individual Consultations

The following information was gathered by the West Coast Literacy Outreach Coordinator through individual consultations. Participants included various members of the Hesquiaht First Nation, and members of the Coastal Family Resources Coalition who provide family/community support services in the area. Additional information was gathered through relevant resource material. From these collective voices and avenues the following community strengths, challenges and recommendations were developed.

The Early Years: Birth to Six Years

The Toquaht First Nation believes the key to understanding one's identity is to understand one's language and traditional teachings. To that end, they realize that strong early literacy skills are critical to young children's success. Oral language skills need to be at the centre of children's learning, therefore it is imperative that speech and language are supported and encouraged in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages. Infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children need to have opportunities to interact with their peers, as well as family and community members.

The families of the Toquaht First Nation would benefit from a variety of programs offering a menu of activities for families that promote meaningful, intergenerational learning exchanges. It is important for young children to have early literacy learning daily, both at home, in daycare and in the

community, to strengthen the development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages.

School –aged Youth: 7 – 18 Years

For the holistic development of the Toquaht youth they need to be involved in a blend of learning environments that are both formal and informal. Youth learning needs to be grounded in Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings as that is where their true identity lies. Multiple creative venues must be used in order to enable youth to demonstrate mentor and leadership roles; opportunities such as these will promote trust, understanding, self-confidence and healthy lifestyle choices.

Young Adults and Adults

The family unit is celebrated as the strength of the community. The ability to move forward as a people will be made possible through the commitment of young adults and adults who seek out their identities and core beliefs through the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings. Healthy and respectful interactions and family environments are critical for the development of children and show respect to Elders.

The Toquaht First Nation believes that when they know who they are they will be able to move forward with practical and effective parenting skills, personal education, and training that will lead to sustainable employment and healthy lifestyle choices.

Elders

Elders are fundamental to the future of the Toquaht First Nation. They are their existing connection to the past and hold the crucial teachings for the future. They are the living and breathing learning resources for their whole nation. The Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings are the essence of who the Ucluelet First Nation are as a people; they need the guidance of the Elders who have experienced the past and learned imperative lessons that hold the possibilities of tomorrow.

Community Strengths

The primary strength of Toquaht First Nation is their collective body of members, wherever they reside. The people represent and support their community by living true to themselves, their language and their teachings.

Within the Toquaht First Nation there is an underlying desire for children and youth to concentrate on the establishment of personal educational foundations. Literacy and the expanded initiatives that integrate both English and Nuu-chah-nulth (such as those detailed in this literacy plan) are recognized as essential to the promising future of the whole community.

The Toquaht First Nation is committed to the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional ways of life. For the Toquaht First Nation to move ahead and take a positive, contributing role within the region there needs to be a delicate weaving together of traditional and contemporary ways. The Elders within their Nation are recognized as the core foundation for guiding the promotion of traditional language and teachings.

With the ratification of the Maa-nulth Treaty the future holds many opportunities for the Toquaht First Nation in the areas of education, healthy, and economic development.

Community Challenges

Macoah is the least populated community included in the Dual-Language Literacy Plan and is accessible only by a logging road or water.

There is very little statistical information (Census or Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) regarding the Toquaht First Nation therefore this report does not record unemployment numbers or educational levels of the Toquaht members.

There are limited Early Childhood Care and Education practitioners on the West Coast. Quality child care is strongly linked with employment and pursuing educational goals, so attention is needed in this area.

Medical and dental services are available in Ucluelet and Tofino; this is a two hour commute for the people living in Macoah. There are no birthing services on the West Coast. Families expecting a baby must travel to outside communities such as Port Alberni, Nanaimo or Courtenay. Historically, the West Coast Region struggles to find medical professionals (doctors, nurses, mental health practitioners) who are interested in relocating to the West Coast.

Toquaht First Nation Recommendations

1. Early Literacy

A clear directive was given to focus attention on supporting early childhood literacy initiatives to establish a passionate learning culture and perspective in both children and their families. This will lay the groundwork for all future learning and educational opportunities. The goal is to enrich and enhance what currently exists for early literacy experiences and create additional initiatives to extend effective learning activities into multiple environments.

Recommendations are:

- To develop an interactive child and adult program that is oral language based, to support the language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. Design resources and material to support the learning experiences to be transferred also into the home environments. The format would be similar to a Mother Goose program, but the content would be enriched and designed to reflect the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.
- To evaluate training such as Parents As Literacy Supports (PALS), Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool-aged Youngsters (HIPPY), Moe-the-Mouse, Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS), this also has an Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills program.
- To establish intergenerational activities and events to utilize the Elders knowledge and teachings of language and cultural traditions for infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children and their families.
- To support the plans for an Early Childhood Care and Education program with a First Nation focus to be offered on the West Coast.

2. School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 years

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To view visual and performing arts as literacy contributions and promote strong Nuu-chah-nulth language skills in singing, dancing and drumming.
- To support the establishment of tutors for students in elementary school, as well as high school.

- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club⁷. This club brings youth together from various local communities to explore their talents in this genre.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Develop early literacy resources in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages to be utilized within the Central West Coast Region.
 - B) Support Elders with computer skills.
- To investigate whether the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program would benefit the Toquaht youth.

3. Young Adults and Adults

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines the two areas. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) is a family literacy plan that was developed in Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators in the Courtenay area. There is an Aboriginal program also, called A-LAPS, which takes into consideration the learning needs and styles of First Nation people in both rural and urban settings.
- To support adult language classes that include traditional teachings, songs, drumming and dancing.
- To investigate whether the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program would benefit the Toquaht young adults and adults.

4. Elders

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To provide opportunities for Elders to work with children, youth and young adults on projects such as the creation of early literacy resources, a community calendar, language and traditional teachings classes.
- To provide opportunities for Elders to learn basic computer skills, with Youth as their mentors.
- To organize a writing program, such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language, to support Elders in writing about their lives.

⁷ The First Nation Youth Photograph Club is a project out of Make It Happen – Nurturing Youth and Community Capabilities, a registered, non-profit society, operating out of Tofino but occurring throughout the Biosphere region.

Another component to this initiative would be to pair the Elders and the youth in order to transfer the Elder's stories onto a computer. The printed version of the story could then be given back to the Elder/Senior as a gift. The Writing Out Loud program has been offered in Ucluelet and Ittattoo. In both locations the participants found the writing experience motivating and of significant value.

Evaluation Plan

Involvement in the evaluation of this literacy plan will include the Literacy Plan Task Force, project partners, Coastal Family Resources Coalition participants, participating First Nation Communities and additional interested parties and project participants from all age levels (early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders).

The evaluation will be prepared by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and guided by the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, and participating First Nation Communities. The evaluation will be designed in a menu format and will include various methods to gather information. The menu will consist of group discussions, small group round tables, individual consultations, anecdotal stories and interactive surveys.

The evaluations will focus on:

- Effectiveness of delivery.
- Participation and level of interest.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as determined by participants.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as noticed by family or community members.
- Information gathered from all age levels: early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors.
- Suggestions for changes or improvements to the Implementation of the Literacy Plan.
- Next steps.

The information gathered will be interpreted then compiled into a report that will be shared and celebrated with project funders, the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, First Nation Community Partners, and additional interested parties and project participants from all levels. We anticipate the report to be creatively designed in order to showcase the overall vision, that *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one

Executive Summary: Tofino

The Tofino Dual-Language Literacy Plan has selected Community Recommendations that reflect and celebrate the Nuu-chah-nulth primary teaching, *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one. The recommendations are intergenerational and hold the potential to promote strong literacy skills in Nuu-chah-nulth and English.

In respectful consideration to the amount of funding awarded for this regional literacy plan, the scope of the geographical area being served, and the extent of community recommendations, it is apparent that extended funding sources will need to be achieved in order for them to come to fruition. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will actively seek additional funding avenues for those endeavors.

This literacy plan recognizes that there are additional recommendations that will require support in the area of time, more than financial contributions. Whenever and wherever possible the Literacy Outreach Coordinator will assist and facilitate those literacy endeavors and work in partnership with community partners.

There are additional recommendations that will require expanded funding sources to implement, or are of a more regional perspective, such as a Nuu-chah-nulth Language Authority. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator, in conjunction with the communities will work in partnership to further address literacy recommendations with a more regional-inclusive perspective.

Tofino

Gateway to the Clayoquot Sound

Background

The Municipality of Tofino is located on the Esowista Peninsula on the West Coast of Vancouver Island. This small community is internationally known due to the surrounding Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve. The spirit of Tofino, however, comes from the people who belong to the local, year-round community which rests at approximately 1,700.

The community has many people and services that support the development of an official community plan that respects the uniqueness of this region:

- Mayor and Council
- Tofino Long Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Tofino Business Association
- Tofino Housing Corporation
- Vancouver Island Regional Library
- Real Estate offices
- School District # 70 Wickaninnish Community School
- Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program: a-ma'a-sip program
- R.C.M.P. and Coast Guard, Fire Hall, Ambulance
- Tofino General Hospital
- Medical Clinic, Dentist
- Vancouver Island Health Authority – Coastal Family Place
- Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve
- Tofino Radio, Tofino Time magazine, Clayoquot Community Theatre
- Banks, retail stores, restaurants, hotels and resorts, galleries
- Tourism services: whale watching, golf, fishing, hiking, kayaking
- Long Beach Airport
- Float plane charters
- Water Taxi services
- Churches, and various community services and societies

Historically, employment has been focused on resource-based sectors such as marine/fishing and forestry; however over the last two decades these industries have experienced a significant reduction. The present employment picture is comprised of tourism/eco-tourism, aquaculture, and sustainable forestry.

Vision Statement

We believe that literacy is the key to strengthening our community and we support the holistic vision promoted by this Dual-Language Literacy Plan. We envision a future where our community is comprised of individuals and groups of all ages who are actively living their dreams. To that end, we believe it is imperative that intergenerational literacy initiatives are implemented to build capacity, enhance what already exists, and to develop projects that will honour our collective and individual hopes and desires. This will be achieved through continued collaborative efforts and respectful partnerships.

Findings from Community and Individual Consultations

The following information was gathered by the West Coast Literacy Outreach Coordinator. Participants included various government ministries as well as service providers of the Coastal Family Resources Coalition who provide support services to the whole community. To further guide the recommendations business and parent voices were also included.

The Early Years: Birth to Six Years

Strong early literacy skills are crucial to development of children in primary grades of elementary school and the learning that takes place leading up to these years is the foundation to children's success. Oral language skills are at the centre of that learning and it is imperative that speech and language are supported and encouraged in both the Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages. Infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children need to have opportunities to interact with their peers, as well as family and community members.

