SUMMER LITERACY CAMPS
2019 REPORT TO THE INUVIALUIT REGIONAL CORPORATION

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Frontier College would like to thank the TD Bank Group as lead national sponsor of this program, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation for its support, and First Book Canada and Scholastic Reading Club for donating books to the program.
2019 Highlights

2019 marks the second year of Summer Literacy Camps in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, organized by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and Frontier College. This summer, camps reached 251 children in all 6 communities of the region:

- Aklavik
- Inuvik
- Paulatuk
- Sachs Harbour
- Tuktoyaktuk
- Ulukhaktok

The Summer Literacy Camps include a wide range of literacy-embedded activities to help kids explore the many ways that words and numbers are part of their lives. Favourite activities this year included:

- Visits to the fire hall, health centre and enjoying activities such as scavenger hunts, nature walks, and science experiments
- A variety of guest speakers, including nutritionists explaining the importance of a balanced diet, nurses showing the children about their profession and Elders reading traditional stories to the children

“The camp keeps kids engaged and in a routine. There is a positive learning environment and great social dynamics.”

- Parent from Paulatuk
The Summer Literacy Camps offer families, at no cost, a varied curriculum that keeps children learning while they’re having fun. Literacy, numeracy, science, and critical thinking skills are embedded in active outdoor games, arts and crafts, field trips, and cultural activities.

With a focus on building and maintaining skills, Summer Literacy Camps are helping children empower themselves over the long term through engaged learning. The camps are aimed and preventing summer learning loss by increasing the availability of books and learning opportunities.

Frontier College has been collecting a wide variety of data on the Summer Literacy Camps for over 10 years. In 2017, Cathexis Consulting Inc. reviewed a sample of that data to better understand the impact of the camps. By combining evaluations from campers, parents, teachers, and counsellors, they concluded the following:

"The camps are achieving their intended purpose. Survey results strongly indicate that campers make progress in a number of areas, including reading habits, academic readiness, school performance, attitude to school and learning, self-confidence, literacy/numeracy skills, and social skills. A review of research studies conducted on other populations suggests that these short-term outcomes will help campers to live more successful lives in the long-term.

- Cathexis Consulting Inc., Impact Evaluation of Frontier College’s Summer Literacy Camps"
Impact on campers

In order to ensure that the Summer Literacy Camps are achieving their goal of reducing summer learning loss, Frontier College keeps a daily record of how much time campers spend reading and what sorts of learning-enriched activities they take part in.

“As simple as it sounds, reading books can reverse the summer slide in literacy skills. [...] Giving kids 12 books to read over the summer was as effective as summer school in raising the students’ reading scores. [...] Regardless of family income, the effect of reading four to five books over the summer was large enough to prevent a decline in reading-achievement scores from the spring to the fall.”

- Annie Paul Murphy, author of Brilliant: The New Science of Smart
Over the course of the summer, we gather feedback from campers and caregivers on the outcomes for campers. We also follow up with local teachers to see how much of a difference the camps made to their students. Here is what we heard in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region this year:

**What campers said:**

- 92% said they enjoyed going to camp
- 82% said they enjoyed reading as much or more after attending camp

**What parents and caregivers said:**

- 95% said that the camp helps their child return to school more prepared and ready to learn
- 100% said that they would send their child back to camp next year
- 100% said that camp felt friendly and welcoming

**In a national survey of teachers:**

- 80% said the campers were better prepared to learn after attending camp
- 71% said the campers maintained or improved their reading skills
- 82% said they believe camp positively benefits and complements their classroom teaching

"You’re doing a great job, my grandson is just happy there."
- Elder from Inuvik

"This camp is great for preparing my daughter for her first year of school starting this fall."
- Parent from Sachs Harbour

"I believe the camp is a positive addition to our community. Children often just wander around all day and get into trouble. With camp, we are helping them strengthen both their academic skills and moral character."
- Counsellor from Aklavik

Pyjama day is always popular at camp
Impact on communities

Participating communities support—and are supported by—camp in several ways.

**Intergenerational learning**

In 2019, *Elders and community members led 32 special presentations at camp. Parents, family members, and community members visited camp 214 times* to read a book, play a game, or engage with the kids. Their presence helped to celebrate campers’ achievements and make each camp a unique experience.

> We learned a new song in the language and it even made a parent cry, as she was so happy her kids were signing in Inuvialuktun.
> - Counsellor from Aklavik

**Book donation**

*Each camp received approximately 200 free, high quality books, including books by Inuit authors.* Campers take books home to keep. Research shows that reading at home is linked to school success, positive attitudes towards reading, and high levels of self-confidence. Even one book can make a big difference in the life of a child who is learning to be a

> I think that the Summer Literacy Camp did make positive changes because these kids have a place to go where they are still learning (literacy, behaviour).
> This also gave young adults an employment opportunity which also builds their skills.
> — Counsellor from Tuktoyaktuk

**Skills development**

The Summer Literacy Camps provide a valuable employment opportunity for communities, as *39 counsellors from the region were hired* in 2019 to run the program.

100% of the counsellors surveyed said that the position strengthened their employment skills, notably with regards to teamwork, communication, and the ability and confidence to work with children.

Counsellors sharing their favorite books during the Inuvik training
Conclusion

Summer Literacy Camps grew out of Inuit, First Nation, and Métis communities’ desire to support their children’s literacy and learning.

Since 2005, the National Camp Program has reached 52,000 children and youth across Canada. The growth and evolution of the camps reflects each community’s belief in the long-term impact of literacy on well-being: Higher literacy is linked to reduced poverty, a stronger economy, healthier and more engaged citizens, and a higher quality of life.

Frontier College looks forward to offering the Summer Literacy Camps in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region again in 2020, when Frontier College will strive to continue to strengthen its connections with participating communities to support their literacy and learning objectives beyond the summer months.

See you next summer!

Citations
