



Read  
On!  
Canada

Lisons!  
Canada

2020

Impact Report

I am delighted to share with you the impact that our new initiative, Read On Canada!/Lisons Canada!, has had for thousands of Canada's children and their families. Together we've been able to provide joy and enrichment during these unprecedented times.

Literacy is the foundation upon which we learn and grow. Building reading, writing and communication skills in children is one of the most effective ways to help them reach their full potential in school and throughout life.

Read On Canada!/Lisons Canada! was designed to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic by ensuring that all children, including the most vulnerable, had access to fun reading materials when schools, libraries and other community support systems were shut down.

The Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation's goal is to make Canada's children the most literate in the world. Read On Canada!/Lisons Canada! helped us move ever closer by supporting children on their reading journey, even in the face of a global pandemic.

Sincerely,

*Ariel R. Siller*

Ariel Siller  
CEO, Canadian Children's  
Literacy Foundation





VEHICLE TURNING AREA  
PLEASE KEEP THIS  
AREA CLEAR

Preparing to distribute more than 140,000 fun books to children across Canada. From Left: Tom Best, First Book Canada; Nina Cabaguio, The Children's Book Bank; Ariel Siller, Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation.

# Tackling Hunger in Children's Bodies and Minds

Read On Canada!/Lisons Canada! was created to mitigate the effects of the “summer slide,” a drop in reading ability which can happen over the summer months, particularly among children who do not have opportunities to read during the school break.

This year, the slide had the potential to be a “summer avalanche” given the prolonged closures of schools, libraries, daycares, and community programs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Research shows that students can lose about one month's worth of school year learning due to summer vacation. With six months away from school, children were at risk of losing three months, or 30%, of their reading gains made during the last school year.

Even before the pandemic, 27% of children in Canada were entering school inadequately prepared and 1 out of 4 children were not reading at grade level by Grade 3.

Recognizing that COVID-19 could exacerbate this already critical issue, the Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation rapidly mobilized a generous group of book publishers and literacy organizations from across the country to bring the joy of reading to thousands of families across Canada.

In partnership with Food Banks Canada, we distributed more than 140,000 enriching books to families accessing food banks this summer. We also made fun reading activities available online and worked with well-known Canadians, including Margaret Atwood, Chris Hadfield and Justin Trudeau, to share messages encouraging all children to 'read on!'

With our leadership and the strength and determination of our coalition partners, Read On Canada!/Lisons Canada! inspired children across Canada at one of the most difficult times in generations.



Heading home from Winnipeg Harvest

“ This summer, many families struggling with food insecurity will get the gift of hope in a food hamper. Because of our partnership with Read On Canada!, not only will families with children receive much-needed food supplies, but each child will also receive a book, which has the ability to open up a world of possibilities. They will know that someone cares, not only for their physical well-being, but for their development as well. ”

– **Chris Hatch**, CEO of Food Banks Canada

“ I like to read them to my siblings, especially my little sister because she doesn't know how to read yet. But sometimes I like to read by myself to have some alone time & just relax on my own. ”

– **7-year-old** participant

“ They made me feel so happy! ”

– **6-year-old** participant

“ It is fantastic, a lot of families couldn't otherwise afford to go out and buy books for the kids, so we are so appreciative. It gives the parents a break to rest, cook or do whatever while the kids are reading! ”

– **Community Member** on the initiative's impact

# Our Impact

**\$1.4M**

in donated books from  
Canadian publishers

More than

**140,000**

books distributed through  
Food Banks across Canada

Our books reached more than

**150**

cities and towns in all 10  
provinces

More than **65** social

media posts from notable  
Canadians, including Prime  
Minister Trudeau, Margaret  
Atwood and more

# Inspiration for Families to Keep “Reading On”



**Debbie Ridpath Ohi** @inkyelbows  
 I'm 'reading on' this summer to help get kids excited about reading! Today: BOG by @KarenKrossing @FitzWhits ([karenkrossing.com/books/bog/](https://karenkrossing.com/books/bog/)). Middle grade adventure, a perfect summer read. ☀️📖  
 #ReadOnCanada initiative: [ReadOnCanada.ca](https://ReadOnCanada.ca) @CanLiteracy

BOG smelled the humans from across the lake.