The families of Tofino would benefit from a variety of programs that offer a menu of activities for families that promote meaningful, intergenerational learning exchanges. It is important for young children to have early literacy learning daily, both at home and in the community, to strengthen the development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages. Current effective partnerships include: the Community Children's Centre, Wickaninnish Community School, Tofino's Parks and Recreation Department, Vancouver Island Health Authority and the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation.

School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 Years

Since the dual-language literacy plan promotes an expanded profile of literacy these recommendations exemplify what already exists in Tofino.

It was acknowledged that youth in Tofino would benefit from the Wickaninnish School holding a Community School status. Because additional funds are awarded to schools in that category, the entire community now has extensive usage of the school facility to host an array of programs and activities. This offers the youth extended opportunities in formal and informal learning environments that are essential to their holistic development. To further use the Community School, Tofino Parks and Recreation programs can provide the youth with opportunities to take on leadership and mentorship roles. It was felt that leadership roles would promote trust, understanding and self-confidence while encouraging respectful cultural diversity and healthy lifestyle choices.

(Additional note: Tofino high school students have two 40 minute commutes per day, five days per week.)

Young Adults and Adults

Many areas of significant value to the well-being of individuals, families and the community have been identified for this age group; most importantly among them are: sustainable employment, practical and effective parenting skills, and healthy lifestyle choices. Literacy skillfulness has been recognized as the essential link between all of these areas.

Elders/Seniors

Imperative to this literacy plan and its structures is the collective knowledge, wisdom and life-experiences of Elders/Seniors. It is essential that Elders/Seniors have constant opportunities to interact formally and informally with infants, young children, youth and young adults. We also realize the importance of Elders/Seniors connecting with their peers, sharing memories and teachings, enriching each other's lives, and continuing along their personal life journeys. These connections bring strength and encouragement to the entire community.

Local Parks and Recreation has a database that can be accessed to support contact with the Elders/Seniors. Transportation to and from

meetings, events and gatherings is not a barrier due to the use of the Parks and Recreation van.

Community Strengths

The District of Tofino's primary strength is the combination of the local people, community services and organizations of which many are participants in the Coastal Family Resources Coalition. There is a strong commitment to working together in order to grow and evolve the entire district. This will be accomplished by the effective and purposeful relationships and partnerships that are based on an open-minded approach to progress. The community already has a collaborative approach to working progressively with the neighbouring First Nation communities to promote cultural and traditional awareness and respect.

The educational structure of Tofino represents their commitment to a life-long learning process. School District #70 is in the initial stages of developing a StrongStart program at the Wickaninnish Community School and historically they have demonstrated a commitment to promoting the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional cultural teachings within the school and community. In the 2009-2010 school year the Nuu-chah-nulth language will be a recognized second language choice for entrance into higher education institutions.

The Tofino General Hospital is the sole hospital on the West Coast, providing services to a large, rural and isolated geographical area. Also in the community are the Vancouver Island Health Authority's Coast Family Place which houses public health services and the Community Children's Centre.

This past year the Ministry of Children and Family Development reinstated a full time Social Worker to service the West Coast Region. Years ago this position was eliminated due to budget cuts and the responsibility for the West Coast was managed by personnel in the Port Alberni office. Another position that has been recently filled is the Child and Youth Mental Health practitioner.

Plans are underway for an Early Childhood Care and Education program to be taught on the West Coast. The program would have an enriched approach to learning by embedding a First Nation focus. Funding has been directed towards this project by the Westcoast Family Resources Coalition, Success by Six and the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council.

Tofino Parks and Recreation plays a pivotal role in the community as a conduit between a vast array of local organizations and programs. Their database supports the distribution of information and the support in reducing transportation barriers for residents. Planning and organizing is orchestrated through this department for activities and events for all ages of people from the youngest to oldest, and everyone in between.

The Westcoast Multiplex Society is in the application phase, and working towards the realization of a multiplex centre that would house both a swimming pool and skating arena. An application for \$17 million has been sent to Western Economic Diversification – Canada’s Community Adjustment Fund.

Community Challenges

Unemployment is significantly higher in Tofino than the provincial average during some months of the year. During the height of tourist season the influx of visitors to Tofino increases the population from 1,700 to 22,000, with a total annual count of 750,000–1, 000,000 people. Employment increases along with this influx, however, the high demand placed on all levels of services and amenities is extensive.

Limited child care options exist in the community as there is a regional shortage of qualified Early Childhood Care and Education practitioners. Quality child care is strongly linked with employment and pursuing educational goals.

Another area that is linked with unemployment is the educational level of the community. According to the 2006 Census, approximately one fifth of the population did not have certificates, diplomas or degrees. This is a high percentage of people who will struggle with employment opportunities unless they up-grade/specialize in an area of trade or higher educational level.

Affordable housing has been a concern for many years, with extreme cases leading to homelessness. Limited apartment/rental buildings and home dwellings in the area have created an inadequate housing market. According to the 2006 Census there are 695 private dwellings by usual residents and the average value of a home in Tofino is \$493,615.

Over the past number of years food security has been an increasing concern for many families, especially during low employment months.

Some local services have explored avenues to address this growing need and to collaborate on funding applications.

Substance abuse and family violence are community concerns that require a collaborative approach to effectively deal with the core issues for those involved.

Although a hospital does exist in Tofino, limited medical services are available to the families on the West Coast. There are no birthing services available so families must travel to other communities such as Port Alberni, Nanaimo or Courtenay to attain these services. This creates an emotional and financial strain at a very vulnerable point in family's lives. It has been a historical challenge to secure medical professionals (doctors, nurses and mental health practitioners) who are interested in relocating to the West Coast.

Critical family support services⁸ that are vital to the development and well-being of families are often not locally provided on the West Coast. They are delivered by agencies and organizations from Port Alberni. Due to weather and road conditions during the winter months only limited service delivery is available.

Community Recommendations

1. Early Literacy

A clear directive was given to focus attention on supporting early childhood literacy initiatives to establish a passionate learning culture and perspective in both children and their families. This will lay the groundwork for all future learning and educational opportunities. The goal is to enrich and enhance what currently exists for early literacy experiences and create additional initiatives to extend effective learning activities into multiple environments.

Recommendations are:

- To develop an interactive child and adult program that is oral language based, to support the language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. Design resources and material to support the

⁸ Examples of family services: Speech and Language Pathologist, Outreach Therapy: Occupational Therapy & Physiotherapy, Child Care Consultant, Ministry of Housing and Social Development, Community Dental Hygienist, Community Nutritionist, Hearing and Audiologist, Vision Screening and Care.

learning experiences to be transferred also into the home environments. The format would be similar to a Mother Goose program, but the content would be enriched and designed to reflect dual-languages, and the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.

- To evaluate training such as Parents As Literacy Supports (PALS), Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool-aged Youngsters (HIPPY), Moe-the-Mouse, Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS).
- To establish intergenerational activities and events to utilize the Elders/Seniors knowledge and teachings of language and cultural traditions for infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children and their families.
- To support the opportunity for social gatherings between young children (day care children) and Elders/Seniors. Example: The daycare children have hosted a tea for the seniors in the past and it proved to be a meaningful experience for all participants.
- To support the plans for an Early Childhood Care and Education program with a First Nation focus to be offered on the West Coast.
- To support the new StrongStart initiative of School District #70.

2. School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 years

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To view visual and performing arts as literacy contributions and organize/arrange events to promote these avenues.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club⁹. This club brings youth together from various local communities to explore their talents in this genre.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Develop early literacy resources in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages to be utilized within the Central West Coast Region.
 - B) Support Elders/Seniors with computer skills.
- To support the establishment of Reading and Art Cafes by working in conjunction with School District #70.
- To support the Power Tools Plus program which contains two components: practical application and entrepreneurship. Youth are introduced to various power tools and construct various projects.

⁹ The First Nation Youth Photograph Club is a project out of Make It Happen – Nurturing Youth and Community Capabilities, a registered, non-profit society, operating out of Tofino but occurring throughout the Biosphere region.

Then the youth are involved in the selling of the projects which extends the learning into both a social and business realm.

- To support the learning of the Nuu-chah-nulth language and culture in all the West Coast School District #70 schools.
- To continue to work collaboratively with the Wickaninnish Community School to offer expanded programs and activities for all ages.
- To promote the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program.

3. Young Adults and Adults

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines the two areas. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills are family literacy programs that were developed in Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators in the Courtenay area.
- To organize community events and activities that support cross-cultural celebrations for the whole community.
- To support adult language classes that include traditional teachings, songs, drumming and dancing.
- To promote the educational opportunities provided through the North Island College Centre.
- To promote and support an extended version of the Power Tools Plus initiative to include interested women and men.
- To promote the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program

4. Elders and Seniors

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To provide opportunities for Elders/Seniors to learn basic computer skills, with youth as their mentors.
- To support more social opportunities involving Elders/Seniors and young/daycare children. (Example: Elder/Senior's Tea hosted by the daycare children.)
- To organize a writing program, such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language, to support Elders/Seniors in writing about their lives. Another component to this initiative would be to pair the Elders/Seniors and the youth in order to transfer the stories onto a computer. The printed version of the story could then be given back

to the Elder/Senior as a gift. The Writing Out Loud program has been offered in Ucluelet and Ittatsoo. In both locations the participants found the writing experience motivating and of significant value.

Evaluation Plan

Involvement in the evaluation of this literacy plan will include the Literacy Plan Task Force, project partners, Coastal Family Resources Coalition participants, First Nation Communities and additional interested participants from all age levels (early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors).

The evaluation will be prepared by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and guided by the Task Force and the Coastal Family Resources Coalition. The evaluation will be designed in a menu format and will include various methods to gather information. The menu will consist of group discussions, small group round tables, individual consultations, anecdotal stories and interactive surveys.

The evaluations will focus on:

- Effectiveness of delivery.
- Participation and level of interest.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as determined by participants.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as noticed by family or community members.
- Information gathered from all age levels: early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors.
- Suggestions for changes or improvements to the Implementation of the Literacy Plan.
- Next steps.

The information gathered will be interpreted then compiled into a report that will be shared and celebrated with project funders, the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, project partners, and additional interested parties and project participants from all levels. We anticipate the report to be creatively designed in order to showcase the overall vision, that *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Executive Summary: Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation has two communities that come under their Band Council Governance. The community of Opitsaht is located on Mears Island, on the north shore of Heynen Channel across from Tofino. The second community is Esowista which is adjacent to Long Beach, and surrounded by Pacific Rim National Park.

