



LICENSED TO LEARN

THE TUTOR TRAINING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Newsletter

June, 2010



- **One third of the elementary students in Toronto fail to meet the provincial standards in literacy and numeracy**
- **One quarter of high school students drop out before graduation**
- **30% of the students have no help for schoolwork after classes.**

But not these Bowmore students. The Grade 7 and 8 tutors helped the Grade 4's to pass, and make new friends, and build self-esteem. L2L helped Ms. Kingsley to make it happen. There were similar successes in 30 schools across Toronto.

The story follows:

Heather Kingsley, top in picture, above, is a remarkable fourth grade teacher in downtown Toronto. She has 34 students in her class. A significant number needed serious help. They are among the 30% of all the students who have no help outside of school. They were failing.

After the winter break new Vice-Principal Peppi Minos joined the school administration. Encouraged by Superintendent Kathy Cowan and Principal Richard Bradley, Peppi had started a tutor-training program at her last school. With her experience, and strong support from Principal Lilian Hanson, a new L2L/PALS partnership program started at Bowmore Jr. and Sr. Public School. Heather's struggling students were paired with tutors under L2L training from grades 7 and 8.

Over the winter and into the spring the pairs met once a week. The initial challenge was to learn spelling and fractions. They defeat many students very early in their school days. They were getting the better of Heather's students. She immediately saw the promise of having informed tutoring help for her students.

Here are the very positive results she witnessed from the paired students:

- **“grades rocketed”**
- **self-esteem grew**
- **new friendships formed**
- **students were “excited to do multiplication” (Really!?!)**
- **“almost in tears about learning”**
- **great weight off teacher's shoulders**

At Bloordale Middle School across town under the leadership of teacher Cindy Fair, a group of 9 pairs, tutors and peers had these comments regarding their experience. The tutors reported: 6 peers moved from failing to passing (2 improved passing grades); the one who did not raise the mark had low attendance, a negative attitude and inadequate work reports. Those being tutored remarked very positively that they found the tutoring helpful, thought they were doing better, found the variety of learning strategies helpful, and they liked their tutors.

Why Support the Tutor Training?



We all learn in different ways. Many children have learning skills that are compatible with school learning, but many don't. In the past, they were considered to have low intelligence, and so it was natural for them to become discouraged with school and to fail, or drop out early. It was the student, not the system that failed.

We now know that if we identify how we learn, understand what our personal learning profile is, we can build strategies to allow students with school-unfriendly profiles to bridge the gap and succeed. This is impossible for a classroom teacher with 34 students without help. Peer tutors immediately available to the teacher make it possible. As it turns out, it is the system's weakness, not the students'.

As the picture, left, shows, this is a challenging exercise for the tutors, but the results are the proof of students' successes.

Building on Community Clusters of Schools

Even with the strong help from our partners in the TDSB, it is hard to find a process to consolidate the growth of the program across the city. What is gaining support from the schools is the idea of clusters of schools centered on a high school hub and filtering down through its feeder system, the related middle and junior schools. The goal is to have L2L trained tutors from the later years helping the schools in the earlier years. So next year we are looking at 8 hubs mainly in the downtown and eastern sections of the city with 40 schools. As we build more training capacity, the program can grow across town.

Financing the Program to Build Community Wealth

With no funding from the government or the Board, L2L relies on public support for its operations. Our budget is small, just under \$100,000, because most of the training and operations are run voluntarily. This can be a challenge as many organizations that would support L2L only fund organizations with budgets of more than \$100,000. Nonetheless, our income for this year and into next year has grown significantly through the generosity of:

- **HydroOne**
- **TELUS**
- **The International Development and Relief Foundation**
- **The Paloma Foundation**
- **Staples**
- **The Raptors Kids Foundation**
- **CIBC Children's Foundation**
- **The George Lunan Foundation**
- **L2L Board members**
- **The UCC '67 and '68 Football Champs**
- **Many L2L friends and advisors**

Every student we help to succeed, and who graduates from high school, will contribute \$15,000 extra annual income to the economy and save \$4000 in welfare costs, not to mention the morale and self-esteem added to the community. With your support, we can help thousands.

**Please help by contributing to the program in one of the following ways: online at www.L2L.ca; cheque to Licensed to Learn Inc, 56 Chiswell Crescent, Toronto, ON M2N 6E1; contribute shares in corporations that might be advantageous for taxes. 416-730-1741
Charitable tax BN #: 86796 1013 RR001**