BOG by Karen Krossing Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ages 9-14 Karen 0:00 / 0:21

690 views

8:17 PM · Jun 26, 2020 · Twitter Web App

**The organizers:** A coalition of book publishers, literacy advocates and Food Banks Canada

**The project:** Providing 130,000 free books for children

Nina Cabagulo, left, supervisor, The Children's Book Bank, Tania Little, chief development and partnerships officer, Food Banks Canada, Tom Best, executive director, First Book Canada, and Ariel Siller, CEO, Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation, pose for a photo in Ms. Little's office on July 8, 2020.

GALIT RODAN/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

**Justin Trudeau** June 28 · 🌐

Hey parents! If you're looking for something that'll keep your kids engaged and entertained this summer, a good book is the way to go. And I'm not just saying that as a teacher - there's nothing like the power words have to transport us to new worlds and teach us new things.

That's why the Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation has partnered with Food Banks Canada to launch the #ReadOnCanada initiative. Check out Sophie's post and visit their website to learn more about the work they're doing and how they're putting books into the hands of kids across the country:

**Sophie Grégoire Trudeau** June 22 · 🌐 Like Page

Avec l'année scolaire qui tire à sa fin et l'été qui est enfin arrivé, nos enfants vont se chercher des choses à faire! Et s'ils ont un bon livre sous la main, ...  
 See More

See Translation

You and 29K others 1.5K Comments 1.3K Shares

**Margaret E. Atwood** @MargaretAtwood

Opening a book can bring forth a world of adventures! My new children's poem supports the #ReadOnCanada initiative to inspire kids to read this summer & throughout the pandemic:

Margaret Atwood is 'reading on'  
 Being stuck at home doesn't mean you can't have any adventures! Canadian author Margaret Atwood shares a ...  
 youtube.com

5:01 PM · Jul 16, 2020 · Twitter Web App

**Sophie Grégoire Trudeau** June 26 · 🌐

The weekend's here... and if your kids are somehow like mine, they'll be looking for things to keep busy (which will give you the break you so rightly deserve!) Marco Morales is an educator who teaches children through artistic expression and who also shares deeply moving short stories on his blog. His tales will transport families into interesting worlds. Some of them are even based on his personal life experience as someone who grew up in Peru and then later moved to Canada. So if you're up for a little literary discovery this weekend, go have a look on his blog! #ReadOnCanada

**David A. Robertson** @DaveAlexRoberts · Jul 11

Late to the party, sorry @CanLiteracy! Thought I'd share a message on reading, especially during the time we're living in right now.  
 #READONCANADA. Stay safe everybody!

760 views 0:07 / 1:36

4 11 23

Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation Retweeted

**Jael Richardson** @JaelRichardson · Jul 11

I have two nephews reading Moon of the Crusted Snow by @waub. Can't wait until they finish so we can all talk about it. #READONCANADA



# The Coalition

From our very beginning as an organization, the Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation's goal has been to understand what approaches have been successful in building early literacy, how we grow those successes, and what challenges can be addressed through national, coordinated efforts.

Recognizing the challenges families were facing as they were forced to quickly shift to learning from home during the pandemic, we were able to rapidly mobilize organizations from across the country thanks to the relationships we have built through consultations and conversations with literacy advocates throughout Canada.

We don't know when our post-pandemic 'new normal' will arrive or what it will look like. What we do know is that by working together we have provided hope and possibility in a time of isolation, opening doors to new adventures for thousands of children across Canada.



# Steering Committee



# Funding Partners



The Emergency Community Support Fund



# Content Partners



# Book and Distribution Partners