This Dual-Language Literacy Plan for the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation is a combination of feature recommendations from both communities. Yet each community is presented separately to demonstrate that the delivery of the literacy plan will take into consideration that Opitsaht's location on Mears Island is one of the three isolated communities in this regional plan.

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Dual-Language Literacy Plan has selected community recommendations which reflect and celebrate the Nuu-chah-nulth primary teaching, *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one. These recommendations are intergenerational and hold the potential to promote strong literacy skills in Nuu-chah-nulth and English.

In respectful consideration to the funding awarded for this regional literacy plan, and the scope of the geographical area served in this plan, the need behind the community recommendations indicate that extended funding and sources will be needed in order for this plan to come to fruition. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will actively seek additional avenues to support this.

This literacy plan recognizes there are additional recommendations that will require time rather than financial contributions. Whenever and wherever possible the Literacy Coordinator will assist and facilitate those literacy endeavors and work in partnership with community partners. That said, there are also additional recommendations that will require expanded funding to support regional perspective endeavors such as the Nuu-chah-nulth Language Authority. Therefore in conjunction with the community the Literacy Coordinator will work in partnership to address literacy recommendations with a regional-inclusive perspective.

Feature Recommendations

- To develop an intergenerational, interactive early childhood child and adult program that is oral language-based with a blend of uniquely designed resources/materials to support language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. The resources and materials will be developed in conjunction with youth and Elders in order to make the learning experiences transferable to home environments. The format will be similar to a Mother Goose program but the content will be enriched and designed to reflect the dual languages, and the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Developing the early literacy resources and material in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. (The content will reflect the seasonal traditions and celebrations.)
 - B) Supporting Elders in learning basic computer skills.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club which brings youth from various local communities to together explore their talent for visual arts. Project Suggestion: the photography group will provide the pictures for the early literacy resources and material. To further extend the participation in this project, the Elders will be asked to guide the use of the Nuu-chah-nulth language component and the content of the resources and material.
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines literacy and parenting Skills. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS) are family literacy programs developed at Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators of this program living in the Courtenay area.
- To organize a writing program that promotes individual writing skills and intergenerational relationships. Writing programs such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language support adults and Elders to write about their life experiences. Elders will be given the option to work on their stories individually or be paired up with youth to work on these stories and up-load them on to a computer. The printed version of the story would then be given as a gift back to the Elders. The learning experience is multi-faceted as both the youth and Elder gain the potential for a meaningful connection, as well as writing skills.

Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation

Nuu-chah-nulth meaning:

People from Clayoqua / Different People

Background: Opitsaht

Opitsaht is situated on Mears Island across from Tofino and is the location of the Tla-o-qui-aht Band office. With a total Band Membership of approximately 880, approximately 260 members live in Opitsaht.

The following community amenities are available in Opitsaht:

- Band Office
- Health Centre/Station
- Recreation Centre
- Utilities: Heat/Hydro/Water
- Garbage and sewage facility
- Water taxi service

Historically, employment in the region was focused on the resource-based sectors of fishing and forestry. Over the past decades these areas have experienced a significant market reduction and tourism is now one of the main employment sectors, along with the secondary sectors of aquaculture and sustainable logging.

Vision Statement

We see our people living in balance with themselves, their families, the community and nature. As we continue down the road of healing, we will learn from the past and carry that learning with us today as we reinvigorate ourselves through our traditional language and cultural ways. We will move forward with dignity and purpose to create a healthy community for ourselves and our future generations. One of the core elements required for this is strong literacy skills in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. We support programs, activities and events that strengthen all the areas of literacy and in doing so these actions demonstrate *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Findings from Small Group and Individual Consultations

The following information was gathered by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator. Along with the reading of background information regarding the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, current and vital information was provided by the Band Manager – Karl Wagner, Education Coordinator – Desmond Tom, Head Start Program Coordinator – Carol Martin, Head Start Staff Member & School District # 70 Educational Assistant – Grace George, Outreach Worker for Opitsaht Drop-in Program – Gail Hayes. From their collective voices, which include the individuals and families they represent, the following community strengths, challenges and recommendations were developed.

The Early Years: Birth to Six Years

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation understands the key to obtaining one's identity is based in their language and traditional teachings. To that end, they realize that strong early literacy skills are crucial to young children's success. Oral language skills need to be at the centre of their learning and it is imperative that speech and language are supported and encouraged in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages. Infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children need to have opportunities to interact with their peers, as well as family and community members.

The families of Opitsaht would benefit from a variety of programs that offer a menu of activities for families that promote meaningful, intergenerational learning exchanges. It is important for young children to have early literacy learning daily, both at home and in the community, to strengthen the development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages.

School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 Years

It is recognized that all students must travel each day on a water taxi to the dock in Tofino, where they are then bused to their respective schools. High school students have two 40 minute commutes to Ucluelet, where the high school is located.

For the holistic development of Opitsaht youth they need to be involved in a blend of learning environments that are both formal and informal. These learning environments must be located within their own community as well as in Tofino. Multiple creative venues must be used in order to enable youth

to demonstrate mentor and leadership roles; opportunities such as these will promote trust, understanding, self-confidence and healthy lifestyle choices.

Young Adults and Adults

The family unit is celebrated as the strength of the community. The ability to move forward as a people will be made possible through the commitment of young adults and adults who seek out their identities and core beliefs through the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings. Healthy and respectful interactions and family environments are critical for the development of children and show respect to Elders.

The Tla-o-qui-aht people believe that when they know who they are they will be able to move forward with practical and effective parenting skills, personal education, and training that will lead to sustainable employment and healthy lifestyle choices.

Elders

Elders are fundamental to future of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. They are their existing connection to the past and hold the crucial teachings for the future. They are the living and breathing learning resources for their whole nation. The Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings are the essence of the Tla-o-qui-aht people; they need the guidance of the Elders who have experienced the past and learned imperative lessons that hold the possibilities of tomorrow.

Community Strengths

The primary strength of Opitsaht is the people who call it their home. The community is made up of approximately 260 people joined together through family and community, and a respect for the land upon which they live.

Within Opitsaht there is a strong belief and value for the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional way of life. To move forward the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation is committed to taking a positive, contributing role within the region in order to blend contemporary and traditional ways of life.

The Tla-o-qui-aht Band office is located in Opitsaht and the community centre has recently been renovated in order to better serve the community. Within this location there are multiple services offered, such as: the Community Access program which has six computers (one computer

has Success Maker), a parent and child drop-in program, and regular community events.

The weekly parent and child drop-in program offers families the opportunity to attend a program within the community. This program offers activities and learning opportunities for families of young children who are interested in supporting the development of their infants, toddlers and preschool-aged youngsters. The Moe-the-Mouse program incorporates speech and language supports for both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages.

There is a Health Centre within the community that offers limited services to the community, however medical and dental services are delivered in Tofino.

There is an underlying desire for children and youth to concentrate on the establishment of personal educational foundations. Literacy and the expanded initiatives that integrate both English and Nuu-chah-nulth (such as those detailed in this literacy plan) are recognized as essential to the promising future of the whole community.

The Elders are seen as a valuable strength and resource within the community. Some are active in supporting the language and traditional teaching within the community and also in various capacities in Tofino, including Wickaninnish Community School.

Historically, the governing body of Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation (the Chief, Chief in Council and Council members) has worked in collaboration with community of Tofino to build positive and enriching partnerships. The Parks and Recreation Department and the Wickaninnish Community School are strong supporters of the families of Opitsaht.

Community Challenges

One of the primary challenges for the families of the Opitsaht community is that it their community is on an island. Water taxi services are vital in order to move people back and forth on a daily basis. Individual, family and community plans must always take into consideration the restriction of the water taxi schedule, available space and weather.

The 2006 Census rate indicates that the unemployment rate in Opitsaht is recorded at 14.3 % while the BC provincial rate is set at 6.0%. Employment through the tourism sector is available part of the year, but what is needed to bring stability to the community is year-round sustainable employment.

Federal statistics suggest that only one third of the population have attained an educational level of a high school diploma or higher. That leaves a large portion of the population who will struggle with employment opportunities unless they up-grade, specialize in a trade or acquire higher education.

There is no licensed child care service in the community and within the region there is a shortage of qualified Early Childhood Care and Education practitioners. Quality child care is strongly linked with employment and pursuing educational goals.

Housing remains an issue, with a total of 56 dwellings to house the population. A major concern is that many of the homes are aging and/or in need of repair in order to create safe and healthy home environments.

Medical and dental services are delivered across the bay in Tofino, and there are no birthing services on the West Coast. Families expecting a baby must travel to outside communities such as Port Alberni, Nanaimo or Courtenay. Historically, the West Coast Region struggles to find medical professionals (doctors, nurses, mental health practitioners) who are interested in relocating to the West Coast.

Substance abuse and family violence are community concerns that require a collaborative approach to effectively deal with the core issues for those involved.

A number of family support services¹⁰ that are critical to the development and well-being of families are not provided locally on the West Coast. At present they are delivered by agencies and organizations from Port Alberni. Due to weather and severe road conditions during the winter months only limited services are available.

¹⁰ Examples of family services: Speech and Language Pathologist, Outreach Therapy: Occupational Therapy & Physiotherapy, Child Care Consultant, Ministry of Housing and Social Development, Community Dental Hygienist, Community Nutritionist, Hearing and Audiologist, Vision Screening and Care.

Community Recommendations

1. Early Literacy

A clear directive was given to focus attention on supporting early childhood literacy initiatives to establish a passionate learning culture and perspective in both children and their families. This will lay the groundwork for all future learning and educational opportunities. The goal is to enrich and enhance what currently exists for early literacy experiences and create additional initiatives to extend effective learning activities into multiple environments.

Recommendations are:

- To develop an interactive child and adult program that is oral language based, to support the language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. To design resources and material to support the learning experiences to be transferred also into the home environments. The format would be similar to a Mother Goose program, but the content would be enriched and designed to reflect the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.
- To evaluate training such as Parents As Literacy Supports (PALS), Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool-aged Youngsters (HIPPY), Moe-the-Mouse, Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) or Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS).
- To establish intergenerational activities and events to utilize the Elders knowledge and teachings of language and cultural traditions for infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children and their families.
- To support the plans for an Early Childhood Care and Education program with a First Nation focus to be offered on the West Coast.
- To support the new StrongStart Outreach program initiative of School District #70. This will have an extension program that will be delivered in Opitsaht in the 2009-2010 school year.

2. School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 years

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To view visual and performing arts as literacy contributions and organize/arrange events to promote these avenues.
- To support the establishment of tutors for students in elementary school and high school.

- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club¹¹. This club brings youth together from various local communities to explore their talents in this genre.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Develop early literacy resources in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages to be utilized within the Central West Coast Region.
 - B) Support Elders with computer skills.
- To support the establishment of Reading and Art Cafes by working in conjunction with School District #70.
- To support the Power Tools Plus program which contains two components: practical application and entrepreneurship. (Youth are introduced to various power tools and construct a range of projects that they in turn sell.)
- To support the learning of the Nuu-chah-nulth language and culture in all the West Coast School District #70 schools.
- To continue to work collaboratively with the Wickaninnish Community School to offer expanded programs and activities for all ages.
- To promote the a-ma' a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program.

3. Young Adults and Adults

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines the two areas. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) is a family literacy plan that was developed in Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators in the Courtenay area.
- To organize community events and activities that support cross-cultural celebrations for the whole community. For example, host a literacy night with a selection of literacy-based activities for multiple learning levels.
- To support adult language classes that include traditional teachings, songs, drumming and dancing.
- To promote educational and training opportunities provided through a variety of avenues, including the North Island College Centre.
- To promote the a-ma' a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program.

¹¹ The First Nation Youth Photograph Club is a project out of Make It Happen – Nurturing Youth and Community Capabilities, a registered, non-profit society, operating out of Tofino but occurring throughout the Biosphere region.

4. Elders

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To provide opportunities for Elders to learn basic computer skills, with Youth as their mentors.
- To organize a writing program, such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language, to support Elders in writing about their lives. Another component to this initiative would be to pair the Elders and the youth in order to transfer the Elder's stories onto a computer. The printed version of the story could then be given back to the Elder as a gift. The Writing Out Loud program has been offered in Ucluelet and Ittatsoo. In both locations the participants found the writing experience motivating and of significant value.

Evaluation Plan

Involvement in the evaluation of this literacy plan will include the Literacy Plan Task Force, project partners, Coastal Family Resources Coalition participants, participating First Nation Communities and additional interested parties and project participants from all age levels (early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders).

The evaluation will be prepared by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and guided by the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, and participating First Nation Communities. The evaluation will be designed in a menu format and will include various methods to gather information. The menu will consist of group discussions, small group round tables, individual consultations, anecdotal stories and interactive surveys.

The evaluations will focus on:

- Effectiveness of delivery.
- Participation and level of interest.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as determined by participants.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as noticed by family or community members.
- Information gathered from all age levels: early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors.
- Suggestions for changes or improvements to the Implementation of the Literacy Plan.
- Next steps.

The information gathered will be interpreted then compiled into a report that will be shared and celebrated with project funders, the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, First Nation Community Partners, and additional interested parties and project participants from all levels. We anticipate the report to be creatively designed in order to showcase the overall vision, that *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Background: Esowista

Esowista is located on the Esowista Peninsula within the boundaries of Pacific Rim National Park. With a total Band Membership of about 880 approximately 220 members presently live in Esowista and roughly 100 families are on a waitlist for housing.

Over the past year there has been revitalization projects taking place in Esowista. Projects have included installing a new water system, paving the streets, and establishing sidewalks for pedestrian safety. A new sign welcomes visitors and residents alike into a forward moving community. A new health centre will be built along with other community buildings to support the healthy growth of the community. There are 42 family dwellings in the community, but many need renovations and up-grades to ensure the safety and health of the residents.

One hundred years ago Chief Wickaninnish initiated negotiations with the government to secure more land for the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. On July 15, 2009 86.4 hectares were removed from Pacific Rim National Park and returned to Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. The expansion will be called Ty Histanis and will be located north of Esowista; a roadway will connect the two communities. This new community will create 160 new homes and have vital amenities such as: Elder housing, recreational facilities, a governance centre, cemetery, emergency services station, geothermal pump station, water and utilities building.

Historically, employment in this region has been focused on the resource-based sectors of fishing and forestry. Throughout the past decades these areas have experienced a significant market reduction and tourism is now one of the main employment sectors. The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation own and operate Tin Wis Resort as well as other tourism-based ventures. They have an active and forward thinking Economic Development Corporation which also works in conjunction with the District of Tofino towards future endeavors.

Vision Statement

We see our people living in balance with themselves, their families, the community and nature. As we continue down the road of healing, we will learn from the past and carry that learning with us today as we reinvigorate ourselves through our traditional language and cultural ways. We will move forward with dignity and purpose to create a healthy community for

ourselves and our future generations. One of the core elements required for this is strong literacy skills in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. We support programs, activities and events that strengthen all the areas of literacy and in doing so these actions demonstrate *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Findings from Small Group and Individual Consultations

The following information was gathered by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator. Along with the reading of background information regarding the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations, current and vital information was provided by the Band Manager – Karl Wagner, Education Coordinator – Desmond Tom, Head Start Program Coordinator – Carol Martin, Head Start Staff Member & School District # 70 Educational Assistant – Grace George, Outreach Worker for Opitsaht Drop-in Program – Gail Hayes. From their collective voices, which included the individuals and families that they represent, the following community strengths, challenges and recommendations were developed.

The Early Years: Birth to Six Years

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation understands the key to obtaining one's identity is based in language and traditional teachings. To that end, they realize that strong early literacy skills are crucial to young children's success. Oral language skills need to be at the centre of their learning and it is imperative that speech and language are supported and encouraged in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages. Infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children need to have opportunities to interact with their peers, as well as family and community members.

The families of Esowista would benefit from a variety of programs that offer a menu of activities for families that promote meaningful, intergenerational learning exchanges. It is important for young children to have early literacy learning daily, both at home and in the community, to strengthen the development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages.

School -aged Youth: 7 – 18 Years

It was recognized that all students must travel each day to attend school. Elementary students travel by bus to Wickaninnish Community School in

Tofino, which is about 15 minutes away. High school students have two 25 minute commutes to Ucluelet, where the high school is located.

For the holistic development of the Esowista youth they need to be involved in a blend of learning environments that are both formal and informal. These learning environments must be located within their own community as well as in neighbouring Tofino and Ucluelet. The content of the learning needs to be embedded in the learning of the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings because that is where their true identity lies. Multiple creative venues must be used in order to enable youth to demonstrate mentor and leadership roles; opportunities such as these will promote trust, understanding, self-confidence and healthy lifestyle choices.

Young Adults and Adults

The family unit is celebrated as the strength of the community. The ability to move forward as a people will be made possible through the commitment of young adults and adults who seek out their identities and core beliefs through the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings. Healthy and respectful interactions and family environments are critical for the development of children and show respect to Elders.

The people of Esowista believe that when they know who they are they will be able to move forward with practical and effective parenting skills, personal education, and training that will lead to sustainable employment and healthy lifestyle choices.

Elders

Elders are fundamental to future of the people of Esowista. They are their existing connection to the past and hold the crucial teachings for the future. They are the living and breathing learning resources for their whole nation. The Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings are the essence of who the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation are as a people; they need the guidance of the Elders who have experienced the past and learned imperative lessons that hold the possibilities of tomorrow.

Community Strengths

The strength of the community of Esowista is the people who call it their home. The community is made up of approximately 220 people who are joined together through family and community bonds and a respect for the land upon which they live.

There is a strong belief and value for the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional way of life. To move ahead and take a positive, contributing role within the region, the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation believes there is a fine balance between traditional and contemporary ways.

A Head Start Preschool Program is located within the community and the dedicated staff members support the learning of the preschool aged children. Within in the Head Start Preschool curriculum is the Moe-the-Mouse program which incorporates speech and language support for both Nuu-chah-nulth and English.

There is a Health Centre within the community that offers limited services to the community. Medical and dental services are delivered in neighbouring Tofino.

There is an underlying desire for the children and youth of the community to establish strong educational foundations. Literacy is recognized as an essential component of a promising future for the whole community.

The Elders are seen as a valuable strength and resource within the community. Some are active in supporting the language and traditional teaching both within the community and also in various capacities in Tofino, including Wickaninnish Community School.

Historically, the governing body of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation(the Chief, Chief in Council and Council members) has worked in collaboration with community of Tofino to build positive and enriching partnerships. The Parks and Recreation Department and the Wickaninnish Community School are strong supporters of the families of Esowista.

Community Challenges

The 2006 Census rate indicates that the unemployment rate in Esowista is recorded at 14.3 % while the BC provincial rate is set at 6.0%. Employment through the tourism sector is available part of the year, but what is needed to bring stability to the community is year-round sustainable employment.

Federal statistics suggest that only one third of the population have attained an educational level of a high school diploma or higher. That leaves a large portion of the population who will struggle with employment

opportunities unless they up-grade, specialize in a trade or acquire higher education.

There is no licensed day care service in Esowista and within the region there is a shortage of qualified Early Childhood Care and Education practitioners. Quality day care is strongly linked with employment and pursuing educational goals.

Medical and dental services are delivered in Tofino, but there are no birthing services on the West Coast. Families expecting a baby must travel to outside communities such as Port Alberni, Nanaimo or Courtenay. Historically, the West Coast Region struggles to find medical professionals (doctors, nurses, mental health practitioners) who are interested in relocating to the West Coast.

Substance abuse and family violence are community concerns that require a collaborative approach to effectively deal with the core issues for those involved.

A number of family support services¹² that are critical to the development and well-being of families are not provided locally on the West Coast. At present they are delivered by agencies and organizations from Port Alberni. Due to weather and severe road conditions during the winter months only limited services are available.

Community Recommendations

1. Early Literacy

A clear directive was given to focus attention on supporting early childhood literacy initiatives to establish a passionate learning culture and perspective in both children and their families. This will lay the groundwork for all future learning and educational opportunities. The goal is to enrich and enhance what currently exists for early literacy experiences and create additional initiatives to extend effective learning activities into multiple environments.

¹² Examples of family services: Speech and Language Pathologist, Outreach Therapy: Occupational Therapy & Physiotherapy, Child Care Consultant, Ministry of Housing and Social Development, Community Dental Hygienist, Community Nutritionist, Hearing and Audiologist, Vision Screening and Care.

Recommendations are:

- To develop an interactive child and adult program that is oral language based, to support the language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. Design resources and material to support the learning experiences to be transferred also into the home environments. The format would be similar to a Mother Goose program, but the content would be enriched and designed to reflect the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.
- To evaluate training such as Parents As Literacy Supports (PALS), Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool-aged Youngsters (HIPPY), Moe-the-Mouse, Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS).
- To establish intergenerational activities and events to utilize the Elders knowledge and teachings of language and cultural traditions for infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children and their families.
- To support the plans for an Early Childhood Care and Education program with a First Nation focus to be offered on the West Coast.
- To support the new StrongStart Outreach initiative of School District #70, this will have an extension program that will be delivered in Esowista in the 2009-2010 school year.

