

## FAQs about Home Schooling Support



### What is the Centre for Literacy?

The Centre for Literacy is a private clinic located in Edmonton which provides intense support to students of all ages who unexpectedly underachieve at school or can only succeed with a great deal of effort and support. Most of the students who receive support at the Centre have some type of learning challenge, difference or learning disability. The Centre was established in 1991 and has proudly served students in the greater Edmonton area since that time.

### Who are the teachers at the Centre?

The Centre is proud of its teachers. Some of our teachers are in semi-retirement and are instrumental in lending their extensive expertise to the remainder of the Faculty. The combined staff have experience at the early education, elementary, junior/senior high and post-secondary levels. All have expertise in supporting students with exceptional learning needs. Every teacher at the Centre undergoes extensive training in a variety of interventions that have proven effective in addressing the educational needs of exceptional learners. Centre teachers also play host to other teachers from regular classrooms where they share techniques and strategies to support students with language or math based learning disabilities.

### How does the Home Schooling Program Work?

The Centre works with parents to customize a plan designed to meet the unique needs of a family. A typical approach is for a child to come to the Centre once per week for a one-on-one session with a teacher. During that session, the student receives support specifically designed to address their language or math problem. Part of the lesson is set aside for the teacher to work with the parent. The teacher shares with the parent options and resources (which they take home) for lesson planning along with activities for the intervening week that can be used to address a student's particular needs.

Some students receive support in both reading and math. There may be a different teacher for the literacy and math sessions, but the general structure is the same.

### How long are the sessions?

The total length of a session is normally about 90 minutes. Of that time, approximately 75 minutes is time which the teacher spends with the student. The balance is time that the teacher spends with the parent. Most often the teacher-parent time comes mid-lesson and enables the child to have a break.

### What is the benefit of this approach?

Many strategies for helping students with language based learning disabilities or math disabilities are very technical. The Centre invests a great deal of resource in initial and continuing professional development. The Centre's home schooling program enables a home schooling family to have both the benefit of the technical expertise of the Centre staff and the option of effective home schooling to address learning challenges. We believe it is an approach which both empowers and builds capacity.

## **I am unsure about the exact nature of my child's learning problems. Can the Centre help?**

The Centre can conduct assessments designed to help identify the precise nature of language based learning difficulties. The assessments are different from IQ (cognitive testing). They focus on the ability of a student to decode language and comprehend written material. They are extremely valuable in helping to create a plan for support. Testing normally takes about 90 minutes. A written report is also prepared that outlines results of the testing.

## **Do we need to sign a long term contract?**

No. Unlike other agencies which prefer long term contracts, we do not lock families into a lengthy agreements. Invoices are issued at the beginning of each month for all scheduled services during the period.

Notice of needed cancellations for family holidays, etc., should be provided ten days before month end; both the schedule and invoice will be changed accordingly. Three weeks' notice is required to cancel services.

## **How much do services cost?**

Lessons and consulting support costs \$60 per hour. Initial diagnostic assessments, including a written report, cost \$200.

All services are subject to GST. Payment may be made via cheque, Debit, Visa, and MasterCard.

Many of these services can be claimed as allowable expenses on income tax returns for students with a Disability Tax Credit Certificate issued by the Government of Canada.

Many health spending accounts also provide full or partial benefits for support of this nature. It is best to check with your plan.

Centre for Literacy services may also be eligible for reimbursement through many home school programs.

## **Travel to Edmonton is a problem for us. Is there a way to still get support from the Centre?**

In select circumstances, the Centre may be willing to provide support via Skype. Ideally, this would be combined with periodic "in person" sessions. Families would need to have the appropriate computers, headphones, cameras and internet bandwidth, and would need to feel comfortable with troubleshooting the inevitable problems that might occur.



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