

FAQ (3 pages)
Winter 2009

What is the LION (Learning in Our Neighbourhood) program?

LION brings mobile early learning resource centres for children up to age six and their families into Peel Region communities where early learning programs and other neighbourhood services are scarce.

How does LION bring programs and services to under-served neighbourhoods in Peel Region?

Three recreational vehicles have been converted into mobile early learning resource centres for pre-schoolers and their families. Families attend free early learning programs on the vehicle.

The LION vehicles travel to designated communities where early learning programs and neighbourhood resources for families are still scarce. They park adjacent to a school or other convenient community service location. LION offers free programs in the neighbourhood serving the learning needs of children, their parents or caregivers.

Why this need for mobile early learning resource centres for pre-schoolers and their families?

The dramatic increase in population in Peel Region has highlighted the absence of crucial early learning resources in some newer, high-density neighbourhoods. LION is one solution designed to fill this gap until permanent early learning services can be established.

Which neighbourhoods are visited by LIONs?

LION mobile early learning resource centres visit school and community centre locations in Brampton and Mississauga, Ontario.

Brampton:

Father Clair Tipping Elementary School
Father Francis McSpiritt Catholic Elementary School
Roberta Bondar Public School
St. Lucy's Catholic Elementary School
James Potter Public School
Brisdale Public School
St. Angela Merici Catholic Elementary School
Thorndale Public School
Treeline Public School
Holy Spirit Catholic Elementary School
Thorndale Public School

Mississauga:

St. Pio of Pietrelcina Catholic Elementary School
Whitehorn Public School
St. Sebastian Catholic Elementary School
McKinnon Public School
Sheridan Centre



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada



Dufferin-Peel
Catholic District
School Board



When does LION visit designated neighbourhoods in Peel Region?

LION launched in Brampton in winter 2008 and in Mississauga in March 2009. The mobile early learning resource centres visit each designated neighbourhood once a week at the same location.

What services does LION offer to children and families?

LION offers parent/child interactive play-based programs that focus on language, literacy and numeracy, supported through play, songs and stories. At the same time, parents and caregivers will be offered the opportunity to talk to early childhood professionals. Library services and information on other parenting resources will also be provided. Information and referrals to relevant services offered throughout Peel will be available. If needed, parents will have the opportunity to obtain information about settlement services for newcomers to Canada. For example, they may ask about ESL classes, employment services or counselling.

The *Baby and Me* program provides an opportunity for parents and caregivers, with children birth to 12 months, to play with their babies through music and activities, and connect with other parents. LION also offers the *Come Learn with Us* program for parents with children birth to 6 years, which will explore math, language, art, and science through a variety of activities. Participants will have the opportunity to socialize, enjoy guest speakers and learn about child development and early learning. LION staff will facilitate programs, model early learning strategies and answer questions.

Do parents and caregivers pay for LION programs and services?

No. All programs and services provided at these mobile resource centres will be free of charge to participating families with children ages 0 to 6.

What other benefits does LION offer to families and their communities?

LION intends to foster communities that support children and families. Pre-schoolers can have fun at the LION resource centre and make friends. Their parents and caregivers can meet others in the neighbourhood and build wider support networks.

Who is responsible for LION?

Partnership is a key component in the success of any community project and the LION initiative is no exception. LION has several central partners: Success By 6 Peel; the Region of Peel; the Brampton Library; the Mississauga Library; Child Development Resource Connection Peel; Malton Neighbourhood Services; Mississauga Parent-Child Resource Centres; the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board; and the Peel District School Board.

Success By 6 Peel, an initiative of the United Way, is the coordinating body for the project and handles administration, communications and evaluation. www.successby6peel.ca

The Region of Peel purchased and renovated the recreational vehicles. The Region will also house and maintain the LION vehicles, and facilitate coordination services.

The LION vehicle will park at selected schools in the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and the Peel District School Board.

Brampton Library; Mississauga Library; Child Development Resource Connection Peel; Malton Neighbourhood Services; Mississauga Parent-Child Resource Centres provide program development and staff that facilitate programs and services.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada provides a portion of funding for staff and program costs.

Does the LION program have community spokespersons?

Yes. Anne Fenwick and Tiffanie Boyd are volunteers for LION and official spokespersons for the program.

- Tiffanie Boyd is a volunteer LION ambassador because she believes children and their families deserve sustained community support from birth through early adulthood. She works at General Mills Canada Corporation as Vice-President, Human Resources and is a member of the Success By 6 Peel Council of Champions.
- Anne Fenwick is a volunteer ambassador for LION because she believes in promoting early learning opportunities for children as she knows they provide life long, lasting benefits for children, their families and their communities. Anne works in public health at Peel Region as Director, Family Health in the Health Services Department. She is also a member of the Success By 6 Peel Council of Champions.

Why does early learning matter so much?

Scientific research shows that the architecture of the brain is created during the first few years of a child's life. When this structure is sound, children have the experience they need to prepare them for successful school entry. A child who hasn't had the positive experiences to support early development will find school – and life -- much harder. Parents and other caregivers have access to the free LION programs to prepare their children for school and to be successful in later life.

Where do I go for more information about LION?

- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to visit www.successby6peel.ca for more information about LION.
- Community partners and organizations interested in supporting or promoting the LION program can contact:

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