2. School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 years

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To view visual and performing arts as literacy contributions and organize/arrange events to promote these avenues.
- To support the establishment of tutors for students in elementary school, as well as high school
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club¹³. This club brings youth together from various local communities to explore their talents in this genre.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
A) Develop early literacy resources in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages to be utilized within the Central West Coast Region.
B) Support Elders with computer skills.
- To support the establishment of Reading and Art Cafes by working in conjunction with School District #70.

¹³ The First Nation Youth Photograph Club is a project out of Make It Happen – Nurturing Youth and Community Capabilities, a registered, non-profit society, operating out of Tofino but occurring throughout the Biosphere region.

- To support the Power Tools Plus program which contains two components: practical application and entrepreneurship. Youth are introduced to various power tools and construct various projects. Then the youth are involved in the selling of the projects which extends the learning into both a social and business realm.
- To support the learning of the Nuu-chah-nulth language and culture in all the West Coast School District #70 schools.
- To continue to work collaboratively with the Wickaninnish Community School to offer expanded programs and activities for all ages.
- To promote the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program.

3. Young Adults and Adults

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines the two areas. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) is a family literacy plan that was developed in Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators in the Courtenay area.
- To organize community events and activities that support cross-cultural celebrations for the whole community. For example, host a literacy night with a selection of literacy-based activities for multiple learning levels.
- To support adult language classes that include traditional teachings, songs, drumming and dancing.
- To promote the educational opportunities provided through the North Island College Centre.
- To promote the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program

4. Elders

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To provide opportunities for Elders to learn basic computer skills, with Youth as their mentors.
- To organize a writing program, such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language, to support Elders in writing about their lives. Another component to this initiative would be to pair the Elders and the youth in order to transfer the Elder's stories onto a computer. The printed version of the story could then be given back to the Elder/Senior as a gift. The Writing Out Loud program has been offered

in Ucluelet and Ittatsoo. In both locations the participants found the writing experience motivating and of significant value.

Evaluation Plan

Involvement in the evaluation of this literacy plan will include the Literacy Plan Task Force, project partners, Coastal Family Resources Coalition participants, participating First Nation Communities and additional interested parties and project participants from all age levels (early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders).

The evaluation will be prepared by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and guided by the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, and participating First Nation Communities. The evaluation will be designed in a menu format and will include various methods to gather information. The menu will consist of group discussions, small group round tables, individual consultations, anecdotal stories and interactive surveys.

The evaluations will focus on:

- Effectiveness of delivery.
- Participation and level of interest.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as determined by participants.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as noticed by family or community members.
- Information gathered from all age levels: early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors.
- Suggestions for changes or improvements to the Implementation of the Literacy Plan.
- Next steps.

The information gathered will be interpreted then compiled into a report that will be shared and celebrated with project funders, the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, First Nation Community Partners, and additional interested parties and project participants from all levels. We anticipate the report to be creatively designed in order to showcase the overall vision, that *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Executive Summary for

Ahousaht First Nation

Nuu-chah-nulth meaning: People of Ahous
(Ahous is a small bay on the west side of Vargas Island)

The Ahousaht First Nation has a holistic vision for their people: to live with dignity and respect with a personal and collective commitment to their language and traditional teachings. They believe their actions today will affect future generations.

The Ahousaht First Nation Dual-Language Literacy Plan has selected community recommendations which reflect and celebrate the Nuu-chah-nulth primary teaching, *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one. These recommendations are intergenerational and hold the potential to promote strong literacy skills in Nuu-chah-nulth and English.

In respectful consideration to the funding awarded for this regional literacy plan, and the scope of the geographical area served in this plan, the need behind the community recommendations indicate that extended funding and sources will be needed in order for this plan to come to fruition. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will actively seek additional avenues to support this.

This literacy plan recognizes there are additional recommendations that will require time rather than financial contributions. Whenever and wherever possible the Literacy Coordinator will assist and facilitate those literacy endeavors and work in partnership with community partners. That said, there are also additional recommendations that will require expanded funding to support regional perspective endeavors such as the Nuu-chah-nulth Language Authority. Therefore in conjunction with the community the Literacy Coordinator will work in partnership to address literacy recommendations with a regional-inclusive perspective.

Feature Recommendations

- To develop an intergenerational, interactive early childhood child and adult program that is oral language-based with a blend of uniquely designed resources/materials to support language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. The resources and

materials will be developed in conjunction with youth and Elders in order to make the learning experiences transferable to home environments. The format will be similar to a Mother Goose program but the content will be enriched and designed to reflect the dual languages, and the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.

- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Developing the early literacy resources and material in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. (The content will reflect the seasonal traditions and celebrations.)
 - B) Supporting Elders in learning basic computer skills.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club which brings youth from various local communities to together explore their talent for visual arts. Project Suggestion: the photography group will provide the pictures for the early literacy resources and material. To further extend the participation in this project, the Elders will be asked to guide the use of the Nuu-chah-nulth language component and the content of the resources and material.
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines literacy and parenting Skills. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS) are family literacy programs developed at Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators of this program living in the Courtenay area. There is an Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills program as well.
- To organize a writing program that promotes individual writing skills and intergenerational relationships. Writing programs such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language support adults and Elders to write about their life experiences. Elders will be given the option to work on their stories individually or be paired up with youth to work on these stories and up-load them on to a computer. The printed version of the story would then be given as a gift back to the Elders. The learning experience is multi-faceted as both the youth and Elder gain the potential for a meaningful connection, as well as writing skills.

Ahousaht

Background

The community of Ahousaht is located on Flores Island, accessible only by float plane or water taxi services. There are approximately 1,700 band members and close to 750 people reside in Ahousaht.

The following amenities are located in Ahousaht:

- Band Administrative Office
- Ahousaht Holistic Centre
- Health Centre
- North Island College centre – Adult Basic Education program
- Maaqtusiis School: Kindergarten to Grade 12
- Head Start Day care and preschool
- Police Detachment
- Recreation Centre
- Heat/Hydro/Water Utility
- Garbage/Sewage Facility
- Youth Centre
- Store
- Café
- Water taxi services
- Two docks

The governing system for the Ahousaht First Nation includes the Chief, Chief Councilor and elected Council. There are an array of departments within the Ahousaht First Nation government such as; administration, education, human services, medical clinic, social services, treaty, home care, transportation, fisheries, forestry, maintenance, and the Ahousaht grocery store.

According to the First Peoples' Language Map there are 48 fluent Ahousaht First Nation speakers, 44 people with an understanding or speak somewhat of the language and 130 learning speakers.

Historically, employment in the region was focused on the resource-base sectors of fishing and forestry. Throughout the past decades these areas have experienced a significant market reduction and tourism is now one of the main employment sectors, along with the secondary sectors of aquaculture, transportation (water taxi service) and sustainable forestry/silviculture and fishing (shellfish).

In February 2009 a new business venture was announced: the launch of the first First Nation-owned No-Net Negative Environmental Impact (NNNEI) Kakawis Wilderness Resort and Spa on Mears Island and the Cypre Valley Recreation Conservation Reserve. The venture involves the Ahousaht First Nation, the Province of BC, ARG Services Inc., and the Municipality of Tofino.

Vision Statement

“My dream is to leave a legacy of our language.”
-- Marie Donahue, Elder

In regards to the West Coast Dual-Language Literacy Plan we see our people moving forward in healing, strength and purpose. We see the wisdom of our Elders guiding our whole community to gain knowledge in our language and traditional teachings. We will carry forward the lessons of our past in order to guide us today and direct our paths into the future. We believe our identities are intricately connected with our language, traditions, land and resources and we are committed to respecting and protecting them. We recognize the vital importance of strong literacy for our people and see literacy as a core component in the creation of a strong and healthy community. We celebrate the primary Nuu-chah-nulth teaching *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Findings From Community, Small Groups and Individual Consultations

The following information was gathered by the West Coast Literacy Outreach Coordinator through a combination of community meetings, small groups and individual consultations. Participants included various staff members of the Ahousaht First Nation, Ahousaht service providers, and participants of the Coastal Family Resources Coalition who provide family/community support services in the area, including government ministries. Additional information was gathered through the reading of relevant resource material. From these collective voices and avenues the following community strengths, challenges and recommendations were developed.

The Early Years: Birth to Six Years

The Ahousaht First Nation believes the key to understanding one's identity is to understand one's language and traditional teachings. To that end, they realize that strong early literacy skills are critical to young children's success. Oral language skills need to be at the centre of children's learning, therefore it is imperative that speech and language are supported and encouraged in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages. Infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children need to have opportunities to interact with their peers, as well as family and community members.

The families of Ahousaht would benefit from a variety of programs that offer a menu of activities for families that promote meaningful, intergenerational learning exchanges. It is important for young children to have early literacy learning daily at home, at daycare and preschool, and in the community.

School -aged Youth: 7 – 18 Years

For the holistic development of the Ahousaht youth they need to be involved in a blend of learning environments that are both formal, through the Maaqtusiis School, and informal. Youth learning needs to be grounded in Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings as that is where their true identity lies. Multiple creative venues must be used in order to enable youth to demonstrate mentor and leadership roles; opportunities such as these will promote trust, understanding, self-confidence and healthy lifestyle choices.

Young Adults and Adults

The family unit is celebrated as the strength of the community. The ability to move forward as a people will be made possible through the commitment of young adults and adults who seek out their identities and core beliefs through the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings. Healthy and respectful interactions and family environments are critical for the development of children and show respect to Elders.

The Ahousaht First Nation believes that when they know who they are they will be able to move forward with practical and effective parenting skills, personal education, and training that will lead to sustainable employment and healthy lifestyle choices.

Elders

Elders are fundamental to the future of the Ahousaht First Nation. They are their existing connection to the past and hold the crucial teachings for the future. They are the living and breathing learning resources for their whole nation. The Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings are the essence of who the Ahousaht are as a people; they need the guidance of the Elders who have experienced the past and learned imperative lessons that hold the possibilities of tomorrow.

Community Strengths

The foremost strength of Ahousaht is the collective body of members of the Ahousaht First Nation, wherever they reside. The people represent and support the community by living true to themselves, their language and their teachings. Many Ahousaht First Nation people have achieved higher education goals and continue to support the advancement of their people. For example, on July 22nd 2009, Ahousaht hereditary chief Shawn Atleo was named National Chief of the Assembly of First Nation.

