

Success Story: Born to Read

~ people power ~

In 1990, the New Carlisle Literacy Exchange in the Gaspé developed the first Born to Read Program in Canada to encourage families to start reading to their children soon after birth. Lack of reading resources in the community highlighted this basic need.

When moms brought their newborn babies to the local health clinic for their first immunization shots, they were presented with a colourful book bag emblazoned with the Born to Read logo.

The books were from corporate donors or acquired through fundraising.

Spin off programs followed:

Activity book bags with scissors, pencils, and crayons were handed out to older pre-school siblings, and a parents' bag with videos and other support material was supplied to each local school, to be rotated through its parent population.

~ How to Start a Born to Read Program ~

- ~ Build a committee of committed people, 5-8 parents, teachers, nurses, community volunteers, etc.;
- ~ Select a geographical area that you can afford to accommodate;
- ~ Seek out advice from early childhood educators, librarians, well-baby clinic personnel;
- ~ Look for partner organizations for funding;
- ~ Buy books, make or buy book bags;
- ~ Find a means of distribution: CSSS baby clinics, new Canadian organizations, schools, etc.

