



The National Director
Institute for Cross-cultural Exchange (ICE)
Institut d'échanges interculturels (IEI)
Box #61143
Kensington RPO
Calgary AB T2N 4S6

March 5, 2009

Dear National Director,

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of the books (The Farmer's Wife and The Lion Who Saw Himself in the Water) that our not for profit organization received from the Institute for Cross-Cultural Exchange (ICE) for use in our community literacy programs. The supporting materials (DVDs, Read Together newsletter, etc.) have been very useful tools for promoting the stories and encouraging our staff, volunteers and families to enjoy time learning together.

LUSO Community Services operates a variety of literacy programs for parents, children, parents and children together (PACT) and families. The community we serve is characterized by poverty, issues of isolation, exclusion due to cultural barriers, lack of social supports, and mental health issues, as well as, immigrants and newcomers, single parent families, and working parents. The challenges that these families face each day often lower self esteem and self confidence and cause family time to be stilted, less enjoyed and very limited.

The resources that your organization has provided to us have allowed us to provide parents and children in the community with brand new books of their very own. This is a huge deal for children who may have fled their own country without their belongings, not to mention those who do not have the means to buy their own books. By tucking the Read Together hints and ideas inside the front cover of each book, we are able to ensure parents have access to the valuable resource without feelings of embarrassment often present in adults who struggle with their own literacy and parenting skills. By allowing the resource to be looked at and used in the comfort of their own home, the stigma of "literacy issues" can be reduced and parents are sure to heed the tips provided. This ensures family literacy time takes place in the home and children are provided with increased opportunities to learn from their parents and other adults.

The Magic of Reading DVD is a very useful tool to use in parenting programs and training workshops. The video is great for providing guidance to parents in our Parents as Partners in Education program and is an excellent tool for training our literacy tutors and program facilitators.

Unsolicited feedback from a struggling parent who attends our "Parents as Partners in Education" workshops each month received copies of the books (with newsletter) for her 3 children was so well received. Last month she shared with me that all 3 kids (JK-Grade 3) absolutely love the stories and continually pull them off the bookshelf to read. This feedback was so unexpected and so exciting because this is a family that truly struggles with day-to-day life.

Thank you once again for making a difference in the lives of the families we serve. We are very lucky and appreciative you're your generous support.

Sincerely
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Literacy and Resource Coordinator

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