For many years the Maaqtusiis School has been a hub of learning in the community and supports the learning of students from kindergarten to grade 12. New funding has been secured to build a new school to house students from grade 7 – 12 (kindergarten to grade 6 will remain in the original school). To further enhance the learning experience for all their students has been a long-term objective for the Ahousaht community as they see education and literacy as a means to move individuals as well as the whole community forward.

The Ahousaht First Nation is committed to the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional ways of life. For the Nation to move ahead and take a positive, contributing role within the region there needs to be a delicate weaving together of traditional and contemporary ways. The Elders within their Nation are recognized as the core foundation for guiding the promotion of traditional language and teachings.

There is a Head Start Daycare/Preschool Program located next to the Maaqtusiis School. There the dedicated staff members support the learning of infants, toddlers and preschool aged children. Embedded in the curriculum are speech and language support for both Nuu-chah-nulth and English.

The Ahousaht Holistic Centre is a vital component within community that offers an array of family health support services. Medical and dental services delivered in Tofino.

A North Island College centre is located in Ahousaht. The centre runs an Adult Basic Education program that gives community members the opportunity to attain their high school diploma/equivalence.

Historically, the governing body of Ahousaht First Nation (the Chief, Chief in Council and Council members) has worked in collaboration with regional, provincial and federal arenas to promote the health, education and economic development of their community and territory. Treaty negotiations are on-going and as the process moves forward innovative initiatives are anticipated as promises give way to actions.

Community Challenges

There was no 2006 Census unemployment information recorded for Ahousaht, however the 2001 Indian and Northern Affairs Canada information indicates that the unemployment rate in Ahousaht is 16.7%. The BC provincial rate is set at 6.0%. Employment through the tourism sector is available part of the year, but what is needed to bring stability to the community is year-round sustainable employment. The Ahousaht First Nation has been working towards job creation endeavors and believes that in the near future the number of employed band members will increase and the unemployed segment of the community will decrease significantly.

Current information suggest that only one third of the population have attained an educational level of a high school diploma or higher. That leaves a large portion of the population who will struggle with employment opportunities unless they up-grade, specialize, or acquire higher education.

While there is a licensed Head Start day care, preschool and infant and toddler centre within the community there is still a struggle to find accredited Early Childhood Care and Education practitioners. Quality day care is strongly linked with employment and pursuing educational goals so attention will be needed in this area.

Medical and dental services are delivered in Tofino which requires a 40 minute water taxi commute. There are no birthing services on the West Coast. Families expecting a baby must travel to outside communities such as Port Alberni, Nanaimo or Courtenay. Historically, the West Coast Region

struggles to find medical professionals (doctors, nurses, mental health practitioners) who are interested in relocating to the West Coast.

Substance abuse and family violence are community concerns that require a collaborative approach to effectively deal with the core issues for those involved.

The community feels it would benefit from increased opportunities to learn the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings. From infants to Elders, the need is there to hear the language sounds, words and phrases, and to incorporate them into everyday use within family environments.

Some family and community support services are delivered from organizations and agencies located in Tofino or Ucluelet which require a 40 minute water taxi commute. In the winter months travel and service delivery can be very limited.

Community Recommendations

1. Early Literacy

A clear directive was given to focus attention on supporting early childhood literacy initiatives to establish a passionate learning culture and perspective in both children and their families. This will lay the groundwork for all future learning and educational opportunities. The goal is to enrich and enhance what currently exists for early literacy experiences and create additional initiatives to extend effective learning activities into multiple environments.

Recommendations are:

- To develop an interactive child and adult program that is oral language based, to support the language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. Design resources and material to support the learning experiences to be transferred also into the home environments. The format would be similar to a Mother Goose program, but the content would be enriched and designed to reflect the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.
- To evaluate training such as Parents As Literacy Supports (PALS), Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool-aged Youngsters (HIPPY), Moe-the-Mouse, Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS), this also has an Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills program.

- To establish intergenerational activities and events to utilize the Elders knowledge and teachings of language and cultural traditions for infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children and their families.
- To support the plans for an Early Childhood Care and Education program with a First Nation focus to be offered on the West Coast.

2. School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 years

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To view visual and performing arts as literacy contributions and promote strong Nuu-chah-nulth language skills in singing, dancing and drumming.
- To support the school curriculum to reflect the seasonal celebrations of the Ahousaht First Nation.
- To support the establishment of tutors for students in elementary school, as well as high school.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club¹⁴. This club brings youth together from various local communities to explore their talents in this genre.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Develop early literacy resources in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages to be utilized within the Central West Coast Region.
 - B) Develop a project that showcases Ahousaht Youth’s artistic talent and includes an entrepreneurship component. To develop a calendar that promotes traditional language and teachings, along with pictures of artwork created by the youth. These calendars could be used as gifts as well as sold at various tourism locations and community events to encourage sustainability into the project.
 - C) Support Elders with computer skills.
- To investigate whether the a-ma’a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program would benefit the Ahousaht youth.

3. Young Adults and Adults

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines the two areas. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) is a family literacy plan that was developed in Bow Valley College in

¹⁴ The First Nation Youth Photograph Club is a project out of Make It Happen – Nurturing Youth and Community Capabilities, a registered, non-profit society, operating out of Tofino but occurring throughout the Biosphere region.

Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators in the Courtenay area. There is an Aboriginal program also, called A-LAPS, which takes into consideration the learning needs and styles of First Nation people in both rural and urban settings.

- To organize community events and activities that support cross-cultural celebrations for the whole community. For example, host a literacy night with a selection of literacy-based activities for multiple learning levels.
- To support adult language classes that include traditional teachings, songs, drumming and dancing.
- To promote the educational opportunities provided through the Ittatsoo Learning Centre, as well as the North Island College centre in Ucluelet.
- To investigate whether the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program would benefit the Ahousaht young adults and adults.

4. Elders

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To provide opportunities for Elders to work with children, youth and young adults on projects such as the creation of early literacy resources, a community calendar, language and traditional teachings classes.
- To provide opportunities for Elders to learn basic computer skills, with Youth as their mentors.
- To organize a writing program, such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language, to support Elders in writing about their lives. Another component to this initiative would be to pair the Elders and the youth in order to transfer the Elder's stories onto a computer. The printed version of the story could then be given back to the Elder/Senior as a gift. The Writing Out Loud program has been offered in Ucluelet and Ittatsoo. In both locations the participants found the writing experience motivating and of significant value.

Evaluation Plan

Involvement in the evaluation of this literacy plan will include the Literacy Plan Task Force, project partners, Coastal Family Resources Coalition participants, participating First Nation Communities and additional

interested parties and project participants from all age levels (early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders).

The evaluation will be prepared by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and guided by the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, and participating First Nation Communities. The evaluation will be designed in a menu format and will include various methods to gather information. The menu will consist of group discussions, small group round tables, individual consultations, anecdotal stories and interactive surveys.

The evaluations will focus on:

- Effectiveness of delivery.
- Participation and level of interest.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as determined by participants.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as noticed by family or community members.
- Information gathered from all age levels: early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors.
- Suggestions for changes or improvements to the Implementation of the Literacy Plan.
- Next steps.

The information gathered will be interpreted then compiled into a report that will be shared and celebrated with project funders, the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, First Nation Community Partners, and additional interested parties and project participants from all levels. We anticipate the report to be creatively designed in order to showcase the overall vision, that *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Executive Summary for Hesquiaht First Nation

Nuu-chah-nulth meaning:

The Hesquiaht First Nation has a holistic vision for their people: to live with dignity and respect with a personal and collective commitment to their language and traditional teachings. They believe their actions today will affect future generations.

The Hesquiaht First Nation Dual-Language Literacy Plan has selected community recommendations which reflect and celebrate the Nuuchahnulth primary teaching, *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one. These recommendations are intergenerational and hold the potential to promote strong literacy skills in Nuuchahnulth and English.

In respectful consideration to the funding awarded for this regional literacy plan, and the scope of the geographical area served in this plan, the need behind the community recommendations indicate that extended funding and sources will be needed in order for this plan to come to fruition. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will actively seek additional avenues to support this.

This literacy plan recognizes there are additional recommendations that will require time rather than financial contributions. Whenever and wherever possible the Literacy Coordinator will assist and facilitate those literacy endeavors and work in partnership with community partners. That said, there are also additional recommendations that will require expanded funding to support regional perspective endeavors such as the Nuuchahnulth Language Authority. Therefore in conjunction with the community the Literacy Coordinator will work in partnership to address literacy recommendations with a regional-inclusive perspective.

Feature Recommendations

- To develop an intergenerational, interactive early childhood child and adult program that is oral language-based with a blend of uniquely designed resources/materials to support language development of Nuuchahnulth and English. The resources and materials will be developed in conjunction with youth and Elders in order to make the learning experiences transferable to home environments. The format will be similar to a Mother Goose program

but the content will be enriched and designed to reflect the dual languages, and the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.

- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:
 - A) Developing the early literacy resources and material in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. (The content will reflect the seasonal traditions and celebrations.)
 - B) Supporting Elders in learning basic computer skills.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club which brings youth from various local communities to together explore their talent for visual arts. Project Suggestion: the photography group will provide the pictures for the early literacy resources and material. To further extend the participation in this project, the Elders will be asked to guide the use of the Nuu-chah-nulth language component and the content of the resources and material.
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines literacy and parenting Skills. L.A.P.S (Literacy and Parenting Skills) is a family literacy plan developed at Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators of this program living in the Courtenay area. There is an Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills program as well.
- To organize a writing program that promotes individual writing skills and intergenerational relationships. Writing programs such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language support adults and Elders to write about their life experiences. Elders will be given the option to work on their stories individually or be paired up with youth to work on these stories and up-load them on to a computer. The printed version of the story would then be given as a gift back to the Elders. The learning experience is multi-faceted as both the youth and Elder gain the potential for a meaningful connection, as well as writing skills.

Hot Spring Cove

Background

Hot Spring Cove is named after a natural hot spring located at the south end of a narrow peninsula on the east side of the cove. The community of Hot Spring Cove is located on the west side of the cove and has a population of approximately 105 people. The Hesquiaht First Nation membership is roughly 625.

There are only two methods of reaching Hot Spring Cove, either by water taxi or float plane services. The trip by boat takes roughly an hour from Tofino and due to the weather during the winter months this community is accustomed to living in isolation.

The following amenities are located in Hot Spring Cove:

- Hesquiaht Band Office
- Hesquiaht Place of Learning
- Hesquiaht Daycare and Preschool located within the new school building
- Health Centre
- Recreation Centre
- Heat/Hydro/Water Utility
- Garbage and Sewage Facility
- Water taxi service

The Ha'wiih governing system for the Hesquiaht First Nation includes the Chiefs, Chief Councilor and elected Council. There is an array of departments within the Hesquiaht First Nation government such as: finance, education, human services, economic development & CRB, fisheries, forestry, CBT, BCR and administration personnel.

According to the First Peoples' Language Map there are four fluent Hesquiaht First Nation speakers, 30 people that understand or speak somewhat of the language, and 16 learning speakers.

Historically, employment in the region was focused on the resource-base sectors of forestry, fishing and boat building. Throughout the past decades, these areas have experienced a significant market reduction and eco-tourism is now one of the main employment sectors, along with transportation, infrastructure and sustainable energy production.

Vision Statement

The Hesquiaht First Nation believes that for the community of Hot Spring Cove to move forward our people need to be grounded in spirituality, healing and reconciliation. This will bring a sense of strength and purpose. We see the wisdom of our Elders guiding our whole community in gaining knowledge of our language and traditional teachings. The lessons of our past will guide us today and direct our paths into the future. We believe our identities are intricately connected with our language, traditions, land and resources and we are committed to respecting and protecting each of them. We recognize the vital importance of strong literacy for our people and perceive it to be a core component in the creation of a strong and healthy community. We celebrate the primary Nuu-chah-nulth teaching *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Findings from Community and Individual Consultations

The following information was gathered by the West Coast Literacy Outreach Coordinator through a community meeting and individual consultations. Participants included various staff members of the Hesquiaht First Nation, Hesquiaht service providers, and participants of the Coastal Family Resources Coalition who provide family/community support services in the area, including government ministries. Additional information was gathered through the reading of relevant resource material. From these collective voices and avenues the following community strengths, challenges and recommendations were developed.

The Early Years: Birth to Six Years

The Hesquiaht First Nation understands the key to obtaining one's identity is based in their language and traditional teachings. To that end, they realize that strong early literacy skills are crucial to young children's success. Oral language skills need to be at the centre of their learning and it is imperative that speech and language are supported and encouraged in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages. Infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children need to have opportunities to interact with their peers, as well as family and community members.

The families of Hot Spring Cove would benefit from a variety of programs that offer a menu of activities for families that promote meaningful, intergenerational learning exchanges. It is important for young children to have early literacy learning daily at home, in the daycare and preschool

and in the community, to strengthen the development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages.

School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 Years

For the holistic development of the Hesquiaht youth they need to be involved in a blend of learning environments that are both formal, through the Hesquiaht Place of Learning, and informal. Youth learning needs to be grounded in Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings as that is where their true identity lies. Multiple creative venues must be used in order to enable youth to demonstrate mentor and leadership roles; opportunities such as these will promote trust, understanding, self-confidence and healthy lifestyle choices.

Young Adults and Adults

The family unit is celebrated as the strength of the community. The ability to move forward as a people will be made possible through the commitment of young adults and adults who seek out their identities and core beliefs through the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings. Healthy and respectful interactions and family environments are critical for the development of children and show respect to Elders.

The Hesquiaht First Nation believes that when they know who they are they will be able to move forward with practical and effective parenting skills, personal education, and training that will lead to sustainable employment and healthy lifestyle choices.

Elders

Elders are fundamental to the future of the Hesquiaht First Nation. They are their existing connection to the past and hold the crucial teachings for the future. They are the living and breathing learning resources for their whole nation. The Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings are the essence of who the Hesquiaht are as a people; they need the guidance of the Elders who have experienced the past and learned imperative lessons that hold the possibilities of tomorrow.

Community Strengths

The foremost strength of Hesquiaht First Nation is the collective body of members, wherever they reside. Their people represent and support their community by living true to themselves, their language and their teachings.

The Hesquiaht Place of Learning is a hub of learning and activities for the whole community. Daycare and preschool programs are located within the school. Within daycare, preschool and the school curriculum are speech and language support for both Nuu-chah-nulth and English. There is also a computer lab that is used for the Adult Basic Education program.

There is an underlying desire for the children, youth and adults of the community to strengthen their personal educational foundations. Literacy is recognized as an essential component of a promising future for the whole community.

There is a strong belief and value for the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional way of life. To move ahead and take a positive, contributing role within the region, the Hesquiaht First Nation believes there is a fine balance between traditional and contemporary ways. Elders are seen as the wisdom and guiding force behind this.

The Health Centre is a vital component within community that offers an array of family health support services. Medical and dental services delivered in Tofino.

Historically, the Ha'wiil governing system of the Hesquiaht First Nation (the Chiefs, Chief in Council and Council members) has worked in collaboration with various regional, provincial and federal arenas to promote the health, education and economic development of their community and territory. Treaty negotiations are on-going and as the process moves forward innovative initiatives are anticipated as promises give way to actions.

Community Challenges

Hot Spring Cove is the most isolated of the Central Region Nuu-chah-nulth Nations and is the most isolated community of this Dual-Language Literacy Plan. Water taxi service is available year-round, but during many months of the year travel is very limited due storms and fog. With a round trip to Tofino requiring 2 hours, there is the cost of travel that must be taken into consideration for people as well. Affordable and safe transportation is essential to the families of this community.

The 2006 Census information indicates that the unemployment rate in Hot Spring Cove is recorded at 27.3% while the BC provincial rate is set at 6.0%. Employment through the tourism sector is available part of the year, but what is needed to bring stability to the community is year-round sustainable

employment. The Hesquiaht First Nation has been working towards job creation endeavors and believes that it will be through this avenue that their population will be retained. The long term goal is to attract more of the Hesquiaht First Nation to return to their territory.

Current information suggests that only one third of the population has attained an educational level of a high school diploma or higher. That leaves a large portion of the population who will struggle with employment opportunities unless they up-grade, specialize, or acquire higher education.

There is a licensed day care and preschool centre in the community but there is a struggle to find accredited Early Childhood Care and Education practitioners. Quality day care is strongly linked with employment and pursuing educational goals so attention will be needed in this area.

Medical and dental services are delivered in Tofino which requires a two hour water taxi commute including both ways. There are no birthing services on the West Coast. Families expecting a baby must travel to outside communities such as Port Alberni, Nanaimo or Courtenay. Historically, the West Coast Region struggles to find medical professionals (doctors, nurses, mental health practitioners) who are interested in relocating to the West Coast.

Substance abuse and family violence are community concerns that require a collaborative approach to effectively deal with the core issues for those involved.

The community feels it would benefit from increased opportunities to learn the Nuu-chah-nulth language and traditional teachings. From infants to Elders, the need is there to hear the language sounds, words and phrases, and to incorporate them into everyday use within family environments.

Community Recommendations

1. Early Literacy

A clear directive was given to focus attention on supporting early childhood literacy initiatives to establish a passionate learning culture and perspective in both children and their families. This will lay the groundwork for all future learning and educational opportunities. The goal is to enrich and enhance what currently exists for early literacy experiences and create additional initiatives to extend effective learning activities into multiple environments.

Recommendations are:

- Health and Developmental Fair, similar to the Here We Come Events that School District # 70 organizes to promote early health and literacy skills.
- To develop an interactive child and adult program that is oral language based, to support the language development of Nuu-chah-nulth and English. Design resources and material to support the learning experiences to be transferred also into the home environments. The format would be similar to a Mother Goose program, but the content would be enriched and designed to reflect the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the participants.
- To evaluate training such as Parents As Literacy Supports (PALS), Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool-aged Youngsters (HIPPY), Moe-the-Mouse, Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS), this also has an Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills program.
- To establish intergenerational activities and events to utilize the Elders knowledge and teachings of language and cultural traditions for infants, toddlers, preschool-aged children and their families.
- To support the plans for an Early Childhood Care and Education program with a First Nation focus to be offered on the West Coast.

2. School-aged Youth: 7 – 18 years

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To continue to support and enhance the monthly literacy nights held at the Hesquiaht Place of Learning.
- For the curriculum of the school to reflect the seasonal celebrations of the Hesquiaht First Nation.
- To view visual and performing arts as literacy contributions and promote strong Nuu-chah-nulth language skills in singing, dancing and drumming.
- To support the establishment of tutors for students in elementary school, as well as high school.
- To support the First Nation Youth Photography Club¹⁵. This club brings youth together from various local communities to explore their talents in this genre.
- To utilize youth in specific intergenerational projects:

¹⁵ The First Nation Youth Photograph Club is a project out of Make It Happen – Nurturing Youth and Community Capabilities, a registered, non-profit society, operating out of Tofino but occurring throughout the Biosphere region.

A) Develop early literacy resources in both Nuu-chah-nulth and English languages to be utilized within the Central West Coast Region.
B) Develop a project that showcases Hesquiaht Youth's artistic talent and includes an entrepreneurship component. To develop a calendar that promotes traditional language and teachings, along with pictures of artwork created by the youth. These calendars could be used as gifts as well as sold at various tourism locations and community events to encourage sustainability into the project.
C) Support Elders with computer skills.

- To investigate whether the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program would benefit the Hesquiaht youth.

3. Young Adults and Adults

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To support literacy and parenting skills by offering training that combines the two areas. Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) is a family literacy plan that was developed in Bow Valley College in Alberta. They offer Train-the-Trainer workshops and there are trained facilitators in the Courtenay area. There is an Aboriginal program also, called A-LAPS, which takes into consideration the learning needs and styles of First Nation people in both rural and urban settings.
- To organize community events and activities that support cross-cultural celebrations for the whole community. For example, host a literacy night with a selection of literacy-based activities for multiple learning levels.
- To support adult language classes that include traditional teachings, songs, drumming and dancing.
- To investigate whether the a-ma'a-sip Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program would benefit the Hesquiaht young adults and adults.

4. Elders

- To promote the new, holistic definition of what literacy is, as quoted in the Introduction section of this plan. (Page 6)
- To support the preservation of the Hesquiaht dialect by the use of media resources to record the Elder's speaking the language and explaining the cultural teachings.
- To provide opportunities for Elders to work with children, youth and young adults on projects such as the creation of early literacy

resources, a community calendar, language and traditional teachings classes.

- To provide opportunities for Elders to learn basic computer skills, with Youth as their mentors.
- To organize a writing program, such as Writing Out Loud or Plain/Clear Language, to support Elders in writing about their lives. Another component to this initiative would be to pair the Elders and the youth in order to transfer the Elder's stories onto a computer. The printed version of the story could then be given back to the Elder/Senior as a gift. The Writing Out Loud program has been offered in Ucluelet and Ittatsoo. In both locations the participants found the writing experience motivating and of significant value.

Evaluation Plan

Involvement in the evaluation of this literacy plan will include the Literacy Plan Task Force, project partners, Coastal Family Resources Coalition participants, participating First Nation Communities and additional interested parties and project participants from all age levels (early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders).

The evaluation will be prepared by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and guided by the Task Force, the Coastal Family Resources Coalition, and participating First Nation Communities. The evaluation will be designed in a menu format and will include various methods to gather information. The menu will consist of group discussions, small group round tables, individual consultations, anecdotal stories and interactive surveys.

The evaluations will focus on:

- Effectiveness of delivery.
- Participation and level of interest.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as determined by participants.
- Areas of progress and increased skills as noticed by family or community members.
- Information gathered from all age levels: early years, youth, young adults, adults, Elders/Seniors.
- Suggestions for changes or improvements to the Implementation of the Literacy Plan.
- Next steps.

The information gathered will be interpreted then compiled into a report that will be shared and celebrated with project funders, the Task Force, the

Coastal Family Resources Coalition, First Nation Community Partners, and additional interested parties and project participants from all levels. We anticipate the report to be creatively designed in order to showcase the overall vision, that *Hishuk ish is'awalk* – Everything is one.

Appendix A

We gratefully acknowledge the following people and thank them for their support in the development of the Central Region West Coast Dual-Language Literacy Plan: *Hishuk ish is'awalk* - Everything is one.

Norine Messer – Facilitator: Coastal Family Resource Coalition
Lori Walker – Program Manager, 2010 Legacies Now/Literacy
Perry Perry – Assistant, Literacy Plan Launch

Ucluelet

Jennifer Auld – Principal of Ucluelet Elementary School
Gert Touchie – School District # 70: Educational Coordinator
Carrie Cam – Coordinator, Literacy Alberni Society
Carolyn Corlazzoli – Parent Advisory Committee
Dierdre Helmus – Parent Advisory, Ucluelet Elementary School
Jack Hitchings – School District # 70: Director of Curriculum
Anne Morgan – StrongStart: Ucluelet Elementary School
Sarah Hogan – Parent and UAACCS Childcare Society
Brenda Jensen – Resident
Levi Martin – Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation
Carol Sedgwick – Principal of Ucluelet Secondary School
Lisa Stewart – Editor/Publisher of the Westerly News
Rina Vigneault – Teacher: Ucluelet Secondary School
Abby Fortune – Director of Recreation: Ucluelet
KK Hodder – Ucluelet Recreation Department
Eleanor Gee – School District # 70 Trustee (West Coast)
Sarah Spence – Toquaht First Nation
Bill Morrison – North Island College: Ucluelet Centre
David Peterson – Supervisor for Ministry of Housing and Social Development
S. Gale Johnsen – Du Quah Gallery
Margaret Morrison – Executive Directory of Westcoast Community Resources Society
Marcie DeWitt – Community Outreach Worker
Celina Tuttle – WWWA/WCRS
Michael Delure – Vancouver Island Regional Library
Ucluelet Consumers Coop Store: Manager – Glen
Theresa Gereluk – Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Ittatsoo

Norine Messer – Facilitator: Coastal Family Resources Coalition
Theresa Gereluk – Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Jennifer Auld – Principal for Ucluelet Elementary School

Gert Touchie – Ucluelet First Nation Education Liaison
Debbie Mundy – UFN Social Development
John Duff – UFN Alcohol and Drug
Melody Charlie – Coordinator for the Nuuchahnulth a-m’aa-sip program
Joanna Lemay – Bounce Back Community Coach
Levi Touchie – UFN Learning Centre/Adult Basic Education
Laurie Hannah – NTC/Family Ties/IDP
Matt Petzold – Wickaninnish Community School/Parks & Recreation
Rose Touchie – UFN
Vicky Touchie – Ittatsoo Daycare
Theresa Gereluk – Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Macoah

Norine Messer – Facilitator: Coastal Family Resources Coalition
Sarah Spencer – Toquaht First Nation
S. Gale Johnsen – Manager, Du Quah Gallery
Theresa Gereluk – Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Tofino

Norine Messer - Facilitator: Coastal Family Resources Coalition
Carrie Cann - Literacy Alberni Coordinator
Perry Perry - Assistant, Literacy Plan Launch
Lori Walker - Program Manager, 2010 Legacies Now/Literacy
Brad Dusseault - Principal: Wickaninnish Community School
Jamie Hansen – Vice Principal: Wickaninnish Community School
Eli Enns - Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation
Laurie Hannah - NTC/Family Ties/IDP
Jack Hitchings - School District # 70 Director of Curriculum
Brenda Jensen - Resident
Fiona McCallum - Community Children’s Centre
Laura MacPherson – Community Children’s Centre
Melanie Morris - Teacher – Wickaninnish Community School
Shelly Renard – Teacher
Rhonda Rusk – Community Children’s Centre
Amy Baker – Community Children’s Centre
Sally Mole – Director for Parks and Recreation: Tofino
Curtis Cook – Clayoquot Biosphere Trust
Matt Petzold – Wickaninnish Community School
Michael Delure – Vancouver Island Regional Library
Tofino Consumers Coop Store – Manager: Al
Theresa Gereluk – Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Opitsaht

Karl Wagner – Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Band Manager
Desmond Tom – Education Coordinator
Carol Martin – Coordinator for Head Start Program
Gayle Hayes – Outreach Worker: Drop-in Program
Grace George – Head Start program staff/ School District # 70 Educational Assistant
Stacey Manson – District Principal, School District # 70
Brad Dusseault – Principal for Wickaninnish Community School
Matt Petzold – Wickaninnish Community School
Norine Messer – Facilitator: Coastal Family Resource Coalition
Sally Mole – Director for Parks and Recreation: Tofino
Theresa Gereluk – Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Esowista

Karl Wagner – Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Band Manager
Desmond Tom – Education Coordinator
Carol Martin – Coordinator for Head Start Program
Gayle Hayes – Outreach Worker: Drop-in Program
Grace George – Head Start program staff/ School District # 70 Educational Assistant
Stacey Manson – District Principal, School District # 70
Brad Dusseault – Principal for Wickaninnish Community School
Matt Petzold – Wickaninnish Community School
Norine Messer – Facilitator: Coastal Family Resource Coalition
Sally Mole – Director for Parks and Recreation: Tofino
Theresa Gereluk – Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Ahousaht

Norine Messer – Facilitator: Coastal Family Resource Coalition
Perry Perry – Assistant, Literacy Plan Launch
Lori Walker – Program Manager, 2010 Legacies Now/Literacy
Darryn Brown – Speech-Language Pathologist for Ahousaht Community
Marie Donahue – Elder, Justice Worker
Dave Frank – Manager, Ahousaht Holistic Centre
Karen Frank – Pregnancy Outreach Worker
Patti Frank – Ahousaht Youth Centre
Richard Gagnon – Bishop, Catholic Church
Elizabeth Hagar – Parent
R. Arlene Paul – Ahousaht Health Clinic
Stanley Sam – Elder, Language Teacher
Marie Samuel – Elder, Basket Weaver
Ray Samuel – Elder

Jennifer Soulsby – Teacher, Maaqtusiis Elementary and Secondary School
Denise Titian – Ha-Shilth-Sa Newspaper
Linda van Dorn – Guidance Counselor, Maaqtusiis School
Ann Atleo – Adult Basic Education, North Island College
Cheryl Campbell – Kindergarten Teacher
Maureen Frank – Daycare
Lorraine John – Elder
Paul Swan – Parent
Menna Webster – Coordinator, Preschool Head Start Programs
Cecilia Swan/Titian – Elder
Francine Frank – Coordinator, Ahousaht Youth Centre
Julia Atleo – Youth Worker
Gloria – Grade 3 Teacher, Maaqtusiis School
Debra Rhinder – Resource Teacher, Maaqtusiis School
Greg Louie – Principal, Maaqtusiis School
Betty Keitlah – Elder, Nuu-chah-nulth Language and Traditions – Maaqtusiis School
Lil Webster – Teacher, Maaqtusiis School
Jennifer Auld – Principal, Ucluelet Elementary School
Linda Marshall – Education Support, SD # 70, Ucluelet Elementary School
Theresa Gereluk – Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Hot Spring Cove

Norine Messer – Facilitator, Coastal Family Resources Coalition
Deborah Botting – HFN
Lisa Sabbas – HFN
Jean C. Thomas – HFN
John Mayba – USMA
Joanna Lemay – Bounce Back Community Coach
Christine Misfeldt – Teacher, Acting Principal – Hesquiaht Place of Learning
Dave Dowling – MCFD
Celina Tuttle – CWWA/WCRS
Karla Strickland – Women’s Outreach Coordinator
Marcie DeWitt – Community Outreach Coordinator – WCRS
Stephanie Konefall – Legal Information Outreach Worker (Legal Services Society)
Kim Hoag – Executive Director, Pacific Rim Hospice Society
Charmaine Lam – Pacific Rim Hospice Society Volunteer
Alexis Lucas – HFN
Angela Galligos – Language Teacher, Hesquiaht Place of Learning
Uncle Charlie – Elder
Rebecca Atleo – Principal, Hesquiaht Place of Learning
Theresa Gereluk – Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Appendix B

References

- "Aboriginal Population Profile." 2006 Census. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Mar. 2007.
- "Ahousesht First Nation Proudly Unveils Phase One." Nation Talk. 24 Feb. 2009. 15 Jul. 2009 <<http://www.nationtalk.ca/modules/news/article.php?storyid=18080>>.
- "Community Profiles." 2006 Census. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Mar. 2007.
- District of Ucluelet. Home Page. 18 Jul. 2009. <www.ucluelet.ca>.
- "First Peoples' Language Map of British Columbia." First Peoples' Heritage and Culture Council. 16 Jul. 2009. <<http://maps.fphlcc.ca/nuu-chah-nulth>>.
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Government of Canada. 1 Jul. 2009. <www.ainc-inac.gc.ca>.
- Maa-nulth First Nations. Home Page. <www.maanutlth.ca>.
- Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Culture. "Towards a New Beginning." Aboriginal Languages Directorate, 2005. 4 Jul. 2009. <www.aboriginallanguagetestaskforce.ca/foundreport>.
- Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. Home Page. 18 Jul. 2009. <www.tla-o-qui-aht.org>.
- Tofino Chamber of Commerce. Home Page. 11 Jul. 2009. <www.tourismtofino.com>.
- Ucluelet Chamber of Commerce. Home Page. 14 Jul. 2009. <www.uclueletinfo.com>.
- Ucluelet First Nation. Home Page. 10 Jul. 2009. <www.ufn.ca>.